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Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Teacher Guide

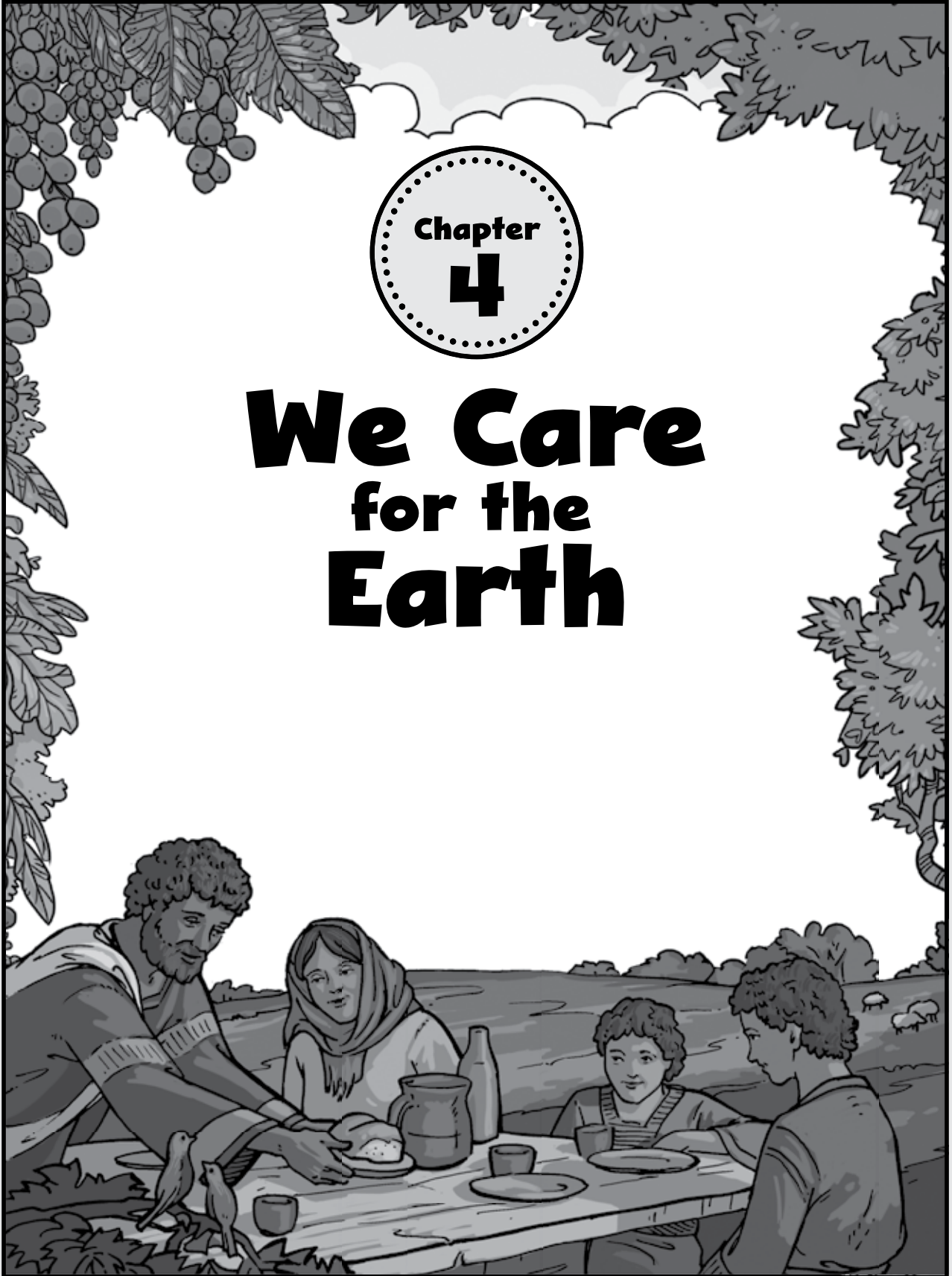
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Chapter

