

# Theme 4: The Holy Family

1: The Holy Family lived in Nazareth .....p. 108  
2: The Holy Family visited Jerusalem.....p. 114

## FROM THE CURRICULUM

Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland (2015)

During this theme of work, the children will engage with the following knowledge and concepts:

### Christian Faith

#### Mystery of the Church

- Jesus, Mary and Joseph are the Holy Family of Nazareth

### Word of God

#### Bible

- Jesus listened to Scripture when he was a child
- We learn about Jesus from the Bible
- Jesus, God's own Son, is the most important person in the Bible

#### Sacred Scripture: God's Loving Plan of Salvation

- Daniel in the Lion's Den (Dn 6:16-23)

### Liturgy and Prayer

#### Prayer: Formal Prayer

- *Night Prayer*

#### Prayer: Additional Prayers

- *Prayer to the Holy Family*

# Introduction

Jesus grew up in a Jewish household, in a society where the extended family was important and the women took care of the children. At around the age of eight, he would have been introduced to the wider world, where he experienced the authoritarian role that was customary for men at that time. It was in this context that his views about life and his values were formed – from his mother Mary and her husband Joseph, and from the other families in the neighbourhood. It is interesting to note that Jesus would later come to criticise the domination of patriarchal authority, seeking to replace dominion over others with mutual service (cf. Matthew 23:9). He also challenged the situation of women. They were very much second-class citizens. Every woman belonged to someone and ownership was passed on from father to husband. Later Jesus stood up against such discrimination, recognising the inherent dignity of women (cf. Luke 13:16) and counting them among his disciples.

The Gospels do not tell us anything about Jesus after the story of the 'Finding in the Temple' until he emerges about eighteen years later, as an adult. We can only imagine that in the intervening period, Jesus' relationship with Mary and Joseph helped him to grow in his own sense of identity as the Son of God.

The Holy Family provides a model for how we ought to live: they loved God and one another. Families are 'schools of love'. In them, we learn the art of how to receive and share love. God's love is mediated to us through the love of our families, in the messiness and ordinariness of family life. The family is, then, the Church in microcosm – a place of encounter with God.

## TEACHER REFLECTION

*The Holy Family of Nazareth [is] the model and example for the Christian family. The mystery of the Word of God's becoming incarnate within a family reveals how it is the privileged place for God's revelation to humanity. In fact, the family is acknowledged to be the ordinary and everyday place to encounter Christ.*

**Synod of Bishops, *The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelisation***



## PRAYER SPACE

Place the following items in the prayer space as you begin this theme:

- Green cloth (Ordinary Time)
- Bible, open at Luke 2
- Candle

As the theme progresses, the following items should be added to the prayer space:

### 1: The Holy Family lived in Nazareth

- Pictures of the children's homes (*Let's Look Art Activity*)

### 2: The Holy Family visited Jerusalem

- Poster 6: The Holy Family



## TEACHER NOTES

### Faith Words

Jerusalem, Nazareth, Passover

### Learning Through Play

A station based on family/home life: a doll's house, play kitchen, dolls and cots, etc.

### Inter-Religious Link

#### Did you know?

In this theme, children are introduced to the Scripture story, 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple'. This story describes how Jesus, Mary and Joseph went to the temple during the week of the Passover festival. Jews today still celebrate Passover, beginning with the Seder Meal, which commemorates the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Israel.

### Differentiation

Children who are gifted and talented may enjoy researching more about Israel at the time of Jesus using websites or library books. You will find some weblinks for this purpose on the *Grow in Love* website.

# 1: The Holy Family lived in Nazareth

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

The Holy Family refers to Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The Church asks us to remember this family in a special manner on the first Sunday after Christmas, the Feast of the Holy Family. Mary and Joseph cooperated with God's plan for the world. They were invited and they said 'yes' to playing their part in the birth and rearing of Jesus, the Son of God.

