



Unit 1



Before You Begin

Download and print:
Art Print BLMs Sessions 1-5

God, Our Creator and Father

Begin

- ▶ **Say:** *The title of this book is Finding God. We will use this book to help us learn about God. God is our Creator and Father. Ask: What does it mean to create something? (to make something) God created and creates everything. Have your child look outside and finish this sentence with things he or she sees: God created _____.* **Say:** *We see God's love for us in his creation. Let's read about someone who loved God's creation too.*

Introduce the Saint

- ▶ Have your child turn to page 1. Read aloud the saint's name. **Say:** *A saint is a person who lived a good, holy life as a follower of Jesus. Saint Thérèse loved flowers. She loved all of God's creation. Saint Thérèse now lives with Jesus in heaven.*
- ▶ Ask your child to color the picture as you read aloud and discuss page 2. Then help your child tear out and fold the Unit 1 saint booklet at the back of the book. Read aloud the pages, inviting your child to track the words with his or her finger. Complete the activity on page D together. **Say:** *Saint Thérèse was born almost 150 years ago. She was such a good woman that we still learn about her today!*
- ▶ With your child, add Saint Thérèse's feast day, October 1, to your calendar. Plan an event together to honor the ways of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus.



God Creates the World

Engage: Page 3

- ▶ Hold up and identify the following colors of crayons or markers: black, orange, yellow, and green. Ask your child to point out objects in your home that match each color.
Say: *Our world is full of color. Who made our world and all the colorful things in it? (God)*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the poem, inviting your child to track the words with his or her finger. **Say:** *God creates all things. Our colorful world is God's creation.*
- ▶ Reread each line of the poem. Together name other things God has made that are the same color. Pray aloud the prayer together. Then pray *Amen*.

Explore: Pages 4–5

- ▶ Take a nature walk outside. Examine a tree, flower, or leaf. Discuss how it feels, smells, and looks. **Say:** *God creates wonderful things for us to enjoy because he loves us.*
- ▶ Read aloud page 4. Help your child find the words *God* and *creates* in the Glossary. Discuss the definitions. **Ask:** *What does God create? (God creates the world and everything in it.)* Read aloud the directions and give your child time to complete the activity. Invite your child to name different kinds of animals and plants that God creates.
- ▶ Together draw a picture or make a clay model of an animal. **Ask:** *What are some ways we can care for animals? (We can give them food and water.)* Read aloud the title and the sentence on page 5. **Ask:** *What are some ways we can care for the earth? (We can recycle; we can care for trees, plants, and animals.)* *What are some ways we can care for people? (We can be kind. We can be helpful. We can pray for them.)* Read aloud the directions. Have your child complete the activity. Talk about ways you can care for the plants, animals, and people in your home and in your community.
- ▶ Display a Bible. **Say:** *The Bible contains the Word of God.* Read aloud the Did You Know? feature at the bottom of page 5. Then read aloud the Reading God's Word feature at the bottom of page 4. **Say:** *These words are from the Bible.*



Art Exploration: Explore Art Print 1 Blackline Master

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of God creating animals.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What is God doing in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe how God is creating, looking after, and caring for the animals.
- ▶ **Say:** *God creates everything in this world, and he creates us. God wants us to care for his creation.*
- ▶ Display the Art Print 1 Blackline Master. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the section God Creates the World. Hold up a Bible and **ask:** *What is the name of this book?* (the Bible) **Say:** *This story is from Genesis, the first book in the Bible. The story tells us how God created the world.*
- ▶ Read aloud the section God's Beautiful World and have your child complete the activity. Discuss animals that live in the air, in the sea, and on the land that God has created.
- ▶ Play Animal Charades with your child. Take turns acting out the motions and sounds of an animal. Then complete the following sentence with that animal's name: *God created the _____.* Talk about ways that people can care for each animal.

Reflect: Pages 6–7

- ▶ Together look at page 6. **Say:** *Sometimes we are quiet and still when we pray. Sometimes we pray using our own words, and sometimes we pray using special words.*
- ▶ Read aloud page 6. Help your child find the word *pray* in the Glossary and discuss the definition. Demonstrate how to fold your hands in prayer. Invite your child to practice folding his or her hands. Then, with your hands folded, bow your head, close your eyes, and demonstrate how to offer a simple prayer to God. Invite your child to pray along silently. Pause briefly before praying together *Amen*.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and text on page 7. **Say:** *We often begin and end a prayer with the Sign of the Cross. Let's practice making the Sign of the Cross.* Teach the gestures first using exaggerated movements. Then add the words. Repeat the prayer several times with your child. Then together complete the activity.

Respond: Page 8

- ▶ Read aloud the Faith Summary. Have your child trace the words *God*, *creates*, and *pray*. **Say:** *We have talked about how God creates the world and everything in it.*
- ▶ Invite your child to pray silently as you pray aloud. **Say:** *Thank you, God, for creating this great world for us. We know you love us because you made this colorful and beautiful world for us to enjoy.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the words from the story in *With My Family* and have your child say the picture words. Use the Picture Glossary on pages 206–207 if needed. Invite your child to answer the questions at the end of the story.



