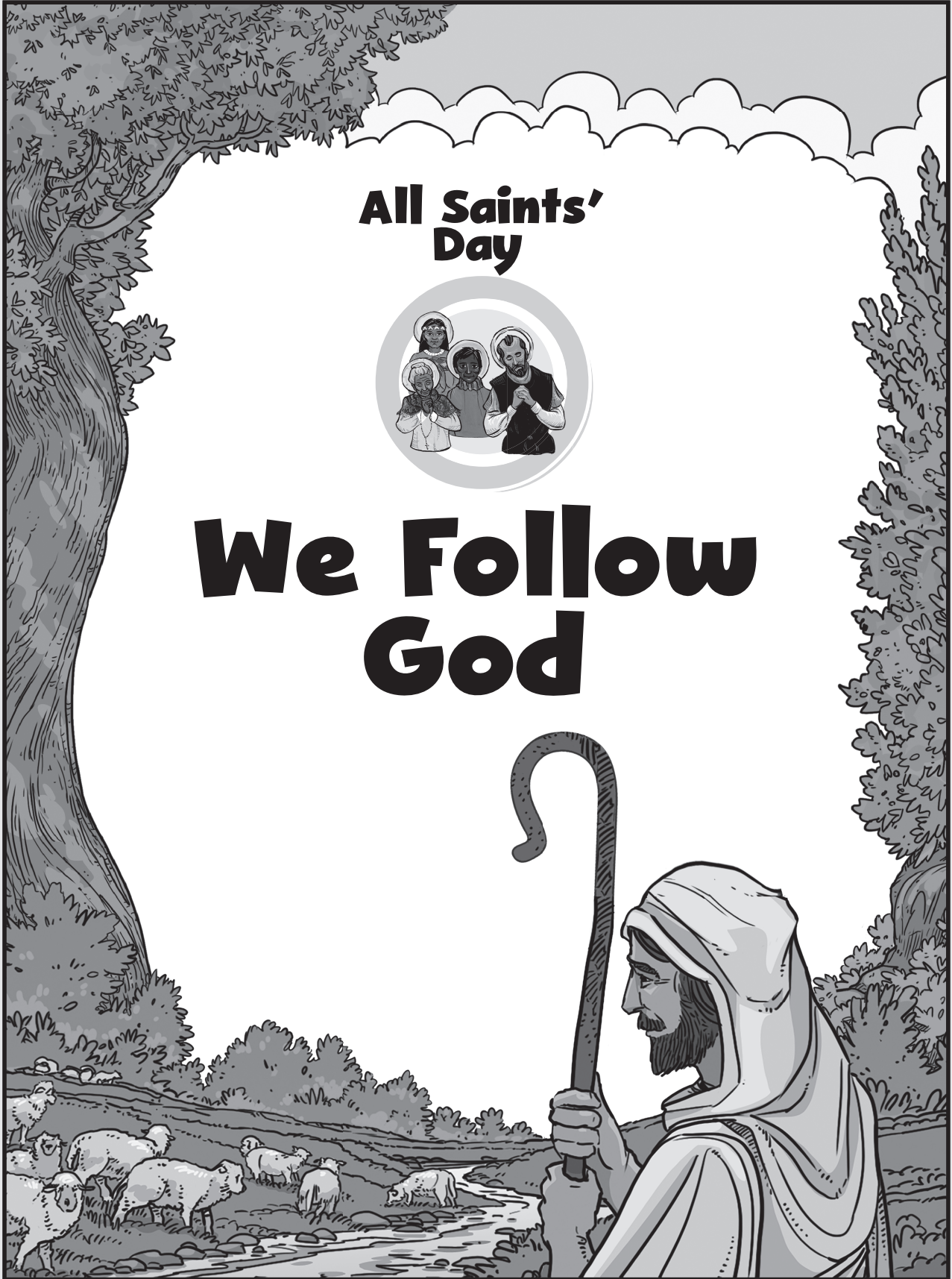


All Saints' Day



We Follow God





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Psalm 23:1–6

Lesson Goals

- to define the Feast of All Saints as the day we honor all the saints in Heaven
- to identify the saints as those people who followed God closely in their lives
- to state that we too can become saints if we follow God our shepherd

