

PREPARING CHILDREN for the RITE of RECONCILIATION

# First Penance

Lesson @ne



## God Loves Me!

Francine M. O'Connor

This Is the World that  
God Has Made

I know that God loves me because  
Jesus told me so. When I see the beautiful  
things our Creator has made, I remember  
God's love. I know nothing I do will  
ever change that love!

How many of God's gifts can you find in this picture?





# God is a



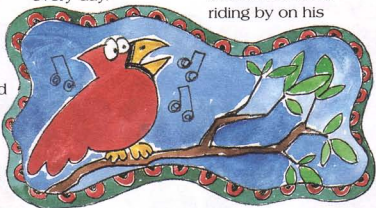
I woke up this morning and the sun was shining in my window. I heard a little bird singing in the tree outside. It seemed like the bird was saying, "Get up! Get up! God has made a wonderful day!"

And all the beautiful things in my world reminded me of God's love.

I went downstairs to the kitchen where Mother was making breakfast. She placed my breakfast on the table, and, oh, how good it smelled! Then, Mother smiled a special mother smile. "Good morning, sweetheart," she said, and gave me a great big hug and kiss. Daddy came in and lifted me way up high.

"Have a wonderful day," he said.

I felt the love of my parents and remembered that God is my loving Father, who watches over me every day.



At school, I read a story all by myself. It was about a little girl and her dog. Then, my teacher helped me with a math problem that I didn't understand. After lunch, we had a spelling bee, and I came in third.

I was so glad that God gave me a

mind that can love and learn new things, and a teacher to show me the way.

After school, I went out to play. It was a beautiful day. My best friend came riding by on his

brand new bicycle. "Would you like to ride my bike?" he asked. And I said, "Oh, yes, I would." My friend was not afraid that I would break his new bike. He trusted me. So I let him play with my best ball while I took a ride on his bike.

And I remembered that God is the best kind of friend, a very good friend who loves me a lot.

Every time I walk in the park, and see children and flowers and trees and birds, I remember again about God's love for the world and the people on earth.

I learn more about how God loves me when I go to church with my family and hear the words of Jesus and about all the loving things he did for all of God's children — like me.

When I hear how Jesus came to our world just to teach about God's love, I know nothing I do will ever make God stop loving me.



R B E E

S R B E E C

P S R B E E C

E S P C I A

Y E C I A O

E C I A O U

C I A O U N

I A O U N S

A O U N S E

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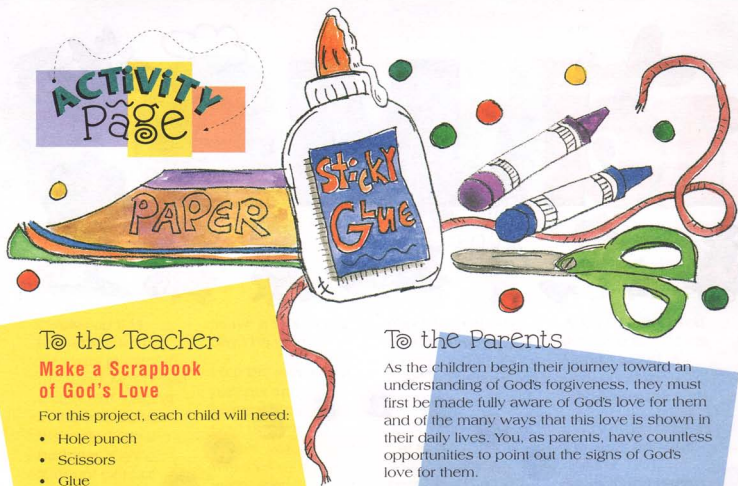
Y E C I A O U N S E I M O N Y

### Circle of God's Love

Use the space outside of the circle to draw some of the things that remind you of God's love for you. Then, if you read every other letter around the circle, starting at the arrow, God will tell you why you are so loved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# ACTIVITY Page



## To the Teacher

### Make a Scrapbook of God's Love

For this project, each child will need:

- Hole punch
- Scissors
- Glue
- Old magazines
- Four or five pieces of 8 1/2" x 11" drawing paper or construction paper
- Crayons or markers
- 12" - 15" pieces of yarn

Direct the children through the following steps:

1. Hold all four or five pieces of paper together and fold them in half to make a book.
2. Punch holes on the folded edge and string the yarn through the holes to hold the book together.
3. On the cover of the book, write, "My Book of God's Gifts."
4. Look through magazines to find pictures that are reminders of God's love.
5. Glue a different gift on each page of the book. Beneath the pictures, write a thank-you prayer for that special gift.

