



HOW SWEET SPRING IS!

Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. (Genesis 1:11; NRSV)

Canadian winters can be long and harsh, but we know that God's creation is wonderful for us. Every year as the piles of snow disappear, we see signs of new life. The season of spring approaches.

Many of us find connecting to God easier when we experience the beauty of new life blooming during spring. Children are no exception. Outdoors, children encounter the diversity of life, which helps them to respect all of God's creation. Being good stewards begins with a love for God and for his beautiful creation. Playing outdoors offers children opportunities to exercise their bodies, minds, and spirits. have increased fitness levels and often. Spending time in the sun can help adults too, especially when we relax and reflect.

In some areas of Canada we are treated to an extra special display of how wonderful God's creation is each spring – *Cabane a Sucre* (Sugar Shack). Hidden among the forests of maple trees you will find these *Cabanes* where workers gather the sap from the trees then boil it down to make the syrup – that's all there is to it – God's sweet treat to all of us. Attached to the *Cabane* is a large building where you can go to dine. Inside are long tables filled with foods made with maple syrup (baked beans, sausages, ham, eggs, potatoes, sugar pie and a whole lot

more) and jugs of maple syrup to pour on top if you want! Outside we go on sleigh rides and sample hot syrup poured on the snow to make *tire sur la neige* (taffy on the snow). Canadians say this treat comes straight from the maple tree and God's love. Maple producers are good examples of good stewardship. Each year they are careful not to over tap the trees.

IDEAS FOR YOUR FAMILY TIME

- Lent is a good time to set aside some time for family prayers. Bring your family to church to walk the Way of the Cross together.
- Spring can be a good time to review those chapters in *Be My Disciples* that cover the topics of God's creation and stewardship.
- Bring your children outside to discover everything that God has to offer in spring. Start a journal of everything new you find.
- If you can't actually go to a *Cabane a Sucre*, make a family meal with some of the foods usually served at this seasonal activity. You can find recipes for many of the foods online. Don't forget to make some *tire sur la neige*.