4

We Care for the Earth




 Chapter
4

Chapter at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Psalm 104:5–15

Chapter Goals

- to name the Book of Psalms as a group of songs and poems to God
- to state that some of the Psalms are prayers of praise to God
- to identify that we are entrusted with caring for the world because it was created for us by God

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Care for God's Creation

Catechism References

293–294, 2415–2418, 2585–2589, 2639–2641

Key Words

psalm, praise, entrusted

Music Suggestions

- “Awesome God,” by Catholic Kids Worship (Catapult)
- “Shout to the Lord,” by Shout Praises Kids (Integrity Music)

Background Reflection

The Book of Psalms is an essential part of the prayer of our Church. It includes prayers for all situations in life: prayers of praise, thanksgiving, frustration, and sorrow. We turn to the Psalms at each Mass to respond to and praise God after the first reading and before the Gospel. The Psalms speak of the intimacy of God, but they are also prayers of community. We are praising God and praying to him—not just for ourselves, but for the whole world.

In this chapter, we concentrate on a psalm that praises God for all his creation. Catholic social teaching tells us that as stewards of the gift of creation, we must care for all that God has made. Sometimes we need to step back and look at what sort of footprints we are leaving on this Earth. Before you begin this chapter, think about your own habits and how you care for the gift of God's creation.



Day 1—Get Ready!

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 4 activity booklet
- extra bookmarks for children who need replacements
- a board or poster to write on

Opening

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 4 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.
- Encourage the children to look at the image on the front of the activity booklet. Invite them to share what they see and to predict what the chapter might be about. Read the chapter title, or invite a volunteer to read it.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to brainstorm about all the wonderful things they see in creation and write their responses on the board or in a place the children can see.
- Explain to them that when we appreciate the beauty in the world around us, we are thankful to God. Tell the group that our appreciation honors God, who created all things.

Bible Background

- Tell the children that the Scripture passage for this chapter comes from the Book of Psalms. Invite the children to turn to page 15 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* and find "Psalms" on the bookshelf. Ask them to share whether the book is found in the Old or the New Testament (*Old Testament*). Invite them to note the color of the book and that this book is part of a collection of books called the Wisdom Books. Encourage them to find this color on the bottom pages of the Bible to get a general sense for where these books are found.
- Help the children to use the table of contents to find the first page of Psalms (page 836). If there is time, read, or have a volunteer read, the introduction to the book.
- Encourage the children to find Psalm 104:5–15 (pages 921–922).
- Invite the children to place their bookmarks in these pages, and explain that you will read this Scripture on day 2 to discover what it says.

Closing Prayer

- Close the day by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and a brief, spontaneous prayer or by playing one of the music suggestions for the chapter.



Day 2—Dive In!

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 4 activity booklet
- blank paper, one piece for each child

Opening

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Close with another Sign of the Cross.

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to use their bookmarks to return to Psalm 104:5–15 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 921–922).
- Tell them that a **psalm** is a song or poem written as a prayer to God.
- Explain that this psalm is a prayer of **praise** to God. Praise is when we honor God for all good things and also when we honor and thank God just for being God.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who is this psalm written to? (*God*)
 - What does the psalm say to God? (*The psalm recognizes that God created everything and cares for everything.*)
 - What parts are clues that this is a psalm of praise? (*The psalm's title is "In Praise of the Creator." The psalm admires all the wonderful things God has done in creation.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - To look at something with wonder is to look with awe and respect.
 - The writer of the psalm thought the world God made was wonderful.
 - God gave us the job of taking care of the world he gave us.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the paper, and give everyone a chance to write a poem. Remind them that their poem can, but does not have to, rhyme. Consider whether the group could benefit from learning the format of a haiku as another possibility. (A haiku consists of three lines: the first with five syllables, the second with seven syllables, and the third with five syllables.)

Tell It!

- Invite several volunteers to share the main points of Psalm 104:5–15 in their own words.
- Affirm the points the children remember. Help them identify key points they may have left out.

Closing Prayer

- Close the day by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and an appropriate prayer from pages 1990–1995 of *The Catholic Children’s Bible*.

**Day 3–Discover!****Materials Needed**

- the chapter 4 activity booklet
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose
- pennies and dice
- index cards

Opening

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Close with another Sign of the Cross.

