

## Teaching Guide

Amos 6,1,4-7; 1 Timothy 6.11-16; Luke 16.19-31

## OVERVIEW

### Gospel Theme: Jesus teaches us to share.

Each week *Seeds* brings the Sunday Gospel to preschool children at their own developmental level. This Sunday's story of the beggar and the rich man continues a theme particular to the Gospel of Luke: the poor are the ones God loves best.

Young children are just beginning to acquire social skills. Sharing is still not easy for them. They need many experiences in learning to be thoughtful, to think of others, to share with others. The story of the rich man and the poor man helps the children as they grow in their understanding of the need to share.

A *Seeds* lesson can be comfortably completed in 30 minutes or can be extended to 50-60 minutes. Teachers can draw out the lesson or use extending activities. Teachers who have less time can abbreviate discussion and direct the children to complete the activity at home. Consider duplicating this guide and sending it home with each child. The guides are also available to parents at pflaum.com.

**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, colored pencils or crayons, *Seeds* CD. This collection of 17 easy-to-learn seasonal songs and activity songs is available at pflaum.com for only \$15.95.

### Connecting the Weekly Issue of *Seeds* 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, [WCBT 16, page 19]. 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 *Seeds*. Be sure to explore this section with the children to discover how the *Catechism* treats this theme for people their age.

## SHARING LIFE STORIES

**1. GATHERING** Begin class by gathering the children in a circle holding hands. If you have purchased a *Seeds* music CD, teach the children the *Seeds* signature song, "There's a Seed in My Heart." They can learn it by listening to the song

first and then singing along the next time. Plan to use this song to begin each class for each of these first Sundays. If you did not purchase a CD, use the following song instead.

### Gathering With Jesus to "Did You Ever See a Lassie?"

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

Make name tags for the children. Put them out on a table and have the children find their own. This can also be a means of taking attendance.

**2. OPENING PRAYER** Have the children remain standing while you say the following prayer. Children answer, "Amen."

*Dear Jesus, help me to listen well today. Help me to learn how to share with others and how to help them.*

**Objective:** The children will experience the sadness of people who are left out.

**3. STORYTELLING:** Gather the children in the work area. This is an area with tables or at least with space on the floor so children can spread out their *Seeds* copy. Use a puppet to ask the children if they can think of a time they felt bad because nobody would share with them. Have them share their experiences.

Perhaps a sister or brother would not share their toys or candy or books. Maybe a child on the playground would not share a game. Maybe an older child would not let them come along to play. Ask the children how being left out makes them feel. Let them tell you what they might have done if they saw someone being left out. Then tell this story.

*One day seven children all went to the park. They were very excited. They were going to fly a kite and swing on the swings and play tag and have lots of fun. But when they got to the park all sorts of things went wrong.*

Distribute *Seeds* and ask the children to open it and spread it out in front of them. Ask them to find all the ways the children in the illustration need help. *Kite in tree; shoelaces need tying; girl is left out; can't reach fountain; scared of dog; needs a push in the swing; on crutches and can't play.* Then ask who can help, and give each child a chance to contribute. They will be very inventive. For instance, a city worker in a cherry picker truck could get the kite down, but so could a teenage boy who can climb trees, or a very tall passerby. One of the children in the picture can help the boy on crutches sit down in a swing, put his crutches out of the way for him, and give him a push. The person who left the dog tied to the tree can come and get it. Conclude discussion by asking each child to pick which person they would help and tell why and how.

**4. STRETCH AND SING** Ask the children to stand and follow you in this familiar song and stretching exercise.

If you're happy and you know it clap your hands. (clap twice)  
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands. (clap twice)  
If you're happy and you know it  
and you really want to show it,  
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands. (clap twice)

Repeat twice, changing the words to *stamp your feet* and *shake my hand*.


## LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

**Objective:** The children will recognize that God cares for the poor and vulnerable.

**5. GOSPEL STORYTELLING: The Rich Man and the Beggar** Move to the story circle for the Gospel discussion.

The *Seeds* music cassette has a song, "Two Little Ears," that the children can use to mark this Gospel storytime as special. Children take in what we value by the attention we pay.

Display a Bible, flowers, and a candle on a beautiful piece of cloth. Before you begin the *Listening to the Gospel* section of your *Seeds* lesson, light the candle and have a child open the Bible. This little ceremony will alert the children that Jesus'

 message is the heart of their time together. [WCBT 16, page 19, Holy Book]


Ask the children to sit with *Seeds* on the floor in front of them and describe the cover illustration to you. *A man is in the big house has lots of food to eat. Another man is sitting by the gate looking in. A dog is keeping him company.* Ask the children how they think the poor man feels. Tell the Gospel story to the children in your own words or use the following text.

*Once there was a poor man who was very hungry and very sick. He had nobody to love him or care for him. His only friend was a stray dog who stayed by his side all the time. The poor man and the dog would go sit by a gate outside a rich man's house. The rich man always wore nice clothes and lived in a large, beautiful house. The poor man hoped that the rich man would see him and share some of his food. But the rich man just walked right by him into his beautiful house. He never even saw the poor man and the dog sitting by his gate. When he ate his scrumptious supper, he didn't even notice that right outside his window was a poor man who hadn't eaten for days.*

Ask the children to look at the cover illustration again. Use the following questions to begin discussion.

- How can you tell that this is a rich man eating his supper?
- Why do you think the poor man is so poor?
- What should the rich man have done?
- Why do you think Jesus told us this story?
- What do you think Jesus wants us to do?

Stress the importance of sharing with others and of noticing when others need help.

**6. CREATIVE DRAMA** Have the children stand and walk like the rich man—*very proud, head held up high, not noticing anyone else*. Next have them walk like the poor man—*slow and weak, afraid people will shoo him away*. Have all the children find a place to sit like the poor man against the gate. Have them pet their dog and talk to it. You be the rich man and walk by them into your beautiful home. Have the children cry out faintly, "Please help me. I am very hungry." Ignore them and eat your supper. Next have one of the children be the rich man. Ask the children how you could change the ending of the story to be like Jesus. Replay with the rich man feeding the beggars and asking them to come inside his home. [WCBT 13, page 16, Sharing] 

## BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

**Objective:** The children will identify ways they can share with others.

**7. I CAN HELP** Gather back in the work area. Distribute scissors and have the children look at the four pictures on page 4. Have them identify what the children in the pictures need—a *bandage, something to play with, something to pick up a spill, something to eat*. Direct the children's attention to the four little pictures at the left of the page. Each picture is something they can do to help. Have them cut apart the little pictures and place one on each picture showing how they would solve the problem.

Have used envelopes available so the children can take the little pictures home and show their family how they can help.

**8. CLOSING PRAYER AND SONG** Gather in a prayer circle and sing the *Seeds* song to conclude your session. Pray the following prayer.

*Thank you, God, for all the wonderful things you have given me—nice clothes, a home, toys, books, family and friends who love me. I want to share with others. Please help me do that. Amen.*

**9. SNACK** Pass out some treat you have brought to class. Tell the children you had this at home and wanted to share.

## EXTENDING ACTIVITY

**10. COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES** Plan activities in which children must share: look at a book together; share one box of crayons; take turns in a game like *Concentration*.

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## Teaching Guide

Habakkuk 1.2-3; 2.2-4; 2 Timothy 1.6-8,13-14; Luke 17.5-10

## OVERVIEW

### Gospel Theme: We believe in Jesus.

In Sunday's Gospel Jesus' friends are worried. Jesus is a new friend of theirs and they know he is special to God. They wonder how they can show in their actions their feelings about Jesus.