We often think of Jesus as divine and a wondrous miracle worker. This is true, but it is important to remember that he was also human – a baby and then a boy. Like other children, he

had to learn to walk, to sleep through the night, to share his toys, to say his prayers, to make up his mind and to forgive others. He learned these things, and more besides, from Mary and Joseph. We celebrate and honour the Holy Family because they give us an example of how to respond to God's love and how to share that love with one another.

This week we hope the children will understand more fully the family context of Jesus' life. He grew up in a family in Nazareth and was loved by Mary and Joseph.

## OBJECTIVES

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Understanding:*
  - » Identify Jesus, Mary and Joseph as the Holy Family of Nazareth
  - » Compare their home with the house that Jesus, Mary and Joseph lived in
- *Communicating and Participating:*
  - » Describe some of the things that the Holy Family did together

### FAITH FORMATION GOALS

- That the children would also:
- Recognise God's presence in their own families
  - Ask God to bless their families

## YOU WILL NEED

- The template on p. 121 photocopied for each child (*Let's Look Art Activity*)
- The prayer card template on p. 122 photocopied, so that there is one for each child (*Let's Live Art Activity*)

## AT A GLANCE

### Let's Look

#### CHATTING

- About Homes

#### ART ACTIVITY

- Our Homes

#### PRAYER

- *Night Prayer*

### Let's Learn

#### CHATTING

- About Jesus' Home

#### SONG

- 'When Jesus Was a Boy'

#### SLIDESHOW

- The Holy Family

#### CHILDREN'S BOOK

- In School, p. 24
- At Home, p. 25

#### SCRIPTURE

- 'Daniel and the Lions'

### Let's Live

#### ART ACTIVITY

- Prayer Cards

#### PRAYER

# Let's Look ...

## CHATTING

### About Homes

Begin by recalling the three families from the story 'Saturday' (Theme 1). You might like to re-read the story. Then tell the children about the homes that each of the families live in: Tom and Liam live in a house on a farm; Sophie and Nana live in an apartment; and Adom and Ama live with their mum in a housing estate. Chat with the children about this aspect of the story using these or similar questions:

- Are any of the homes in the story the same as the home that you and your family live in?

Which one? What other types of homes do people live in?

- Do you know the name of the place where your family lives? Tell us.
- What comes into your mind when you think of your home? Who comes into your mind when you think of your home?

### Teacher Tip:

Just as we emphasised that every family is different, we also want to recognise that every home is different. Try, therefore, to be as inclusive as possible in naming the different types of homes that families live in, and to use the term 'home' rather than the term 'house'.

## ART ACTIVITY

### Our Homes

Distribute the template on p. 121 to each child. Ask children to draw a picture of their home on it. Then, using the Artist's Chair technique, choose some children to show the class their picture and to talk about their home.



### Teacher Tip:

Photocopy the template on p. 121 for each child in advance.

### Prayer Space:

Display all the pictures near the prayer space using the caption 'God bless our homes.'

## PRAYER

### Night Prayer

*Sign of the Cross*

**T:** This week, we are going to learn the beginning of a new prayer. We can say this prayer when we are leaving school and when we are getting ready to go to bed. It helps us to say 'thank you' to God for his love, for our family and for our friends. You can say each line of the prayer after me:

God our Father, I come to say  
Thank you for your love today.  
Thank you for my family,  
And all the friends you give to me.

*Sign of the Cross*

### Teacher Tip:

Pray this part of the *Night Prayer* every day this week.

# Let's Learn ...

## CHATTING

### About Jesus' Home

Introduce the picture of Jesus' home using Poster 6. Chat about it using these or similar questions:

- Does anyone remember the name of the town where Jesus grew up? Do you remember his mother's name? What was her husband's name?
- Does Jesus' home look like your home? What's different? What's the same?



## SONG

### 'When Jesus Was a Boy'

Introduce the song 'When Jesus Was a Boy' (Track 9, p. 120) to the children and chat about the words. You can sing this song throughout the week.

