

My Family Cares for Me

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 12, ages 4-5

Lesson 12 Goal

- Your child will reflect on and talk about your family, and will learn about Jesus' family, the Holy Family.

Key Points

- God gives us a family to love and take care of us.
- Jesus had a family, too: Mary, his mother, and Joseph, his foster father.



Parent Reflection

The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls the home “the first school of Christian life” (CCC, 1657), meaning that by God’s design, families are the first and primary place children learn about God. In families, this learning usually takes place not through structured lessons but through the events of everyday life. As children watch their parents living out the Christian life, they grow in the faith.

Today, the definition of family is itself under scrutiny. The example of the Holy Family can help us to understand the nature and purpose of the family in God’s plan. While there are some ways in which our families are different from that of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, one important way in which we can follow their example is in trying to be as open as possible to God’s will. When families can see simple everyday tasks such as cleaning, preparing food, and helping one another as acts of love to which they are called by God, and when they can accept whatever comes their way, even that which is unexpected, as part of God’s larger plan for their lives, they are celebrating the sacrament of the present moment. It is in these simple, everyday happenings that God reveals himself.

Reflection Question

How is God currently revealing himself in the everyday life of my family?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- safety scissors
- a family photo
- a Bible with Old Testament stories bookmarked (possible stories include the Creation Story, Noah and the Ark, or Jonah and the Whale)
- large blanket
- serving tray, cups, plates
- foods from Old Testament times to share, such as grape juice, flat bread, cheese, olives
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: *“Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”*

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, *“Today, we will pray for our family. Families are a gift from God. All of us who take care of you and love you are your family. And, everybody is also in God’s family! Together, let’s name the people in our family. After each of us speaks, we will say a prayer together.”*

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Take turns naming people in your family. After each person speaks, say together: *“Dear God, please take care of our family.”*

In closing, pray: *“Thank you, God our Fa-*

ther, for loving us so much that you gave us our family. Please be with us always. Amen.”

Discovering

Caring for Baby Jesus. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Joseph and the angel.

Ask your child, “How do you think Joseph felt when the angel appeared?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. The Holy Family, My Family. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Holy Family Story Time. Sit together on a blanket and share Old Testament stories while

sampling the same foods that the Holy Family may have eaten. Explain to your child that Mary and Joseph shared the very same stories with Jesus. Close story time with a prayer to thank God for your family.

3. The Communion of Saints: The Virgin Mary. Show your child the picture of Mary on the Family Activity page and read about her. Then read more about Mary to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ God sent the Angel Gabriel to ask Mary to be Jesus' mother. Why did Mary say yes to what God asked, even though she knew it would be hard? (*She trusted God.*)

▶ What did Gabriel say about Jesus? (*He is the Savior.*)

Have your child write and draw about the Virgin Mary using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child:

"Dear Jesus, we thank and praise you for our wonderful family. You will be our Father and we will be your sons and daughters. Bless every one of us and keep us safe. Amen."

The Virgin Mary

The Mother of Jesus

Long ago, in a little village there lived a young woman named Mary. She would soon marry Joseph. One day, perhaps when she was baking bread or sewing, an archangel named Gabriel appeared to her. "Hail, Mary, the Lord is with you!" Gabriel said.

Mary felt afraid. She did not understand what was happening.

"Don't be afraid," Gabriel said. "God loves you. He has chosen you for a very special responsibility. God wants you to be the mother of his Son, Jesus, the Savior."

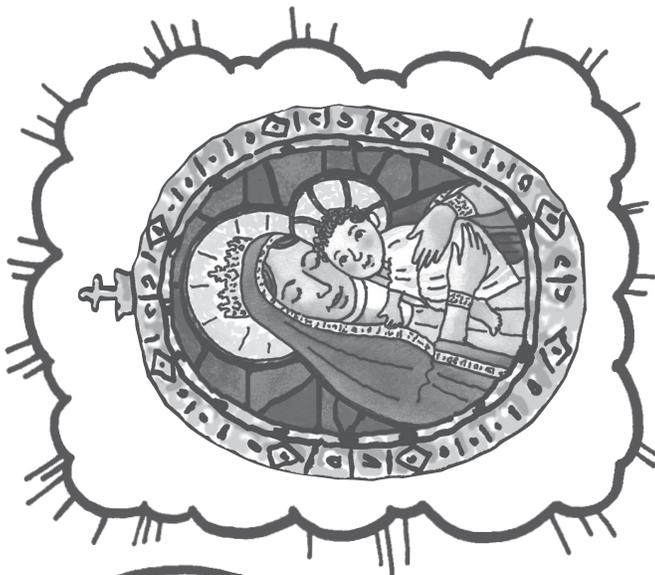
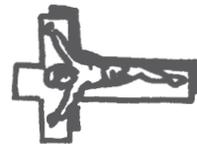
Mary still was not sure what all this meant. She knew this special job would be hard sometimes, but she trusted that God knew what was

best. She said to Gabriel, "Yes. I will do what God asks."

Mary did what God asked of her always. She became the mother of Jesus and watched over him and cared for him always. She cared for Jesus when he was a baby. With Joseph she traveled to Egypt to keep him safe. She watched over him when he was a child. She was devoted to him when he taught people about God. She was by his side when he died.

Just like Mary cared for Jesus, she cares for us all. Because of her love and care for us we call her our Mother. She wants us to be good followers of Jesus and always helps us.

DRAW



**Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
pray for us!**