

# Contents

## The I Am Special 4-Year-Old Program

• Overview	7
• Teacher Guide	7
• Activity Book	7
• Flannel-Board Stories	7
• Music	8
• Approach	8
• Role of Teacher/Catechist	9
• Parent Involvement	10
• Organization of Weekly Programs: (Use Core Lesson Outline)	10
• Organization of Daily Programs: (Use Sessions One, Two, and Three)	11
• Using Music in Early Childhood Religious Education	12
• Administrative Forms	14
• Parent-Orientation Letters	17

## Unit One: God Made Me

1. My Name Is Special	19
2. My Smile Is Special	30
3. My Hands Are Special	38
4. My Voice Is Special	46
5. God Made Me	55

## Unit Two: I Can Discover

6. I Can See	65
7. I Can Touch	74
8. I Can Hear	82
9. I Can Smell	92
10. I Can Taste	100

## Unit Three: I Discover God's Gifts

11. God Gave Us Animals	109
12. God Gave Us Birds	119
13. God Gave Us Fish	128
14. God Gave Us Flowers	137
15. God Gave Us Trees	146
16. God Gave Us Water	154
17. God Gave Us Light	163
18. God Gave Us Air	172
19. God Gave Us Families	180
20. God Gave Us Friends	188

## Unit Four: I Can Love

21. I Can Help	197
22. I Can Share	205
23. I Can Wait	214
24. I Can Listen	223
25. I Can Pray	233

## Unit Five: I Can Celebrate

26. Thanksgiving	243
27. Advent	253
28. Christmas	263
29. St. Valentine's Day	272
30. Easter	282
31. Mother's Day/Father's Day	291

## Concluding Lesson

32. I Am Growing	301
------------------	-----

## Appendix

End-of-the-Year Family Celebration	311
------------------------------------	-----

## Stories, Poems, and Flannel-Board Figures

• Index to Stories and Flannel Board Figure Numbers (or Story Location)	313
• Flannel-Board Figure Summary	314

## Finger Plays and Other Action Games

Apple Tree	317
Circle Activity	316
Duck, Duck, Goose	316
Farmer in the Dell	316
Good Morning	316
Hands on Shoulders	317
Johnny Works With One Hammer	317
Little Bird	316
My Garden	317
My Head Is Still	316
My Turtle	317
Name Game	316
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear	317
This Is the Circle That Is My Head	316
Two Little Blackbirds	317
Two Little Feet	316
Who Is the Leader?	316

## Music Resource Information

Music Resource Information	320
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## Songs and Music

\* Songs included on the *Songs for 4-Year-Olds* music cassette tape and CD prepared for the Fifth Edition by Jack Mifflon

Song Title	Page	Tape/CD Sequence No.
* A Happy Heart	M-2	1
A Helper Kind and Good	M-1	—
Away in a Manger	M-1	—
* The Counting Prayer	M-3	2
* Dear Jesus, Bless My Hands	M-4	3
* Drip Drop	M-5	4
* Friends Are Special Blessings	M-6	5
* Friendship Cake	M-7	6
* God Made My Hands and Feet	M-8	7
* Handy Hands	M-9	8
* He's Got the Whole World	M-10	9
If You're Happy and You Know It	M-1	—
* I Am a Lamb	M-12	10
* I Am Special	M-13	11
* I Can Be a Helper	M-14	12
* I Have a Family Tree	M-15	13
* I Love You	M-16	14
* I Say, Thank You	M-17	15
* I See the Animals	M-18	16
It's Fun to Go to School	M-1	—
Jingle Bells	M-1	—
* Laughing Hosannas	M-20	17
* Love One Another	M-21	18
* O Praise the Lord	M-22	19
* Pit-a-Pat	M-24	20
* Sometimes When I Pray	M-26	21
* Thank You, God	M-27	22
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star	M-1	—
* When We Pray Together	M-28	23
* Wonderfully Made	M-29	24
* Your World Is Wonderful	M-30	25

## Teacher Patterns

Teacher Pattern Index	351
	Lesson No.
TP-1. Story: <i>Pandy's Rainbow</i> (1 of 2)	5
TP-2. Story: <i>Pandy's Rainbow</i> (2 of 2)	5
TP-3. Game: <i>Donkey and Tail</i>	6
TP-4. Prayer: <i>The Sign of the Cross</i>	7
TP-5. Optional Activity: <i>Placemat Pattern</i>	15
TP-6. Picture: <i>Sun and Rainbow</i>	17
TP-7. Game: <i>Smile Face</i>	17
TP-8. Activity: <i>Pinwheel</i>	18
TP-9. Picture: <i>The Child Jesus and Mary</i>	19 & 31
TP-10. Picture: <i>The Child Jesus and Joseph</i>	19 & 31
TP-11. Optional Activity: <i>Happy Friends' Day Greeting</i>	20
TP-12. Activity: <i>Get-Well Card</i>	22
TP-13. Story: <i>Jesus Welcomes Children</i>	24
TP-14. Picture: <i>Jesus Welcomes Children</i>	24
TP-15. Optional Activity: <i>Polite Mouse</i>	24
TP-16. Optional Activity: <i>Christmas Ornaments</i>	27 & 28
TP-17. Optional Activity: <i>Jesus Is Our Light</i>	28
TP-18. Action Poem: <i>Five Little Valentines</i>	29
TP-19. Activity: <i>Valentine's Day Card</i> (1 of 2)	29
TP-20. Activity: <i>Valentine's Day Card</i> (2 of 2)	29
TP-21. Coupon: <i>Mother's Day / Father's Day</i>	31
TP-22. Picture: <i>Jesus, Joseph, and Mary</i>	32
TP-23. Picture: <i>Growth Sequence</i>	32
TP-24. Flannel-Board Figures: <i>End-of-the-Year Celebration</i>	

## Scope and Sequence Reference Chart

*I Am Special* Religious Education Program  
Inside Front Cover

# 5th Edition Scope & Sequence

## I Am Special® Religious Education Program

Religious Themes for Early Childhood Religious Education	— Specific Lesson Titles —		
	3-Year-Old Level (30 Lessons)	4-Year-Old Level (32 Lessons)	Kindergarten Level (32 Lessons)
1. God Made Me Special	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to My Name</li> <li>• See My Smile</li> <li>• I Have Two Hands</li> <li>• I Have Two Feet</li> <li>• I Can Bend and Stretch</li> <li>• I Can Walk, Hop, and Run, Jump, Climb, and Dance</li> <li>• Listen to Me Talk</li> <li>• I Am Special</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My Name Is Special</li> <li>• My Smile Is Special</li> <li>• My Hands Are Special</li> <li>• My Voice Is Special</li> <li>• God Made Me</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I Am Special</li> </ul>
2. Baptism	—	—	• I Am Special to God
3. Family and Friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God Gives Us a Family</li> <li>• God Gives Us Friends</li> <li>• Year-End Celebration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God Gave Us Families</li> <li>• God Gave Us Friends</li> <li>• Mother's Day / Father's Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I Am Special to My Family</li> <li>• I Am Special to My Friends</li> <li>• Special Days for Parents</li> </ul>
4. Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God Gives Us Animals</li> <li>• God Gives Us Fish</li> <li>• God Gives Us Water</li> <li>• God Gives Us Air</li> <li>• God Gives Us Birds</li> <li>• God Gives Us Light</li> <li>• God Gives Us Flowers</li> <li>• God Gives Us Trees</li> <li>• God Gives Us Sand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God Gave Us Animals</li> <li>• God Gave Us Birds</li> <li>• God Gave Us Fish</li> <li>• God Gave Us Flowers</li> <li>• God Gave Us Trees</li> <li>• God Gave Us Water</li> <li>• God Gave Us Light</li> <li>• God Gave Us Air / Wind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation: Light, Water, Plants</li> <li>• Creation: Fish, Birds, Animals, People</li> </ul>
5. Saints	—	—	• All Saints Day
6. Thanksgiving	• Thank You, God!	• Thanksgiving	• Thanksgiving
7. Advent / Christmas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiting for Christmas</li> <li>• Happy Birthday, Jesus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advent</li> <li>• Christmas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advent — A Time for Waiting</li> <li>• Preparing for Jesus' Birthday</li> <li>• Gifts for Others</li> <li>• Jesus' Birthday Celebration</li> </ul>
8. Senses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I Can Hear</li> <li>• I Can See</li> <li>• I Can Touch</li> <li>• I Can Smell</li> <li>• I Can Taste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I Can See</li> <li>• I Can Touch</li> <li>• I Can Hear</li> <li>• I Can Smell</li> <li>• I Can Taste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I Can See and Touch</li> <li>• I Can Hear</li> <li>• I Can Smell</li> <li>• I Can Taste</li> </ul>
9. Jesus / Christian Attitude and Actions	• Love One Another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I Can Help</li> <li>• I Can Share</li> <li>• I Can Wait</li> <li>• I Can Listen</li> <li>• St. Valentine's Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus Is a Loving Friend</li> <li>• I Can Love (Valentine's Day)</li> <li>• Jesus Is a Helper</li> <li>• I Can Help</li> <li>• I Can Share</li> </ul>
10. Feelings	—	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Happy / Sad Feelings</li> <li>• Sometimes I Feel Angry</li> <li>• Sometimes I Feel Afraid</li> </ul>
11. Prayer	—	• I Can Pray	• Talking to God
12. Lent / Easter / Springtime	• Easter: Happy Spring!	• Easter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Life in Spring</li> <li>• New Life from Seeds</li> <li>• Sharing Bread with Friends (Holy Week)</li> <li>• Celebrate the New Life of Jesus (Easter)</li> </ul>
13. Church / Mass	—	—	• Going to Church / Mass
14. I Am Growing (Final Lesson)	• I Am Growing	• I Am Growing	• I Am Growing

# LESSON 1



## Adult Faith Commentary

Our Faith teaches us that out of love and goodness, God honored us with the gift of life and a partnership in divine creation. Moreover, we are created in God's image and likeness and are called as *individuals* to share in God's own life.

(Cf. CCC 356-357)

From the beginning, God has known us individually and called us by name. (Cf. Is 43:1) As sons and daughters of our Creator, therefore, each person is unique, precious, and special in the eyes of God.

The individual name that we were given at birth by our parents and with which we were received into the Church at our baptism reflects our dignity as a unique human person created by a loving God. (Cf. CCC 2156-2159)

***God made me. God loves me. God knows my name.*** (Cf. Is 43:1-4)

Note: CCC references are from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Second Edition, copyright 1994 and 1997, United States Catholic Conference—Liberia Editrice Vaticana.

## My Name Is Special

### Helpful Teaching Notes

This first unit of the program is especially designed to help young children develop positive self-concepts, because God creates each person as a unique individual worthy of love and acceptance. The development of children's self-esteem is a necessary starting point to help young children to relate well with family and friends, and is grounded in God's commandment: *You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* (Mt 22:39)

In this first of five lessons in this unit, the children will discover that their names, given to them by their parents, are very special gifts that they will always have. To help the children feel loved and accepted, frequently call them by name.

Remember to prepare the children's name tags before class begins. Also before class, print each student's name on the two color bands and the table tent card found on p. 5 of their activity books, then cut them out.

Through songs, exercise activities, games, and an art project, the children will hear their names called and see their names written. Hopefully, they will sense your acceptance of them and view themselves as worthy of love and recognition. At the same time, your smile and gentle manner can help establish a relationship of trust with the children that will show your love and concern. When you create this type of teaching environment, the children can feel good about themselves and will experience God's love for them through you and your actions.

✓ **Note:** Each lesson in this program includes a short Scripture passage for the children to hear. It is suggested that throughout the year a Bible and candle be displayed on a small prayer table in your classroom. At Scripture time, invite the children to join you around the prayer table and light the candle, if permitted, to remind them of Jesus' presence.

### Teaching Objectives



- ✓ To help children discover that their names are special in an effort to reinforce each student's sense of self-worth as a child of God.
- ✓ To help children appreciate the names their parents gave them through a story, follow-up discussion, and various activities.
- ✓ To help children express their appreciation for God's love, friendship, and gift of life through Scripture, music, and prayer.
- ✓ To introduce the Bible as the holy book of the Church.

## ► Core Lesson

### Materials

- Activity books, pp. 1-6:
  - Welcome letters, pp. 1-2 (Sent to each child **before first class**.)
  - Name tag, pp. 3-4 (**Before class**, cut, assemble with yarn for wearing, and print each student's name in the spaces provided on both sides.)
  - Name bands and card, pp. 5-6 (**Before class**, cut out the two color bands and the table tent card, and print each student's name on them.)
- Bible, candle, picture of Jesus, and prayer table.
- Name chart.
- Name cards for name chart.
- Hole punch for teacher.
- Scissors for teacher.
- Yarn for teacher.
- Beach ball.
- Flannel-board story: "That's My Name," p. 28.
- Flannel board.
- Crayons.
- Tape for teacher.
- Growth chart.
- Music cassette player or CD player.
- Music cassette tape or CD: *Songs for 4-Year-Olds*, Fifth Edition.
- Blackline masters for Lesson 1: *Parent Letter* and *Take-Home Story*.

### Flannel-Board Figures

- 1. Kelly.
- 2. Mr. Martin.
- 3. Mrs. Martin.
- 4. Grandma Ellen.
- 5. Becky in stroller.
- 6. Mrs. Ming.
- 7. Kelly's name card.
- 8. David.

### Music References

- "God Made My Hands and Feet," p. M-8 (7).
- "I Am Special," p. M-13 (11).
- "It's Fun to Go to School," p. M-1.

### Opening

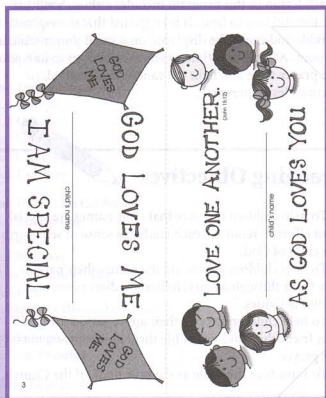
#### 1. Name tags:

Greet each child with a smile upon arrival and invite the children to form a circle on the floor. Introduce yourself and each child, presenting each with a name tag to wear.