## SLIDESHOW



### The Holy Family

Begin by drawing the children's attention to Poster 6, and help them to name the ways in which Jesus' home was different to their homes. Then tell the children that Jesus, Mary and Joseph were called 'The Holy Family' because they were very close to God. In fact, they were closer to God than

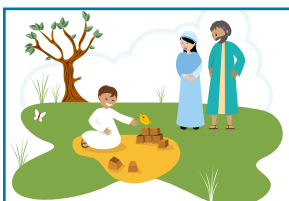
any other family who ever lived or ever will live, because Jesus was not only Mary's son, he was God's Son too.

Then show the children the slideshow of the Holy Family at home in Nazareth. Chat about each of the pictures using these or similar questions:



#### Picture 1: The Holy Family works together

- What job do you think Joseph had? What are he and Jesus doing together in this picture?
- Did you ever help a person you live with to do a job? Tell us about it.



#### Picture 2: The Holy Family plays together

- What is Jesus playing with in this picture? What are Mary and Joseph doing? Why do you think they are laughing?
- Have you ever made anything using blocks? Tell us about it.



#### Picture 3: The Holy Family eats together

- What is the Holy Family doing in this picture? What are they eating? What are they drinking?
- What is your favourite food to eat?

#### Picture 4: The Holy Family gets water from the well

- What do you think Jesus and Mary are doing in this picture? Why do they need to do that? Why don't they just use taps?



#### Picture 5: The Holy Family prays together

- What do you think Jesus, Mary and Joseph are doing in this picture?
- Do you ever pray with someone that you live with? What prayers do you say together?



This is a prayer that Mary, Joseph and Jesus might have said together. Let's pray it together:

Holy are you  
Holy is your name  
O Lord our God.

## CHILDREN'S BOOK

### In School

P. 24: This week the children learned about the life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Holy Family of Nazareth. On this page they select the house that the Holy Family lived in, and draw a picture of them in front of it.



### At Home

P. 25: Families are asked to chat about the similarities and differences between their family life and the family life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Together, they circle the things that they like to do together.



## SCRIPTURE

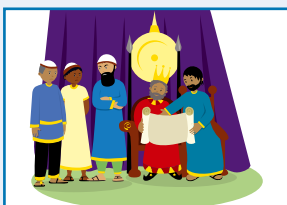
### 'Daniel and the Lions'

Begin by reminding the children that Jesus, Mary and Joseph prayed together. Mary and Joseph also told Jesus stories about God. Encourage the children to name the book from which we read stories about God and Creation. Explain that Jesus

listened to stories from the Bible when he was a child. Tell the children that you will now read them one of the stories that Jesus would have heard. Then read 'Daniel and the Lions'.



#### 'Daniel and the Lions' (Adapted from Daniel 6)



There was once a king whose name was Darius. He was king of a place called Babylon. Darius had lots of helpers. One of them was a man called Daniel. He was Darius's chief helper, and a lot of the king's other helpers did not like him because he was the king's favourite. So as a way to get rid of him, and knowing that

There was once a king whose name was Darius. He was king of a place called Babylon. Darius had lots of helpers. One of them was a man called Daniel. He was Darius's chief helper, and a lot of the king's other helpers did not like him because he was the king's favourite. So as a way to get rid of him, and knowing that

Daniel would be faithful only to God, they encouraged King Darius to make a new law. 'You are such a wonderful king,' they said. 'You should make a rule that for the next thirty days everyone must pray only to you. If they disobey, they will be thrown into the lions' den.' King Darius made the new law, but Daniel kept praying to God because Daniel loved God. The king's helpers caught him praying. They told King Darius, 'Now you must throw Daniel into the lions' den!' The king knew he had been tricked, but he had to obey his new law. So Daniel was thrown into the lions' den. But he was not afraid.

He knew God would take care of him. King Darius told Daniel, 'I hope your God will save you'. That night, the king could not sleep. He was too worried about Daniel. At sunrise, the king hurried to the lions' den. 'Has your God saved you from the lions?' he called. 'Yes!' answered Daniel, 'my God sent his angel to protect me.' So Daniel returned to the palace. Then King Darius ordered everyone to honour and respect God.



