



# CREATE & DISCOVER

ART  
& SCIENCE  
LEADER  
GUIDE







## CREATE & DISCOVER LEADER GUIDE

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## Get Connected!



**Pinterest: GrowingUpCatholic**

<https://www.pinterest.com/GrowingUpCatholic/come-to-the-table>

"Come to the Table" board



# WELCOME TO COME TO THE TABLE!

*Come to the Table* is a one-week Vacation Bible School (VBS) curriculum that explores five stories about Jesus from the Gospels of Luke and John. These stories show Jesus eating with unexpected people, providing food for a crowd, demonstrating humility, and extending welcome and forgiveness. When you eat with Jesus, anything can happen!

The curriculum begins with Jesus' parable of the great feast and invites children to journey alongside Jesus as he feeds 5,000 people, befriends a tax collector, washes his disciple's feet, and both forgives and challenges his friend, Peter. Through these stories of Jesus, children learn that everyone is welcome at God's table where there is always enough. *Come to the Table* invites children to see that God loves and welcomes all people and challenges them to share that same love and hospitality in their everyday lives.

Each day begins with the invitation to **COME**. Children will participate in relationship-building activities, songs, prayer, Bible memory, and a dramatic presentation of the Bible story. Then children will **TASTE** by rotating through three activity stations and eating a snack. In closing worship, children will be challenged to **SHARE** the love of God with everyone they meet.

COME (35 min) Children start in small groups and then gather for worship.	TASTE (90 min + snack) Small groups rotate between three activity stations and have a snack.	SHARE (10 min) The large group gathers for worship and dismissal.
<b>Set the Table (10 min)</b> (small groups)  <b>Gather (10 min)</b> (large group, Call to Worship, songs, offering)  <b>The Main Course (15 min)</b> (large group, Bible memory, drama, Table Talk questions, prayer)	<b>Create &amp; Discover (30 min)</b> (art and science projects)  <b>Dig In (30 min)</b> (Bible study)  <b>Sprout (30 min)</b> (active games)  <b>Snack Time (15 min)</b>	<b>Songs</b>  <b>Family Diner Cards</b>  <b>Blessing</b>  <b>Dismissal</b>

## Items you will need:

- Create & Discover Leader Guide*
- Create & Discover supplements*
- Create & Discover Area Poster*

The **supplements** include teaching aids to accompany the leader's guide. Each Create & Discover Leader should be given access to them to print pages for the chosen activities. The Create & Discover supplements include the following:

- Days 1–5 Staple Foods
- Day 1 "Party Popper" Invitations
- Day 1 Feast Placemat Verse
- Day 2 "Chalk Talk" Headlines
- Day 2 "Foil Fish" Template and Photograph
- Day 3 Zacchaeus Figures
- Day 4 Kindness Catchers and Instructions
- Day 4 Foot Treatment Cards
- Day 5 Beaded Fish Instructions

**Media Connections** are included in each guide and posted on the **Growing Up Catholic Pinterest** page for ease of use. Locate the "Come to the Table" board. The items are organized by day.

# WELCOME TO CREATE & DISCOVER!

Create & Discover is one of three 30-minute **TASTE** Activity Stations following **COME** (opening worship). Each Create & Discover session includes art and science explorations and has three parts: Connect, Explore, and Bless.

## CONNECT

Gather the children for a brief recap of the Bible story.

## EXPLORE

Choose from three Create options and two or three Discover options each day. Try to incorporate one Create art project and one Discover science exploration activity each day to allow for varied learning styles, individual preferences, and age-group abilities and interests. Each activity includes “Talk About It” prompts to help you guide conversations with children, connecting the activity to the Bible story and children’s experiences. Media Connections are included for each day.

## BLESS

Work together with the children to clean up materials in preparation for the next group, and then gather the children for a short prayer of blessing.

## TASKS FOR VOLUNTEERS

There are many tasks that volunteers can do before, during, and after each day of VBS. Many people are not able to attend VBS, but they would be happy to donate supplies, prepare craft items, or decorate the room.

### Days 1–5:

- Before:** Print, copy, and cut out items from the supplements.
- Before:** Elicit donations of needed supplies.
- Before:** Prepare samples of Create projects.
- Before:** Preview Media Connections to decide which items to use for Discover.
- Before:** Sprout some rice several weeks before VBS following the instructions in the Discover section.
- During:** Assist children in making Create projects. Clean up between groups.
- During:** Staff the Discover area, supervise use of media, and lead science-related conversations.
- After:** Clean up the activity areas in preparation for the next day. Make sure art projects get to the children to take home.