✓ **Note:** The name tag is on pp. 3-4 of the activity book. **Before class**, print each child's name on the front and back of the tag, then cut and assemble with yarn for wearing.

#### 2. Game and Song:

When all the children have arrived and are wearing





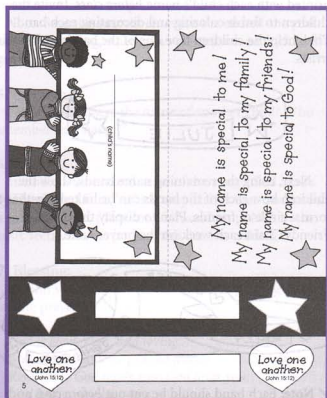
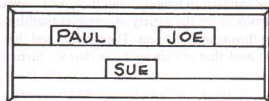
their name tags, tell them that you are glad they have come. Play a game and sing a song to set a happy mood.

**Game:** The teacher tosses a beach ball to one child at a time and says: "I am happy to see (child's name)." Upon receiving the ball, the child rolls it back to the teacher. Continue in the same way to include everyone in the game.

**Song:** Introduce the song "It's Fun to Go to School," sung to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell." (The words for this song are on p. M-1, in the music section in the back of this teacher guide.)

### 3. Name Chart:

Complete name chart and record attendance. For weekly sessions, it is a good idea to have each child place a name card in a pocket chart or on the chalkboard ledge upon arrival. You might also want to have the child put a gummed star or sticker on the card each week to mark attendance, in which case, use a larger size name card.



## Development

### 4. Story:

Read the flannel-board story *That's My Name*, p. 28, using the flannel-board figures included with this program. After reading the story, ask the follow-up questions provided on the story page.

### 5. Prayer:

Invite the children to repeat after you the phrases of the following prayer:

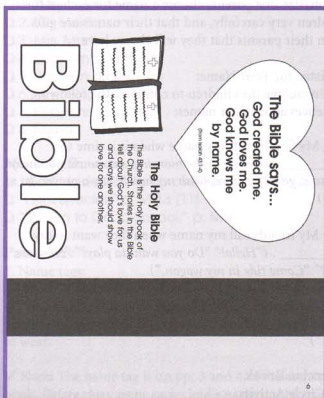
*Dear God, / thank you / for making me / so special. / I am glad / that I have / a special name. / I feel happy / when I hear / the sound of my name. / Amen.*

### 6. Song:

Introduce the first verse of the song "I Am Special," on p. M-13 in the music section in the back of this teacher guide.

### 7. Scripture:

Invite the children to join you around the prayer table and light the candle. Tell the children that the burning candle helps remind us of Jesus, God's Son. Jesus came a long time ago on this earth to be with us and to teach us about God's love for us. Jesus' words are like a light that guides us and help us to be good. Whenever we see a candle burning, it can help us think about our friend Jesus.

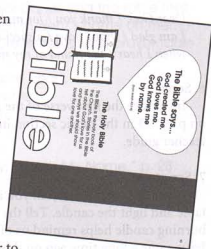


Then reverently pick up the Bible from the prayer table, open it, and hold it in your hands. Next, place this guide on your lap or over the open Bible. Tell the children to listen carefully as you read a sentence from the Bible that tells us about God's love for each one of us. Then read the following text adapted for the children from the Prophet Isaiah:

*And God said to the people, "I made you, I love you, I know you by name." (Cf. Is 43:1-4)*

Reassure the children that God, working through our parents, made each one of us because God loves us and wanted us. *God knows each one of us by the name our parents gave us.*

Show p. 6 in the Activity Book and read to the children the text about the bible. (Then remember to extinguish the candle.)



#### 8. Question:

Stand behind one child at a time and say: "(Child's name) is special." Then ask: "Who gave you your name?" Emphasize that parents choose a name for each of their children very carefully, and that their names are gifts from their parents that they will always have.

#### 9. Listen for Your Name:

Encourage the children to complete the following sentences about their names:

• My family calls my name when it is time to \_\_\_\_\_. (*Get up in the morning, eat lunch, put away my toys, go to the store, wash my hands, say a prayer, go to bed.*)

• My friends call my name when they want to say \_\_\_\_\_. (*"Hello!" "Do you want to play?" "How are you?" "Come ride in my wagon."*)

• My teacher calls my name to say \_\_\_\_\_. (*"Good morning!" "How are you?" "I am happy to see you."*)

### Exercise Break

#### 10. Circle Activity:

Have the children join hands in a circle and say this chant:

*Join hands in a circle  
and all walk around,  
all walk around,  
all walk around.*

*Stand still in a circle  
and all clap hands,  
all clap hands,  
all clap hands.*

*Sit down in a circle  
and fold your hands,  
fold your hands,  
fold your hands.*

### Activity Time

#### 11. (Child's name)'s First Day:

To help the children feel happy about their first day in class, pass out a complete activity book to each child. Invite the children to look through their own copy of the activity book to see the variety of activities that they will be doing throughout the year. They should feel that it is *their own book* that will always be *in class* for them to use.

#### 12. Name Bands:

Distribute the two name bands you cut out and printed with each child's name *before class*. Invite the children to finish coloring and decorating each band. Then help the children tape one of the bands to fit their wrists.



Next, using the remaining name bands, show the children how each of the bands can be linked together to form a circle of friends. Plan to display the Circle of Friends Chain each week on the prayer table.



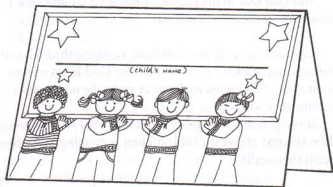
✓ Note: Each band should be cut out *before class* and

lettered with the child's name in the space provided.

### 13. Table Tent Card:

Distribute the remaining name cards from pp. 5 and 6 that you cut out and printed with each child's name *before class*.

Point out and read the text on each side of the page. Then invite the children to color in the letters of the word "Bible." Demonstrate how the card is folded in half to form a table tent card that can be proudly displayed at home.



**Optional Activities, see p. 26.**

### Closing

#### 14. Growth Chart:

As you collect each child's name tag, measure each child on a class growth chart and write the child's name on the chart.

✓ **Note:** Save this growth chart for the end-of-the year lesson on growing, when you will measure each child again.

#### 15. Questions:

"Who remembers the name of another child? Who remembers my name?"

#### 16. Song:

Introduce the second verse of the song "God Made My Hands and Feet," which emphasizes that God knows us each by name. (This song is found on p. M-8 in the music section in the back of this teacher guide.)

#### 17. Blessing:

Extend your hands over the children, praying this blessing prayer:

*God is good, kind, and loving.  
May God's name be praised forever.  
Remember God made you; God loves you;  
God knows you by name.*

*May God bless you always with happiness. Amen.*

### 18. Take-Home Materials:

As you distribute copies of the *Parent Letter*, *Take-Home Story*, and activity book materials, compliment the children on how nicely they worked together.