*Seeds* focuses on children's place in their home and neighborhood communities and in the Christian community. The lesson encourages them to place their trust in the God who created them and wants them to grow and flourish and in Jesus, who came to bring us this message of God's love.

**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:** Glue or paste, poppy seeds, scissors, colored pencils or crayons. Separate pages 3-4 of *Seeds* from pages 1-2 before class.

## SHARING LIFE STORIES

**1. GATHER AND SING** Begin class by gathering the children in a circle, holding hands and singing the *Seeds* song from the music CD. Or sing "Gathering With Jesus," which was printed in last week's guide.

**2. OPENING PRAYER** Ask the children to fold their hands as you say the following prayer. They can answer Amen. Or teach them the prayer so they learn it by heart. It lends itself to gestures—holding hands and raising them for the first line, gesturing far and near for the second line, touching ears and hearts for the third and fourth lines, then folding hands in prayer position for Amen.

Jesus, Jesus, we are here.

We come to you from far and near.

With our ears we hear your words.

In our hearts we keep your words. Amen.

**Objective:** The children will recognize the growth they see around them and experience in themselves.

**3. STORYTELLING: Justin's Birthday** Have the children sit down in a story circle. Tell them this story, or make up a similar one of your own.

*I know a little boy who has a birthday today. His name is Justin and he is five years old! Justin lives in a house with his father and his brother, Charlie, his grandmother, Ginger the dog, and Princess the cat. Ginger woke Justin up this morning by jumping on his bed and licking his face. Justin chased*

*Ginger into the kitchen where Grandma was waiting with Justin's birthday hug. Justin's dad and Charlie hugged him, too, and everyone sang "Happy Birthday." Then Grandma said, "Come over to the door and get measured, Justin. We will see how much you have grown this year." Justin stood by the kitchen door. Grandma got a pencil. She put her hand on top of Justin's head and touched the door frame. Then she made a mark on the door where her fingers touched. Justin stood back and looked at the mark. It was way above the mark from his last birthday! "I am getting big!" Justin announced, and everyone applauded.*

**4. STORY PAGE: I can grow (page 2)** Distribute pages 1-2 of *Seeds*. Have the children find page 2 and place it on the floor in front of them. This allows them to look at the illustration, but keeps them from handling it. Have them find Peter, the birthday boy, and then speculate what else is happening in the picture. Have a puppet call attention to the acorns on the ground and ask what will happen to the acorn if the squirrel buries it. It becomes an oak tree. Have the puppet ask what will happen to the puppy? To the tulip bulbs? To the little boy? Telling the puppet about the picture gives each child a chance to be the teacher.

Summarize by telling the children all things that are alive come from small beginnings. Ask what kinds of seeds they know. *Some possibilities: sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, seeds in apples and oranges and pits in peaches and plums.* In the fall, it is easy to see seeds forming in flowers and on bushes. If there is time, take the children on a seed-finding walk or have books that tell about seeds for private reading.

**5. STRETCHING ACTIVITY** Have the children stand and raise their arms high pretending they are oak trees. Then have them frame their faces with their hands pretending they are sunflowers. Finally, ask them to crouch down like seeds and when you say "Gro-o-o-o-ow" stretch up like oaks. Repeat, this time stretching up like sunflowers.

## LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

**6. GOSPEL RITUAL** Move to the area you have designated for the Gospel storytelling. Display your copy of *Seeds* on a lovely piece of cloth. Have the children sit in a circle and put their copies of *Seeds* on the floor in front of them so they will not be distracted during the Gospel storytelling.

Sing "Two Little Ears" from the *Seeds* music CD as an introduction to the Gospel. Have the children add simple gestures. If you do not have the CD, have them simply repeat each line after you. Show them gestures to go with the song—hands cupping ears; pointing to eyes; holding out hands; folding hands in prayer.

Two little ears to hear God's word.  
Two little eyes to see God's love.  
Two little hands to work each day.  
Alleluia! Hear me pray.

**Objective:** The children will understand they can trust Jesus.

### 7. GOSPEL STORY: Jesus Wants Us to Grow

Tell the children that in the Gospel story we hear this Sunday Jesus tells us about a kind of seed that is very, very small—maybe the smallest kind of seed there is. Tell this story from Luke 17:5-10.

*Jesus had a lot of friends when he lived on the earth. There were men and women and children who liked to listen to him and eat with him. One day some of Jesus' friends said to him, "Jesus, we know you are very special to God. Do you think God is pleased with us?" Jesus understood that they were worried about being good. He asked them to come close by him so they could see something he had in his hand. They had to look really close because it was a very small something. Jesus said, "This is a mustard seed. See how little it is. But if you plant this little tiny seed, a big bush grows up." Jesus smiled at his friends. "If you believe in me only a little bit, like this tiny seed, that is good enough. Don't worry. God loves you and I love you and you will grow and grow."* [WCBT 2, page 5, Jesus]

Ask: Why were Jesus' friends worried? Possibly they didn't think they were good enough for Jesus. What does it mean to believe in someone? To trust they like you and will help you. What did Jesus want his friends to do? Trust in him.

**8. SEED ACTIVITY** Move to the work area and ask the children to put their copies of *Seeds* face up on their tables or desks. Go around the room and put a drop of paste or glue in the center of Jesus' hand in the cover illustration. Then ask each child to hold out one hand, slightly cupped. Go around again, this time putting a small quantity of really tiny seeds like poppy seeds in each child's hand. Show them how to sprinkle the seeds on the glue spot so that at least some stick.

**9. SINGING** Teach the children this song to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

When I'm playing in the park.  
God is with me in the park.  
Day or night, night or day.  
God is with me all the way.  
Father, Son, and Spirit three,  
God will always be with me.

Change the first two lines to fit your circumstances. For instance, you might sing, "When I'm riding in the car, God is with me in the car," or "When I'm playing with my friends, God is with me and my friends." The children will be very good at suggesting times and places; you only need to put them into short sentences that fit the song.

# BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

**Objective:** The children will make a loving words booklet.

### 10. ACTIVITY: My Loving Words Book (pages 3-4)

Gather in the work area. Distribute scissors, colored pencils or crayons, and pages 3-4 of *Seeds*. Show the children how to cut the page in two the long way, following the heavy black line. Go around the room making sure everyone is cutting on the solid and not the dotted line. Show them how to fold the two pieces on the dotted lines and put them together to make a booklet. Check to make sure the pages are in the correct order and staple them together.

When all the children have their books ready, go through them page by page. Begin by reading the cover words aloud. Turn to pages 2-3 and ask the children to describe the illustration. Read the words on page three, and ask when they have used these words. Tell the children a sign we are growing up is learning to use loving words. Give the children time to trace the letter with their pencils or crayons. Do the same for the other pages.

**11. CLOSING PRAYER** Gather back in the story circle. Ask: What or whom would you like our *Seeds* group to pray for today? Give each child a chance to share a petition. Gather all the petitions with this prayer. The children respond "Amen"

*Jesus, we believe that you care for us and that you will help the people we pray for and worries we have.*

Conclude by leading the children in singing the *Seeds* song or the song above.

**12. SNACK** If you provide a snack for your children, serve sunflower seeds, roasted pumpkin seeds, or apples cut in two so the seeds show.

## EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

**13. SEED ACTIVITIES** Have a variety of seeds that the children can handle—pumpkin seeds, avocado, prune or apricot pits, sunflower seeds. Have stations set up where the children can count the seeds, sort them into separate cups, arrange them into designs, or other preschool kind of activities.

**14. PLANTING A SEED** Children enjoy planting something and waiting for and watching it grow. Use paper cups with just a little potting soil in them. Plant bean seeds or some other fast-growing seed. Reflect with the children on how the combination of soil, sun, and water, and the life within the seed produces a healthy plant with flowers and fruit.

