

God is our Provider

God made the sun and the moon
and the seasons of spring and summer.
God made the rains and the soils
and gave us the lands and seas.
God made our stomachs and mouths
and gave us the plants and animals to eat
as food.

God made tastebuds to enjoy the flavours
and noses to smell the baking cookies.
God made food to be a delight for us,
to bring joy and to sustain life.
When we eat, we must remember the
gifts of God:
the cycle of life - and be thankful.

Chicken and hot dogs, bacon and tomatoes, grapes and cheese, all these foods come from plants and animals who have given their lives as we eat them to get nourishment for our bodies. Just as some animals eat other plants and animals, human beings also eat other animals and plants. We catch a fish in a net and its body becomes food for us, or we pick an apple from a tree as food to eat. Vegetables and fruit, eggs and meat, milk and chocolate, every kind of food comes from plants and animals.

Some plants are even good for medicine and make people healthy. Some of our most important medicines come from plants and herbs and mushrooms. Food and medicine is a basic human need. Jesus taught us always to share with people in need.

This is why it is so important to be **thankful** and say a prayer of thanks out loud (or in our hearts) when we eat our food. A prayer of thanks for food is called 'saying Grace.' God gave us the animals and plants and we have taken their lives into our bodies so that we may live too. We are thankful to God and thankful even to the animals and plants for our bodily life. (*See: 1 Timothy 4: 3-4*)

We should also **respect** animals and plants and care for them in the world. In the wild forests we try to conserve the trees and animals by not over harvesting. On the farm, we make sure animals are safe and well fed and even see a doctor called a Veterinarian when they are sick. And we **honour** animals and plants because they are part of the **circle of life**. They too are creatures whom God created. We also **admire** plants and animals because they are beautiful and interesting and have something to teach us.

Finally, God gave human beings the artistic gift of making new and beautiful things. Do you realize that cooking and baking and creating new recipes is also a gift from God? Your favourite flavour probably comes from some person's creativity.

Questions:

- What is your favourite food? Do you know which plant or animal it comes from?
- How can we show respect for animals and plants?
- Why do we say a prayer of thanks for our food?
- Food is a basic need. Can you think of other 'needs' without which we cannot live?