### Day 1:

- “Party Popper” Invitations:** Save toilet paper tubes and/or paper towel tubes, one per child. Paper tubes can also be made from card stock.

### Day 2:

- “Foil Fish” Suncatchers:** Save cereal boxes (flattened). Print the Day 2 “Foil Fish” Template (supplements) and trace it onto thick cardboard. This template could be sized down or enlarged, depending on the number of

children and cereal boxes you have. One cereal box can make at least eight suncatchers, depending on sizing of the boxes and fish. Older children can use the cardboard template to trace their own fish and cut it out. For younger children, precut all the fish from cereal boxes. Precut pieces of foil that will fit over each fish shape, wrapped fully around.

### Day 3:

- Kernel Mosaics:** Color corn kernels for the mosaics. *Note:* 1 cup / 167 g of corn is enough for about 15 children. You will want several colors. **To color corn:** Pour 1 cup / 167 g corn, 1 cup / 240 ml warm water, 2–3 T / 15–30 ml of vinegar, and 20–30 drops of food coloring into a resealable plastic bag. Soak overnight. Then drain the liquid from the corn and spread out the corn on a cookie sheet lined with paper towels to dry for more than 6 hours.

### Day 4:

- The Foot Treatment:** Collect four-ounce baby food jars, one per child.

### Day 5:

- Mini Campfires:** Cut out cardboard circles that are approximately 4 in / 10 cm in diameter (or larger if you have larger pebbles). Collect small rocks or pebbles and twigs for children to create a mini campfire.

# CREATE

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CREATE LEADER

- Select one or more Create activities for each day, depending on the time, supplies, and number of children involved.
- Print all needed pages from the Create & Discover supplements.
- Coordinate volunteers who can help prepare materials, make samples, and support children as they work on the projects.

- Solicit donations from church members for needed supplies.
- Set up and decorate the Create areas. Hang up the Create & Discover Area Poster.
- Explain craft projects to the children.
- Clean up at the close of each day.

## SETTING UP THE CREATE AREA

In the Create area, children will be making a variety of arts and crafts projects. Place drop cloths under and around tables. Cover tables with disposable tablecloths or newspapers for messy projects. Individual trays or baking sheets will help to contain materials to a specific space.

Provide appropriate table and chair sizes for both younger and older children. It is difficult and unsafe for younger children to sit on their knees at a table that is too big, and it is uncomfortable for older children to sit in small chairs. Be aware that some children also work better when standing rather than sitting still.

Many of the Create projects reflect the values of process art. Process art is child-directed, choice-driven, and celebrates the experience of discovery. In process art, the final product is unique, and the focus is on the creation of the work, not the outcome. Children should be given the freedom of self-expression within the art they create and so no two pieces will look the same. Leaders can guide children by asking them open-ended questions about what they are creating and how it helps them make a connection with God and the Bible stories from the week.

### General supplies that are needed throughout the week:

<input type="checkbox"/> Copy paper, card stock, poster board, and construction paper	<input type="checkbox"/> Paintbrushes
<input type="checkbox"/> Ribbon or yarn (variety of colors)	<input type="checkbox"/> Scissors (include left-handed)
<input type="checkbox"/> Hole punches	<input type="checkbox"/> Stickers
<input type="checkbox"/> Craft glue, hot glue gun	<input type="checkbox"/> Washable inkpads and stamps
<input type="checkbox"/> Washable markers	<input type="checkbox"/> Glitter
<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent markers	<input type="checkbox"/> Tape
<input type="checkbox"/> Crayons	<input type="checkbox"/> Stapler
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercolor paints	<input type="checkbox"/> Basin
<input type="checkbox"/> Washable tempera paint (variety of colors)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Paint smocks (or large T-shirts)	

The daily chart of supplies in each session lists only items that are *in addition to* general art supplies.

Organize supplies so they are easily accessible. Baskets, large cups, and/or plastic utensil caddies can be filled with supplies, such as pencils, markers, or scissors, and placed on tables. Keep paper in a central location. Keep paints, permanent markers, and staplers safely stored away until ready to use. Washable markers and paints are best for younger children. Adult-sized scissors can be used by older children but store them out of reach from younger children.

Have cleanup items available, such as handwipes, paper towels, sponges, and cleaning spray. A hand-held vacuum is helpful but not necessary. Rinse paintbrushes in a sink and air-dry at the end of each day.