## Teaching Guide

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

## OVERVIEW

### Gospel Theme: Jesus is our friend.

Jesus' healing of the ten lepers is a sign in Luke's Gospel of God's love of the outsider and the excluded. Children, who often see themselves as outsiders because of their size and age, will appreciate Jesus' friendship for these people everyone else left out. *Seeds* helps children identify all the occasions when people let them in and appreciate them, occasions on which they can respond, as one of the ten lepers did, with thanksgiving.

**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 colored pencils, scissors, tape, used 9" x 12" envelopes.

## SHARING LIFE STORIES

**1. GATHER AND SING** Begin class by gathering the children in a circle holding hands and singing the *Seeds* song. Add gestures so the children can use their whole bodies.

If you do not have the *Seeds* CD, sing the following song to the tune of "Did You Ever See a Lassie?"

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

**2. OPENING PRAYER** Ask the children to join you in the prayer from last week. It is an easy one for them to remember and to add gestures.

Jesus, Jesus, we are here.  
We come to you from far and near.  
With our ears we hear your words.  
In our hearts we keep your words. Amen.

**Objective: The children will recognize the importance of thanking.**

### 3. STORYTELLING: The Thank You Kids

Tell the children to gather around you in a circle for a story about a group of children who called themselves The Thank You Kids.

*Kim, Kevin, Carla, and Chris all played in the same park. They pushed each other in the swings. They took turns on the slide. They played Follow the Leader on the climbing bars. They liked to do everything together. One day Kim's mother came to the park to watch them. It was a hot day and Kim's mother bought each of them an ice cream bar.*

*"Thank you," said Kim. "Thank you," said Kevin. "Thank you," said Carla and Chris together. "You're welcome," Kim's mother said. "You are very polite children. You must be the Thank You Kids." "Yes, we are," said Kim. "Let's see who else we can thank." The Thank You Kids ran to the water fountain. A policeman was just getting a drink. "I'll lift you up so you can get a drink, too," the policeman said. "Thank you!" said the Thank You Kids. The policeman smiled a big smile. After they got their drinks, the children ran towards the swings. A girl on a scooter moved to the side to let them run by. "Thank you!" the children called to her. "You're welcome," she called back. The Thank You Kids ran to the slide and slid to a stop. "You can go first," said Kim to Kevin. "Thank you," Kevin said and started to climb. Carla and Chris got in line. Kevin went down first. As he slid he called out, "Here come the Thank You Kids," and everybody clapped for them.*

**Objective: The children will identify actions for which they can say thank you.**

**4. I CAN SAY "THANK YOU"** Use a puppet to review your class rules for talking and listening—one child talks at a time; everyone looks at the person who is talking and listens hard; everyone can have a turn to talk.

Ask, or have the puppet ask:

- When someone gives you a present, what do you say?  
*Thank you.*
- When your mom or dad gives you lunch, what do you say?
- When someone picks up something you dropped, what do you say?

Continue with examples and allow the children to add their own. Then ask: Have you ever given a present or done something for a friend and they didn't say thank you? How did you feel?

**5. STRETCH AND SING** Ask children to stand and follow you in this familiar song and stretching exercise to the tune of "Ten Little Indians."

Lift one foot and then the other,  
Lift one foot and then the other,  
Lift one foot and then the other,  
Thank you for our feet.

Shake one hand and then the other,  
Shake one hand and then the other,  
Shake one hand and then the other,  
Thank you for our hands.

## LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

**6. GOSPEL RITUAL** Gather the children in a circle around the Bible or lectionary. If you do not have either of these, display a copy of *Seeds* with the Gospel picture showing

on a bookstand or piece of lovely material. This will help the children see that the story about Jesus they hear in *Seeds* class is the same one they and their families hear on Sunday. Have the children sit in a circle around you and the Bible with their copies of *Seeds* on the floor in front of them.

Sing “Two Little Ears” from the *Seeds* music CD as an introduction to the Gospel. Add simple gestures. If you do not have the CD, have them simply repeat each line after you.

Two little ears to hear God’s word.

Two little eyes to see God’s love.

Two little hands to work each day.

Alleluia! Hear me pray.

**Objective:** The children will recognize Jesus cares for those whom others leave out.

## 7. GOSPEL STORYTELLING: Jesus heals ten sick people

Introduce Sunday’s Gospel story by telling the children it is about a very loving thing Jesus did for some people and how they responded. Tell them what the disease called leprosy is like so they understand that *leper* in the story refers to a person and not an animal like a leopard. Leprosy is a contagious skin disease which disfigures people. It can be cured now, but years ago people with leprosy had to live apart from other people. Tell the children these lepers were also strangers to Jesus, people he didn’t know and maybe had reason to distrust. Set the scene for the children—Jesus and his friends walking along a dusty road, minding their own business, and then tell the Gospel story in your own words or use the following text.

*One day Jesus and his friends were walking near a place called Samaria. Ten lepers saw Jesus. They called to him. “Jesus! Jesus! Please make us well.”*

*Jesus saw how bad off they were and felt sorry for them. “Go show yourself to the priests,” he told them.*

*The lepers obeyed Jesus. As they were going, they realized their leprosy had gone away. They were healed! They didn’t need crutches or canes or bandages any more. They could walk and jump and dance again.*

*One of the lepers—a person from Samaria—went back to Jesus. He knelt at Jesus’ feet. “Thank you, Jesus, for healing me,” he said.*

*Jesus said, “Weren’t there ten lepers? Why did only one come to say thank you? Where are the other nine?”*

Ask children to pick up *Seeds* and find Jesus, the nine lepers at the top of the page and the one who came back to thank Jesus. Ask: Whom did Jesus make well? How many did he make well? Who thanked Jesus? How do you think Jesus felt?

## 8. GOSPEL CREATIVE DRAMA

Ask the children to stand and show you with their bodies:

- how the 10 lepers felt when they were sick (remember some had canes or crutches);
- how they felt when Jesus made them well;
- what one leper did;
- how Jesus felt when the leper thanked him.

Conclude this Gospel discussion by asking the children what they learned about Jesus from this story. Tell how important it is to tell someone thank you.

# BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

**Objective:** The children will identify actions for which they can say thank you.

**9. I CAN SAY THANK YOU** Gather in the work area and have the children open *Seeds* to pages 2-3. Ask if they know the words in the voice balloon. What are the children saying thank you for? As the children identify the four illustrations, ask about their favorite flower, flavor of ice cream, present, and place to go in the car. Give them time to color the pictures and add their own face in the car window.

**Objective:** The children will thank God for the gifts of creation, family, and daily sustenance.

**10. MEAL PRAYER CARD** Gather in the work area and distribute scissors. Ask children to place *Seeds* with page 4 facing up. Ask them to tell you all the things that are illustrated on this page. Then read the prayer aloud to the children. Tell them they will make a Meal Prayer Card they can take home and use with their families.

Show children how to cut on the heavy black line that runs the length of the page. Go around the room making sure everyone has it right. Direct them to put the strip of paper with the dotted-line words “Thank You” aside. When everyone has finished cutting, show them how to crease the meal prayer paper on the three dotted lines with the picture showing. Go around the room and tape the cards together for the children so they stand up. **[WCBT, page 33, Prayers]** ✂

Use the *Seeds* music CD to teach the children the melody to these words. Plan on singing this grace before your snack time each week so the children learn it well and can pass it on to their families.

