

EARTHKEEPERS

Crafts & Activities

The following pages include crafts, stories, and activities with worksheets to help the children better understand each day's theme. Choose from among the activities, depending on your available time and the age of the group.

Saint Prayer Cards

Note that we have provided printable saint prayer cards to accompany each of the three saint stories. Print them on cardstock or laminate them so they will last.

More Options

Additional activity options are available on the CreationCareKids.com website and more will be added there, so be sure to check back.

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St. Kateri Tekakwitha image adapted from picture by Kokodyl on Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike license.

SAMPLE - DO NOT REPRODUCE

Upcycled Shopping Bags

☑ Preparations

Gather the following materials:

- One reusable shopping bag per child
- Scraps of felt and fabric
- Sewing scissors
- A variety of buttons (optional)
- Cloth markers (optional)
- Needles and thread (optional)
- Adhesive-tech glue gun

👉 Decorating the Bags

- Each child will decide how to personalize their family's shopping bag.
- They can cut out scraps of felt or fabric in the shapes they want, use markers to draw on the cloth, and/or sew on buttons. Depending on the age and ability of the children, they may even want to stitch words or names onto the bag.
- Encourage them to focus on a theme from the day or week such as "food rules" for not wasting, reducing/reusing/recycling or creation care. For example, they may want to decorate it using images from nature or they might write some food rules on it.
- If sewing isn't an option, you can use an adhesive-tech glue gun to fasten the felt or fabric scraps. Designate an adult or teen volunteer to use the glue gun if you are using that option.

For examples, see: <http://bit.ly/1QAHutc>



St. Martin de Porres

☑ Preparations

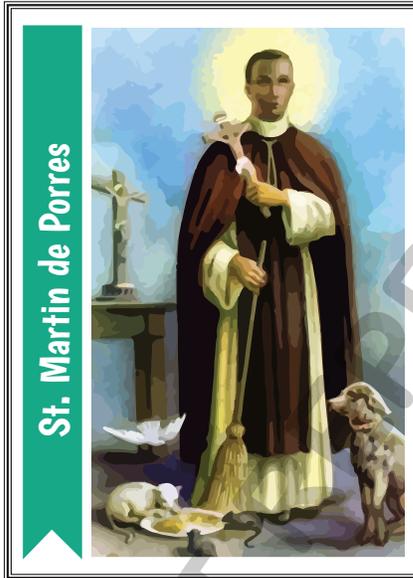
Be sure to have one prayer card for each child.

💬 Who is St. Martin?

Introduce this story about St. Martin de Porres. He lived long ago in Peru (South America).

Pass out the prayer cards and have the children look at the picture of St. Martin. Ask what the items in it might tell us about him:

- **Dog, bird, cat, and mice.** He especially loved animals and tried to help them.
- **Broom.** He saw work as holy and an important way to help people
- **Crosses.** He loved Jesus and Mary and tried to live like they did.



cats. Martin always found ways to feed those who were hungry, people as well as animals. He helped them all, poor and rich, human or not, using his medicines, food, and prayer.

One sunny morning, Martin heard shouting and screaming in the streets. He rushed outside. A fierce bull had escaped from its pen! Now it was thundering through the streets, tossing its head with its sharp horns, its eyes flashing.

Martin stepped into the road, right into the path of the running bull. Martin called out calmly. "Are you frightened, my friend? I can take you back to where you feel safe."

The bull slowed, and then stopped. Martin put a gentle hand on the bull's muscular shoulder and led it home.

Years later, people finally began to see Martin the way God saw him: a loving, holy man who helped all creation.

🌟 St. Martin's Story

This is a story about when he was a boy. Other people bullied him because he had darker skin. This made him unhappy, but he was still caring toward others, and he always knew God loved him.

Martin loved God and all creation. He studied plants, learning that some could become medicines for people or animals. He made medicines for upset stomachs and headaches, and some that healed cuts. Soon people brought him babies with fevers and children with earaches. He helped people with rashes, coughs and broken arms. Some even brought him sick dogs and

💬 Who is St. Martin?

Ask the children to retell the story of St. Martin in their own words.

Then ask what things Martin did that made him a good caretaker. For example:

- He healed sick animals and people.
- He fed hungry animals and people.
- He calmed down an angry bull.

End by praying the prayer on the cards together.

Squirrel Story

Taking More than We Need

Remind the kids about the Bible story today, where God taught people not to take too much. When we take too much, it's not good for the world, other people, or ourselves!