After reading the story, check for understanding using questions such as 'What is a den?' Then dig deeper using these or similar questions:

- What is your favourite part of this story? Why? I wonder ... how was Daniel able to be so brave? What do you think helped him?
- I wonder ... do you think Jesus liked it when Mary or Joseph told him this story? Why or why not? What do you think he liked or didn't like about it?
- Does anyone ever tell you stories from the Bible? Who?



# Let's Live ...



## WHAT HAVE YOU TAUGHT?

Jesus, Mary and Joseph are the Holy Family of Nazareth. Mary and Joseph cared for Jesus in many of the same ways that parents/guardians care for their children today.

## ART ACTIVITY

### Prayer Cards

Remind the children that the Holy Family was a very special family, but God blesses *every* home and family.

Distribute the prayer card on p. 122 to each child. It reads 'God bless my family'. Invite the children to colour this in and to bring it home. Chat about where they might display it in their home

(for example, on the fridge door). Encourage the children to pray the words every time they see the prayer card.



**Teacher Tip:** Photocopy the template on p. 122 in advance so that there is one prayer card for each child.

## PRAYER

*Sign of the Cross*

**T:** Let's ask God to bless our families by saying together, 'God bless our families'.

**C:** God bless our families.

**T:** We think of grannies and grandads ...

**C:** God bless our families.

**T:** We think of mums and dads, and any other grown-ups we live with ...

**C:** God bless our families.

**T:** We think of brothers and sisters ...

**C:** God bless our families.

**T:** We think of aunts and uncles ...

**C:** God bless our families.

**T:** We think of cousins ...

**C:** God bless our families.

**T:** Loving God,

Thank you for all the ways in which you bless our families.

Keep us all safe from harm.

Let's say the first part of our *Night Prayer* together:

**All:** God our Father, I come to say

Thank you for your love today.

Thank you for my family,

And all the friends you give to me.

*Sign of the Cross*

# 2: The Holy Family visited Jerusalem

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem every year to celebrate the feast of Passover (cf. Luke 2:41). This is a celebration of God's liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. When Jesus was twelve years old, he went with Mary and Joseph. After the celebrations, he stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing (cf. Luke 2:43). Three days later, they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers. He was 'listening to them and asking questions' (Lk 2:46). But Luke is telling us more than that. He is intimating that Jesus had a sense of his identity

early on in his life. In reply to his mother's complaint, 'Your father and I have been terribly worried trying to find you' (Lk 2:48), he says, 'Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house?' (Lk 2:49). Here, Jesus is referring to God as his father in a familiar and intimate manner. It is this relationship that will come to define his life and mission.

This week, we want the children to become familiar with the story of 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple' as the basis upon which to begin to understand Jesus' identity and mission.

## OBJECTIVES

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Understanding:*
  - » Explore the story 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple'
  - » Imagine how Mary and Joseph felt when they found Jesus
- *Communicating and Participating:*
  - » Tell the story 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple' in their own words, according to their own ability
  - » Pray the *Night Prayer*
  - » Participate in a prayer service in honour of the Holy Family

### FAITH FORMATION GOALS

- That the children would also:
- Relate to the person of Jesus in Bible stories
  - Develop a love for Bible stories

## AT A GLANCE

### Let's Look

#### CHATTING

- About Pictures

#### PRAYER

- *Night Prayer*

### Let's Learn

#### SCRIPTURE

- 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple'

#### DRAMA ACTIVITY

- Role Play

#### INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY

- Sequencing the Story

#### CHILDREN'S BOOK

- In School, p. 26
- At Home, p. 27

### Let's Live

#### CHATTING

- About Jesus

### Prayer Service

#### END OF THEME PRAYER SERVICE

- This prayer service is designed to take up one class period

# Let's Look ...

## CHATTING

### About Pictures

Begin by showing the children Poster 6, and assess what they can recall about the Holy Family. Then display the picture of Mary and Joseph looking worried. Chat with the children about it using these or similar questions:



- Look at this picture of Mary and Joseph. How do they look? Why do you think they look like that? What do you think has happened?
- Who else would you expect to see in this picture? I wonder ... where is Jesus?
- Was there ever a time when you couldn't find your family? Tell us about it.