## ► Session One

### Materials

- Activity books, pp. 1-6:
  - Welcome letters, pp. 1-2 (Sent to each child **before first class**.)
  - Name tag, pp. 3-4 (**Before class**, cut, assemble with yarn for wearing, and print each student's name in the spaces provided on both sides.)
- Bible, candle, picture of Jesus, and prayer table.
- Hole punch for teacher.
- Scissors for teacher.
- Yarn for teacher.
- Beach ball.
- Flannel-board story: "That's My Name," p. 28.
- Flannel board.
- Crayons.
- Music cassette player or CD player.
- Music cassette tape or CD: *Songs for 4-Year-Olds*, Fifth Edition.

### Flannel-Board Figures

- 1. Kelly.
- 2. Mr. Martin.
- 3. Mrs. Martin.
- 4. Grandma Ellen.
- 5. Becky in stroller.
- 6. Mrs. Ming.
- 7. Kelly's name card.
- 8. David.

### Music References

- "God Made My Hands and Feet," p. M-8 (7).
- "I Am Special," p. M-13 (11).
- "It's Fun to Go to School," p. M-1.

### Procedure

#### 1. Name tags:

Greet each child with a smile upon arrival and invite the children to form a circle on the floor. Introduce yourself and each child, presenting each with a name tag to wear.

✓ **Note:** The name tag is on pp. 3 and 4 of the activity book. *Before class*, print each child's name on the front



and back of the tag, then cut and assemble with yarn for wearing.

## 2. Game and Song:

When all the children have arrived and are wearing their name tags, tell them that you are glad they have come. Play a game and sing a song to set a happy mood.

**Game:** The teacher tosses a beach ball to one child at a time and says: "I am happy to see (child's name)." Upon receiving the ball, the child rolls it back to the teacher. Continue in the same way to include everyone in the game.

**Song:** Introduce the song "It's Fun to Go to School," sung to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell." (The words for this song are on p. M-1, in the music section in the back of this teacher guide.)

## 3. (Child's name)'s First Day:

To help the children feel happy about their first day in class, pass out a complete activity book to each child. Invite the children to look through their own copy of the activity book to see the variety of activities that they will be doing throughout the year. They should feel that it is *their own book*. You will tear out the pages for them to use in class.

## 4. Story:

Read the flannel-board story *That's My Name*, p. 28, using the flannel-board figures included with this program. After reading the story, ask the follow-up questions provided on that page.

## 5. Prayer:

Invite the children to repeat the phrases of the following prayer after you:

*Dear God, / thank you / for making me / so special. / I am glad / that I have / a special name. / I feel happy / when I hear / the sound of my name. / Amen.*

## 6. Song:

Introduce the first verse of the song "I Am Special" on p. M-13, in the music section in the back of this teacher guide.

## 7. Scripture:

Invite the children to join you around the prayer table, then light the candle. Tell the children that the burning candle helps remind us about Jesus, God's Son. Jesus came a long time ago on this earth to be with us and to teach us about God's love for us. Jesus' words are

like a light that guides us and helps us to be good. Whenever we see a candle burning, it can help us think about our friend Jesus.

Then, reverently pick up the Bible from the prayer table, open it, and hold it in your hands. Next, place this guide on your lap or over the open Bible. Tell the children to listen carefully as you read a sentence from the Bible that tells us about God's love for each one of us. Then read the following text that was adapted for the children from the Prophet Isaiah:

*And God said to the people, "I made you, I love you, I know you by name." (CF. Is 43:1-4)*

Reassure the children that God, working through our parents, made each one of us because God loves us and wanted us. *God knows each one of us by the name our parents gave us.*

Show p. 6 in the Activity Book and read to the children the text about the bible. (Then remember to extinguish the candle.)

# Session Two

## Materials

- ☐ **Before class**, cut out the two color bands found on p. 5 of their activity books and print each child's name on them. Save the remainder of the page for use in Session Three.
- ☐ Bible, candle, picture of Jesus, and prayer table.
- ☐ Name tags.
- ☐ Scissors for teacher.
- ☐ Crayons.
- ☐ Tape for teacher.
- ☐ Music cassette player or CD player.
- ☐ Music cassette tape or CD: *Songs for 4-Year-Olds*, Fifth Edition.

## Music References

- ☐ "I Am Special," p. M-13 (11).
- ☐ "It's Fun to Go to School," p. M-1.

## Procedure

### 1. Songs:

Review the songs "It's Fun to Go to School" and "I Am Special" introduced in Session One.

### 2. Circle Activity:

Have the children join hands in a circle and begin to chant the following activity:

Join hands in a circle  
and all walk around,  
all walk around,  
all walk around.

Stand still in a circle  
and all clap hands,  
all clap hands,  
all clap hands.

Sit down in a circle  
and fold your hands,  
fold your hands,  
fold your hands.

### 3. Question:

Stand behind one child at a time and say: "(Child's name) is special." Then ask: "Who gave you your name?" Explain that parents choose a name for each of their children very carefully, and that their names are gifts from their parents that they will always have.

### 4. Listen for Your Name:

Encourage the children to complete the following sentences about hearing their names called:

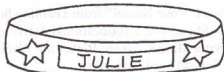
• My family calls my name when it is time to \_\_\_\_\_. (Get up in the morning, eat lunch, put away my toys, go to the store, wash my hands, say a prayer, go to bed.)

• My friends call my name when they want to say \_\_\_\_\_. ("Hello!" "Do you want to play?" "How are you?" "Come ride in my wagon.")

• My teacher calls my name to say \_\_\_\_\_. ("Good morning!" "How are you?" "I am happy to see you.")

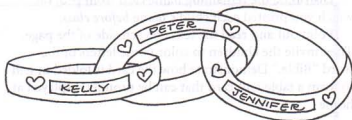
### 5. Name Bands:

Distribute the two name bands you cut out and on which you printed each child's name. Invite the children to finish coloring and decorating each band. Then help the children tape one of the bands to fit their wrists.



Next, using the remaining name bands, show the children how each of the bands can be linked together to form a circle of friends. Plan to display the Circle of

Friends Chain each week on the prayer table.



✓ **Note:** Each band should be cut out before class and lettered with the child's name in the space provided.

### 6. Prayer:

Invite the children to join hands in a prayer circle and repeat the following prayer, which was presented in Session One.

*Dear God, / thank you / for making me / so special. / I am glad / that I have / a special name. / I feel happy / when I hear / the sound of my name. / Amen.*

## ► Session Three

### Materials

- **Before class**, print each child's name in the space provided on p. 5 of the activity book page left over from Session Two.
- Bible, candle, picture of Jesus, Circle of Friends Chain from Session Two, and prayer table.
- Crayons.
- Tape for teacher.
- Growth chart.
- Music cassette player or CD player.
- Music cassette tape or CD: *Songs for 4-Year-Olds*, Fifth Edition.
- Blackline masters for Lesson 1: *Parent Letter* and *Take-Home Story*.