**11. THANK YOU NOTE** Direct the children’s attention to the strip of paper that was left when they cut out their meal card. Point out the words *Thank You*. Let the children trace the words with crayons or colored pencils, then fold on the dotted line. Ask them to open it and print their name on the line or draw their picture there. Brainstorm to whom they may wish to give this card.

**12. CLOSING PRAYER AND SONG** Gather in a prayer circle and sing to conclude your *Seeds* session. If you learned the table grace song, have the children hold their cards as they sing. Conclude the prayer by thanking God for each of the children in your *Seeds* group by name.

It is a good idea to save all 9” x 12” envelopes that come to your home or business. These large used envelopes are perfect for sending home activities such as the Meal Prayer Card that children make in this lesson. You can slip the completed activity in the envelope and staple or tape it shut.

**13. SNACK** Serve crackers, cookies, or fruit. Reinforce saying thank you to the person who passes out the snack. Sing the meal prayer.

## OVERVIEW

### Gospel Theme: God wants us to ask.

In Sunday's Gospel Jesus tells the story of a poor widow who repeatedly asks an uncaring judge to settle a case in her favor. When the judge can't stand her constant nagging any more, he gives her the justice she deserves. The lesson, Jesus tells us, is that our loving God will answer our prayers much faster than the uncaring judge answers the widow.

*Seeds* celebrates the quality of persistence in young children. This ceaseless asking for what they perceive as good is a God-given gift that can become a strength for them in adult life. The stories and activities in *Seeds* help children exercise their ability to ask for what is good.

**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:** Crayons or markers, pencils.

## SHARING LIFE STORIES

**1. GATHER AND SING** Gather the children together in a circle to sing a gathering song. You may wish to sing the *Seeds* signature song, the "Gathering With Jesus" song from last week's *Seeds* guide, or the meal prayer you learned last week.

**Objective:** The children will recognize that it is best to have an "I'll try" attitude and be persistent.

**2. DAN'S CHALK DRAWING** Stay in the circle and use a puppet to ask the children if they have ever drawn pictures on the sidewalk. Children will often respond to a puppet's questions more quickly than they will respond to you. Have the puppet ask questions about what the children describe so they get used to being heard and responded to for their ideas. After you have listened to a few children describe where and what they drew, ask what happened to the drawings. *The rain may have washed them away. Time faded them. Other children drew on top of them.* Tell them you have a story about a boy who made a beautiful chalk drawing and what happened to it. Look around the circle to be sure you have everyone's attention and then read this story poem.

### Dan's Chalk Drawing

Dan drew a picture on the sidewalk  
for all the world to see.  
He made it by using colored chalk.  
It was beautiful as it could be!

The day was warm and windy.  
The leaves were blowing down.  
Soon Dan's picture was covered  
with leaves that hit the ground.

Dan grabbed a broom and gave the leaves  
a whisk and then a whack.  
He cleared his beautiful picture,  
but soon the leaves were back.

Dan grabbed a shovel and gave the leaves  
a push and then a pack.  
He cleared the beautiful picture.  
but soon the leaves were back.

Dan grabbed a rake and gave the leaves  
a heave and then a hack.  
He cleared the beautiful picture,  
but soon the leaves were back.

Suddenly, the wind stopped blowing.  
The leaves lay quiet and still.  
Everyone could see Dan's beautiful picture,  
and maybe they always will.

Move to the work area. Distribute *Seeds* and instruct the children to open to the center page picture. Have the children circle the tools that Dan used in the story. Find Dan's rake, shovel, broom, as well as the leaves and the wind. Have them color Dan's drawing.

**3. CREATIVE DRAMA** When you have completed the activity, ask the children to stand in their circle. Tell them to act the various actions of the poem, as you read the poem a second time.

Stanza 1: Children make drawing motions with their hands.

Stanza 2: Become leaves that are falling to the ground.

Stanza 3: Make a sweeping motion as though with a broom.

Stanza 4: Make shoveling motions.

Stanza 5: Gather leaves with a raking motion.

Stanza 6: Children stand with arms extended towards the beautiful chalk drawing.

## LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

**4. GOSPEL RITUAL** Have the children come to the story area and bring their copies of *Seeds* along. Show them how to put their *Seeds* on the floor in front of them, far enough away

so they won't be tempted to pick it up until you say so.

Children of preschool age can generally relate to having many wants and needs. Use a puppet to ask the children what things they have begged their parents, siblings, or grandparents to get for them. Ask:

- What did you ask for?
- Whom did you ask?
- What response did you get?
- How did that make you feel?

**Objective: The children will understand that God loves them and will answer their prayers.**

**5. GOSPEL STORYTELLING: Jesus tells us to keep asking** Put the puppet aside and tell the children you know a funny story that Jesus told his followers a long time ago. Set the scene. Ask the children to look at the *Seeds* cover and describe the two people to you. The story is about the lady who doesn't have very much money. She has gone to court to get the judge to give her some money that she deserves but that she isn't getting. The judge doesn't like her very much, but the lady keeps coming to his courtroom day after day to ask him to settle the case in her favor. Finally one day, this happened.

**Lady:** Mr. Judge, I'm here again.

**Judge:** Oh, no! Not you.

**Lady:** Yes, I want you to give me the justice I deserve.

**Judge:** If I settle the case in your favor, will you go away?

**Lady:** Yes, I will.

**Judge:** All right. I am going to settle your case so you get your money. But I'm not doing it because I like you. I am doing it because I am tired of you asking me all the time.

After Jesus told this story to his friends, he said, "God will answer our prayers much quicker than the judge answered the lady. We just have to keep on asking."

**6. PRAYERS OF ASKING** Give the children a moment of quiet with the story. Then ask what asking prayers they make to God. To get the conversation going, remind them of the loving words booklet they made last week. *Please* is a word we use to ask for something. Ask about the worries they have or the people they are concerned about. Ask if there are other things now they want to ask God to help. If appropriate, teach them a simple response to petitions, maybe the one you use at Sunday Eucharist—"Lord, hear our prayer," or "Jesus, hear us," or just a simple, "Please."

You may wish to start these prayers with a simple beginning:

Loving God, we ask you:

- to keep all children safe
- to keep our families safe
- that all people have food to eat
- that all people have homes to live in
- for (mention people you wish to pray for)

We thank you for hearing our prayer. Amen.

Conclude this portion of the lesson by reminding the children Jesus wants us to pray whenever we need something and to remember that God always pays attention to our prayers.

[WCBT 15, page 18, Prayer]



**7. SING AND STRETCH** Move to the open area and lead the children in singing "The Whole World's in God's Hands." This is on the *Seeds* music CD so the children can sing along with it. However, it is also an easy song to teach. It lends itself to spontaneous new verses, which can be pantomimed to add fun and interest to the singing. For instance, "The little bitty baby's in God's hands," or "You and me, brother," and "You and me, sister," suggest rocking and pointing motions.

## BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

**Objective: The children will thank God for the beauty of autumn.**

### 8. THANK YOU, GOD, FOR AUTUMN

Gather in the work area again with *Seeds* and ask the children to place it with the back page up on the table in front of them. Use your own copy to show them how to use markers or crayons to make a leaf person. Encourage them to add arms, legs, hands and feet, hair and facial features to their leaf person.

**9. CLOSING PRAYER** Gather around the snack area and sing the *Meal Prayer* song to conclude class.

**10. SNACK** Bring fall food such as pumpkin seeds or apples cut into slices or candy corn.

## EXTENDING ACTIVITY

**11. LEAF HUNT** Go on a nature walk and find large, sturdy leaves to pick up and bring back to class. Help the children paste these on construction paper and draw more leaf people. They may want to make a leaf person look like each member of their family, or draw leaf person portraits of each other.