Then display the picture of Mary, Jesus and Joseph together again and happy. Chat with the children about it using these or similar questions:

- Now look at this picture of the Holy Family. How do Mary and Joseph look this time? What words would you use to describe them? How do you think they feel?
- Do you remember a time when you were really happy to be with your family? Tell us about it.



### Prayer Space:

Display Poster 6 in the prayer space

## PRAYER

### Night Prayer

*Sign of the Cross*

**T:** This week, we are going to learn the second part of the *Night Prayer*. Let's say the first part of the prayer together.

**All:** God, our Father, I come to say  
Thank you for your love today.  
Thank you for my family,  
And all the friends you give to me.

**T:** The second part of the prayer asks God to mind us throughout the night. You can say each line after me.

Guard me in the dark of night,  
And in the morning send your light. Amen.

*Sign of the Cross*

### Teacher Tip:

Pray the *Night Prayer* every day this week.

# Let's Learn ...

## SCRIPTURE

### 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple'

Tell the children that you would like to read them a story about a time when Mary and Joseph could not find Jesus. Tell them that this story comes from

the Bible, the holy book from which we read stories about God. Then read the story 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple'.



#### 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple'

(Adapted from Luke 2:41-50)



Every year, Mary and Joseph went on a journey to a city called Jerusalem for a festival called Passover. Lots of other families went

to Jerusalem too. While they were there, they went to the temple. The temple was a big stone building where the people went to pray, and to listen to stories from the Bible. The temple was also a special place where they could say thanks to God for his love.

One year, when Jesus was about twelve years old, he went to Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph. Jesus was looking forward to it, even though it took days and days to get there! The city of Jerusalem was very crowded when the families arrived. Lots and lots of people had come to say thanks to God.

After a few days, Mary, Joseph and the other families started to make their way

back to Nazareth. They couldn't see Jesus, but they thought he was with some of their neighbours and friends, so they continued on. Mary and Joseph travelled for a whole day before they realised that no one knew where Jesus was. They became very worried. As quickly as they could, Mary and Joseph went back to Jerusalem to look for Jesus. They looked and they looked, but they could not find him. They were very upset.

Finally, three days later, Mary and Joseph found Jesus. He was in the temple, sitting with the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. The teachers were amazed that he knew so much. Mary ran to Jesus. 'Son, why have you done this to us?' she asked. 'Joseph and I have been terribly worried trying to find you.'

Jesus answered them, 'Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house?'

No one was quite sure what Jesus meant. Mary and Joseph looked at each other. Then they took Jesus by the hand and started on the long journey home to Nazareth.

#### Teacher Tip:

If a child from a faith tradition other than Christian is in your class, this might be an opportunity to invite him/her to tell the other children about the place where their family goes to pray.

After reading the story, check for understanding using questions such as 'How did Mary feel when she couldn't find Jesus?' Then dig deeper using these or similar questions:

- The Holy Family and their friends and neighbours went to the temple in Jerusalem to pray to God. Does anyone in this class go to a special place to pray to God? Tell us about it.

- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they couldn't find Jesus? What do you think they said to each other?
- I wonder ... what do you think are some of the things that Jesus said about God to the teachers in the temple?

## DRAMA ACTIVITY

### Role Play

Divide the children into pairs and assign to one the role of Mary and to the other the role of Joseph. Ask them to act out the conversation they think Mary and Joseph might have had when they discovered that Jesus was missing.

### Teacher Tip:

Choose some of the pairs to act out their conversation for the class.

## INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY

### Sequencing the Story

Pictures related to the story 'The Boy Jesus in the Temple' are presented on screen. Children click each picture and say what is happening, and then drag and drop the pictures to place them in the correct sequence.



