

You Are Blessed!

QUICK SESSION OVERVIEW

Opening Prayer.....	5 min
Watch and Discuss; Read and Explore.....	68 min
Show What You Know	10 min
Journal with Jesus.....	5 min
Closing Prayer.....	2 min

OBJECTIVES

- **TO DEMONSTRATE** that we are blessed.
- **TO EXPLAIN** that First Reconciliation is one of many great moments in our journey with God.
- **TO TEACH** how to be grateful and how to share our blessings with others.

FROM DAY ONE IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONVEY TWO THINGS...

- **You care about your students.**
- **You are excited to be on the journey toward their First Reconciliation.**

WELCOME

Introduce yourself. Tell them a few things about you and your life—where you grew up, what football team you support, your hobbies, your favorite flavor of ice cream, and why you decided to be here right now.

Tell them this is the start of a great journey, a journey you feel blessed to be a part of.

Take a few minutes and go around the class, asking each person to say his or her name and favorite color. Many of the children may not know one another. Getting to know each other's names will help to start friendships.

Let them know you are praying for them. Encourage them to start praying for each other.

And remember what Theodore Roosevelt wrote: "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care."



Prayer Icon



Read and Explore



Watch and Discuss



Show What You Know



Journal with Jesus



Time Tracker



OPENING PRAYER

Step-by-Step

- 1 Make the Sign of the Cross together, and read the opening prayer out loud to your class.
- 2 Encourage and allow time for exploration. Give them a chance to dive into the book.
- 3 Have your students turn to the "My name is" page at the beginning of the book and fill out their name and date of their First Reconciliation. It's important for them to feel like this is a special book, just for them. The children will follow your lead. If you make it a big deal, so will they!

Nobody knows exactly what they are doing, but if you act like you do, people will think you do. Even the greatest leaders will tell you this is true.

Decision Point

1

You Are Blessed!

God, our loving Father,
 thank you for all the ways you bless me.
 Help me to be aware that every person,
 place, and adventure I experience is an
 opportunity to love you more.
 Fill me with a desire to change and to grow,
 and give me the grace to become
 the-best-version-of-myself in
 every moment of every day.

Amen.



5 minutes

My Notes:

tip What an awesome opportunity this is to share your faith with young people! Gather everyone for prayer. Each time you pray, encourage everyone to be quiet and respectful of the time for prayer. Utilize silence to create a prayerful moment. Make the Sign of the Cross with reverence. Remember your students are watching you and want to follow your example.

The future is in your hearts and in your hands. God is entrusting you the task, at once difficult and uplifting, of working with him in the building up the civilizations of love.

St. John Paul II



WATCH AND DISCUSS

Step-by-Step

- 1 Introduce the first episode. Tell the children you are excited for them to meet Ben, Sarah, and their pet gerbil, Hemingway.
- 2 Watch Episode 1.
- 3 Explore the illustration. Ask the students: "Who is the King in this picture?"
 - GOD
 - "What is his family called?"
 - THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Young people want to be loved, not because of how they look or what they can do for another person, but simply for who they are. That is how God loves us. Our yearnings to be loved are a yearning for God.

Decision Point

2

Welcome

Welcome. We are beginning a great journey!

You are a child of God. You are part of the largest and most famous family in the world: the Catholic Church. You are blessed.

God wants you to always feel welcome in his presence, in his Church, and as a member of his family.

You are the son or daughter of a great King.

You may think of yourself as a boy or a girl, as young or old, as black or white, as American or Chinese, but first and foremost, you are a child of God. He is the great King, and you are his son or daughter. We all have this in common. God is our Father.



7 minutes

My Notes:

The day you learn to surrender yourself totally to God, you will discover a new world . . . You will enjoy a peace and a calm unknown, surpassing even the happiest days of your life.

Blessed Jaime Hillario

3



READ AND EXPLORE

Step-by-Step

- 1 Read this section out loud to your students.
- 2 Share with the students some of the best gifts you have ever received. Try not to focus on material blessings. Instead, focus on blessings that often go unnoticed.
Examples:
 - AIR TO BREATHE
 - EARS TO LISTEN
 - A FAVORITE MEAL
 - SUNSETS
 - FAMILY
 - AND THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL, LIFE

Without gratitude, what was extraordinary yesterday becomes ordinary today.

Rediscover Jesus

You Are Blessed

You are blessed. What does it mean to be blessed? It means that God loves you and showers you with gifts.

You are blessed in so many ways, but every blessing you experience flows from the first blessing. You are a child of God. This is the original blessing.

What's the best gift you have ever received?

You may think it is a bike, a baseball bat, a dress, a bracelet, or a video game. But this is not true.

The best gift you have ever received is LIFE. Life makes every other gift possible. Without life, you wouldn't be able to enjoy any other gift!

This is just one of a thousand reasons why life is sacred. God loves life.

The very first thing we read about in the Bible is how God created everything. Then God looked at all he had created and said, "It is good" (Genesis 1:31).

You are blessed in so many ways, but every blessing flows from the blessing of life.

You may be blessed to run like the wind, but if God had not given you life, you wouldn't be able to do that. You may be blessed to eat ice cream, but only because God gave you the original blessing.