Then read this story about a squirrel that ate too much.

A Squirrel Story

There once was a squirrel that was good at finding nuts and seeds to eat. He searched for acorns and buried them for his winter food. He was healthy and happy.

One fine autumn day, the squirrel noticed some ripe grapes hanging from a fence. There were so many!

Being a smart squirrel, he knew he could not store grapes like acorns. If he was going to eat them, he must do so now. That squirrel climbed up the fence faster than you can say, "grape jelly!"

He bit into one. It was sweet. It was juicy. How he enjoyed it! So he ate another... and another... and another and... another...

Evening was coming on when the squirrel realized he felt very sick. Slowly he climbed down the fence and headed to his nest in a hole in a nearby tree. All night he lay in

his nest of leaves, groaning and tossing and turning. Why oh why had he eaten so many grapes?

In the morning, he heard voices. He peeked out of his nest. There stood the people who had planted the grapes. They looked surprised and disappointed. They had been all ready to pick grapes to make grape jelly. All over the ground were half-eaten grapes and sticky juice. But on the vines, there were not enough grapes left to make jelly.

The squirrel pulled back into his nest. His stomach still felt sick, and even his head hurt. But now it was his heart that felt really badly. He had been selfish. He had eaten so much he had hurt himself. And he had also hurt the people in the house who couldn't make what they needed.

Learning from the Squirrel

Ask the kids about a time in their lives when someone took too much or didn't share so there wasn't enough for everyone. Ask them how that made them feel.

Then ask them to think of times when they have been selfish and haven't shared with someone else. They may not want to admit this out loud, so you can let them know it's ok just to think about it silently.

Tell them God can help us be less selfish and become better at sharing!



Food Choices

☑ Preparations

Print a handout for each child in the session. Note that we have one handout for elementary school children, and another for middle school children.

💬 Creation Care Kids (Younger Kids)

Read through the stories with the kids aloud. Work as a group to complete each exercise, discussing the following questions.

Lunch line choices.

- What will happen to the food Henry threw away?
- Name some of the people who helped make the food that was thrown away: school cooks, delivery truck drivers, workers who built the delivery trucks, farmers and farmworkers who grew and harvested the plants, fruit, and animals.
- Name resources used to make the food that was wasted: lots of water, fuel, time, and human energy.

Cookie choices.

- Being selfish hurts everyone. Though these were only cookies, might Sadie's selfishness hurt someone? How might it hurt her?
- Sometimes commercials or TV shows can make us selfish, because they make us want more things for ourselves (like toys or certain foods). What kind of things do commercials make you want to have?

💬 Creation Care Kids (Older Kids)

Have the children read through these stories and reflect on the questions. There is no "correct" response to these situations, and they are offered to consider the kinds of tough decisions we find in life.

All-you-can-eat choices. Help the children talk through the pros and cons of eating at this kind of restaurant. You might emphasize that this is not a simple decision and that it's not always wrong to eat at this kind of restaurant.

- Here are some pros you might hear:
- Less expensive than other restaurants.

- Lots of food choices.
- You don't have to wait as long for your food.
- Here are some cons you might hear:
- Easy to waste food.
- Can make us feel greedy.

For those who say they would still eat at this kind of restaurant, ask how this discussion might change the way they would eat there.

Food waste. As part of this discussion, you may also want to engage the children more specifically on the topic of food waste.

- What will happen to any food that people at this restaurant don't finish eating?
- Name some of the people who helped make the food that was thrown away: school cooks, delivery truck drivers, workers who built the delivery trucks, farmers and farmworkers who grew and harvested the plants, fruit, and animals.
- Name resources used to make the food that was wasted: lots of water, fuel, time, and human energy.

Shoe sale choices. Have a conversation on the pros and cons of this sale. Again, there's no easy answer. Start by asking why the store has a sale like this (it encourages people to want more things and spend more money than they intended to).

Ask about the pros and cons of this situation. Here are some pros you might hear:

- Costs less money per shoe.
- Get two pairs of shoes instead of one.

Here are some cons you might hear:

- Costs more money total.
- One pair of shoes may be wasted (if it's grown out of before it wears out)

Discount sales like this are not always bad, but encourage the children to think about when they are a good or bad choice (not just for them, but for creation).

💬 Food Rules

End the lesson by reviewing these rules based on the manna story, caring for creation, and caring for others. Ask what they can do to follow these rules better.