## CHILDREN'S BOOK

### In School

P. 26: This week, the children heard the story of how the Holy Family journeyed to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. On this page, they colour the things that the Holy Family needed for their journey.



### At Home

P. 27: Children colour the faces to show how Mary and Joseph felt when they found Jesus. Families are invited to chat about a happy time they spent together, and to pray the *Night Prayer*.



# Let's Live ...

## WHAT HAVE YOU TAUGHT?

Mary, Jesus and Joseph went to Jerusalem for a festival called Passover. While there, they went to the temple to pray to God and to give thanks for all the things that they had received from him.

Once, when Jesus was twelve, Mary and Joseph left Jerusalem without Jesus. After three days, they found him in the temple, talking to the teachers.

## CHATTING

### About Jesus



Show the children the illustration of Jesus talking with the teachers in the temple, and chat with the children using these or similar questions:

- I wonder ... why do you think Jesus was talking to the teachers in the temple? What questions do you think Jesus asked them? Do you think they asked Jesus questions?
- How did Jesus know so much about God? Who did he learn about God from?

Show the children the Bible once again. Tell them that we can learn a lot about God from Jesus, just as the teachers in the temple did. We learn about Jesus from the Bible. He is the most important person in the Bible. He is God's Son, so he can teach us more about God than anyone else.



Then show the children the online picture of Jesus as an adult. Ask them to guess what job Jesus did when he got older. Tell them that Jesus spent his

whole life teaching people about God and God's love for them.



# Prayer Service

Theme:  
Holy Family



If possible, have the children sit around or close to the prayer space. If this is not possible, have the children turn their chairs towards the prayer space.

## Opening Song

'When Jesus Was a Boy' (Track 9, verse one, p. 120)

### Sign of the Cross

**T:** We begin by lighting our candle. Our candle reminds us that God is with us.

### Light candle

For the last few weeks, we have been learning all about the Holy Family of Nazareth. We have a picture of the Holy Family here in our prayer space. Who can remember each of their names?

Choose one child to come forward and point out and name Jesus, Mary and Joseph from the poster in the prayer space.

The Holy Family lived together in Nazareth. Here near our prayer space, we have pictures of many types of homes. The children in this class live with their families in [name some of the places in which the children live].

**T:** Let's listen to a story about the Holy Family of Nazareth.

You can also read this story from *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Luke 2:41-50)

**Every year the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to the festival as usual. When the festival was over, they started back home, but the boy Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. His parents did not know this, they thought that he was with the group, so they travelled a whole day and then started looking for him among their relatives and friends. They did not find him, so they went back to Jerusalem looking for him. On the third day they found him in the Temple, sitting with the teachers, listening to them and asking questions. All who heard him were amazed at his answers. His parents were astonished when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'Son, why have you done this to us? Joseph and I have been terribly worried trying**

**to find you.' He answered them, 'Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand his answer.**

**T:** For a moment, let's close our eyes and picture ourselves back in the time of Jesus. (Pause)

Play Track 3, 'Reflective Music'

**T:** Picture the temple that day, when Jesus was talking to the teachers. (Pause)

See him there, telling them all about God and how much he loves each one of us. (Pause)

Now, watch as Mary and Joseph come in the door and run up to Jesus. Watch as Mary talks to Jesus and as he replies to her. (Pause)

Watch as they hug each other. Look at Mary's face: is she happy? Look at Joseph's face: how does he feel? Now look at Jesus. He is happy to be back with his family. (Pause)

Using your inside voice that no one else can hear, tell God about a happy time your family spent together. (Pause)

Thank God for all the happy times that you have had with your family. (Pause)

Ask the Holy Family of Nazareth to bless your family, and to always keep them safe. (Pause)

Then when you are ready, you can open your eyes again.

Let's finish by saying our *Night Prayer* together. You can say this prayer with your family at home too.