### Music References

- "God Made My Hands and Feet," p. M-8 (7).
- "I Am Special," p. M-13 (11).

### Procedure

#### 1. Songs:

Review the song "I Am Special." Then introduce the second verse of the song "God Made My Hands and Feet," which emphasizes that God knows each of us by name.

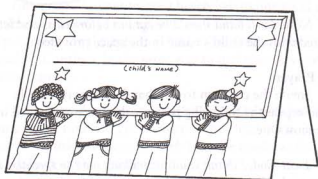
#### 2. Question:

"Who remembers the name of another child? Who remembers my name?"

### 3. Table Tent Card:

Distribute the remaining name card from p. 5, on which you printed each child's name *before class*.

Point out and read the text on each side of the page. Then invite the children to color in the letters of the word "Bible." Demonstrate how the card is folded in half to form a table tent card that can be proudly displayed at home.



### 4. Growth Chart:

As you collect each child's name tag, measure each child on a class growth chart and write the child's name on the chart.

✓ **Note:** Save this growth chart for the end-of-the-year lesson on growing, when you will measure each child again.

### 5. Blessing:

Extend your hands over the children, praying this blessing prayer:

*God is good, kind, and loving.  
May God's name be praised forever.  
Remember God made you; God loves you;  
God knows you by name.  
May God bless you always with happiness. Amen.*

### 6. Take-Home Materials:

As you distribute copies of the *Parent Letter, Take-Home Story*, and activity book materials, compliment the children on how nicely they worked together.

## ► Optional Activities

#### 1. Name Game:

Call each child by name and give each a simple command.

- \_\_\_\_\_, clap your hands.
- \_\_\_\_\_, touch your toes.
- \_\_\_\_\_, say "I am happy."
- \_\_\_\_\_, hold up one hand.



- \_\_\_\_\_, hold up both hands.
- \_\_\_\_\_, touch your knees.
- \_\_\_\_\_, wiggle your fingers.
- \_\_\_\_\_, put your hands on your head.
- \_\_\_\_\_, jump up and down.
- \_\_\_\_\_, hold your elbow in the air.
- \_\_\_\_\_, hop on one foot.
- \_\_\_\_\_, stamp your feet.

Continue this game to include everyone in the activity.

#### 2. Look for Your Name:

Use pictures to show various places where children might see their names written. Some possibilities include: name tag, birthday cake, birthday card, on a bedroom door, on party favors, on stickers, inside a book, Christmas gift tag.

#### 3. Name Chants:

Gather the children in a circle and, all together, chant each child's name:

- *His name is (Joey). (Joey) is his name.*
- *Her name is (Angie). (Angie) is her name.*

Continue the chant to include every child's name.

#### 4. "I Am Special":

Show and discuss the story entitled "I Am Special" from the *I Am Special* video strip available from Our Sunday Visitor. (A teacher guide comes with each video strip.)

#### 5. Songs:

Sing "What Is Your Name?" from the record album *Learning Basic Skills Through Music, Vol. 1*.

"What a Miracle," on Hap Palmer's music album entitled *Walter the Waltzing Worm*, offers an opportunity for movement and at the same time emphasizes that each child is special and unique.

## ► Supplemental Resources

#### Songs:

"What Is Your Name?" from *Learning Basic Skills Through Music, Vol. 1* (Educational Activities).

"What a Miracle," from *Walter the Waltzing Worm* (Educational Activities).

#### Music Tape/CD:

*Songs for 4-Year-Olds, Fifth Edition* (Our Sunday Visitor).

# 1 TAKE HOME STORY

## That's My Name

*This first story introduces to the children a four-year-old girl named Kelly, who, with her family and friends, appears in most of the stories throughout this program. Such continuity establishes the character Kelly as a companion, an example, and a reflection of each child's own developing awareness of self, of others, of God, and of God's wondrous creation. In this story, Kelly demonstrates that she is proud of her name, and of herself, as she eagerly recognizes and tells her name during her first day of school.*

There is a red brick house along Clover Street with an apple tree in front and a swing set in back. Inside the house lives a special little girl. She has big brown eyes and curly red hair, which her mother usually brushes into two ponytails. When she is happy or excited, she smiles a sunny freckled smile that makes everybody else want to smile, too. Her name is Kelly Martin.

Every morning at eight o'clock, Mr. and Mrs. Martin go to work, and Grandma Ellen comes to spend the day with Kelly and her baby sister, Becky. Sometimes Kelly misses her parents, but she loves to be with Grandma Ellen. Her favorite part of the day comes during Becky's afternoon nap. Grandma Ellen takes Kelly outside under the apple tree and tells her wonderful stories. But a day came when Kelly could no longer sit and listen to Grandma's stories during Becky's afternoon nap. It was time for Kelly to begin school.

Kelly and her family were in the kitchen eating breakfast when Grandma Ellen arrived on one very important day. "Hello!" Grandma called. She gave a friendly tug at Kelly's ponytails. "How's my Kelly this morning?" she asked.

"Great!" Kelly exclaimed.

"Now, why is that?" Grandma asked with a smile.

Kelly laughed. "You know why," she said. "It's my first day of afternoon class!"

Before they left for work, Kelly's mother and father each gave her a big hug and kiss. "Have a good time!" her mother told her. "You're going to meet many new friends."

The afternoon seemed like such a long time away! Kelly's new green jacket and blue school bag were already marked with her name and waiting near the door. After lunch, it was finally time to leave. Grandma Ellen put Becky into the stroller with her favorite stuffed teddy bear. How excited and grown-up Kelly felt as they walked to school! When they found her classroom, Kelly's teacher was waiting at the door.

"Hello!" she greeted them. "My name is Mrs. Ming."

"I'm Kelly Martin," Kelly replied.

"It's nice to meet you, Kelly," said Mrs. Ming, giving her a name card to wear around her neck. "Why don't you find your name by the coat hooks and hang up your jacket?"

Kelly recognized her name right away. She could always tell by the tall letters in the middle that looked like two Popsicle sticks. Next to hers, Kelly spotted another familiar name. It began with the letter D and ended with a d. "Hi, David!" she called to her best friend. David was already sitting on the big pink rug with the other children.

Class began with a name game. Mrs. Ming explained, "Your parents gave each of you a special name when you were born. Your name is a sign of their love for you and of God's love for you. Now, I am going to call out each of your names. When your name is called, I want you to stand up and say, 'That's my name.'"

Kelly looked at her classmates as each of them stood up. Would she ever learn all their names?

Finally Mrs. Ming called, "Kelly Martin!" Kelly proudly stood up. "That's my name!" she said, and gave them her special happy smile.