Core Learning Activity**What Am I?**

- Prepare index cards in advance, each with a word or phrase on one side related to caring for (or not caring for) creation: for example, “sun,” “trees,” “recycling plastics,” “throwing trash on the ground,” “running water while brushing teeth.” Create enough index cards for at least half the number of children in the group to use one.
- Invite the children to stand in a circle, and tell them that you are going to play a guessing game using a stack of cards with words related to creation and the care of it.

- Explain that you will ask for a volunteer who will pick a card from the stack without looking and hold it facing out on his or her forehead so the other children can see the writing on the card.
- Tell the children that they will then shout clues for the word or phrase on the card. Explain they may not use the actual word or phrase.
- Encourage the child holding the card to guess what the card says based on the clues offered by the group. Once he or she guesses the word or phrase, invite another child to select a card. Continue the activity for 5 to 10 minutes.

Process the Activity

- Use the ideas on the cards to discuss the different ways we care for creation, as well as ways that we might fail to care for creation.
- Explain that God created the world for our use, but he also made us responsible for caring for all creation.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 91 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain that the Psalms were written as songs and prayers to God. Make the following points:
 - The Book of Psalms in the Bible contains 150 Psalms written for many different situations.
 - In this chapter, we read part of Psalm 104, which is a prayer of praise.
 - When we praise God, we honor him above all else, just for being God.
- Remind the children that when God made all of creation, he said it was good, and he cares for all of creation.
- Explain that when we praise God for creation, we are keeping wonder and awe in our minds and hearts.
- Help the children understand that it is our responsibility to take care of creation, using the following points:
 - When we litter, throw away food, mistreat our clothes, or waste other resources, we are *not* caring for God's creation. We are being irresponsible.
 - God **entrusted** us with the care for his creation. He created it for us. He gave us the responsibility to care for it, and he believes in our ability to use our resources wisely.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How we can keep the wonder and awe of God's creation in our minds and hearts? (*We can offer prayers of praise to God.*)
 - What are we doing when we praise God? (*We are honoring God just for being God.*)

- Whose responsibility is it to care for God's creation? (*It is our responsibility.*)
- How does God want us to care for creation? (*God wants us to be responsible and use our resources wisely, not to waste or mistreat his creation.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet. Ask them to form pairs. Hand out a penny to each child, and give a die to each pair. Invite the children to play the game on page 3 with their partners.

Closing Prayer

- Close the day by reading aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.



Day 4—Go!

Materials Needed

- the chapter 4 activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- copies of the handout "Chapter 4 Review," one for each child
- copies of the handout "Praising God for Creation," one for each child
- the *Discover!* folder

Chapter 4

Note: The handout "Chapter 4 Review" can be found at the end of this chapter or accessed online at www.smp.org/discover_grade3_school.

Opening

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Close with another Sign of the Cross.

Review

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this chapter, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The Book of Psalms is a group of songs and poems to God.
 - Some of the Psalms are prayers of praise to God.
 - We are entrusted with caring for the world because it was created for us by God.
- Give each child a copy of the handout "Chapter 4 Review" if you would like to incorporate an assessment on day 4. After allowing time for completion, correct the handout together, going over any answers that need reinforcement. Invite the children to correct any items they may have answered incorrectly. *Answers: 1. psalm, 2. responsibility, 3. Creation, 4. entrusted, 5. Praise, 6. True, 7. True, 8. False, 9. True, 10. False*

Chapter 4 Review

Choose the word that best completes each sentence and write ? on the line.

entrusted psalm praise Creation responsibility

1. A _____ is a song and prayer to God.
2. Caring for the Earth is a great _____.
3. _____ is everything that God made for us.
4. God _____ us with the care of all that he has made.
5. When we _____ God, we honor him above all else, just for being God.

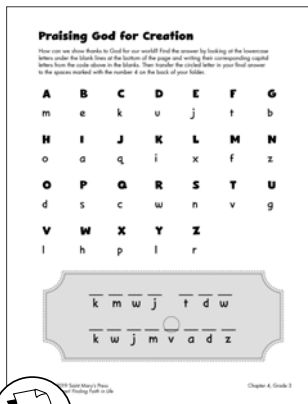
Read the following statements. If the statement is true, write True on the line. If the statement is false, write False on the line.