You may be blessed to sing like an angel, but only because God gave you life first.

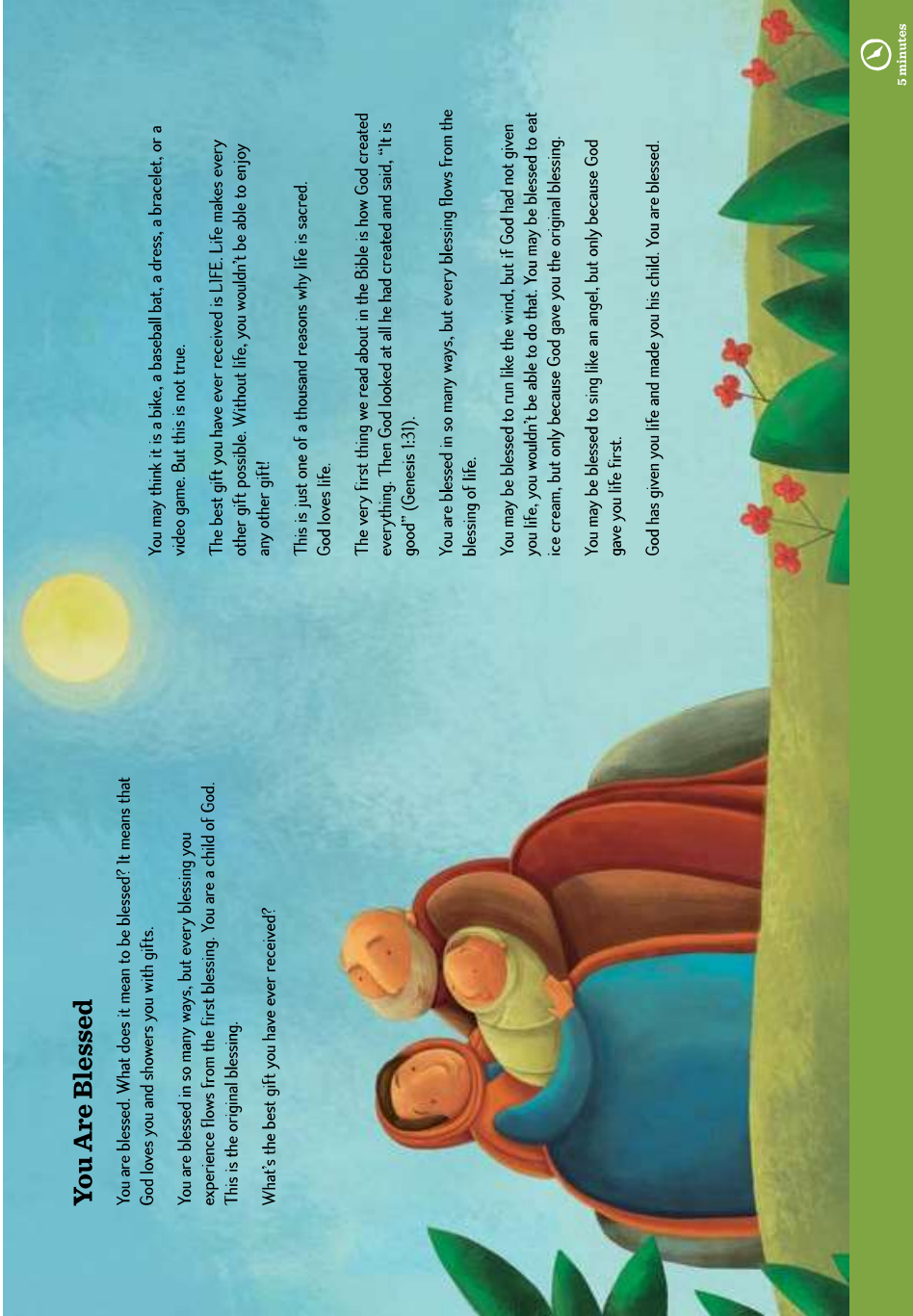
God has given you life and made you his child. You are blessed.



My Notes:

God has sent you as workers into his harvest that through your ministry, faith may be preserved and love may grow.

St. Vincent Pallotti





WATCH AND DISCUSS

Step-by-Step

- 1 Introduce Episode 2 by saying: "We are blessed in so many ways, but Ben and Sarah are going to share the greatest blessing of all!"
- 2 Watch Episodes 2 and 3
- 3 Ask the students: "Can you name the blessings in your life?" Write these blessings on the board. Keep going until the children have named a total of 50 blessings.
If they get stuck, suggest:
life, family, friends, school, a favorite toy, food, a favorite sport, music or an instrument, good health, a favorite pet, the Earth, being healthy, summer vacation, Christmas, Easter, a comfy bed, America, and God

Count Your Blessings

There is an ancient Jewish saying, "Count your blessings!" Jewish rabbis encourage their people to count their blessings each day and see if they can get to one hundred.

Counting our blessings leads us to gratitude. When we count our blessings, we become full of joy and gratitude. God loves a grateful heart. As children of God we should try to begin and end each day with gratitude.