## OVERVIEW

### Gospel Theme: Everyone is important to God.

Sunday's Gospel story is about two people—a very important pillar of the community and a tax collector nobody likes—who both go to the Temple to pray. The important person uses his prayer time to thank God that he is better than the tax collector. The tax collector admits his failings and asks God's mercy. Jesus asks us a question: Which person pleases God?

*Seeds* helps children answer that question simply. We are all important to God. We all please God when we love ourselves and respect others around us. Children easily recognize a “show-off” but often fail to see that everyone has equal rights. In this lesson they will grow in appreciation of likenesses and differences.

**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:** Crayons or colored pencils.

## SHARING LIFE STORIES

**1. GATHER AND SING** Gather the children in your prayer circle and begin the *Seeds* session with the “One Family” song from the *Seeds* music CD. If you do not have the CD, sing the following words to “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.”

God loves you and God loves me.  
We are all one family.

**2. OPENING PRAYER** Give the children a moment to stand quietly and pray in their hearts that Jesus will be with them during this *Seeds* class. Then ask them to join you in the prayer you learned earlier this year, and make the gestures you make.

Jesus, Jesus, we are here.  
We come to you from far and near.  
With our ears we hear your words.  
In our hearts we keep your words. Amen.

**Objective: The children will explore likenesses and differences.**

**3. STORY: FROM A TO Z** Have the children sit in a story circle around you. Tell them you were working at your desk last night and you heard the letters of the alphabet talking. You only listened a little while, because

eavesdropping is rude. This is all you heard.

*A said, “I am most important because I come first in the alphabet. Everyone always says, ‘A,B,C.’ I am always first.”*

*Z said, “I am most important because I come last. Everyone always saves the best until last.”*

*M said, “I am most important because without me you couldn't spell Mother.”*

*“How about me?” said G. “You need me to spell God.”*

*Pretty soon all the letters were talking at the same time. They made so much noise my ears hurt, so I shut the dictionary and went to bed. But now I am wondering, which letter of the alphabet is the most important?*

Give the children a chance to give their opinions. They will most likely agree that all the letters are necessary to write books and letters, and to spell their names. If you know an alphabet song, sing it with the children.

**4. WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT! WE ARE ALL ALIKE!** Direct the children to gather at their work places. Distribute *Seeds* and ask them to open to page 2-3. What do they see? *Many trees, many kinds of places to live, different kinds of people.* Draw children's attention to the top row of pictures which shows five kinds of trees. Ask if they can name the trees. *From left to right: oak, maple, or some other hardwood; pine tree; apple tree; weeping willow; palm.* Use the puppet to ask how these trees are different from each other. The children will enjoy pointing out to the puppet that only apple trees have apples, only evergreen trees like pines get to be Christmas trees, palm trees grow where it is hot, weeping willows like to have their feet in the water. When the puppet has learned enough, ask if the apple tree is better than the palm tree. They will answer that they are just different, not better. Ask the children what their favorite trees are. After discussion, give them time to draw that tree in the blank at the far right. It is all right if they draw one of the trees already in the illustration.

Continue with the row of illustrations showing places people live, giving the children time to draw their own house at the end. The last row shows different people. The children draw a person who is important to them in the empty space. If this activity becomes too long for your class, stop it. You can pick it up again later on in the lesson or on another day. Parents can also continue the activity at home.

**5. CIRCLE SCAVENGER HUNT** Have children leave their *Seeds* issue at their work places and gather around you. Tell them you want each child to find something made in a circle shape in your classroom. Give as an example a clock or the top of a wastebasket. Tell the children to walk around the room until they find a circle shape and then to stand still by it. You might want to make sure there are enough shapes by making a flower pot, coffee cup, juice glasses, buttons, balls,

and other circle shapes obvious. Help children who need help.

When each child has found a circle shape ask: Where does your circle begin? There may be a seam or handle, but basically the circle is the same all around, with no real beginning or end. Make this point, then ask the children to gather around you in the open area in a circle and hold hands. Point out that no one is first or last in a circle of children.

**6. STRETCH AND SING** While the children are standing in their circle, play “Simon Says.” Begin by saying, “Simon says, walk around in a circle.” The children respond by doing what Simon says. Continue with walk, run, hop, crawl, and so on. If your children have ideas, let them be the leaders. too.

## LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

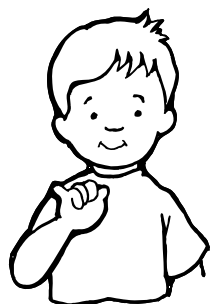
**Objective: The children will recognize Jesus prefers people who don't put others down.**

**7. GOSPEL STORYTELLING: Who does Jesus think is best?** Ask the children to sit in their circle as you tell them the Gospel story.

*Jesus told a story, once, about two people who 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. I am not like this miserable tax collector.” The other man was a tax collector. No one liked him. This is how the tax collector prayed. “Be kind to me, God. I have done many wrong things.”*

*When Jesus finished his story he asked his friends, “Which of these two people pleased God the most?”*

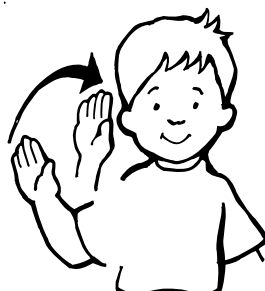
Ask the children what they think the answer to Jesus' question is. *The people who do their best please God, not the ones who brag and then put down other people.* Children will probably complain about kids who think they are better than others because they have more possessions or can do things others can't such as read or skate on inline skates. Children with older siblings may feel inferior to them because they cannot do the same activities or attend the same events. However, children can also understand that people who brag aren't always as good as they say. Conclude this discussion by looking together at the cover illustration and repeating Jesus' point: people who respect themselves and others are pleasing to God. These people do not need to brag.



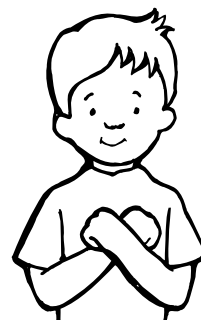
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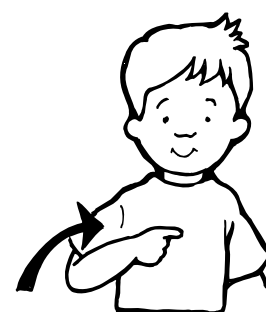
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God



Loves



Me

TG1-10

**8. GOSPEL CREATIVE DRAMA** Let the children take turns acting out the way the two characters in the Gospel pray. The other children may guess by their actions if they are pretending to be the important person or the tax collector who knows he needs God's mercy.

## BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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

**9. WE ARE ALL CHILDREN OF GOD** Young children tend to be very self-oriented. Through the activities in *Seeds*, they will gain exposure to being part of a group. Children will see that they belong to a family unit, social group, and a larger Christian community. Page 4 presents a circle of faces with one space remaining blank. Ask the children to draw their facial likeness in the empty space. Explain that this is a way of showing how each of us fits into a larger group. [WCBT 14, page 17, God loves you] ✂

**10. CLOSING PRAYER** Gather the children standing in the prayer circle. Ask them to put their copies of *Seeds* on the floor in front of them. Explain that you are reading the words on the page and they will repeat your words and add gestures.

*I am important.* (point to self)

*You are important.* (point to other children)

*Everyone is important.* (make big sweeping gesture)

*We are all children of God.* (bring arms up, and hands over head)

*God loves us all.* (hands on heart)

## EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

**11. MAKING FLOWERS** Give the children a variety of materials to create a variety of flowers like the variety of trees in *Seeds*. Provide construction paper, tissue paper, scissors, glue, pipe cleaners, crayons, markers. Let the children be creative and expressive by telling about their flower.

