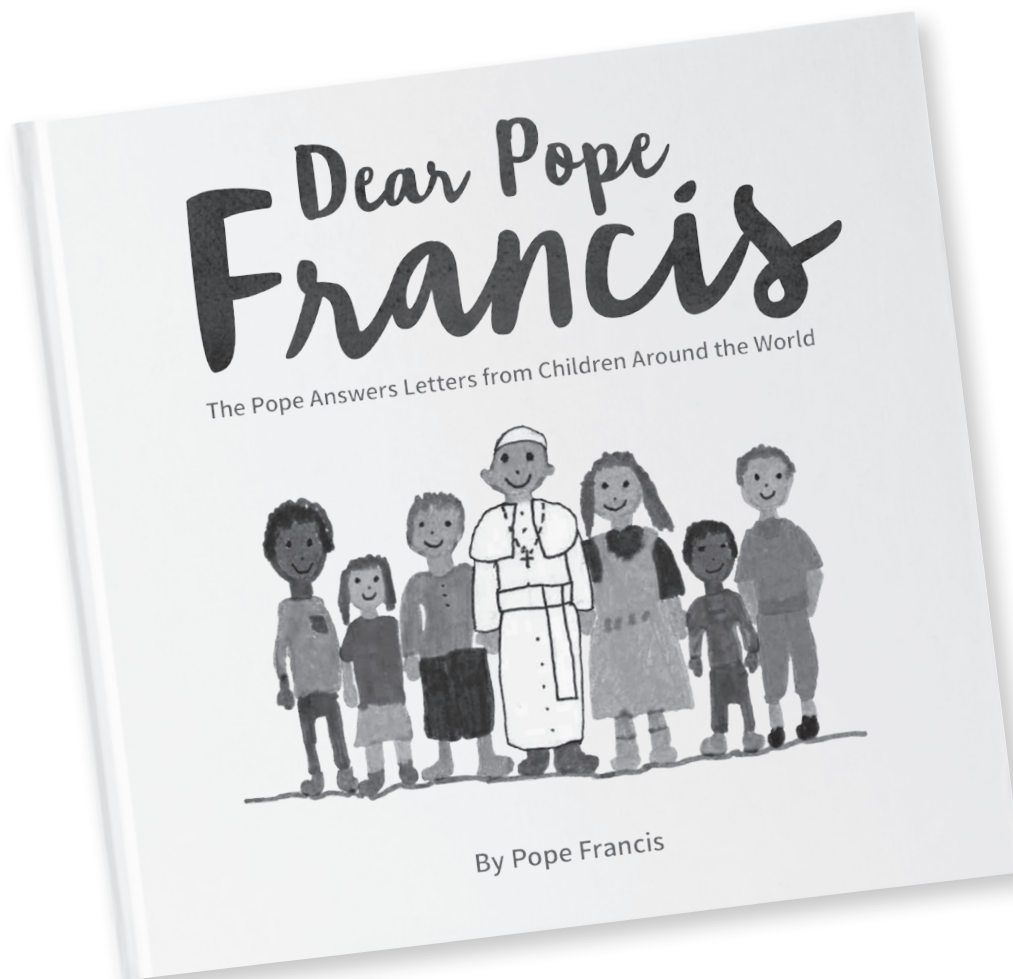


## Introduction

### 1 Before You Read Aloud

The letters to Pope Francis collected for this book were written by children in cities and towns, camps and villages, around the world. They were chosen as exemplars from 259 letters that covered a range of topics and addressed myriad concerns. Say: ***God calls on us to share his love and help those in need. Pope Francis leads us in this effort, reaching out to people around the world with compassion and urging all of us to be instruments of God's mercy.***

*(Continued on next page.)*

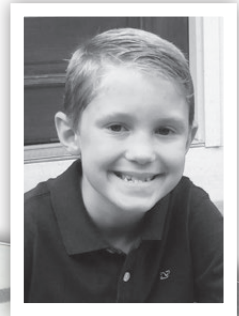


## 2 Connect

As you share these letters, encourage discussion and empathy. Many of the letters bring up questions and concerns that all of us share. Others will address topics and issues that are unfamiliar, giving children an opportunity to explore new ideas and better understand the challenges that others face. In all cases, Pope Francis counsels a consistent commitment to following Jesus' example and relying on God's constant and unconditional love.

