



Christian Education

Bulletin Insert

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"It is through our everyday relationship with (our children) that we convey spirituality. As we share our reverence for the natural world, the simple joys of family life, our dependability, and our unconditional love, we show them the face of God."
Jean Grasso Fitzpatrick

Thanksgiving - October 12

Pair the creation story with Thanksgiving for something slightly different from the usual. If the weather is good enough you might combine this with a family walk on the Monday of Thanksgiving weekend. If not, have your picnic and story in the living room. Fill a picnic basket with a tablecloth, fresh bread, a means of slicing it, and maybe some jam and juice boxes. Add some objects or pictures to represent what God created on each day of the six. E.g. A flashlight, some star stickers, some small plastic or plush fish, birds and animals, and male and female "Little People." Include a cross, photos of each member of the family and a children's Bible unless you have the story memorized. Once you arrive at your picnic spot, ask the family to imagine what it was like before God created anything, then read or tell the creation story, using your 'props.' Talk about what a tremendous gift and reason for thanksgiving the creation is. Then talk about the greatest gift of all, God's incarnation as the Baby Jesus. Use the cross as your illustration. Use the family photos to explain how God is still creating. Then enjoy your picnic.

Thanksgiving singing

This would be a good after meal activity, while still sitting round the table. Read Psalm 100:4 - "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name." Ask everyone to think of one thing they are thankful for and a well known tune, such as a nursery rhyme, an

advertising jingle, a folk song or a pop tune, that they can sing it to. Demonstrate by singing "Thanks for my friends" to "Three Blind Mice" or "Thank you for my family" to "Polly put the kettle on." Go around the table, and after each person has sung, ask everyone to repeat their song together.

Family Bible Reading

Scripture Union has excellent Bible reading helps for children of all ages, as well as their adult booklets. For the under 5s, there is a series of 6 books - **Tiddlywinks**. Each one contains 50 short Bible stories which are connected with the lives of fictional preschoolers. There is always a short prayer at the end of each story and sometimes activities to try as well.

Join In - Jump On! is for 5 - 6 year olds. There is a book on each of the gospels and Easter and Christmas ones. Children are asked to read a selection from their own Bible. Lots of craft ideas, jokes, puzzles and paper and pencil games are included. In **Hotshots**, for 7 - 8 year olds, the Bible passage (Contemporary English Version) is printed on the page. Again, there is much to interest children in this age group. There are 8 undated books - each with 60 readings. The titles indicate the subject matter - e.g. "The Time Everything Exploded with Energy" is about creation, Jesus' birth and some of the great works of the spirit. Another title is "The World's Greatest Leader - Ever!"

Snapshots, for 9 - 11 year olds, are in a pocket sized format. These are the first dated guides and are published quarterly. Scripture Union also publishes great teen guides, **One Up** for 12 - 14 year olds and **Dayzd** for 15 - 18 year olds. They have a magazine like style.

Any of these guides would be wonderful helps for adults trying to encourage children to begin a lifetime of Bible reading and excellent gifts for a grandchild or godchild. Your parish may have a Scripture Union representative with whom you may place an order. If not, go to <www.scriptureunion.ca> or phone 905-427-4947.