The children can make scented flowers by putting a small amount of glue on their flower and sprinkling it with potpourri. Shake off any excess when the glue is dry.

**12. SIGN LANGUAGE PRAYER** Children love to learn bits of sign language. Teach them how to sign their belief in God's love for them by demonstrating the signs illustrated below.

## Teaching Guide

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

## OVERVIEW

**Gospel Theme: Jesus wants to be with us.**

In Sunday's Gospel a tax collector named Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus so bad, he climbs a tree near the street where Jesus is walking. When Jesus sees how much this man wants to meet him, he invites himself to Zacchaeus's house for dinner. Jesus shows the importance of extending and receiving friendship.

Young children need practice in being friends. They need to learn that sharing, helping, and enjoying fun together is how people become friends. They need to experience friendships with family members, schoolmates, and their neighbors. The story of Zacchaeus helps them to understand the importance Jesus gave to friendship.

**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, scissors, paste or tape.

## SHARING LIFE STORIES

**1. GATHER AND SING** Begin your *Seeds* session by gathering the children in a circle and singing together the *Seeds* song or the following song.

### Gathering With Jesus

(to the tune of "Did You Ever see a Lassie?")

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.

**2. OPENING PRAYER** Remind the children of what they learned about circles last week. Circles have no beginning or end. Everyone in a circle is important. Have the children hold hands while you say the following prayer. They can answer, "Amen."

*Dear Jesus, we are a circle of friends. We love and care about each other. Be with us today as we learn more about friends and more about you.*

**Objective: The children will recognize friends are people who like being with you and enjoy sharing with you.**

### 3. WHAT DO I DO WITH MY FRIENDS?

Sit down in the story circle. Ask the children what they like to do with friends and give them ample opportunity to answer. Then go back to each child and ask why they like to do the activity mentioned or go to the place they told about with that special friend. Answers will be simple. The important thing is that the child will be involved in the lesson if he or she has to contribute to the discussion. To conclude, ask the children to stand up and demonstrate or tell how friends show they like one another. Answers will vary from a hug or handshake to sharing food or pocket change. Take advantage of this break to move to the work area.

Some children are reluctant to take part in discussion. It may be tempting to let a child hang back, hoping that he or she will join in the group at some future date. Sometimes it is true that children are simply waiting until they feel they want to say something. Often, however, continued lack of connection with a group leads to a feeling of alienation. Therefore, the *Seeds* teacher should try a variety of ways to make it easy for a child to share feelings, ideas, and experiences. One way is to give a puppet to the child for part of the class and ask the child to have the puppet answer questions or join in the discussion. Instead of turning to the child and asking, "What do you do with your friends?" you can ask the puppet the question and wait for the child to supply the puppet's answer.

**4. WHO IS MY FRIEND?** Gather in the work area and ask the children to spread *Seeds*, pages 2-3, on the table or work surface in front of them. Read the title aloud and ask children to tell you what is happening with the pairs of children. Do not look for analysis of behavior. It is important that the children have time just to study the illustration first. Accept any comments they make. After they have had a chance to talk, distribute crayons or colored pencils and ask the children to circle the groups of children who are helping each other. *Cleaning up a spill; sharing a book; building something together; helping find puzzle pieces; telling a teacher that a girl and younger boy are having a problem.* Stress how these children are making friends by sharing, helping, and playing with each other. Ask them to find children who perhaps are not being good friends. *A girl is holding a toy away from a smaller child. She could be keeping him from hurting himself. The boy talking to the adult could be telling her the boy who spilled was careless, but he could also be asking her to help him.*

**5. STRETCH AND SING** Have the children play “London Bridge Is Falling Down.” Explain that every time they catch someone new in the bridge it is a new friend. Change the last words in the song to “my new friend” to emphasize this point.

## LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

**Objective:** The children will recognize Jesus loves all people and that his love changes us.

### 6. GOSPEL STORYTELLING: Jesus makes a friend

Gather the children in the story area with their copies of *Seeds*. Ask them to describe the cover illustration to you. *A man is sitting up in a tree. Jesus is standing under the tree looking up at the man and reaching out his hand. The other people standing around look as if they are not sure what is happening.* Ask the children why they think the man is up in the tree. Do they think Jesus likes him? How can they tell?

Tell Sunday’s Gospel story in your own words or use the following text.

*Once in the country where Jesus lived there was a man named Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was very rich but he didn’t have any friends. People said he was a cheater and wouldn’t be friends with him. Zacchaeus heard a lot about Jesus because people were always talking about him. One day he heard that Jesus was coming to town. He was curious about Jesus and decided he would try to see him. But when Zacchaeus got to the street that Jesus was walking down, it was so crowded he couldn’t see over people’s heads. Zacchaeus was just too short. But he got a really good idea. He found a nice tree that stood by the end of the road and he climbed it. Sure enough, he could see Jesus coming. Zacchaeus leaned out of the tree to get a good look at Jesus. Then, guess what? Jesus saw Zacchaeus, too! Jesus walked right up to the tree where Zacchaeus was.*


*“Zacchaeus, come on down,” Jesus said. “I want to stay at your house tonight.”*

*Zacchaeus was so surprised he almost fell out of the tree. Jesus wanted to be his friend. It was too good to be true. Jesus helped him down from the tree and Zacchaeus took Jesus home with him. After Zacchaeus and Jesus had supper together Zacchaeus told Jesus he was sorry that he had been a cheater.*

*“I will give half of everything I own to poor people. I will give half my clothes, and half my furniture, and half my food. Half of everything! And I will pay back every person I ever cheated four times as much.”*

*Jesus said, “I am very glad.”*

Ask the children why Zacchaeus didn’t have any friends. Was Jesus a good friend to Zacchaeus? How do you know that? Bring out the love and care that Jesus had for Zacchaeus. Ask what happened to Zacchaeus because Jesus became his friend. Summarize by saying that Jesus loves us all the time, even when we are not as good as we could

 be. [WCBT 18, page 22, Bible]

**7. CREATIVE DRAMA** This story lends itself to creative drama. Have all the children take the role of Zacchaeus and show through facial expressions and body

positions his activities and feelings when people don’t like him, when he is trying to see Jesus, when he climbs the tree, when Jesus sees him and wants to come to his house, when he tells Jesus he will do better in the future. Do the same with Jesus. Then have the children, each with a partner, dramatize the interaction between Jesus and Zacchaeus. Finally, have the children do the story as a whole, while you tell or read it. Select a child to be Jesus and another to be Zacchaeus. The other children can be part of the crowd or the tree that Zacchaeus climbs. Conclude by discussing again why Jesus wanted to stay at Zacchaeus’s house.

## BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

**Objective:** The children will experience eating with friends.

**8. FRIENDS EAT MEALS TOGETHER** Move to the work area and ask children to identify what is happening in the illustration on page 4—*Jesus is sitting at a table with Zacchaeus and some other people.* Tell the children that one of the things friends like to do is eat together. Ask what kind of food they have at parties. Then ask what kind of food Jesus and Zacchaeus might have eaten together. Identify the bread, cheese, fruit, and jug of wine or water in the little pictures at the side of the page. Distribute the scissors and paste. Direct the children to cut out the food and paste it on the table.

**9. CLOSING PRAYER AND SONG** Children gather in the friendship circle and hold hands as you say this prayer:

*Jesus, we thank you for our friends. Please help us to be good friends to each other. Help us to make new friends, also. Amen.*

Children sing the following song to the tune of “London Bridge is Falling Down.”