6. The Book of Psalms is a group of songs and prayers to God. _____
7. Some of the Psalms are prayers of praise to God. _____
8. Caring for the Earth means throwing our trash on the ground. _____
9. The world was created for us by God. _____
10. We are free to do whatever we want with creation because God created it for us. _____

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Finding Faith is Life
Chapter 4, Grade 3



Note: The handout “Praising God for Creation” can be found at the end of this chapter or accessed online at www.smp.org/discover_grade3_school.



Chapter Wrap-Up

- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read the “People of Faith” section aloud. Add any other information you know about Saint Francis of Assisi, and lead the children in saying, “Saint Francis, pray for us.” Assure them that they can ask for Saint Francis’s help at any time.
- Encourage the children to remind their parents to read through the family page on the back of the activity booklet.
- Distribute the handout “Praising God for Creation.” Invite the children to complete the puzzle right away or have them complete it at home, depending on time availability. *Answer: Care for Creation*
- Remind the children to transfer the circled letter in their final answer (T) to the correct locations on their folder.

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in the following prayer:
 - God of all creation, we praise you with wonder and awe because of your beautiful world. We ask you to help us be good caretakers of all creation. Help us to always be aware of ways we can take care of the world.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and close with a final Sign of the Cross.



Day 5—Discover More!

The following suggestions can be used alone or in some combination to create an additional lesson for day 5. Choose the suggestions that best fit in with your particular schedule or any specific objectives you might have.

Journal or Artistic Reflection

Invite the children to use a journal to write about the key learnings from the chapter. Encourage them to recall the things they found most interesting or helpful and what they might do differently because of what they learned. Alternatively, you might encourage the children to share their significant learnings through art, skits, or other forms of creative expression.

Chapter 4

Discover! Finding Faith in Life

We Care for the Earth

Psalm 104:5-15

Understand It!

A famous song says, "I think to myself, what a wonderful world." To *wonder* means to look on something with awe and respect. We look at something beautiful and say, "Wow! Isn't that something!" When the writer of Psalm 104 looked at the ocean, the mountains, the rivers, the trees, the sky, and the animals, he just had to write a song praising God for his wonderful world!

But to look at the world with wonder is not enough. God gave us the job of taking care of the wonderful world he gave us. If you love something, you will take care of it. Look again at the world around you. Think, "What a wonderful world." Then think about ways you can take care of the world God gave us.

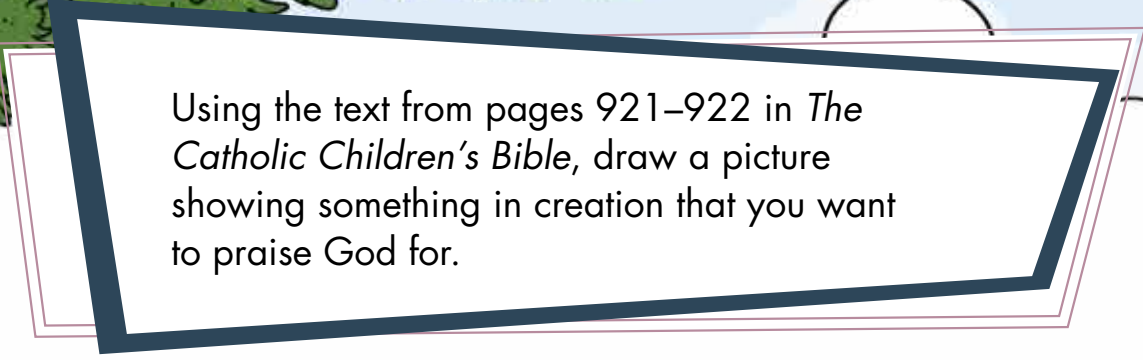
Live It!

Write a poem or song about God's wonderful world. Take your work home and post the words where they can be seen by everyone in your family. You might even want to send your poem or song to your relatives and friends. Let everyone know that you love and care for the world God gave us!