### Nurture Creativity and Curiosity Through Conversation

Each Create & Discover activity includes “Talk About It” prompts that will help children make connections between the Bible story, the activity, and their own experiences. Open-ended activities and questions help children to express their own ideas and perspectives. They also help build relationships between the children and leaders. These prompts can be used while the children are working or at the close of an activity.

When talking with children about their artwork, it is common to say things, such as “What a great job!” or “Wow, you’re really creative!” These responses sound positive but are not the most helpful responses to Create activities. Saying “I see that you drew many people in your scene. Who are they?” communicates to a child that you are paying attention and see something unique in what he or she has done. Saying “Tell me about your picture” opens a conversation rather than gives an assessment of what the child did.

# DISCOVER

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISCOVER LEADER

- Set up and decorate the Discover table and book corner.
- Preview and select media. Videos and books are posted on the *Growing Up Catholic* Pinterest page and organized by day for ease of use. See the “Come to the Table” board.
- Go to a library and check out relevant picture books/informational books. A list is included in Media Connections for each day, but your local librarian may also have suggestions.
- Sit at the Discover table and facilitate activities and conversation.
- Supervise the use of technology and ensure the safety of electronic devices.

## SETTING UP THE DISCOVER AREA

The Discover area is designed to be used by small groups for short periods of time, allowing all the children in the group to have an opportunity to visit the area during the 30-minute time frame. Set up a long table next to a wall. Cover it with a tablecloth one might use at a picnic. At one end, set up a laptop, tablet, or other Internet-connected device to show media connections. You may want to provide headphones. Near the table, set up a book corner that has picture books and informational books from your local library. Book suggestions are provided for each day.

To go along with the “Come to the Table” theme, each day highlights different countries or continents and one staple food that is eaten there. Hang a world map on the wall. Each day color or visually highlight the regions listed below. Glue the Days 1–5 Staple Foods (supplements) on the map in the specified countries or continents each day or draw the food on the map yourself.

- Day 1: Rice (North Korea and South Korea)
- Day 2: Wheat (Canada, Romania, Russia, Ukraine and United States)
- Day 3: Corn (Central and South America)
- Day 4: Cassava (Nigeria)
- Day 5: Review

One suggested activity is to sprout rice over the course of the week. If you choose this option, you may want to sprout some additional rice one to two weeks before VBS so children can see how the rice looks when it is farther along in the growing process.

### General supplies that are needed throughout the week:

<input type="checkbox"/> Pencils	<input type="checkbox"/> Days 1–5 Staple Foods (supplements)
<input type="checkbox"/> Paper	<input type="checkbox"/> World map
<input type="checkbox"/> Sticky notes	<input type="checkbox"/> Tablecloth
<input type="checkbox"/> Laptop or tablet with Internet connection	<input type="checkbox"/> Plates, cups, bowls, spoons, knives
<input type="checkbox"/> Headphones (optional)	<input type="checkbox"/> Books

## USING MEDIA CONNECTIONS

Each session includes a variety of media connections, including websites, videos, and books. Add the books to your book corner. Show videos to the entire group or allow children to view them independently using a tablet with headphones.

### ***Tips for Media Use:***

- Preview all video suggestions to be sure they will work for the age and interests of the group.
- Decide how and when you will use media (small group, large group, individuals).
- Set up clear guidelines if children will be viewing media independently. They should only watch items that have been chosen by the leader.

# 1

## DAY 1

# BE OUR GUEST

### Scripture Text:

Luke 14:15–24

### Food for Thought:

Everyone is welcome at God's table.

**"There is room for everyone in the church and, whenever there is not, then, please, we must make room, including for those who make mistakes, who fall or struggle.... The Lord is clear. The sick, the elderly, the young, old, ugly, beautiful, good and bad... Everyone, everyone, everyone!"**

**Pope Francis**  
**August 3, 2023**

### Bible Essay:

Who is welcome at God's table? The answer might surprise you!

The parable of the great feast is the focus of today's session, but the preceding verses offer important background for understanding the parable and the theme of this session. Jesus is having dinner at the home of a prominent Pharisee (a "religiously serious" leader). It is the Sabbath, but that doesn't stop Jesus from breaking Jewish law to heal a man who is sick. Jesus notices that the guests are vying for the important seats at the dinner table. He then teaches the guests that at God's table, the humble are exalted, the stranger is invited, and all are welcome. Social status, wealth, and power don't matter here; come as you are! This is God's table, where the poor, ignored, and excluded receive the extravagant and warm hospitality of God. It's a reminder for us that we should invite and welcome all to our eucharistic celebrations. Jesus doesn't want us to exclude anyone!

