

CELEBRATING SPECIAL NEEDS

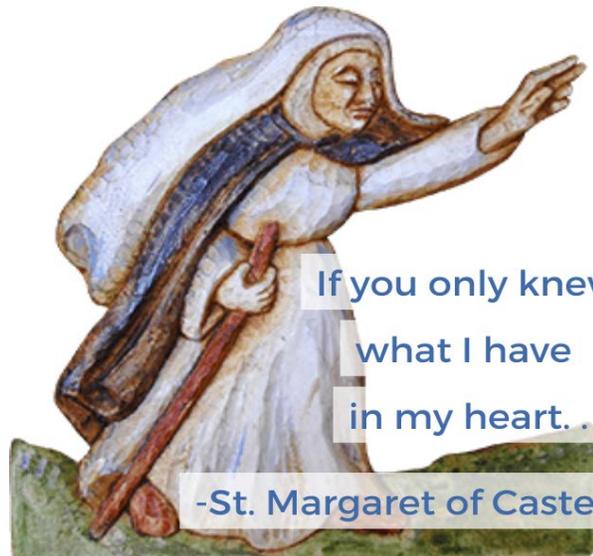
GRADES 1-3 – Lesson 1

GOAL: Students will learn about the importance of respecting those who are different from us. Students will learn about recognizing that every person is unique and made in the image of God, loved for who they are, and their physical appearance or abilities cannot change that.

Lesson:

God makes each person special—a unique creation whom He planned from the beginning of time. God does not make mistakes. God has a special plan for every single person, no matter what our abilities are.

As Christians, it is important that we learn to respect the dignity of every human person, as made in the image and likeness of God. Unfortunately, people with disabilities are often treated poorly by others, and may experience discrimination and bullying. God invites each of us to recognize the incredible gift and dignity of every person, no matter their abilities. Rather than rejecting or being mean to those who are different than us, we can with love and support. We all have unique gifts and struggles, which offer opportunities to help each other.



If you only knew
what I have
in my heart.

-St. Margaret of Castello.

Watch: [You are Special](#)

Tells the story of a little boy made of wood who is treated like an outcast until someone tells him to go visit the man who made him, who loves him just the way he is!

Discussion:

- What did all the Wemmicks have in common?
- Who is Punchinello?
- Why was he given gray dots? How did Punchinello feel once he received all of the gray dots?
- Who were given gold stars?
- What did the Wemmick who had no stickers, Lucia, tell him to do?
- Who is Eli the Wood-carver? What did Eli tell Punchinello?
- Why are we special? (because we're created and loved by God)

Reinforce the message that, because God makes each one of us and creates us for a reason, he gives us everything that we need to fulfill our purpose in this life. Everyone is created by God one-of-a-kind. God does not make mistakes! If someone is born with a disability or a special need, or, is different like Punchinello, God's plan for that person will still create something wonderful!

Ask students if they know anyone with any special needs (in a wheelchair, Down syndrome, autism, blind, uses a cane). What do you have in common with them? Ask them to think of a time someone different from them made them smile or feel loved. Reinforce the gifts of love, joy, and friendship that everyone can share, each in their own special way!

Watch:

- Meet Griffin and Turner in this [Special Books by Special Kids](#) Video

Discussion:

- What makes Turner special? Do Griffin and Turner have fun together?
- How do Turner and Griffin love each other? Are they good brothers?
- How can you help someone with special needs know that he or she was made special by God?

Activity:

- God made each of us special! Have the students form a circle and take turns coming up with a fun and unique action. Have the rest of the group join in for each action while saying the person's name who created it. Repeat the actions and names until everyone has gone. Explain that this is one way we can see how special each person is and the beauty of our differences!

Sing and Dance:

- Sing and dance along with [I Am A Child of God](#)

Prayer:

*Jesus,
Thank you for creating each of us unique and special.
Help me to be kind to people who are different from me.
Help me to welcome new friends and never leave anyone out.*

Amen.