

We Must Care for People in Need

Featured story from the *Catholic Children's Bible*; *Matthew 25:34, 37-40*

Parent Activity Guide for use with children in grades 1-5 and their families – November home lesson

Gather

Gather your family members around a central table or activity space. Make sure everyone can see *The Catholic Children's Bible* or another Bible of your choosing.

Quiet yourselves and take a moment to enter into God's presence. Choose someone to lead the opening prayer.

Begin with the sign of the cross and then the reader should pray aloud the following:

Heavenly Father, you sent your Son, Jesus, to live among us and form a community of believers. Let your Holy Spirit open our hearts to hear what You want to say to us through the Bible passage today. Give us a mind like Jesus to understand your message to each of us. Amen.

Share in God's Word

Ask your child to read aloud the feature story from the children's Bible, **Matthew 25: 34, 37-40** (found on page 1510 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* revised edition, copyright 2017). Provide support as needed.

The leader should explain that the word 'righteous' from the passage means 'good.'

Check to see if your child has any other questions about the passage and address them as needed.

Understand it

Leader: Let's review the main ideas of this passage. This story emphasizes that we must care for those in need.

Refer to your *Catholic Children's Bible* "Understand it!" section or read aloud the following:

In this Bible story, Jesus tells us something amazing. When we are kind to people in need, it is like being kind to Jesus. Jesus has special love for people who are poor. So should we. We can show our love by sharing what we have with those in need.

Poor people are not the only ones in need. Some older people are lonely because no one visits them. Some children have a hard time learning in school. Some people look or act different from the group and are bullied. And some people can't see, hear, or walk well.

When we reach out to these people with a kind and generous heart, we reach out to Jesus.

Live it *

Leader: What can you do to show you care for your family members, friends, neighbors, and people in need?

Think of some kind acts you can do as a family. Talk as a family about which of these you will commit to doing together this month.

Tell it

Using the pictures in the “Tell it!” section of the featured story spread, check your child(ren)’s comprehension by asking him/her to retell the story in their own words.

* Adaptation: If you do not have *The Catholic Children’s Bible*, ask your child to create a comic strip with four pictures to depict four main ideas from the passage and explain them to you.

Closing Prayer

Leader: We quiet ourselves now and ask God who or what we should pray for today. After hearing this Bible passage, who is God calling each of us to pray for?

[Give everyone time to list anyone in need of prayers.]

Leader invites everyone to join in the Sign of the Cross, and then prays aloud the following prayer or adapts it to fit your family’s needs:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of our lives and the chance to share this prayer time together. We offer all of the names spoken here into your care, trusting in Your great love for us and that You will take care of everything. We especially ask you to care for those who are homeless, those who do not have clean clothes or toys to play with, those who are sick, those who are afraid or overwhelmed, and those who are in prison. We know that you care for all of us, and we give all of these prayer intentions to you. Amen.

* See optional additional activities on the next page.

Additional Activities (Optional)

These interactive family activities could be used as an extra activity in the above family lesson or used at another time in the month to reinforce the main theme of social justice for November.

These activities and more can be found on <https://d6family.com/splink/>.

Lean On Me

Ask each family member to find a partner and sit on the floor with his/her back to one another. (Partners with similar height work best.) Instruct each pair to link arms and stand up without unlinking arms. (Partners will have to lean on one another in order to do this.)

Talk about it:

How did you help each other so you could both stand up? (We had to lean against one another; we had to push against the other; etc.)

How can we support one another? (Help each other, be a friend, listen, pray for, say kind words, etc.)

We can support each other with love and treat each other in a kind way just like we want to be treated!

A Special Gift

Items Needed: Gift card to an ice cream shop

Wrap the gift card and give it to one family member. After he/she has opened it, ask, "What would like to do with your gift?" (Hopefully, he/she will say, "Use it!")

Are you willing to share your gift with the rest of our family?* [if your child says no, see starred alternate response below]

If he/she says yes, load up the family and head out to use the gift card. As you are enjoying the treat, talk about the gift of helping others.

How did you feel when _ shared the gift with us?

Did you know that helping others is a gift?

The ability to help others is a special gift from God.

All of us are capable of helping others, and this is a great way to serve God.

When _____ shared his/her gift with us, we all enjoyed a treat. Sharing with others and being kind are a couple great things to do as we try to help others.

* **If your child says no:** talk about that. Explain how his/her decision makes everyone feel. Explain that God calls us to a higher way, a better way. While it might seem nice in the short

term to keep the gift card all to oneself, it is when we share with others that we are truly happy. Share a story of a time when you shared something you had to make someone else happy, and what resulted from that. God calls us to be generous and to share from what we have with those in need. *[If your child does decide to have a change of heart and share the gift card, praise your child for his/her good choice.]*

Kindness Box

Items Needed: Small box, crayons, markers, stickers, etc.

Give your child a box and provide him/her with supplies to decorate the box. Encourage your child to write kind words on the box as well. (Help with this if necessary.) Explain to your child how compliments and kind words make people feel loved. Write each family member's name on a small piece of paper. Pass the papers around having everyone write something nice on each paper. (If your child is too young to write, allow him/her to dictate to you.) Place the papers into the kindness box. Pull them out one at a time and read them aloud.

God wants us to show kindness to each other and to help one another as well. After reading the kind words from the box, discuss ways you can help each other throughout the week.

Proud as a Peacock

Have you ever heard the phrase "proud as a peacock"?

Why do you think a peacock would be proud?

Here are some interesting facts about peacocks:

A peacock (male-peacock, females-peahens, and young-peachicks) is known for its beautiful, bright blue and green, iridescent tail.

An adult peacock's train of feathers can be sixty inches long with a wingspan of up to six feet.

Peacocks have a crest or crown on the top of their heads that gives them a royal appearance.

Some think the peacock fans out his feathers and dances to get the peahens to notice him.

Sometimes a good way to understand something is to look at its opposite. Being prideful is the opposite of being humble. Pride is thinking about myself all the time—my way, my rights, my needs, my, my, my! Humility is putting others first and treating them as we want to be treated.

What does pride look like in people? (Wanting to be first; wanting to be noticed; wanting your way; thinking you are better than others; etc.)

What does humility look like in people? (Working together; caring about others; serving others; thinking about others more than about yourself, etc.)

God's Word tells us to love others as we love ourselves (Matthew 22:39). Loving others well means we treat them like we want to be treated. We must be humble, put away our pride, and focus on others more than our way, our rights, and our needs.