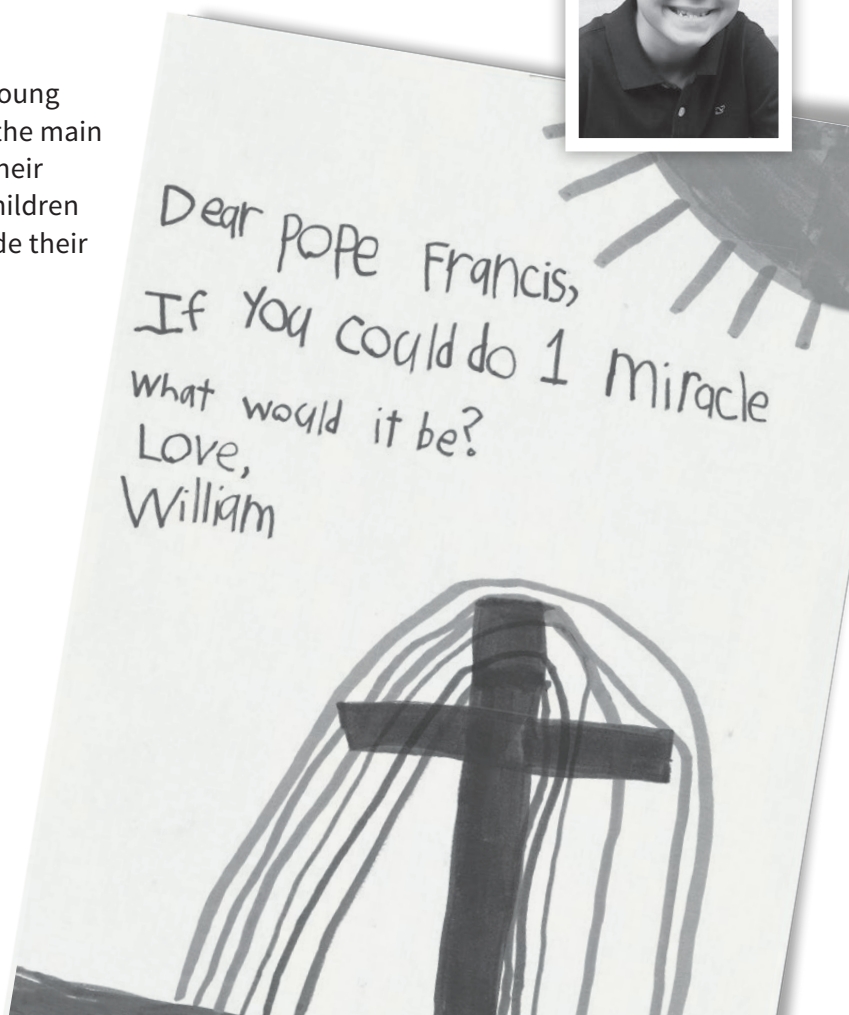
## 3 Stories

Say: ***The letters in this book were written by children just like you. They have questions. They have hopes and fears. Some of them face challenges that are difficult and confusing. Pope Francis answers each question with understanding, wisdom, humor, and compassion. His words offer hope and inspire action.*** Children will be able to apply the advice that Pope Francis gives to their own lives, taking to heart his overriding message of mercy and love.



## 4 Moving On

The activity pages give children and young people an opportunity to respond to the main ideas and apply the Pope's words to their own lives. Pope Francis encourages children to trust in God's love and use it to guide their actions and decisions in daily life.



Dear Pope Francis,  
If you could do 1 miracle  
what would it be?  
Love,  
William

# God's Love Creates the World

## 1 Begin

Say: ***We believe that God creates everything in the wonderful world for us because of his great love for us.***

Distribute the activity page to each child. Read aloud the introduction. Invite children to share examples of the wonder and beauty of the world that God creates.