Prayer

"Praise the LORD, my soul!
O LORD, my God, how great you are!"
(Psalm 104:1)

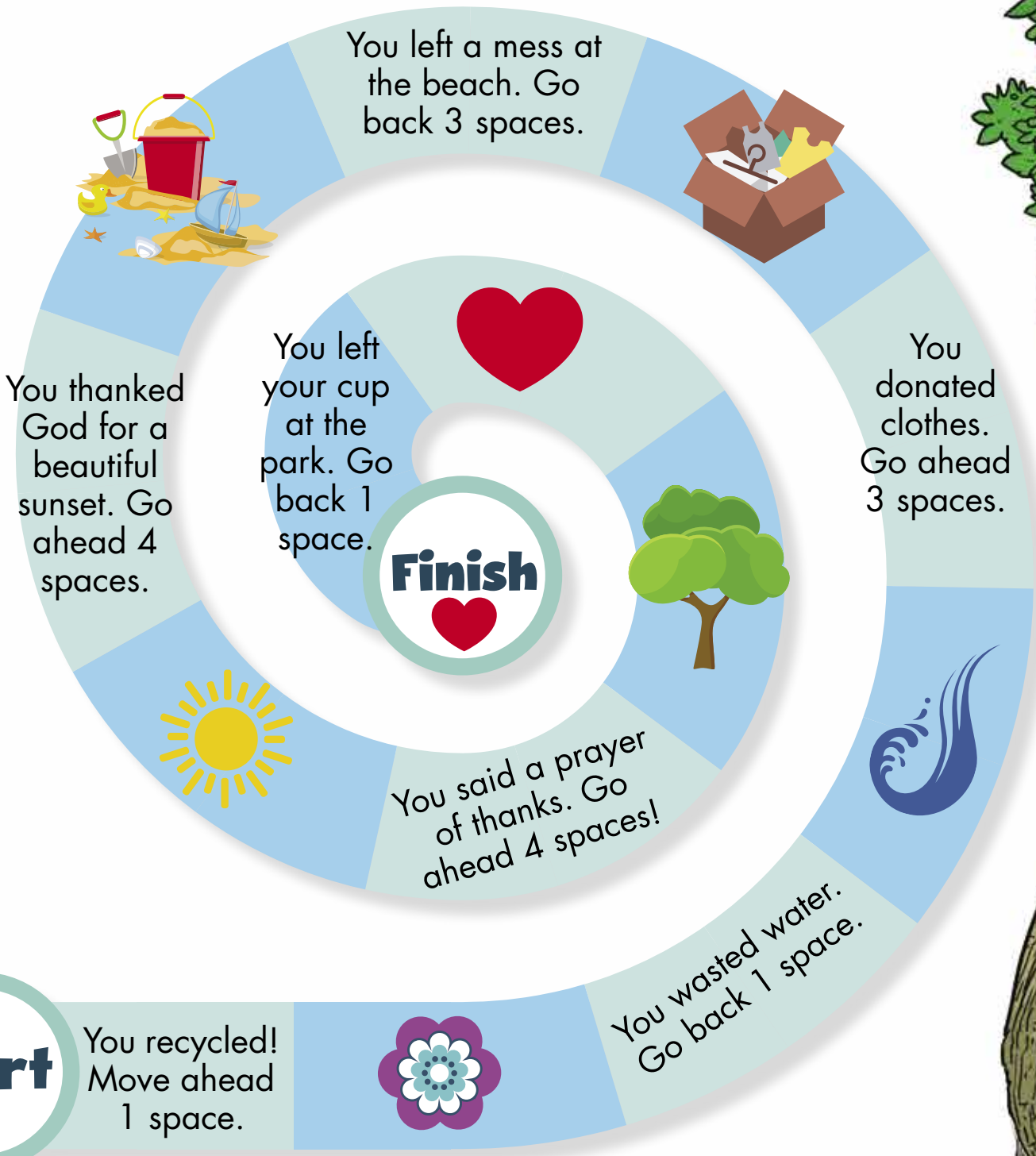




Using the text from pages 921–922 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*, draw a picture showing something in creation that you want to praise God for.



