

Meet Pope Francis

Teaching Plan

Teaching Tips

Ahead of introducing *Meet Pope Francis* to the children, take time to familiarize yourself with the contents. Review this handout and how it correlates to the children's resource.

The resource is designed for children to interact with. Have the children follow along as you read aloud, and engage them in hands-on interaction with the resource, as suggested in the teaching steps below.

Background

When Jesus said, "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," he gave Peter an authority that did not end when the Apostle died, but would extend through Peter's successors. Jesus later told his Apostles to "go and make disciples of all nations," assuring them that he would be with them "until the end of the age." This briefly explains why Catholics understand that the pope is part of an unbroken line of authority originating with the Apostles.

Pope Francis is our 266th pope. He has been embraced by Catholics and non-Catholics alike for his humility, simplicity, and especially for his efforts to reach out to the poor, forgotten, and others at the fringes of society. Pope Francis guides us in following Christ's teaching that "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." Invite the children to meet our charismatic Holy Father on these pages and help them see how much he cares for all people—and shows us how to do the same.

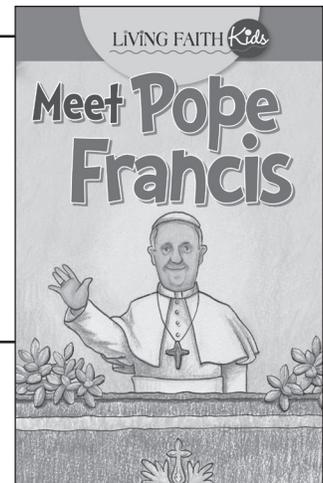
Opening Prayer

Begin your lessons with prayer. Use the following or modify it each time you pray it with the group.

Good Jesus, thank you for all the people who show us how to follow you, especially our Holy Father, Pope Francis. Help us listen to him and learn from his example. Amen.

Teaching Steps

Page(s)	
COVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct the children to look at the cover of their booklets. Ask, <i>What do you know about our Holy Father, Pope Francis?</i> • Discuss the art. Ask, <i>What is Pope Francis doing in this picture? (Waving and giving a blessing.) What else do you notice about him?</i> Accept and affirm all reasonable answers. Say, <i>Let's learn a little more.</i>



2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the picture on page 2. Ask, <i>Why do you think Pope Francis has a lamb on his shoulders?</i> (You might want to note that Pope Francis actually did this during an Epiphany celebration several years ago.) Point out that we can find an answer in the first paragraph. Then read it together and discuss what it means that the Pope is a shepherd. (If you have access to a Bible, read John 21:15-17 together.) • Read the next two paragraphs. Ask, <i>Did you know any of this about Pope Francis? Do you like any of these same things, or know anyone who does these things?</i> • Read "What Pope Francis Says." Ask, <i>What does it mean to have a simple lifestyle?</i> Ask the children to think of ways they can follow a simple lifestyle. • Have the children place the sticker. Ask, <i>How is riding a bus an example of a simple lifestyle?</i>
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