God blesses us in lots of ways. When we count our blessings we are really saying THANK YOU to God for all the fabulous talents, things, people, experiences, and opportunities he gives us.

When someone asks, "How are you?" rather than just saying "good" or "fine," you can say, "I am blessed!" It helps us to remember this, and it reminds others that they are blessed, too.

What are some of the ways God has blessed you?



15 minutes

My Notes:

tip One of the most powerful habits for a young person is to develop an attitude of gratitude. Counting blessings leads to gratitude. From time to time, have your children count their blessings.

Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.

St. Teresa of Calcutta



READ AND EXPLORE

Step-by-Step

- 1 Have the children fill out the Gratitude List. If they have a hard time, refer to the list on the board that the class made together. Be sure they spend no more than 5 minutes filling out their list.

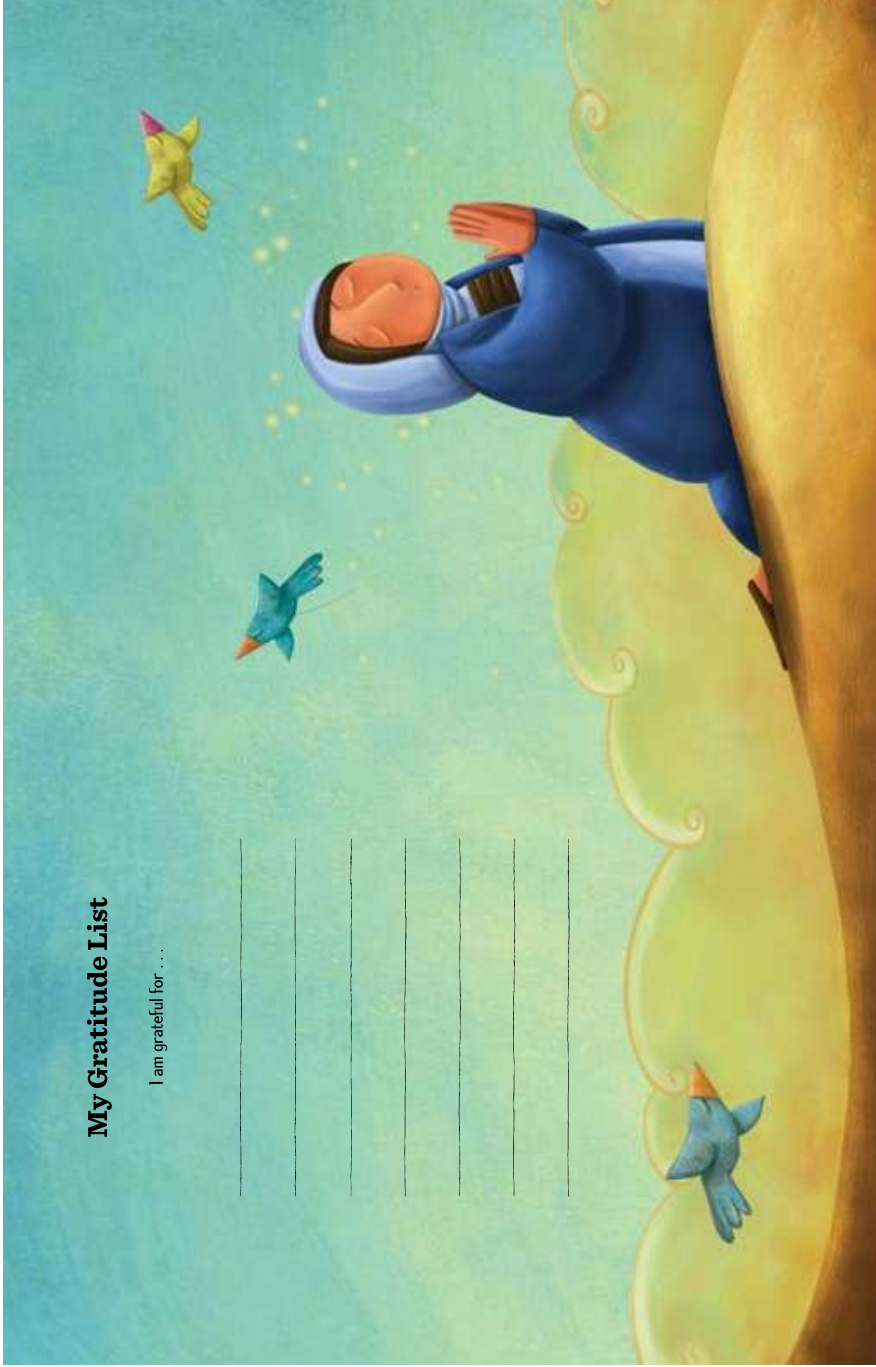
My Gratitude List

I am grateful for . . .

tip Your students should continue to add to the Gratitude List in the workbook throughout the course of their preparation. Any time they want to add something to the list, encourage them to share with the class.

Gratitude reminds us of what matters most and what matters least, and fills us with resolve to carry on the great mission God has entrusted to us.

Resisting Happiness



5 minutes

My Notes:

For those who love, nothing is too difficult, especially when it is done for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Ignatius of Loyola