Use pennies as markers. Take turns with your partner to roll the dice to move your markers. See how well each of you has taken care of God's creation by the time you get to the finish line!



Family Page

Background Reflection

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In this chapter, we concentrate on a psalm that praises God for all his creation. Catholic social teaching tells us that as stewards of the gift of creation, we must care for all that God has made. Sometimes we need to step back and look at what sort of footprints we are leaving on this Earth. Before you begin these activities, think about your own habits and how you and your family care for the gift of God's creation.

Family Activities

- Find out about your community's recycling programs. Discuss how your family could throw away less trash by reusing, donating, and recycling.
- Read together Psalm 104:5–15 from this lesson. Invite your child to reflect on the fact that this psalm praises God's creation of the world for us to use and care for. Make a plan to explore God's creation together, whether that be a nearby park, a nature trail, or a state or national park.
- Watch the video "What a Wonderful World | Playing for Change | Song Around the World" (YouTube, 3:41) together. Discuss how your child sees and cares for the world. What is the most wonderful part of creation for your child? How does your child praise God for his creation?

People of Faith

Saint Francis of Assisi (c. 1181–1226)

Saint Francis praised God in his preaching and writing. He respected God's creation and treated animals with kindness. Francis lived simply and is known for his love for those who are poor and in need. The Church celebrates his feast on October 4.

Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, all of your creation is beautiful. We praise your wonderful world. Help us be good caretakers of your creation. Amen.

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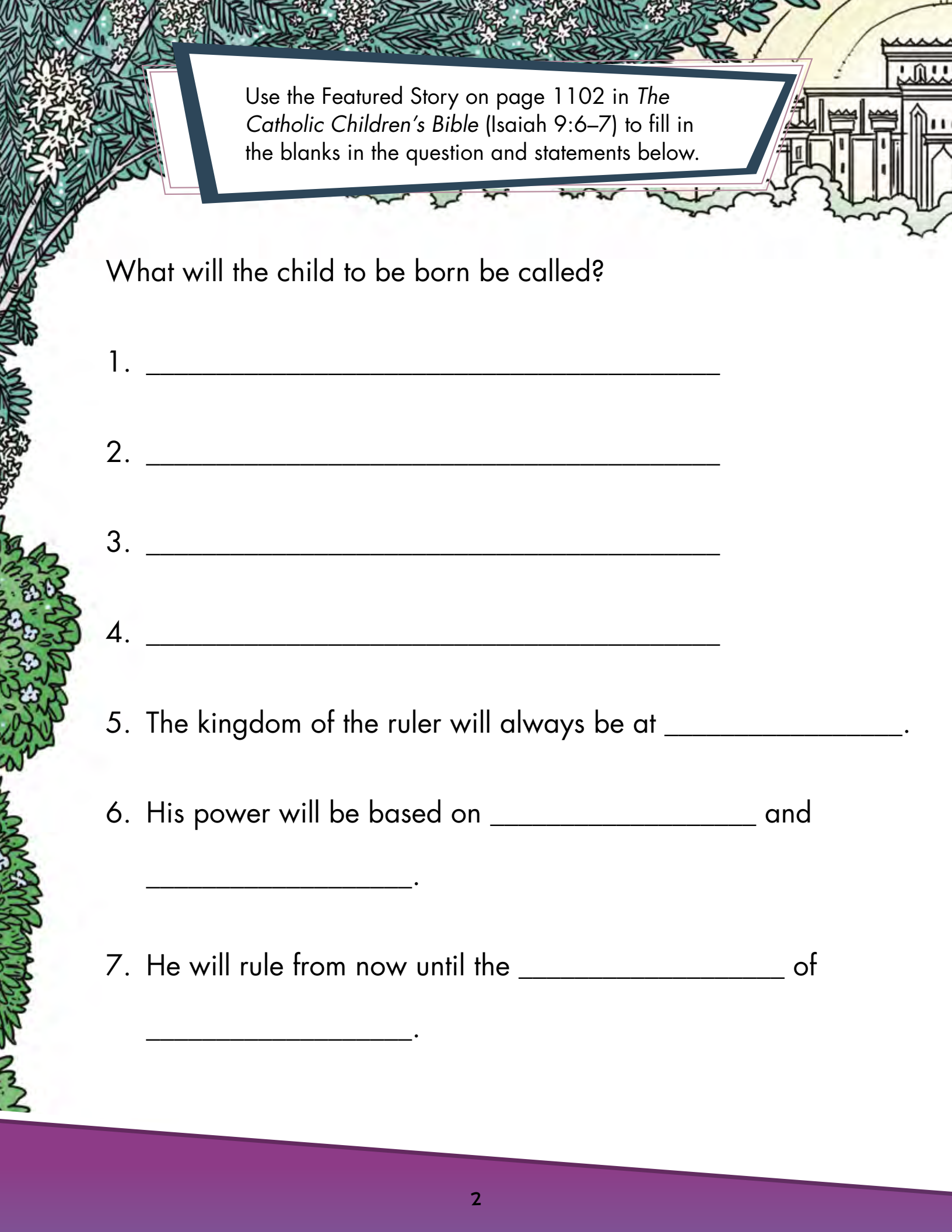
The King Is Coming