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### Discussion Questions

- Why was it easy for Kelly to read her own name? *(The tall letters in the middle looked like two Popsicle sticks.)*
- What was special about the way her friend David's name looked? *(David begins with a D and ends with a d.)*
- List the places where Kelly's name was written. *(Coat, school bag, name tag by the coat hooks.)*
- When the children played a name game, what did Kelly say when Mrs. Ming called her name? *(“That’s my name!”)*
- Who gave you your name? *(Parents.)*



*God made me. God loves me. God knows my name.*

(Cf. Is 43:1-4)

Dear Parent(s),

Your child is beginning the four-year-old level of the *I Am Special* religion program. The lessons in this program are designed to foster positive self-concepts, the discovery of God's marvelous creation, an appreciation for God's goodness and love, and Christian attitudes and actions toward others. Through songs, stories, prayers, Scripture, finger plays, games, and lesson-related art activities, I hope to assist you in helping your child discover and respond to God's love.

Throughout the year you will receive parent letters like this informing you of our lesson topic, a short commentary about how that topic relates to our Catholic Faith, the learning objectives of the lesson, and some suggestions for faith development at home. Also, your child will bring home completed pages from the *I Am Special* activity books. This cooperative approach strives for a parent-teacher partnership as we work together to help children establish foundations for their faith development.

### Adult Faith Commentary

Our Faith teaches us that out of love and goodness, God honored us with the gift of life and a partnership in divine creation. Moreover, we are created in God's image and likeness and are called as individuals to share in God's own life. (Cf. CCC 356-357)

From the beginning of our lives, God has known us individually and called us by name. (Cf. Is 43:1) As sons and daughters of our Creator, therefore, each person is unique, precious, and special in the eyes of God.

The individual name we were given at birth by our parents and with which we were received into the Church at our baptism reflects our dignity as a unique human person created by a loving God. (Cf. CCC 2156-2159)

### Learning Objectives

- To help children discover that their names are special in an effort to reinforce each student's sense of self-worth as a child of God.
- To help children appreciate the name their parents give them through a story, follow-up discussion, and various activities.
- To help children express their appreciation for God's love, friendship, and gift of life through Scripture, music, and prayer.
- To introduce the Bible as the holy book of the Church.

### Faith Development at Home

Today's class was a get-acquainted session. Each child was greeted and given a name tag to wear. Our time together included a story, prayers, songs, Scripture, exercise activities, and art activities to highlight your child's name. Your child also decorated a wrist name band to wear and a table card to display his or her name.

Enjoy snuggling up with your child in an easy chair and reading the *Take-Home Story* for this lesson. Use the questions that follow the story to talk to your child about the importance and value associated with one's name. Follow up the story by printing your child's name on index cards and placing them on his or her bedroom door, toy box, pillow, or inside a favorite book. Then print name cards for the other family members and place them at the kitchen table. Enjoy a lively discussion about everyone's name at dinnertime.

Young children also like to hear their names called. By calling their names often and lovingly, we help them to see themselves as persons worthy of love and recognition.

# LESSON 2

## My Smile Is Special



### Adult Faith Commentary

The ability to smile is a uniquely human gift that we use to communicate and show others an assortment of emotional feelings. These might include pleasure, amusement, affection, assurance, and friendliness. Who can resist returning the smiles of an infant or young child? A mother or father's smile can convey more about warmth, acceptance, and love to a child than any spoken words. A friendly and understanding smile can be more effective than any medicine to chase away the frown in us or dry the tears of someone's loneliness.

In living out Jesus' commandment, *that you love one another as I have loved you* (Jn 15:12), our own special smile can be a valuable expression of our faith, hope, and love of God that we are called to share with others. (Cf. CCC 1812–1829)

*Let the children come to me . . .  
And he took them in his arms and  
blessed them.* (Mk 10:13-16)

### Helpful Teaching Notes

Using mirrors, the children discover the uniqueness of everyone's smiles. No two people have exactly the same smiles. In this lesson, the children take pride in their own smiles, given them by God. They are encouraged to use their smiles to bring happiness to others around them.

Your own smile and gentle manner with the children should convey warmth and acceptance. This approach will not only help foster the children's positive sense of self-worth, but also help establish a relationship of trust with them. In this type of teaching atmosphere, the children can feel good about themselves and will experience God's love for them *through you*.



### Teaching Objectives

- ✓ To help children discover that their smiles are very special.
- ✓ To reinforce each student's sense of self-worth as a child of God.
- ✓ To help children appreciate their individual smiles and share them with others through a story, follow-up discussion, and various activities.
- ✓ To help children express their appreciation to God for their special smile through Scripture, music, and prayer.

Note: CCC references are from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Second Edition, copyright 1994 and 1997, United States Catholic Conference—Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

## ► Core Lesson

### Materials

- Bible, candle, picture of Jesus, Circle of Friends Chain (from Lesson 1), and prayer table.
- Activity books, pp. 7–10. **Before class**, cut pp. 9–10 into quarters and place the four My Smile Gift Cards in an envelope for each child.
- Name tags used in Lesson 1.
- Name chart.
- Name cards for name chart.
- Several mirrors for the children to use.
- Flannel-board story: "Sharing Smiles," p. 36.
- Flannel board.
- Crayons.
- Music cassette player or CD player.
- Music cassette tape or CD: *Songs for 4-Year-Olds*, Fifth Edition.
- Blackline masters for Lesson 2: *Parent Letter* and *Take-Home Story*.

### Flannel-Board Figures

- 1. Kelly.
- 4. Grandma Ellen.
- 8. David.
- 13. Becky in playpen.
- 41. David's mother.
- 54. Cloud with rain.
- 56. SMILE! picture.

□ 73. Unhappy Kelly.

□ 82. Mail carrier.

□ 94. Neighbor.

### Music References

- "A Happy Heart," p. M-2 (1).
- "God Made My Hands and Feet," p. M-8 (7).
- "It's Fun to Go to School," p. M-1.
- "I Am Special," p. M-13 (11).

### Opening

#### 1. Name Chart:

If you made a name chart for your class as suggested in Lesson 1, have the children complete it for this lesson.

#### 2. Name Tag Chart:

Distribute the name tags. As you give each child the appropriate tag, have the class chant: "Her name is (Susie). (Susie) is her name." Continue until all name tags are distributed.

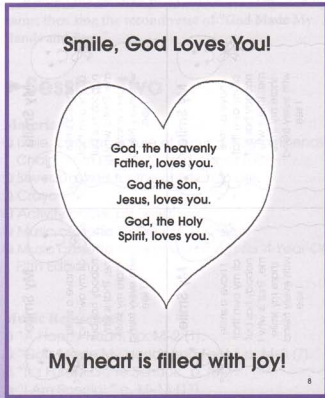
#### 3. Song:

Sing the first verse of "It's Fun to Go to School."

### Development

#### 4. Story:

Read the flannel-board story provided in this lesson entitled "Sharing Smiles." After reading the story, ask the follow-up questions provided.



### 5. Songs:

Review the "I Am Special" song. Emphasize again that each child is a special person and that God loves each and every one of them.

Remind the children that God knows each child by name, then sing the second verse of "God Made My Hands and Feet."

### 6. Poem:

Emphasize the theme that smiles are special by having the children take turns looking at their smiles in a mirror. Then read the poem "My Smile" on the My Smile Gift Cards from p. 9 of the activity book.

### 7. Share Smiles Around the Circle:

This activity begins with you sharing a smile with the child beside you. Then that child smiles at the next child. The process continues until everyone has shared a smile. Emphasize that smiles make others feel happy.