Jesus doesn't stop with just a lesson about where to sit and how to treat guests. He tells the dinner guests a parable of a great feast to reveal who God is and what God cares about. This is the focus for children today.

This story, like so many of Jesus' parables, stretches and challenges the listener. The host invites many friends, who initially agree to come, but then some back out on the day of the feast. They have more pressing things to do—visiting a purchased field, trying out some new oxen, enjoying the early days of a marriage.

The host doesn't have patience for these excuses and sends his servant to invite people until his house is full. He specifically tells the servant to look in the streets and alleys to find people who are poor, people who can't walk, and those who can't see. Even after doing this, there is still room. So the servant goes far and wide inviting people until the house is full.

Jesus closes the story by restating the sad reality that not everyone is interested in this alternate way of being in community; some want to carry on with life as usual. It can be hard to embrace a world where the last are first and the least are the greatest, especially if you have been living in a position of privilege.

The good news is that God (the host of the feast) offers an invitation to all people. No one is left out! Everyone is welcome to come to God's table. Those who come do so in response to God's generous hospitality. May all the children in your group experience welcome and hospitality this week!



# DAY 1 AT-A-GLANCE

## Advance Preparation

- Read Luke 14:15–24 and the Bible background essay for Day 1 on page 6.
- Read through the Create & Discover session plan. Choose one or more Create ideas and one or more Discover activities to include, depending on the space, group size, available materials, and amount of time you have. Gather needed supplies.
- Communicate with volunteers about their role and tasks.

## Session Plan

### Connect

Welcome the group and give a brief recap of the Bible story. Refer to the story summary on page 6. Explain the layout of the room and location of the Create & Discover activities.

### Explore

Complete one or more of the Create & Discover activities. Leave time to clean up, return materials to their place, and prepare the space for the next group.

### Create

OPTIONS	SUPPLIES* / TO DO
<b>Feast Placemats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Day 1 Feast Placemat Verse (supplements), one per child</li></ul> <p><b>To do:</b> Print and cut out the Day 1 Feast Placemat Verse, one per child.</p>
<b>"Party Popper" Invitations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Day 1 Invitations (supplements)</li><li>Paper rolls, one per child (toilet paper rolls, paper towel rolls, homemade paper rolls from card stock)</li></ul> <p><b>To do:</b> Customize and print out the Day 1 "Party Popper" Invitations, one per child. Make a sample party popper.</p>
<b>Welcome Table</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Plastic tablecloths</li></ul>

\*In addition to general supplies on pages 4–5

### Bless

Gather the group. Tape the rice picture from the Days 1–5 Staple Foods (supplements) onto North Korea and South Korea on the world map. Say a closing prayer:

**God, we remember your people joining together at tables all around the world today. We pray especially for our Korean neighbors today. We thank you that you welcome all people into your family. Amen.**



### Discover

OPTIONS	SUPPLIES* / TO DO
<b>Sprouting Rice</b>	Supplies for each group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>One large canning jar and ring</li><li>½ cup / 100 g of brown rice</li><li>5-in / 13-cm square of cheesecloth</li></ul>
<b>Food, Glorious Food!</b>	<i>None needed</i>

\*In addition to general supplies on pages 4–5

# CREATE

## Feast Placemats

Create placemats. Provide a dinner plate, fork, knife, spoon, and cup for children to trace onto a piece of 12 x 18 in / 31 x 46 cm paper to create the look of a place setting. Glue the Day 1 Feast Placemat Verse (supplements) to the middle of the plate area. Have a variety of art supplies available. Encourage children to decorate their placemats in an extra special way as if they were going to use them at a feast. Draw favorite foods on the plate. If glue or paint is used, be sure the mats are completely dry before covering them with shelf paper.

**Option for small groups:** Cover the mats with clear adhesive shelf paper for durability and then use them during snack time.

### Talk About It

God's table is a celebration place where everyone is included, and no one is left out. Your placemat can remind you that you have a special place at God's table. If you were to give away the placemat as a way to invite someone to the table, who would you choose?

### Supplies

- Day 1 Feast Placemat Verse (supplements), one per child
- Plates
- Dinner knives
- Forks
- Spoons
- Cups
- 12 x 18 in / 31 x 46 cm construction paper
- Decorating supplies (crayons, markers, food stickers, stamps, paper, flat leaves)

## "Party Popper" Invitations

Create a "Party Popper" Invitation holder with a VBS invitation inside. Customize, print, and then have children color the Day 1 "Party Popper" Invitation (supplements). Roll up the invitation and put it into the paper tube. Cut a piece of tissue paper several inches longer than the toilet paper tube on either side so you can wrap it up like a piece of candy. Use double-sided tape or glue to securely wrap the tissue paper around the toilet paper tube. Children can use hole punchers or rip up small pieces of construction paper to create confetti to put inside the tube. Tie both sides with ribbon.