*All my friends are here today,  
here today, here today.  
All my friends are here today,  
let’s have a party!*

**10. SNACK** Share a special snack with the children. Ask them to sit next to someone new. When the children go home shake the hand of each child as you say, “Peace be to you, my friend.”

## EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

**11. MAKING A GIFT** Children love making necklaces. Have the children put all their names in a hat and then each draw out a name. Each child will make a necklace of macaroni or cereal loops for that person.

**12. SHARING** Ask half of the class to go find a book or toy to share with someone they haven’t played with. Let them share for about five minutes. Stress how nice it is to play with someone new.

## Teaching Guide

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

## OVERVIEW

**Gospel Theme: God made everything that is alive and cares for all that lives.**

This week *Seeds* builds on the young child's natural sense of wonder and awe. The lesson helps the children explore God's creation of both living and non-living things. They will be encouraged to respond to God's gift of creation by saying thanks to God and by caring for our world.

**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 colored pencils. You will need an exacto knife or other sharp utensil to make the cut in the page 4 activity. You can do this before the lesson.

## SHARING LIFE STORIES

**1. GATHER AND SING** Begin your session by gathering the children in a circle and playing "God Made the Animals" from your *Seeds* music CD. If you meet for a long period of time or more than one day a week, you may wish to take time to teach the children the melody and to lead them in making the animal sounds. This song is recommended to conclude this *Seeds* session, also, so the children will use it twice.

If you do not have the *Seeds* CD, sing the following words to "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Put gestures to the words after the children are familiar with them.

Thank you, God, for all we see,  
all we hear, all we touch.  
Thank you, God, for all we smell.  
Thank you for our world.

**2. OPENING PRAYER** Ask the children to remain standing as you say the following prayer. They answer, "Amen."

*Dear God. We know that you love us very much. You made this beautiful world for us to live in and to enjoy. Help us to take good care of it.*

Help the children learn the *Sign of the Cross*. Stand with them, facing the same way, so they don't get confused about which shoulder to touch first. [WCBT 1, page 4, Sign of the Cross]

**3. STORY A Pet for Carlos and Patty** Stay in the story area and tell the children this story about Patty and Carlos and the lost dog.

*Patty was five years old. Carlos was four. They wanted a dog very, very much. "Please, Mom, when can we have a dog?" Patty asked.*

*"A puppy is lots of fun, Patty, but it is also lots of work. You have to feed a puppy, give it water, exercise it, and play with it."*

*"We will do all of those things, Mom," said Carlos. But still their mother did not get them a dog.*

*Then one Monday when Mom came home from work, she asked Patty and Carlos to come out to the garage. Way in the corner by the sack of grass seed was a little brown and white dog with long floppy ears. "I opened the garage door to drive in," said Mom, "and there was this little dog. I think he is lost. He doesn't have a collar or tags. Do you think you could take care of him until we find his owner?"*

*Patty and Carlos jumped up and down with excitement. "Thank you, Mom, thank you. We will take good care of him." They named the dog Brownie. Patty used some of her birthday money to buy dog food. Carlos put fresh water in one of his cereal bowls. Mom gave them an old hairbrush and tennis ball. Both Patty and Carlos groomed Brownie and played with him.*

*One day Mom came back from grocery shopping and said she saw a sign in the grocery store about a lost puppy. The puppy sounded like Brownie. Mom called the phone number on the sign. That Saturday Patty and Carlos packed up the brush and ball and took Brownie to his owner. The owner was very glad to have his dog back.*

*On their way home, Mom said to Carlos and Patty, "You took such good care of Brownie, that I think you are ready to have a dog. Maybe we can get one after Christmas." Patty and Carlos hugged their mother. They missed Brownie, but they were happy they could have a dog of their own.*

Review the details of the story with the children. Ask what Patty and Carlos will do when it is time to get their own dog?

**Objective: The children will distinguish between living and non-living things.**

**4. IDENTIFYING LIVING AND NON-LIVING THINGS** Ask the children how many of them have a pet. Have children share by telling the kind of pet, the name, what they have to do to take care of it, what it does best. Ask the children if their pet is a "living thing." Ask how they know—it moves, eats, grows, reproduces itself. Explain what a "non-living" thing is and give examples—*pet food, water dish, leash, toys*. Have them look around the classroom or care center and point out living and non-living things. Talk about how much God must love us to make all these wonderful living things for us to enjoy.

Move to the work tables and distribute *Seeds* and crayons or colored pencils. Ask the children to describe the cover

illustration to you. *It is a beautiful park scene.* Have them name all the things they see. Include the sidewalk, bench, trash can, rock. Now ask the children to identify which of the things they find are living things and make a check by them.

**5. STRETCH AND SING** Move to an open area where the children can be more than arm length away from each other. Play a game of “Did You Ever See a Lassie,” The song goes as follows:

Did you ever see a lassie, a lassie, a lassie,  
Did you ever see a lassie go this way and that?  
Go this way and that way, and this way and that way.  
Did you ever see a lassie go this way and that?

Each time you sing a verse, the children mime your actions. Do simple things like swinging your arms vigorously out to the side, hopping in place, or bending to touch your toes. This is a good activity to use whenever the children get restless from too much concentration. Children enjoy being the leaders.

## LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

**Objective:** The children will appreciate God made everything and loves everything.

**6. GOSPEL STORYTELLING:** God made all that is Gather in the area where you have displayed the Gospel book or Bible or this week’s copy of *Seeds*. Tell the children this simple version of Sunday’s Gospel.

*Once Jesus was teaching. Some of the people standing around kept trying to be smarter than Jesus. These people said that God didn’t care about people who were dead. “Once you are dead, God forgets about you,” they said. Jesus told them they were wrong. Jesus said. “God is so great that God cares for everything and everyone.” Some of the people said to Jesus, “Good answer!”*

Ask the children what signs they see that God cares for the whole world. Be specific. Ask: How does God care for your pet? *By making water and food; by giving the pet legs to run and teeth to eat; by giving the pet to you to take care of it.* Continue with the plants in your room, with children and teacher, with family members.

**7. CREATIVE DRAMA** Have the children open *Seeds* to pages 2 and 3. With the help of a puppet have the children identify all the animals on the two pages. Tell the children that all the animals in creation are God’s creatures, like us. The Sunday Gospel tells us that “God is God of all that lives.” God wants us to enjoy the animals and to be good to them. Ask the children what being good to them means. Next ask the children to stand and move into the empty space. Explain that God makes each animal special and that each has its own special way of moving.

Take your time with this activity. The children’s experience of naming creatures and objects in their world and thanking God for them will later grow into understanding of the concepts of praise and prayer.

Have the puppet name each animal on pages 2-3 and ask the children to show how the animal moves. Make three rules

about this activity: spread out and keep in your area; no bumping into each other; no being silly. If space is small, have just two children at a time make the movements of an animal.

**8. GOSPEL PRAYER** After the children have shown you how the animals move, replay. This time make it a prayer. The puppet says the animal: Horse. The children gallop until they hear you say, “God is God of all that lives.” Children stop and repeat this prayer refrain after you. Continue the litany with the rest of the animals. Have children sit. Talk about and try out the sounds each animal makes. Remind the children to be believable. Stand. Repeat the litany but this time as they move, they make the noise. Stress making the noises quietly so that they can hear you say, “God is God of all that lives.” Have them repeat after you as they did the movements. Have fun together praising God with voices and bodies and the names of the animals.

## BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

**Objective:** The children will create a visual reminder of God’s love for them.

**9. GOD LOVES EVERYONE (page 4)** This activity provides the children with a take-home picture of Jesus they can keep in their bedrooms or in a family area. They can appreciate the one truth of our faith we all cling to—God created us out of love and we will continue forever in that love. You will need to make the semicircular cut on the dark heavy line for the children. Follow the illustrations to demonstrate the folds for the children. It is best to have aides who can help the children individually.