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## To the Parents

As the children begin their journey toward an understanding of God's forgiveness, they must first be made fully aware of God's love for them and of the many ways that this love is shown in their daily lives. You, as parents, have countless opportunities to point out the signs of God's love for them.

An excellent family project for this week is a "faith walk" in a wooded area or park. In preparation for this project, decorate a shoe box with pictures cut from a magazine. You can print "God Made the World for Me" on your box.

On the day of your walk, have the children carry bags to collect small mementos: acorns, leaves, birds' feathers, small stones, flower petals, and so forth. During your walk, point out signs of God's love that the children may miss, but give them the opportunity to discover some of these signs on their own.

After your walk, read about the wild flowers in the Sermon on the Mount (see Lk 12:27-28), or the story of creation as found in the Book of Genesis. The children can then store their collections in the decorated box.

## From the Catechism of the Catholic Church

- #295, #341 on creation
- #218-21, #733 on God is Love
- #370, #374 on God's attributes and friendship



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Lesson Two

## Mystery Scripture Message

Francine M. O'Connor

**H**ere is a message from the Bible that tells how the people have always felt about God. Unscramble the scrambled words to find out what the message says.

iSgn l jofyu \_\_\_\_\_  
osgn to the \_\_\_\_\_  
rodL! moeC to \_\_\_\_\_  
wrohspi him \_\_\_\_\_  
with tnahkflu \_\_\_\_\_  
ehatrs and osgn \_\_\_\_\_  
of parsie. The \_\_\_\_\_  
rodL is the \_\_\_\_\_  
rgetaest oGd. \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 95:1,2,3

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## Lesson Three

# Love One Another

Francine M. O'Connor

Jesus loves you very much. He said, "Love one another as I have loved you." Unscramble the words below the pictures to find ways you can love others as Jesus loves you.



TAEHC AOBTU OGD



FDDE HET ORPO



VSITI TEH CSKI



RPYA



FROGVIE OERTSH

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## Lesson Four

# God's Rules

Francine M.  
O'Connor

- 1. You shall honor no other god but me.**  
(Always put God first in everything you do.)
- 2. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.**  
(God's name is a prayer. Always say it with love.)
- 3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.**  
(Celebrate with Jesus every week in holy Mass.)
- 4. Honor your father and your mother.**  
(Obey and help your parents.)
- 5. You shall not kill.**  
(Always be kind to others.)
- 6. You shall not commit adultery.**  
(Be loyal to your family and friends.)
- 7. You shall not steal.**  
(Take care of things that belong to others.)
- 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**  
(Tell only good and truthful things about others.)
- 9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.**  
(Don't be jealous of other friendships.)
- 10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.**  
(Don't be jealous of what others have.)

Jesus  
added two  
more rules.

**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.**

**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**

**If we follow these two Great Rules, we will have no problem following the Ten Commandments.**

God wants us to stay close. But we need to know how to do this. So God gave us directions to follow. These directions are called the Ten Commandments or God's Rules.

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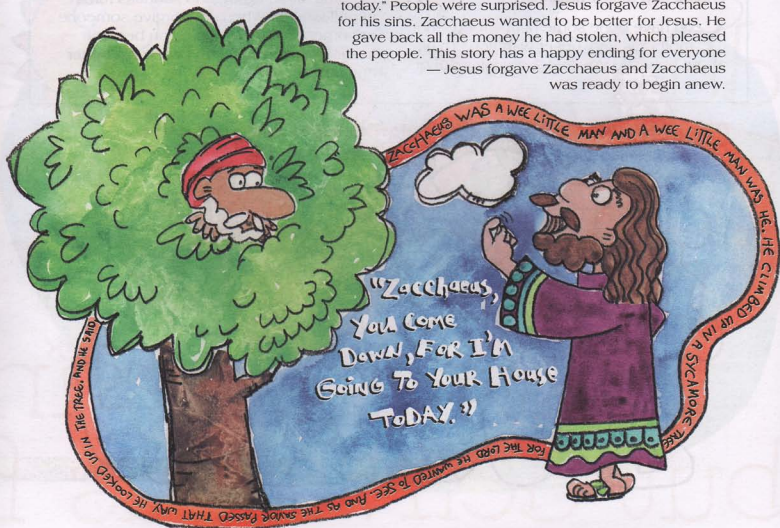
## Lesson Five