Catechism References

956, 1195, 2013, 2030

Key Words

shepherd, rod, staff, banquet

Music Suggestions

- “Psalm 23,” by Songtime Kids (Spring Hill Music Group)
- “When the Saints Go Marching In,” by Kidsongs (Kidsongs Video Music)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the All Saints’ Day activity booklet
- the *Discover!* folder
- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- small plastic baggies, one for each child
- colored pony beads (white, green, blue, red, gray, black, brown, gold), one set for each child
- small jingle bells, one for each child
- 18- to 24-inch lengths of plastic lanyard or elastic cord, one for each child
- copies of Psalm 23 and the color bead code, one for each child
- key rings, one for each child
- a pair of scissors
- a sample completed key chain
- a board or poster to write on
- saints’ pictures or medals for prayer
- table
- an image of the Good Shepherd for the prayer space
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

On All Saints’ Day, we honor all the saints of the Church, known and unknown. These people of great faith lived lives of holiness and can help us through their example and through their prayers for us.

God calls each of us to be a saint, whoever and wherever we are. This may seem to be a daunting prospect until we understand saints as normal people who struggled with many of the same things we do today. We often think of saints as always having perfect faith, but they were all human beings like us. They just grew to great faith and holiness by their reliance on and trust in God.

The saints knew God as the loving shepherd described in Psalm 23—the shepherd who loves, protects, and provides for us. This image reminds us too that if we ever feel weak or lost, God is always there to guide, care for, or carry us with his love and protection. May we ask the saints to pray that we may also follow the Good Shepherd, listen to his voice, trust in his care and love, and one day be called saints ourselves.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the All Saints' Day activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to share what a hero is. Then invite them to list some of the heroes they have and why. Explain that we all have heroes we look up to.
- Tell the group that we have heroes in the Church. Ask the children if they know what we call the heroes in our Church (*saints*). Point out that the saints often did really brave things and lived very good and holy lives.
- Explain to the children that all of us are called to become saints. Tell them that we are all called to live faithful lives, living as Jesus taught us.
- Tell the children that in today's Scripture we learn how much God cares for us and watches over us, like a good shepherd who takes care of his sheep, as we learn to be saints, or holy people.

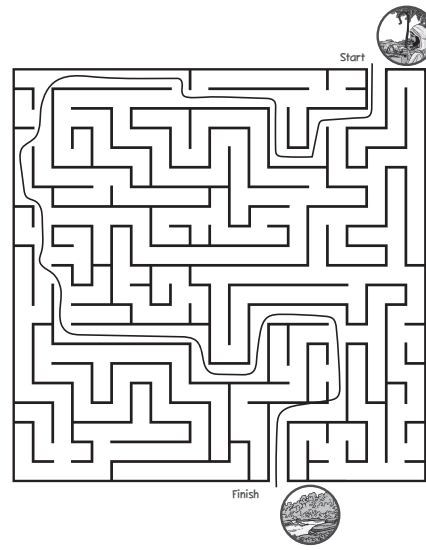


Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Psalm 23 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 852). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 854. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark the same Scripture passage found on page 852.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 854–855 and invite them to describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How does the shepherd take care of his sheep? (*by leading them to food, water, and safety*)
 - What does he help them with? (*keeping danger away, protecting them*)
 - How does God act like a good shepherd? (*by guiding us and providing us with all we need*)
 - How does God protect us? (*Accept all reasonable responses, such as by surrounding us with friends and family, teachers, and helpers, and by always listening to our prayers.*)

- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution:*



Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 855, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - A shepherd takes care of his sheep by guiding them to food and water.
 - He protects them from dangers like cliffs, thorns, and wolves and other dangerous animals.
 - He counts his sheep at night to make sure none of them is missing.
 - We call God our shepherd because he guides us, protects us, and gives us all we need to live.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 855, or have a volunteer read it.
- Tell the children that they will not be doing this activity during this lesson, but that they should complete it at home.
- Ask the children to share where they might put their posters, once they are complete, to remind themselves and their family that God is our shepherd who guides us and cares for us.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 855.
- Invite one or two volunteers to retell the Scripture story by looking at the images. (*Image 1 shows a shepherd watching the sheep eating grass by a stream. Image 2 shows the shepherd using his staff to guide the sheep on the path. Image 3 shows the shepherd leading the sheep through darkness and rain. Image 4 shows a banquet that shows us how welcome God want us to feel.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Good Shepherd Beaded Key Chain

- Prepare ahead of time a plastic baggie with eight beads (one of each color), a small jingle bell, and an 18- to 24-inch length of plastic lanyard or elastic cord, one for each child.
- Prepare for each child a preprinted copy of Psalm 23, with a list of the bead colors and the bell and what they represent:

◦ White: shepherd	◦ Black: deepest darkness
◦ Green: green grass	◦ Brown: shepherd's rod and staff
◦ Blue: quiet pools of fresh water	◦ Gold: goodness and love of God
◦ Red: strength that the shepherd gives	◦ Jingle bell: joy that God is our shepherd
◦ Gray: right paths	
- Show the video "Custom Keychains," published by Artists Serving Others (YouTube, 5:31), for a simple beading tutorial in preparation for making the key chains with the group.
- Distribute the plastic baggies, the key rings, and the copies of Psalm 23.
- Explain to the children that they will be making a beaded key chain to remind them that God the shepherd is always guiding them.
- Explain that each bead represents a part of the psalm.
- Show the children how to string the bell on the string. Then have them fold the cord in half so the bell falls to the middle and the ends meet.
- Help the children tie a single knot to hold the bell in place. The bell marks the bottom of the beaded key chain.
- Show the group how to hold the two ends together and put the rest of the beads onto the doubled cord, starting with the gold, in the reverse order of the psalm.
- Instruct the children to tie a few knots to secure the beads in place after they have put all the beads on.
- Show the children how to tie the key ring to the cord and tie a couple of knots around it. Help them trim the excess string.

Process the Activity

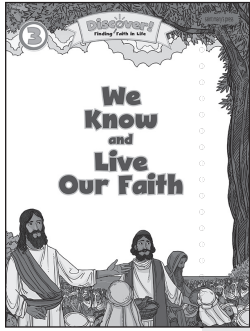
- Invite a volunteer to read the psalm slowly, and invite the children to hold the color bead that relates to the part of the Scripture that is being read. You might wish to call the colors out to help the children know which bead to hold at what time.
- Tell them that this key chain can help them remember that God is their shepherd. Point out that this can be particularly helpful when they are feeling "lost" or experiencing "deep darkness" like sadness, fear, or worry.
- Encourage the children to remember the first verse and use it as a prayer.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 254–255 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the children that they started the lesson by talking about heroes we have in the Church. Ask them if they remember what we call these heroes (*saints*) and who these people were. Highlight that saints are people who have lived good lives, following God and helping others.
- Invite the children to share the names and stories of any saints they are familiar with. Provide some prompts to see if they can guess well-known saints, such as Saint Francis, Saint Joseph, Mary, and Saint Peter. If your parish is named after a saint, have some information about that saint you can offer to the children.
- Tell the group that saints love God because they know God provides for them and cares for them like a shepherd. Point out that we too can become saints if we follow God our shepherd.
- Explain that we can look up to the saints, like other heroes, and use their lives as examples for our own. Note that saints' lives show us how to be good people, how to help others, how to pray, and how to love God. Tell the children that in doing these things, we can one day become saints as well. Point out that God wants all of us to be saints.
- Explain to the children that we can always ask the saints to pray for us. Tell them that we can pray to specific saints by name or we can ask all the saints, together, to pray that we can be happy, healthy, and faithful.
- Tell the children that we celebrate the saints in a special way on All Saints' Day. Explain that the Feast of All Saints is November 1, the day the Church honors all saints, even those we don't know by name.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why is it important to remember saints? (*They are an example for us. They show us how to be good people, how to help others, how to pray, and how to love God.*)
 - When do we celebrate the Feast of All Saints? (*November 1*)
 - Do we remember only famous saints on All Saints' Day? (*No, we remember even those we don't know by name. We remember all good and holy people who are with God.*)
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read the "People of Faith" section aloud. Encourage the children to say, "All the saints of God, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles and activities in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Church Has Two Parts,” page 12
- “The Communion of Saints” + activity, pages 13–14
- “Saints and the Church Year” + activity, pages 30–32
- “The Prayer of Intercession” + activity, pages 56–57

Read aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, the selections as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Invite the children to begin the activities, or have them complete the activities with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take time to get input from the group and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The Feast of All Saints is the day when we honor all the saints in Heaven.
 - The saints are people who followed God closely in their lives.
 - We too can become saints if we follow God our shepherd.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the group in the Sign of the Cross, and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1995 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Explain that this prayer is the prayer of a saint. Explain that by praying in the same way as Saint Francis did, we can learn about his goodness and seek to be the same in our lives.
- Pray the prayer, either by reading it for the group or reading it together.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

All Saints' Litany

Prepare a focal point or prayer table with a picture or statue of the Good Shepherd, and as many pictures or medals of the saints in this litany as you can find. Place the saints' pictures and medals around the picture of the Good Shepherd. Choose a reader for each saint in the litany, and choose a helper for each saint, asking that child to hold up the picture or medal of the saint as that saint's name is read.

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Leader: Each of us has gifts that we can use to serve God and other people. The saints show us many different ways of following God, our shepherd. We ask the saints to pray to God for us. Our response is: Pray for us.

Reader 1: Saint Peter, fisherman and Apostle of Jesus,

All: Pray for us.

Reader 2: Saint Mary, Mother of Jesus,

All: Pray for us.

Reader 3: Saint Francis, follower of the Gospel,

All: Pray for us.

Reader 4: Saint Mother Teresa of Kolkata, loving servant of the poor,

All: Pray for us.

Reader 5: Saint Isidore, patron of farmers,

All: Pray for us.

Reader 6: Saint Catherine of Siena, teacher and Doctor of the Church,

All: Pray for us.

Reader 7: Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, teacher of children,

All: Pray for us.

Reader 8: Saint Ignatius Loyola, who saw God in all things,

All: Pray for us.

Reader 9: All holy men, women, and children, models of faith,

All: Pray for us.

Add your parish saint and other favorite saints. Ask the children to add the names of their patron saints or other saints they know. After each name, lead the group in responding, "Pray for us."

Leader: We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Play and sing "When the Saints Go Marching In" or another appropriate song about the saints. Invite the children to march around the room and to shake their key chains in celebration during the song. End the prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a board or poster to write on
- 8½-x-11 inch sheets of medium grade sandpaper, one for each child
- crayons
- one or two blow dryers
- one or two adult helpers

Sandpaper Art (15 minutes)

- Give each child a piece of sandpaper and crayons. Draw a sample of a shepherd's staff on the board that the children can use to copy onto their sandpaper. Tell them that it should be big enough to fill the sandpaper.
- Tell the children that they should press down while they draw so the colors will be brighter.
- Invite the children to draw the following symbols on the staff:
 - a white sheep
 - green grass
 - a blue pond
 - a red heart
- Have them color in the rest of the staff with other colors and print the citation "Psalm 23:1-3" on the bottom of their paper.
- Invite the children to take their completed coloring to you or an adult helper. Ask this person to lightly melt the crayon marks with a blow dryer to give a stained glass or painted look.
- Lay the artwork in a safe place to dry, cool, and harden. Recall with the children that these are like stained-glass windows. Tell the children that the stained-glass windows in church show us stories about the Bible, the saints, and the life of Jesus.

Materials Needed

- large marshmallows
- an edible ink marker
- stick pretzels
- small plastic baggies

Marshmallow Sheep (15 minutes)

- Check for any food allergies before using this activity. If any of the children have allergies, select another activity.
- Explain to the children that today they are going to make sheep out of some edible items. Distribute two marshmallows and a handful of stick pretzels to each child. These break easily so it is best to give the children extras.
- Show the children how to push the stick pretzels into the marshmallows to become the legs. Tell them that they should use one or two more to attach the head (one marshmallow) to the body (the second marshmallow).
- Use an edible ink marker from a craft or cooking store to mark the eyes and a nose on each sheep.
- Tell the children that these sheep remind us that we follow God, our shepherd, who is always watching us, guiding us, and taking care of us.
- Distribute baggies so the children can take their sheep home. Invite them to tell their family about the Scripture passage they read today.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Saint Francis (15 minutes)

- Watch the video “A Day in the Life of St. Francis” (YouTube, 3:52). Make sure to watch it until the very end.
- Invite the children to share what they saw in the video. Ask them to share what Francis did in the video and how he helped other people.
- Watch the video a second time and see what new things the children notice. Invite them to share their favorite parts.
- Point out the line, “What people need most is to see an example.” Explain to the children that Saint Francis is known for encouraging people to live their faith by doing good things for others.
- Invite the children to brainstorm things they could do today that would show their faith through actions. Encourage them to select one or two things and do them during the next week.