### Talk About It

In the Bible story for today, Jesus told a story about a person who invited everyone to a banquet. No one was left out. Let's invite our friends to come to Vacation Bible School and/or come to Mass with us on Sundays to experience God's love. Who do you know might want to come? Pass along this invitation after you leave today. Maybe one of your neighbors or family members would be interested.

### Supplies

- Day 1 "Party Popper" Invitations (supplements)
- Markers
- Paper rolls (toilet paper rolls, paper towel rolls, homemade paper rolls from card stock)
- Hole punchers
- Construction paper
- Tissue paper
- Double-sided tape
- Ribbon

## Welcome Table

Spread out a plastic tablecloth with a light color on the table. Provide permanent markers for the group to decorate the tablecloth. Write words of welcome, draw pictures of food to share at a feast, write names of people, or draw pictures of people you'd like to invite. Listen to "Lead Us to Your Table" (supplements) as children draw. Hang the completed tablecloths on the wall or use them as tablecloths for snack time.

### Talk About It

What were the excuses people made in the Bible story? (*I got married. I bought a field and have to go see it. I bought animals.*) The people had important life events happening, or were busy, and missed out on the feast. What are excuses that we might make today? What could we miss if we are too busy?

### Supplies

- Plastic tablecloths with light colors (one or more per rotation)
- Permanent markers

# DISCOVER

## Sprouting Rice

**Note:** If this activity is chosen, it will need a brief amount of time every day.

With the children, pour  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup / 115 g of uncooked brown rice into a large canning jar. (White rice will not work!) Fill the jar with water. Place the sprouting screen (cheesecloth) on the top and secure with the canning jar ring. Ask: “What do you think the rice will look like tomorrow? What will it look like by the end of the week?” Children can draw their hypotheses on sticky notes. Post them on the wall above the jar.

### Talk About It

More than half of the people in the world eat rice as a staple food. A *staple* is a food that makes up most of a population’s diet. About 90% of the rice in the world is grown in these countries: India, China, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Thailand, Vietnam, Burma, the Philippines, Cambodia, and Pakistan. Locate these countries on a map. As you observe sprouting rice this week, think about how the good news is like a seed that has the potential to grow new plants. People around the world sprout seeds, plant seeds, grow food, and then share food together. Who could you share a meal with?

### Supplies (for each rotation)

- One large canning jar and ring
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup / 115 g of uncooked brown rice
- 5-in / 13-cm square of cheesecloth
- Pitcher of water
- Sticky notes
- Pencils
- World map (paper or online)

## Food, Glorious Food!

What would a feast have been like in Jesus’ time? On chart paper, have the group make a list of 10 to 15 foods they think would have been eaten at a feast in ancient Israel. What foods have they heard about in the Bible? (Older children could do this individually.) Then learn about foods from Jesus’ time by looking at the article “Ancient Israelite Cuisine” on Wikipedia. Look specifically at section 3 (Characteristics) and section 4 (Foods). Compare the actual foods to children’s guesses. Another Wikipedia article to read is “Seven Species,” which refers to two grains and five fruits named in the Bible as special crops in Israel. If desired, have children guess what the Seven Species are. They are wheat, barley, figs, grapes, olives, pomegranates, and dates.

**Option:** Watch the “Celebrating Tu BiSh’vat” video or listen to “The Seven Species” song in Media Connections.

### Talk About It

Would you choose to serve any of these Bible-times foods at your party? Why or why not? If not, what would you serve instead? How are the foods we eat different than the foods from Jesus’ time? How are they similar?

### Supplies

- Chart paper or sheets of paper
- Markers
- Laptop or tablet with Internet connection

## Media Connections

- *Bee-Bim Bop!* by Linda Sue Park
- *The Great Feast (My Bible Stories)* by Su Box (for younger children)
- *The Have a Good Day Cafe* by Frances Park and Ginger Park
- “Remarkable Rice: How Does Rice Grow?” by Eat Happy Project (YouTube)
- “How to Sprout Brown Rice” by stealthlikeafox (YouTube)
- “Sharing Thanksgiving with You” by Nazareth Village (YouTube)
- “The Seven Species” by Joanie Calem (YouTube)
- “What Are the World’s Most Important Staple Foods?” article from [www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com)