God our Father, I come to say  
Thank you for your love today.  
Thank you for my family.  
And all the friends you give to me.  
Guard me in the dark of night.  
And in the morning send your light. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

## Closing Song

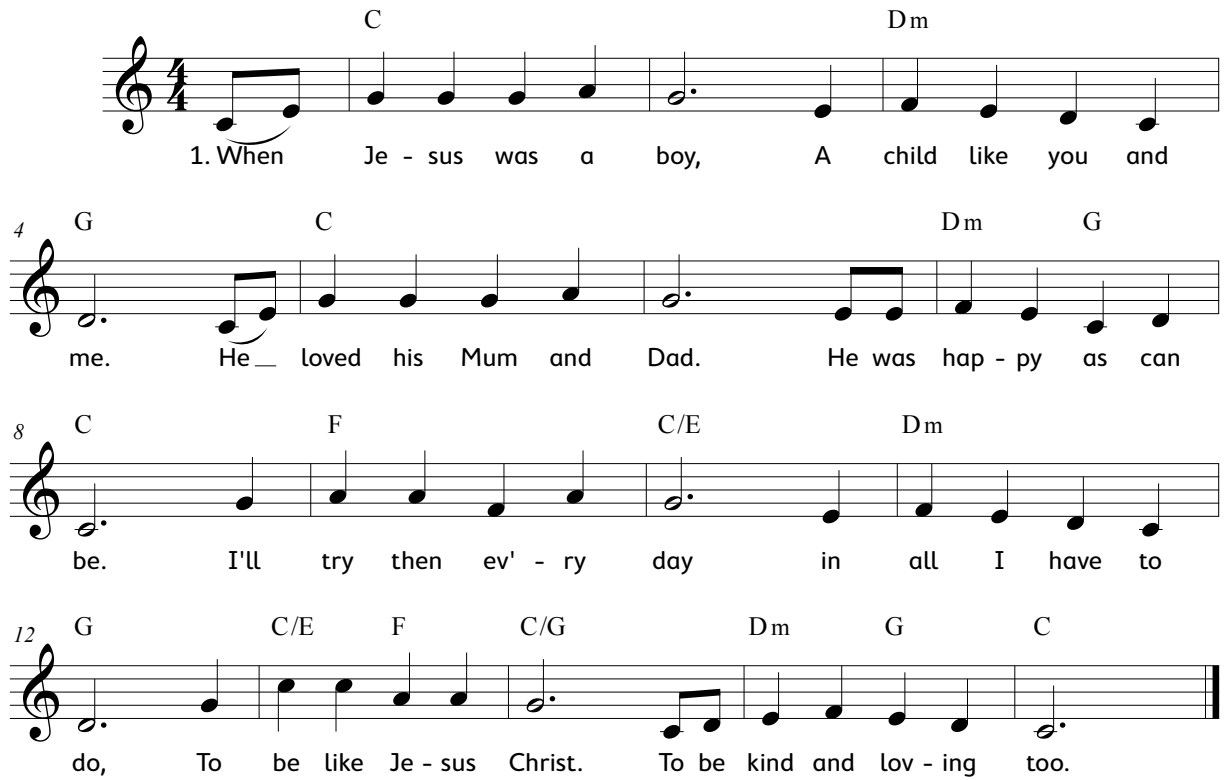
'When Jesus Was a Boy' (Track 9, verse two, p. 120)

### Teacher Tip:

Have Track 3, 'Reflective Music', ready to play in background when the children begin to engage in meditative prayer.