# Jesus Forgives a Sinner

A SHORT MAN NAMED ZACCHAEUS climbed up in a tree, trying to see Jesus over the crowd. He was not always a good man. He became rich by cheating people.

Jesus said, "Come down. I am going to your house today." People were surprised. Jesus forgave Zacchaeus for his sins. Zacchaeus wanted to be better for Jesus. He gave back all the money he had stolen, which pleased the people. This story has a happy ending for everyone.

— Jesus forgave Zacchaeus and Zacchaeus was ready to begin anew.





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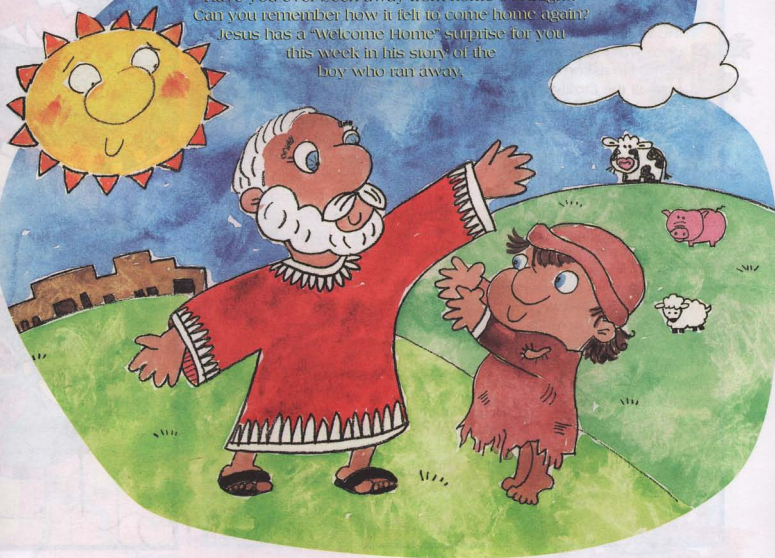
Francine M. O'Connor

Lesson Six

## Coming Home Again

Have you ever been away from home overnight?  
Can you remember how it felt to come home again?

Jesus has a "Welcome Home" surprise for you  
this week in his story of the  
boy who ran away.



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Lesson Seven

## FAMILIES WORK TOGETHER

When a family works together, things get done — and everyone feels happy and proud.



I'll chase away the varmints

woof  
woof



When someone in the family is not loving and kind to the others, nothing gets done — and everyone feels unhappy.



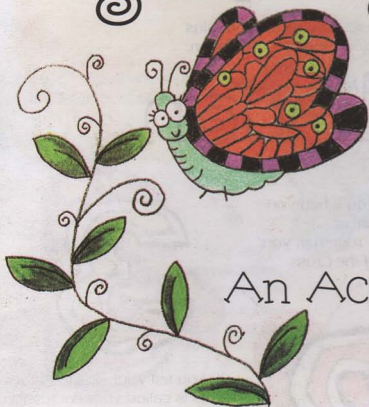
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## Lesson Eight

# A Brand New Beginning



I do not always do the right thing, the loving thing. I do not always follow God's laws of love. I am sorry for those times when I have failed to follow in Jesus' footsteps. Jesus died on the cross for my sins because he loves me and he forgives me. The sacrament of reconciliation is my chance for a new beginning, to start all over again to be the very best me I can be.

Below is a prayer I will say each night to tell God I am sorry.

## An Act of Contrition

*O my God, I love you above all things.*

*I am truly sorry for all my sins,  
and I thank you for forgiving me.*

*Help me to stay close to you  
and to remember always  
your wonderful laws of love. Amen*