Isaiah 9:6-7

Prayer

O God, bless our homes, our families, and our friends as we prepare for Christmas. Teach us to wait in joyful hope and to be kind to one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.





Use the Featured Story on page 1102 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Isaiah 9:6-7) to fill in the blanks in the question and statements below.

What will the child to be born be called?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. The kingdom of the ruler will always be at _____.

6. His power will be based on _____ and
_____.

7. He will rule from now until the _____ of
_____.



Come, Lord Jesus!

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. . . . Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

Leader: Let us sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

**All: O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Leader: Dear God, we are getting ready to celebrate the birthday of your Son, Jesus. We ask your help to prepare our hearts for his coming. Fill us with joy. Come, Lord Jesus!

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come soon!

Leader: Bless us with patience to wait as the people of Israel waited for their promised king. Come, Lord Jesus!

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come soon!

Leader: Bless our Advent wreaths and help us to reach out to those who need our help. Come, Lord Jesus!

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come soon!

Leader: Help us to make this world a better place by the light we bring into it. Come, Lord Jesus!

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come soon!

Family Page

Background Reflection

In the midst of busy Christmas preparations, the season of Advent calls us to a different preparation—one of reflection, excitement, and growing joy! Waiting for Christmas can be difficult for the best of us, and it can be even harder for children. The first Advent wreaths and calendars were an attempt to help children to count the passing days, to focus their impatience, and to build anticipation and joy. These traditional practices also help adults to focus our longing and place our hope on the coming of the Messiah, in Bethlehem, in our lives now, and at the end of time.

The people of Israel were also impatient, enduring years of hardship and exile. The prophet Isaiah promised a great king and named him Prince of Peace, Eternal Father, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God. What do we name that king? We name him Jesus! The birth of a king in an obscure, small, and humble place was not at all expected. So we are reminded that greatness often hides in the ordinary fabric of our lives and in the hidden corners of our world. The King of Kings is Emmanuel: God with us.

Family Activities

- Start making a paper chain with red and green construction paper strips to decorate your tree or a doorway. Cut out twenty-four strips of paper, about 6 inches long, for December 1–24. Each day, connect a new strip of paper to the chain. Use this time to talk about how you can make Advent a special time of preparation for Christmas.
- Decorate a can or jar. Write “Advent Pennies” on a label and attach it to the can or jar. Collect pennies and loose change to donate to a charity.
- View the video “Advent in 2 Minutes (NEW!)” (YouTube, 2:09) together. Discuss what your child saw in the video and any points that were new for her or him. Make a commitment to celebrate Advent in a new way this year.

People of Faith

Saint Lucy (c. 283-304)

Saint Lucy was a young woman who chose to die rather than give up her faith. Her life was a witness to the light of Christ and his love. Lucy means “light”. Saint Lucy’s feast day is December 13, and is often celebrated by lighting candles and sharing a sweet Saint Lucy bread.

Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Loving God, in this season of Advent, help us grow in love and fill our hearts with peace. As we prepare to celebrate your coming into the world, let us be grateful for all our gifts and especially for the gift of Jesus. Amen.