**10. PRAYER AND SONG** Gather the children in the prayer circle and sing “God Made the Animals” or some other song that thanks God for the gifts of living things.

**11. SNACK AND CLEAN UP** Have the children help you set up for the snack and clean up the snack area. Talk about whether you should save aluminum cans and recycle paper things. Point out how caring for the things we have shows care for God’s creation.

## EXTENDING ACTIVITY

**12. NATURE WALK** Take the children for a nature walk. Have them watch for animals and birds. Say the names of the animals—crow, sparrow, squirrel, cow. When you return ask the children to remember and name the birds and animals they saw. Conclude: God is God of all that lives—crows, sparrows, squirrels, boys and girls (or name each of the children).

## OVERVIEW

### Gospel Theme: Thank you, God!

On Thursday, November 25, people in the United States celebrate the holiday of Thanksgiving. *Seeds* uses the theme of thanking God for creation, especially the fruits of the earth, rather than the Gospel story about the destruction of the Temple and the persecution of the faithful, which is the lectionary reading. Recognizing God's love for them in the beauty and abundance of creation builds a foundation of trust which will serve the children well in their lifelong faith development.

Children learn to pray by praying, to forgive by forgiving, to respect others by being respected, and to know God by recognizing God's goodness around them. Parents who take time for grace at meals teach children to value thankfulness to God in a way no catechist can. Send a note home reminding the parents of the meal prayer card the children make a few weeks ago. Suggest they make this prayer a part of their family Thanksgiving celebration.

**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:** Pumpkin seeds, glue, scissors, stapler, crayons and colored pencils, popsicle sticks, tongue depressors, or pencils, used large envelopes so the children can take their card activity home.

## SHARING LIFE STORIES

**1. GATHER AND SING** Gather the children in a circle. Review the thank you song they learned when they made their meal prayer cards. Use the *Seeds* music CD to review the music. Or put the words of the prayer to a melody the children know.

Thank you for the world so sweet.  
Thank you for the bread we eat.  
Thank you for the birds that sing.  
Thank you, God, for everything.

**2. PRAYER** Have the children sit down in their circle and become quiet. Pray this prayer. The children will answer, "Amen."

*Jesus, we want to be good listeners and hear your stories. We want to be your friends and learn of your love for us. You are important to us. We love you.*

**3. STORY: Peter's Pumpkin** Tell the children you know a story about a boy who grows pumpkins in his yard.

*The boy's name is Peter. He lives in a house on a corner, where the sun shines bright all day. Peter's dad got tired of mowing the lawn around the house. One day he said, "Let's plant something else besides grass. Let's plant something good to eat." So Peter and his mom and dad looked at all the seed catalogs. Peter's mom picked out tomato plants and pepper plants and carrot and lettuce seed. Peter's dad picked out corn seed, which would grow into tall stalks with golden yellow ears of corn. Peter looked through all the catalogs. He didn't want to plant turnips, or cauliflower, or broccoli. Then he found a page full of pumpkins. There were big fat pumpkins and small round ones. The pumpkin vines twined around the page. "Here is what I want to grow," Peter told his mom and dad. So they sent in the order for all their seeds.*

*While they were waiting for the seeds and plants to come, Peter helped his dad dig up their lawn to make the soil ready. The day the seeds came in the mail, it was raining. As soon as the rain stopped, Peter and his dad and mom planted their seeds and plants in the moist soil. And then they waited.*

*Peter's pumpkin vines grew and grew. Finally he saw the baby pumpkins appear. The sun and the rain helped the pumpkins to grow. Every week they got bigger. Peter was proud of his pumpkins, and his dad was glad he didn't have to mow the lawn anymore.*

**4. PUMPKIN SEED ACTIVITY** Gather the children in the work area and distribute *Seeds*. Ask, or have the puppet ask, what the children see on the cover page. *A child is hoeing a garden with a pumpkin vine, a corn stalk, and a carrot.* Explain that each of the plants they see came from a seed. Go around the room and put a small amount of glue in the oval space under the pumpkin vine on each child's *Seeds*. Then pass out pumpkin seeds and let each child put a pumpkin seed on the glue. Move to the story circle leaving the *Seeds* copies behind so the glue can dry.

## LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

**Objective:** The children will appreciate God's gifts from the earth.

**5. GOSPEL STORYTELLING: God cares for all creation** Ask the children what holiday is coming. Ask what happens on Thanksgiving—*dinner, relatives, prayer services or Mass, stories about Plymouth and how the Native Americans helped the settlers, saying thank you to God for all the good things in our lives.* Remind the children of the cover theme. The early settlers celebrated this feast in the fall to say thank you to God for the crops they harvested. Thanksgiving is a special time to thank God for everything that grows. Mention some things they ate today and where they come from.

Cereal: wheat or oats or rice  
Bread: wheat  
Peanut butter: peanut plant  
Jelly: strawberries or other fruit  
Apples: trees  
Milk: cows

Tell that God made all these growing things so we would be happy looking at them and so they would make us strong when we ate them. All the growing things are a sign of how much God loves us.

**6. STRETCH AND SAY** Lead the children in this stretching activity.

*A seed is very, very small. (Children curl into a ball)*

*A plant grows very, very tall. (Children stretch and stand on their tip toes)*

*Seeds are small, plants grow tall. (Children curl down and stretch up)*

*Plants wave in the wind and storm, then they grow calm. (Children sway and then grow still)*

## BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

**7. HOW TO GET A PUMPKIN PIE** Gather again in the work area. Help children separate pages 3-4 from pages 1-2. Demonstrate how to cut the cards on page 3 on the dark lines. Next, glue or staple each card to a stick or pencil. Direct the children to place their six cards before them on the table. Show the children your first picture card, the seed, and wait until they each find their matching card. Then read the sentence on the back of your card. Hold up your number 2 card and repeat the process. The children will soon catch on that they can finish the sentence with you.

An alternative way to do this activity is to divide the class into six groups and have each group take just one card. They will stand up and show their pictures when you read that card aloud.

The words are printed on the back of each card so the children can repeat this activity at home with their parents.

**Objective: The children will prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving by enumerating things they are thankful for.**

**8. THANK YOU, GOD!** Talk with the children about the picture they see of the pie on the last card. Explain to them that this is one way the seed and plant become our delicious food. Have the children put their cards aside and turn to page 2 of *Seeds*. Help them make the connection between the pie on the dinner table and the pumpkin seed, vine, flower, and fruit on the cards. Make a connection also between the corn and carrot plants on the cover and the corn and carrots on the table. Then have the children identify the other foods pictured and color the ones they like best. Tell them they can draw their own favorite Thanksgiving food, or everyday food, on the empty plate.

**9. CONCLUDING PRAYER** Remind the children that on Thanksgiving all the people in the United States say thank you to God for the growing things that give us food. Conclude by saying or singing the meal prayer from lesson 3. [WCBT, page 33, Grace]



## EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

**10. PLANTING A SEED** It is important for children to have the experience of planting and nurturing seeds and harvesting the fruit. They will learn that the gift of water and sunshine will help a plant to grow. A respect for our land, environment, and resources will develop as children see that plants produce food. Allow each child the experience of growing a seed by planting a bean or carrot seed in a cup. As the child cares for the seed, and it begins to sprout, it can be transplanted into a flower pot.

**11. MAKING A FOOD CHART** Have glossy magazines available for children to cut out pictures of food. Help them sort them into the food groups and make the pyramid of good nutrition.