### 8. Song and Scripture Verse:

Invite the children to join you around the prayer table. Then, holding the Bible, read the following line based on Proverbs 15:13:

*A happy heart lights up the face.*

Introduce the song titled "A Happy Heart," based on the Scripture passage.

### Exercise Break

#### 9. Finger Play:

Teach the finger play "This Is the Circle That Is My Head," p. 316.

#### 10. Song:

Review the song "A Happy Heart."

### Activity Time

#### 11. Poem: "My Smile":

Again read the poem "My Smile" on the My Smile Gift Cards from p. 9 of the activity book.

Then distribute p. 7 from the activity book and instruct the children to draw their faces with a smile. (Have mirrors available while the children are working, so they can see their hair and eye color.)

#### 12. Smile, God Loves You!

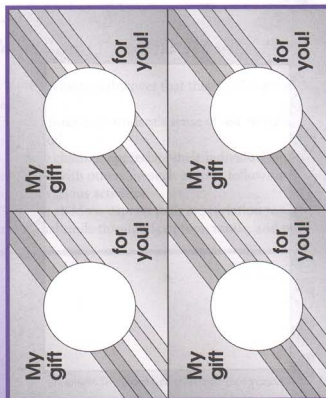
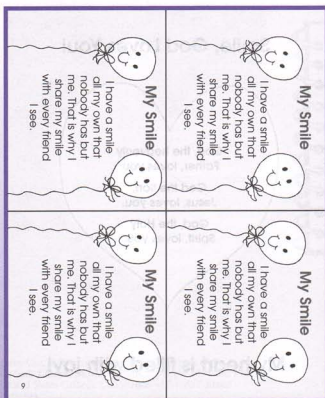
Read the statements on p. 8 of the activity book to the children and emphasize that we have good reason to be happy and to smile because:

*God loves you and me! God loves us!*

Then invite them to decorate around the heart.

#### 13. Smiles To Share:

Again read the poem "My Smile" on the My Smile Gift Cards from p. 9 of the activity book.





Then distribute the envelopes with the four My Smile Gift Cards you cut out *before class*. If class time permits, instruct the children to draw a smile picture on each card. Explain to the children that these smile pictures can be taken home and given to friends and relatives just like Kelly and David did in the story that was read in class.

### Optional Activities, see p. 35.

### Closing

#### 14. Prayer:

Invite the children to join hands, forming a circle around the prayer table. Then have them repeat each phrase of the following prayer:

*Thank you for my smile, dear God. /  
It's a very special part of me. /  
May it bring a lot of happiness /  
to every friend I see. / Amen.*

#### 15. Song:

Review the new song "A Happy Heart."

#### 16. Blessing:

Extend your hands over the children and pray this blessing:

*Thank God for giving you your own special smile. May you be blessed even more each time your friendly smile makes other people happy. Amen.*

#### 17. Take-Home Materials:

As you distribute the *Parent Letter*, *Take-Home Story*, and My Smile Gift Cards, remind the children to share their special smiles with their families and friends.

## ► Session One

### Materials

- Name tags used in Lesson 1.
- Flannel-board story: "Sharing Smiles," p. 36.
- Flannel board.
- Music cassette player or CD player.
- Music cassette tape or CD: *Songs for 4-Year-Olds*, Fifth Edition.

### Flannel-Board Figures

- 1. Kelly.
- 4. Grandma Ellen.
- 8. David.
- 13. Becky in playpen.

- 41. David's mother.
- 54. Cloud with rain.
- 56. SMILE! picture
- 73. Unhappy Kelly.
- 82. Mail carrier.
- 94. Neighbor.

### Music References

- "God Made My Hands and Feet," p. M-8 (7).
- "It's Fun to Go to School," p. M-1.
- "I Am Special," p. M-13 (11).

### Procedure

#### 1. Name Tag Chart:

As you give each child the appropriate name tag, have the class chant: "Her name is (Susie). (Susie) is her name." Continue until all name tags are distributed.

#### 2. Song:

Sing the first verse of "It's Fun to Go to School."

#### 3. Story:

Read the flannel-board story provided in this lesson entitled "Sharing Smiles." After reading the story, ask the follow-up questions provided.

#### 4. Songs:

Review the "I Am Special" song. Emphasize that each child is a special person and that God loves each and every one of them.

Remind the children that God knows each child by name, then sing the second verse of "God Made My Hands and Feet."

## ► Session Two

### Materials

- Bible, candle, picture of Jesus, Circle of Friends Chain (from Lesson 1), and prayer table.
- Several mirrors for the children to use.
- Crayons.
- Activity books, pp. 7-10.
- Music cassette player or CD player.
- Music cassette tape or CD: *Songs for 4-Year-Olds*, Fifth Edition.

### Music References

- "A Happy Heart," p. M-2 (1).
- "God Made My Hands and Feet," p. M-8 (7).
- "It's Fun to Go to School," p. M-1.
- "I Am Special," p. M-13 (11).

## Procedure

### 1. Songs:

- Review the following songs:
  - "It's Fun to Go to School."
  - "I Am Special."
  - Verse 2 of "God Made My Hands and Feet."

### 2. Poem:

Read the poem "My Smile" on p. 9 of the activity book. Then distribute p. 7 to the children and instruct them to draw their faces with smiles. (Have mirrors available while the children are working, so they can see their hair and eye color.)

### 3. Share Smiles Around the Circle:

This activity begins as you share a smile with the child beside you. That child then smiles at the next child. The process continues until everyone has shared his or her smile. Emphasize that smiles make others feel happy.

### 4. Song and Scripture Verse:

Invite the children to join you around the prayer table. Holding the Bible, read the following line based on Proverbs 15:13:

*A happy heart lights up the face.*

Then introduce the song "A Happy Heart," based on the Scripture reading.

### 5. Smile, God Loves You!

Read the statements on p. 8 of the activity book to the children and emphasize that we have good reason to be happy and smile:

*God loves you and me! God loves us!*

Then instruct them to decorate around the heart.

### 6. Finger Play:

Teach the finger play "This Is the Circle That Is My Head," p. 316.

## ► Session Three

### Materials

- **Before class**, cut pp. 9-10 from the activity books into quarters and place the four My Smile Gift Cards in an envelope for each child.
- Bible, candle, picture of Jesus, Circle of Friends Chain (from Lesson 1), and prayer table.
- Crayons.

- Music cassette player or CD player.
- Music cassette tape or CD: *Songs for 4-Year-Olds*, Fifth Edition.
- Blackline masters for Lesson 2: *Parent Letter* and *Take-Home Story*.

### Music References

- "A Happy Heart," p. M-2 (1).
- "I Am Special," p. M-13 (11).

### Procedure

#### 1. Song:

Review the songs "A Happy Heart" and "I Am Special."

#### 2. Smile Poem and Activity:

Read the poem "My Smile" on the My Smile Gift Cards from p. 9 of the activity book.

Then distribute the envelopes with the four My Smile Gift Cards you cut out before class. Invite the children to draw a smile picture on each card.