## 2 Connect

Read aloud the letter from Ryan on page 12 and the answer from Pope Francis on page 13. Help children paraphrase the Holy Father's message: *Before God created the world for us, he loved.* Suggest that God's love radiates to every part of creation.

Say: ***God shares his love with us. We show our love for God by sharing his love with others.***

Then read aloud the activity directions. Ask the children to complete the activity. (Possible answers: the stars, my family, the sun shining)

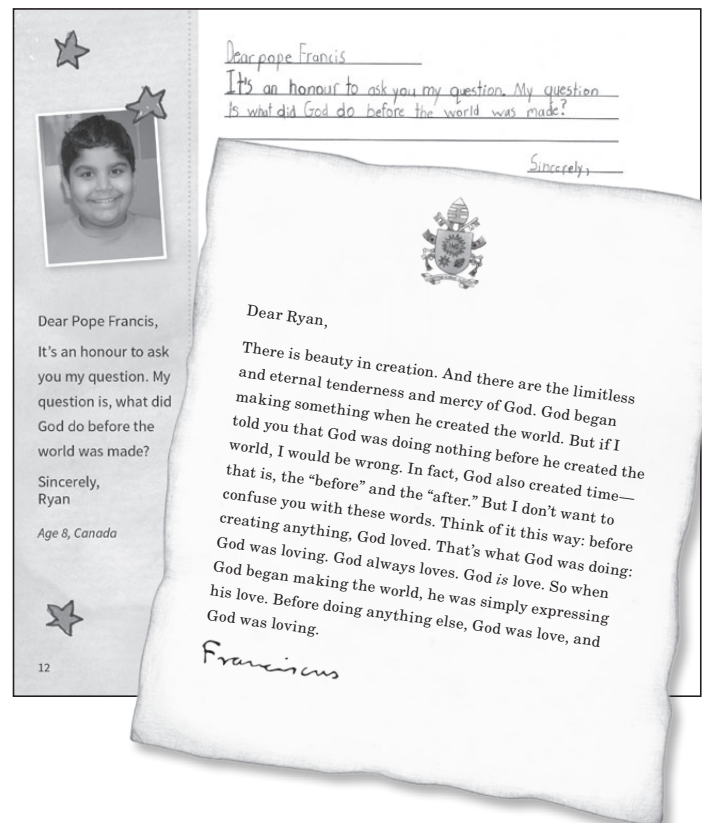
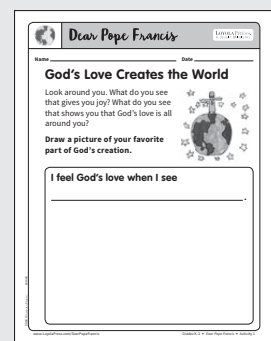
## 3 Close

Invite children to share their drawings and ideas about sharing love. Encourage children to show God's love to others and to treat one another with kindness and respect.

Write the following prayer on the board. Pray the Sign of the Cross. Then pray aloud as the children pray with you: ***Thank you, God, for showing your love in all the beautiful things you created for us.*** Close by praying the Sign of the Cross.

### FOR USE WITH

- *Dear Pope Francis* pages 12–13
- Grades K–2, Activity 1





# Dear Pope Francis

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## God's Love Creates the World

Look around you. What do you see that gives you joy? What do you see that shows you that God's love is all around you?

**Draw a picture of your favorite part of God's creation.**



**I feel God's love when I see**

\_\_\_\_\_ •

# God Loves Us and Listens to Us

## 1 Begin

Say: *The Bible tells us about all the ways God shares his love with us. He hears what is in our hearts and is always present to help.*

Distribute the activity page to each child. Read aloud the introduction and talk about where and how we can pray. Emphasize that we do not have to be kneeling in church to pray. God is always listening to hear what is in our hearts.

