



## Our Lady of the Smile

# ACTIVITIES



## For Primary Grades

### Materials Needed:

- **Costumes and props** (*optional*)
- **Photographs of familiar school and parish staff members** (*teacher or catechist, principal or DRE, pastor, maintenance staff, music minister, secretary, and so forth*)
- **Supplies to make smile awards** (*round circles of yellow construction paper, crayons, ribbon, tape or glue sticks*)

### Faith Connection

#### Before Telling the Story

1. Invite the children to name those who have smiled at them today, and how those smiles made them feel. Also ask who they have smiled at and why.
2. Ask them to listen for who smiles in today's story, and how that smile helped the story's main character, Thérèse.

#### Telling the Story

Tell in your own words the stories of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus and Our Lady of the Smile, as is appropriate for the age of the children you are teaching. The story of Our Lady of the Smile would be an excellent story to dramatize, with costumes and props as suggested by the text.

#### After Telling the Story

1. Invite volunteers to name their favorite parts of the story of Our Lady of the Smile.
2. Invite volunteers to name the person who smiled (*the Blessed Virgin Mary*) and how her smile helped Thérèse (*Thérèse was healed*).

3. Talk together about ways our smiles help and heal others. (*For example: Our smiles help sad people be happy. Our smiles help lonely people feel less lonely. Our smiles make others smile too.*)

### **Putting Faith into Action**

1. Invite the children to name those they know who need a smile today. List their thoughts on a flip chart or whiteboard.
2. Create a Litany to Our Lady of the Smile by naming those mentioned in #1 (*above*) in a prayer of petition, and by responding, "Our Lady, smile upon your children." (*For example: For our pastor, we pray: Our Lady, smile upon your children. For our parents, we pray: Our Lady, smile upon your children.*)

## **Curriculum Connection: Social Studies and Art**

### **Before Telling the Story**

1. Before telling the story, play a game of Whose Smile is It?
2. Cover the top half of each of the photographs you have gathered (*see Materials*).
3. Explain that you are going to show the group the smiles of people who are familiar to them from the school, parish religious education program, or parish. After you have shown each photograph, you will ask the group, "Whose smile is it?" The goal is to correctly guess all of the people pictured.

### **After Telling the Story**

1. Distribute art supplies for the smile awards (*see Materials*). Show an example of a smile award. It is a round yellow circle with a smiley face drawn on it and a piece of ribbon attached to the bottom of the circle. Invite each child to create three or more smile awards. Offer help as needed.
2. After all of the children have finished creating their smile awards, explain that they are to give the awards to people who smile at them today and they are to say, "Thank you for smiling at me today."

### **And Furthermore . . .**

At the next class or session, invite the children to name who they gave their smile awards to and why. Conclude the sharing by praying, "Our Lady of the Smile, pray for us!"