

FAMILY GROUPS WEEK FIVE CYCLE B

Opening Prayer: Loving God, thank you for creating the whole world and each of us. May we always listen to you and do what you ask of us. Amen.

Theme: *God wants us to love others.*

Gospel: John 12:20-33 One family member reads the Gospel aloud.

Making Connections:

God created us and everything in this beautiful world. He even created the grain of wheat in such a way that it has to go into the ground to grow into a wheat stalk, which will then be used to make bread. Like grains of wheat, we need to be planted in God's love so that we can grow. When we experience God's love, we can share this love and learn how to make good choices.

God sent Jesus to teach us to be his disciples, to listen to him, to be generous with what we have, to follow his ways, and to pray. When we do these things, we will bring joy and peace to others and ourselves.

FAMILY SHARING TIME

Use the questions below to guide your family discussion.

Preschool children: God made us and everything in the world because of his great love. Can you name some things God made? What are some of your favorite things that God made? Why? How can you thank God for all he has created?

Primary-grade children: Sometimes we might want to do our own thing and not share or care about anyone else. When you are not kind to others or refuse to share with them, how does that make you feel? Why is it difficult to share with others and to be kind? Discuss. When you are kind to others, how do you feel? Share. What kind act have you done recently? Let's talk about this.

Preteens: Our culture tells us that we need to have many things in order to be happy. Jesus tells us to think of others, rather than ourselves. What makes you happy? Why? Often it is easy to follow the crowd and buy things we really don't need. Is that true for you? Why or why not? What is Jesus' message about how we can be truly happy? Discuss.

ACTIVITY

Materials Needed: paper, pens, pencils, markers

Check on the cups with the seeds that were planted last week. Remember that your seed had to give up something and change to become something more beautiful. Think of a selfish behavior or something you can give up for God that will make you a happier and

better person. Express this through a poem, a prayer, or a drawing. Just as a seed grows into a plant, may you continue to grow closer to God.

Optional: For preschool and primary children, learn and act out the following poem and song.

1. Little Flowers

The sun comes out and shines so bright.
Then we have a shower.
The little bud pushes with all its might,
And soon we have a flower.

2. Sing to the tune of *Pop! Goes the Weasel*

Everything that grows begins (*Crouch down as small as possible.*)
From something very small –
A tree, a flower, a pumpkin, too ---
God planned it all. (*Jump up quickly.*)

Suggestion of the Week: Each family member will find something special that belongs to him/her (toys, clothes etc.) and give it away to someone who needs it and will enjoy it.

PRAYING TOGETHER

Gather around a prayer table, with a Bible, crucifix, and lit candle.

Leader: Dear God, thank you for creating such a beautiful world. We love you and want to listen to you. Like seeds, help us to grow and become more kind and loving like your Son Jesus. Amen. *Share a sign of peace with one another.*