



Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd. He tells his friends that he knows and cares for them just as a shepherd cares for his sheep. Jesus says he will even lay down his life for his sheep, whom he knows by name. Jesus cares for all of his followers. Most parishes have a pastor, who leads and cares for the people of his parish, much like a shepherd cares for his sheep. Since Earth Day is April 22, *Good News* connects a shepherd's care for his sheep to our responsibility to care for God's Creation. This week, as you play the "We Care for Creation" game with your child, let it inspire you to make a family commitment to one new way of caring for God's Creation.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** Take turns sharing the names of people you wish to pray for. You may want to write down the names. Then pray: "Jesus, you are our Good Shepherd. You love us and watch over us. Thank you for your care. Please take care of these people we are concerned about. We trust that you will take care of us all. Amen."
- Activity • Sheep and Shepherds (page 4)** Begin the lesson by talking about sheep and shepherds. **Ask:** What do you know about sheep and the job of a shepherd? Relate this to what your child may know from taking care of pets or other animals. Then turn to page 4 and invite your child to color the picture of the shepherd and his sheep. While your child is coloring, **ask:** What do you think a shepherd does when the sheep run out of good grass to eat? When the sheep are thirsty? When a wolf comes near? When someone tries to steal a sheep? When a sheep gets lost? Emphasize that the shepherd does all he can to take care of and protect his sheep.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is Our Good Shepherd (page 1)** **Ask:** Have you ever heard of anyone calling Jesus the Good Shepherd? Proclaim the Gospel by sharing the reading parts between you and your child.
- Discuss the *Know* questions related to the Gospel.** *1. Review the answers you discussed as your child colored the picture on page 4. You can also talk about what the shepherd might be doing in this picture—watching for possible dangers, counting his sheep, checking weather, etc. 2. Jesus always has us in his heart and care, gives us other people to help us, gives us the ability to love and care for others so we can be good shepherds too. Jesus feeds us with his Body and Blood at Communion, welcomes us into his family at Baptism, answers our prayers, helps us learn how to be like him through his actions and teachings in the Gospels.*
- Activity • Wolves in Hiding (page 1)** Invite your child to find and circle the eight wolves hidden in the cover picture. *An answer key can be found at gospelweeklies.com/lesson-updates.*
- Connecting Gospel and Doctrine (page 4)** Read "Jesus Leads Us" with your child. **Ask:** What is the name of the pastor of our parish? If there are other priests and deacons who serve, ask about their names also. **Ask:** Who is the pastor of the whole Catholic Church? *The Pope.* **Ask:** What is his name? *Pope Francis.*
- Catholic Faith Words • parish, pastor (page 4)** Read aloud these definitions and ask: What are some ways the pastor of our parish acts as our shepherd?



□ **Open** the What the Church Believes and Teaches handbook to pages 51-54. Read through the definitions of some of the shepherds of the Catholic Church on these pages: bishop, deacon, priest, and Pope. Then read the following answers and have your child guess the question in a “Jeopardy!” style quiz.

- He is a shepherd and teacher, leader of a diocese or archdiocese, and can celebrate all the sacraments. *Who is a bishop?*
- He helps the bishop and priests, he distributes Holy Communion, assists at and blesses marriages, proclaims the Gospel, preaches Homilies. *Who is a deacon?*
- He leads the whole Catholic Church in the world. He is the bishop of Rome, Italy. *Who is the Pope?*
- He helps the bishop; he often leads the people of a parish as pastor; he celebrates the Sacraments of Baptism, Penance and Reconciliation, Eucharist, Matrimony, Anointing of the Sick. He may celebrate Confirmation if the bishop gives him special permission. *Who is a priest?*

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Good News, page 2.

Live the Gospel

- **Activity • We Care for Creation (pages 2-3)** (Note: you will need game dice for the game.) Read aloud the first paragraph on page 2. Explain that God needs us to take care of his Creation. We are like shepherds of our world. The word we use for that instead of *shepherd* is *steward*. Read aloud the game directions. You can play the game with your child either by making an extra copy of the happy earth symbols to cut out, or by simply dividing the eight symbols between you. Players can move forward or backward on their turns.
- **Closing Prayer** Together, read aloud the prayer next to the shepherd picture on page 4. It is a prayer to Jesus, our Good Shepherd.



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture