

Jesus Loves and Cares for Us

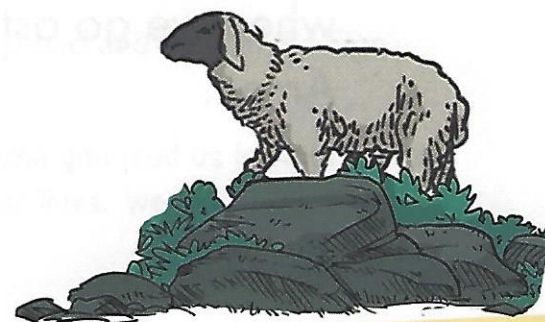
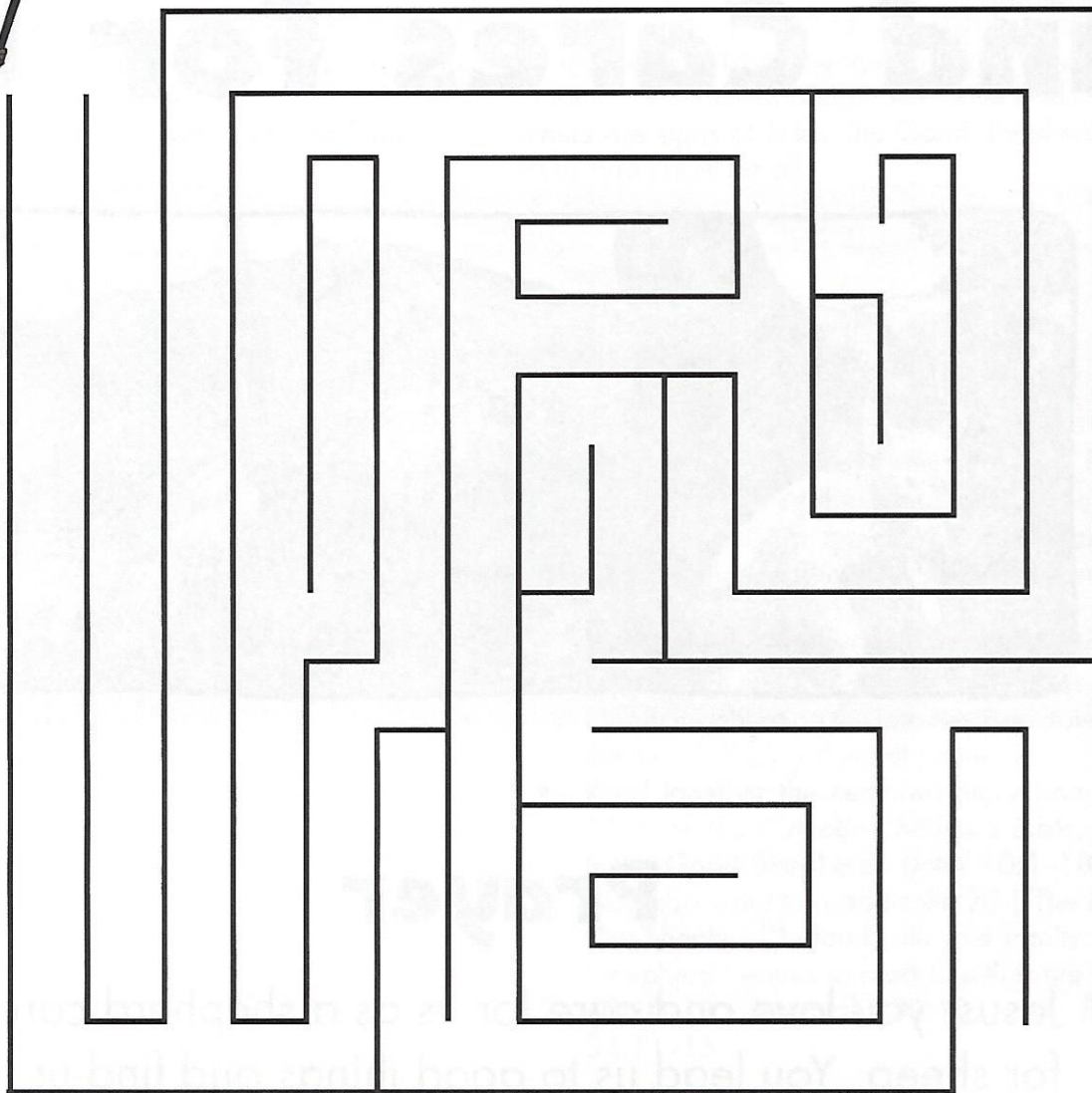


Prayer

Jesus, you love and care for us as a shepherd cares for sheep. You lead us to good things and find us when we go astray. Help us to follow you always. Amen.



The sheep in this picture has gone astray. Help the shepherd find it!





Fill the blanks in the sentences by choosing a word from this list:

possible

penance

Contrition

sin

encouragement

1. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we tell God that we are sorry by saying an Act of

_____.

2. We promise not to _____ again.

3. After we confess our sins, the priest may give us some words of advice or _____.

4. The priest gives us a _____, a prayer or good action that shows we will do better.

5. We should do our penance as soon as

_____.

Family Page



Background Focus

In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we are not simply confessing our sins to the priest. We are confessing them to God. The priest is God's representative, who has the power, in God's name, to forgive our sins. In every sacrament, the priest acts in the name of Jesus. Getting to know Jesus as the Good Shepherd helps the children to understand that the priest, who acts in the name of Christ, will welcome them with love and care.

You may want to remind your child that we have many shepherds in our lives. Parents and teachers are shepherds; police and firefighters are shepherds who risk their lives each day to care for the community; your child is a shepherd when he or she looks out for younger children or cares for animals. All of these people who love and care for others are signs of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who loves and cares for all.



Family Strategies

A family is a kind of flock. A flock sticks together and shares both good times and bad. Be sure to plan fun family times for your flock on a regular basis. Make Family Night a routine, and involve the children in planning the activities. As they grow, they will make their own friends and pursue their own activities. Yet they will also know that they have a secure base that is always ready to welcome them home.



Family Activities

- Visit a farm or petting zoo that cares for sheep and lambs. It is always helpful to have hands-on experience of the symbols that Jesus uses in the Gospel. You may also want to watch the YouTube video "The Baa Baa Song (He's the Good Shepherd)" (2:06).
- Find images of the Good Shepherd in your church. If there are none, find images of the Good Shepherd on the Internet, and download them and display them at home.
- Read together the Featured Story from page 1676 of *The Catholic Children's Bible*, "Jesus Is the Good Shepherd" (John 10:1-18). You may also want to read Psalm 23 ("The Lord Is Our Shepherd") aloud with your family. Other "shepherd" verses to read together are Isaiah 40:10-11, Jeremiah 31:10, and Ezekiel 34:11-15.

Pray It!

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Jesus, Good Shepherd, you call us by name and you lead us in right paths. Keep us near you as you guide us through our lives. We ask this in your name, Lord Jesus. Amen.