Explain to the children that these smile pictures can be taken home and given to friends and relatives just like Kelly and David did in the story that was read in class for this lesson.

#### 3. Prayer:

Invite the children to join hands, forming a circle around the prayer table. Then have them repeat each phrase of the following prayer:

*Thank you for my smile, dear God. /  
It's a very special part of me. /  
May it bring a lot of happiness /  
to every friend I see. / Amen.*

#### 4. Blessing:

Extend your hands over the children and pray this blessing:

*Thank God for giving you your own special smile.  
May you be blessed even more each time your  
friendly smile makes other people happy. Amen.*

#### 5. Take-Home Materials:

As you distribute the *Parent Letter*, *Take-Home Story*, and My Smile Gift Cards, remind the children to share their special smiles with their families and friends.

## ► Optional Activities

### 1. Song:

Make up new verses for the song "If You're Happy and You Know It," p. M-1, such as: *If you're happy and you know it . . .*

- smile at me!
- spin around!
- shout hooray!

Use the children's ideas for more verses.

### 2. Smiles or Frowns:

Have the children classify pictures of faces cut from magazines according to whether they have happy smiles or sad frowns.

### 3. How Would You Feel?

Invite the children to make happy or sad faces to show how they would feel if the following events happened to them:

- Your cat Snoozie just had baby kittens.
- Your friend has a cold and cannot come to your home to play.
- Your new kite gets caught in a tree.
- You go fishing with your family and catch a big fish.
- You get lost in the grocery store and cannot find your mom or dad.
- Your mother buys your favorite kind of fruit.
- You drop your ice cream cone on the ground.
- The tooth fairy left money under your pillow.

### 4. Songs:

The following songs support this lesson theme:

- "Feelings," from the album *Getting to Know Myself*.
- "Sing a Happy Song," from the album *Rosenshontz Tickles You*.
- "What a Miracle" from the album *Walter the Waltzing Worm*.

## ► Supplemental Resources

### Songs:

"Feelings," from *Getting to Know Myself* (Educational Activities).

"Sing a Happy Song," from *Rosenshontz Tickles You* (RS Records).

"What a Miracle," from *Walter the Waltzing Worm* (Educational Activities).



### Music Tape/CD:

*Songs for 4-Year-Olds, Fifth Edition* (Our Sunday Visitor).

## Notes



## 2 TAKE HOME STORY

## Sharing Smiles

*Smiling is a way of sharing God's love with those around us. In this story, Kelly and her friend David show concern and kindness toward others by sharing pictures of sunny smiles on a rainy day.*

Rain, rain, rain! It splattered on the windows and splashed into puddles. It made the ground mushy and muddy. Kelly Martin didn't like the rain at all. She wanted to go to the park with David and play on the slide, but now there would be a huge mud puddle at the bottom of it. Sadly, she stared out her bedroom window as rain poured from the clouds.

Suddenly, the doorbell rang. "I wonder who it is?" thought Kelly. She ran to the living room to see. Grandma Ellen had already opened the door, and there stood David, dripping on the mat! His mother gave him a kiss and dashed back to her car.

Grandma Ellen grinned. "I thought you might like some company on such a wet day, so I invited David to come," she told Kelly.

"Thank you, Grandma," Kelly replied. She was still frowning. "Hi, David," she said. "I wish we could go to the park."

All this time, David had been standing with his hands behind his back. Now he handed Kelly a picture of a big smiling face. "I made this for you," he said.

Kelly's sad face brightened into her special happy smile. "Thanks, David," she said. "Let's make more smile pictures. Maybe other people are feeling sad today, too."

"Okay," said David. He liked coloring even better than playing in the rain and jumping in mud puddles.

Kelly and David first looked at their own smiles in a mirror. They found paper and crayons, then set to work drawing happy, smiling faces with bright, cheerful colors. Grandma Ellen showed them how to write the word "Smile!" below each face. Soon the kitchen counter was covered with a row of beautiful pictures, ready to be given away.

It was still raining hard, but Kelly and David didn't mind at all. They had important things to do. First, they taped a picture on Becky's playpen.

"Sometimes Becky cries," Kelly explained.

"Maybe this will make her smile," David said.

Kelly and David gave another picture to the man who delivered the mail.

"Why, thank you!" he exclaimed. "This is just what I needed to brighten a rainy day."

When the neighbor from next door came by to return the picnic basket she had borrowed, Kelly and David gave her one of their drawings.

The neighbor smiled. "This rain ruined my picnic," she said, "but you two are sunnier than any sunny day!"

When David's mom came to take him home, they gave her the last picture.

"Thank you," she said. "I'm glad you two found something fun to do."

"Yes!" Kelly exclaimed. "Sharing smiles is even better than sunshine!"

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### Discussion Questions

• What did David do to help make Kelly feel happy on a rainy day? (*He gave her a picture of a smiling face.*)

• Kelly and David drew more smile faces to give others. Why did they give smiles to others? (*To make them feel happy.*)

• Who received smiles from Kelly and David? (*Becky, the mail carrier, a neighbor, and David's mom.*)

• To whom could you give a smile face to make them happy?





*Let the children come to me . . .*

*And he took them in his arms and blessed them.*

(Mk 10:13-16)

### Adult Faith Commentary

The ability to smile is a uniquely human gift that we use to communicate and show others an assortment of emotional feelings. These might include pleasure, amusement, affection, assurance, and friendliness. Who can resist returning the smiles of an infant or young child? A mother or father's smile can convey more about warmth, acceptance, and love to a child than any spoken words. A friendly and understanding smile can be more effective than any medicine to chase away the frown in us or dry the tears of someone's loneliness.

In living out Jesus' commandment, *that you love one another as I have loved you* (Jn 15:12), our own special smile can be a valuable expression of our faith, hope, and love of God that we are called to share with others. (Cf. CCC 1812-1829)

### Learning Objectives

- To help children discover that their smiles are very special.
- To reinforce each student's sense of self-worth as a child of God.
- To help children appreciate their individual smiles and share them with others through a story, follow-up discussion, and various activities.
- To help children express their appreciation to God for their special smile through Scripture, music, and prayer.

### Faith Development at Home

Continuing with the theme that God has made each child very special, it was emphasized in this lesson that each child also has a smile that is very special and unique. No two people have exactly the same smiles.

The children looked at their smiles in a mirror, then shared them around our friendship circle. During the activity, they discovered that their smiles can bring happy feelings to others around them.

Because young children discover God's love and concern for them through the people around them, our influence in their lives is very significant. Therefore, a key objective of this *I Am Special* program is to promote pleasant relationships between children and their teachers and family members. At the same time, the children's positive self-concepts will be enhanced through our smiles and gentle manner with them.

Enjoy reading this week's *Take-Home Story* to your child and asking the questions that follow the story. Then assist your child in delivering the smile pictures brought home from class.

**Please Note:** Next week's activity will involve painting, so please have your child bring a paint shirt to class. Also, be sure to have the shirt labeled with your child's name; it will be kept with our supplies for future use.