# When Jesus Was a Boy

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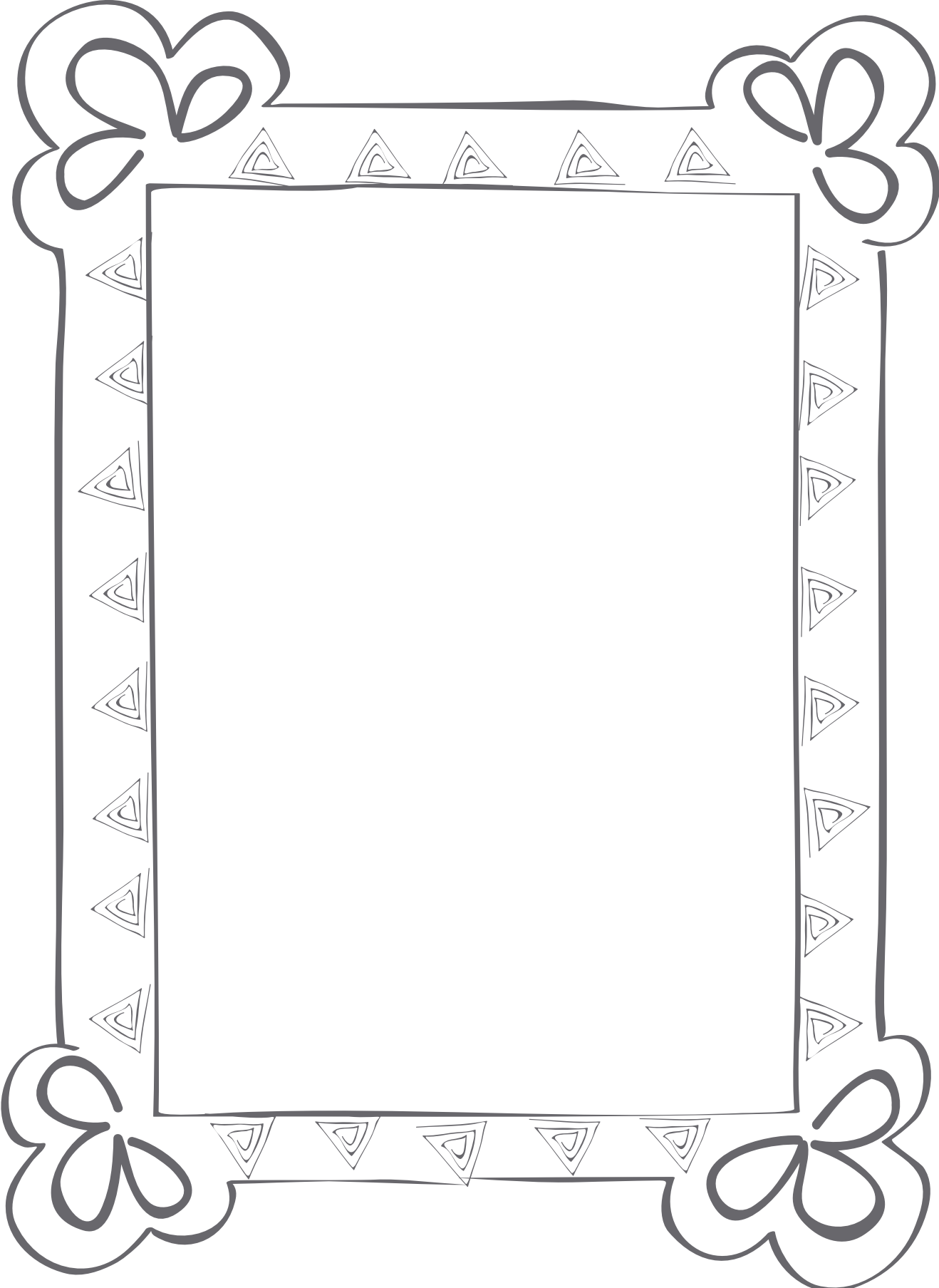


1. When Je - sus was a boy, A child like you and me. He - loved his Mum and Dad. He was hap - py as can be. I'll try then ev' - ry day in all I have to do, To be like Je - sus Christ. To be kind and lov - ing too.

2. When Jesus was a boy  
 A child like you and me  
 He was good and kind to all  
 As a little child should be  
 I'll try then ev'ry day  
 In all I have to do  
 To be like Jesus Christ  
 To be kind and loving too



# This is my home



**God bless  
my family**



**God bless  
my family**



**God bless  
my family**



**God bless  
my family**