## 2 Connect

Read aloud the letter from Josephine on page 14 and the answer from Pope Francis on page 15. Help children paraphrase the Holy Father's message: *We can pray any time. God is always there to listen.* Invite volunteers to share ideas for places to pray or tell where they pray.

Then read aloud the activity directions. Ask the children to complete the activity and help them write their prayers of thanks as necessary. (Possible answers: family, a place to live, friends)

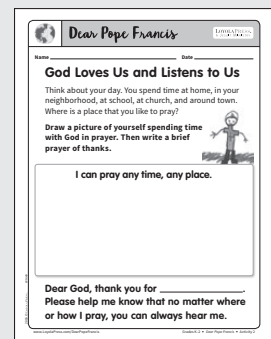
## 3 Close

Invite children to share their drawings and prayers of thanks. Remind children that God always listens whenever or wherever they pray.

Write the following prayer on the board. Pray the Sign of the Cross. Then pray aloud as the children pray with you: **Dear God, thank you for watching over me and always hearing my prayers.** Close by praying the Sign of the Cross.

### FOR USE WITH

- Dear Pope Francis pages 14–15
- Grades K–2, Activity 2



**Dear Pope Francis**

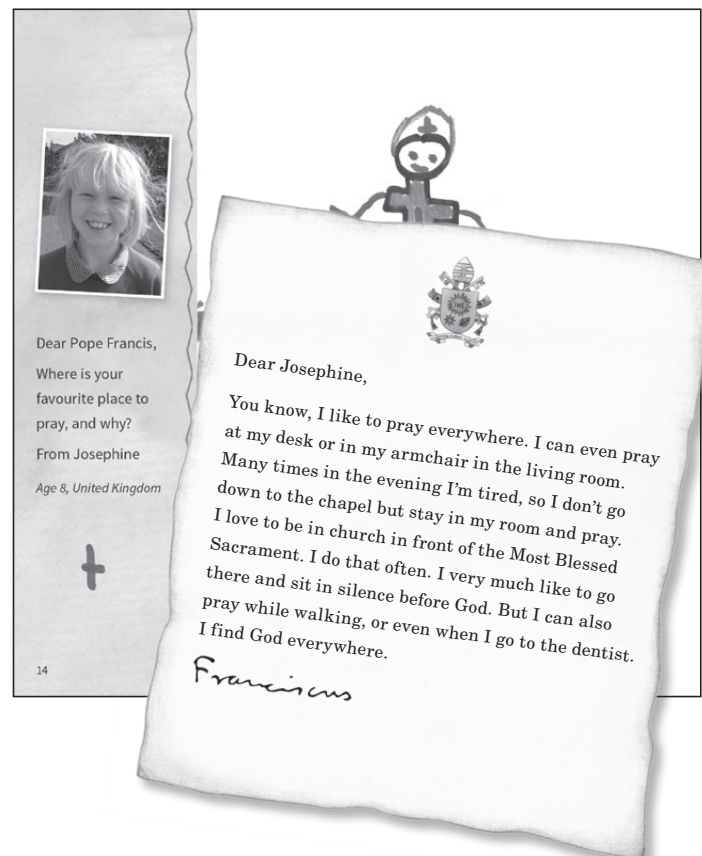
**God Loves Us and Listens to Us**

Think about your day. You spend time at home, in your neighborhood, at school, at church, and around town. Where is a place that you like to pray?

Draw a picture of yourself spending time with God in prayer. Then write a brief prayer of thanks.

I can pray any time, any place.

Dear God, thank you for \_\_\_\_\_  
Please help me know that no matter where  
or how I pray, you can always hear me.







# Dear Pope Francis

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## God Loves Us and Listens to Us

Think about your day. You spend time at home, in your neighborhood, at school, at church, and around town. Where is a place that you like to pray?

**Draw a picture of yourself spending time with God in prayer. Then write a brief prayer of thanks.**



**I can pray any time, any place.**

**Dear God, thank you for \_\_\_\_\_.**  
**Please help me know that no matter where or how I pray, you can always hear me.**