God Creates People

Engage: Page 9

- ▶ Look at photos of family and friends. Discuss why these people are important to you. **Say:** *God creates people. Everything God creates is good.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title. **Say:** *Let's learn a song about how God takes care of people.* Read aloud the song title and sing the verse. [You might refer to page 195 for the complete set of verses.] Demonstrate hand gestures—such as cradle arms, point to self, arms up, and make a circle—as you sing each verse with your child. **Say:** *God takes care of us and loves us.*
- ▶ Continue singing the song, creating a verse for each person in your photos. For example, **say:** *He's got my Uncle Max in his hands.* When you have finished, pray aloud the prayer together. Then pray *Amen.*

Explore: Pages 10–11

- ▶ Share something special about yourself. For example, **say:** *I can jump really high.* **Ask:** *What is something special about you?* (Answers will vary.) **Say:** *God made us all special.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the sentences on page 10. Help your child find the word *people* in the Glossary. Discuss the definition. **Say:** *People are God's greatest creation.* Read aloud the directions and have your child do the activity. As your child colors the picture of Adam and Eve, read aloud Genesis 2 from a children's Bible or retell it from your Bible using simple language. **Say:** *Listen for the rule that God gives to Adam and Eve.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature on page 10. **Say:** *God is the Creator of all life.*
- ▶ Read aloud page 11. Point out the word *loves*. Help your child find it in the Glossary. Discuss the definition. **Ask:** *How do you know that someone loves you?* (They are kind; they take care of you.) Have your child complete the activity and find the hidden word that answers the question (me).
- ▶ Read aloud the A Friend of God feature. **Say:** *Saint John was a follower of Jesus.*
- ▶ Help your child write the names of family members, neighbors, and friends on long strips of paper. Make a paper chain out of the strips. Call it your *God Loves Us All* chain. Ask family members to add new names to the chain.



Art Exploration: Explore Art Print 2 Blackline Master

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of children from around the world holding hands or relating to one another.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What is happening in this picture? What are the children doing?* (Possible answers: The children are holding hands; they are caring for one another.) Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail.
- ▶ **Say:** *All of us are unique and special. God loves us just the way we are. He wants us to love and care for one another.*
- ▶ Display the Art Print 2 Blackline Master. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the section God Creates All People. **Say:** *God made each of us different and unique, but we are all made in God's image.*
- ▶ Read aloud the section Caring for God's People and complete the activity together. Talk about how all people are made in God's image. **Say:** *We may have different customs, languages, and ways of living, but we are all made by God. We are all the same in God's eyes.*
- ▶ To the tune of "Farmer in the Dell," sing these words, inserting different physical features at each verse: "God loves our eyes, God loves our ears, God loves our arms, God loves us all." Together point to the feature as you sing about it.

Reflect: Pages 12–13

- ▶ Together look at page 12. **Ask:** *How are these children enjoying God's creation?* (They are running outside.) **Say:** *We can thank God for his creation in prayer.*
- ▶ **Ask:** *How do we get ready to pray?* (We get quiet, fold our hands, close our eyes, and bow our heads.) Pray aloud page 12. Invite your child to pray the *Thank you, God* lines with you. Close by praying the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What body part do we use to see?* (eyes) Repeat for hear, touch, taste, and smell. **Say:** *We use our five senses to experience the world around us.* Read aloud the title and text on page 13. **Say:** *We use our senses to learn about God's creation.* Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the activity. Then discuss it.

Respond: Page 14

- ▶ Read aloud the Faith Summary. Have your child trace the words *loves* and *people*. **Say:** *We have learned about how God creates, loves, and cares for all people. We are all special and loved by God.*
- ▶ Invite your child to pray silently as you pray aloud. **Say:** *Thank you, God, for making each of us special and for taking such good, loving care of us every day.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the words from the story in *With My Family* and have your child say the picture words. Use the Picture Glossary on pages 206–207 if needed. Invite your child to answer the question at the end of the story.



Adam and Eve Make a Choice

Engage: Page 15

- ▶ Find pictures of plants and vegetables that grow in a garden. (daisies, carrots, corn, cucumbers, roses) Make number flash cards for 1 through 5, showing pictures of your plants.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title. **Ask:** *Who were Adam and Eve?* (the first people God created) Remind your child that Adam and Eve lived in a garden. Read aloud the poem. Invite your child to hold up their fingers to show the numbers they hear. Make up new verses that go with your flash cards and have your child display the flash cards as you say the new verses.
- ▶ Talk about how to take care of plants in a garden. (Water them, make sure they get enough sunlight, give them good soil and natural fertilizers.) Pray aloud the prayer together. Then pray **Amen.** **Say:** *God always wants what is best for us.*

Explore: Pages 16–17

- ▶ **Ask:** *What are some important rules in our family?* (Answers will vary.) *Why are rules important?* (Rules keep us safe. Rules bring order and peace.) Together make a list of your family rules.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the sentences on page 16. **Ask:** *What happens when rules are broken?* (Someone could get hurt. We separate ourselves from the love of God.) Read aloud the directions and demonstrate how to draw a line from number 1 to number 2. Discuss each rule. When your child is finished, **ask:** *Why are these good rules?* (They follow God's rules.)
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. **Say:** *God's rules help us love others and live in harmony.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the sentences on page 17. Point out the term *Original Sin*. Help your child find the term in the Glossary. Discuss the definition. **Ask:** *What are some of God's rules?* (Love one another, share, give to those in need.) **Say:** *God is our Father. His rules give us a way to live.* Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *Everything good comes from God. God asks us to care for his beautiful world.*



Art Exploration: Explore Art Print 3 Blackline Master

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Adam and Eve.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the emotions on Adam's and Eve's faces and the setting.
- ▶ **Say:** *This artwork shows Adam and Eve, the first people God created. They lived in a beautiful garden called the Garden of Eden.*
- ▶ Display the Art Print 3 Blackline Master. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the section Adam and Eve. **Say:** *Adam and Eve decided not to follow God's rules. Because they sinned, we are all born with sin. This is called Original Sin. Even though Adam and Eve sinned, God still loved them and cared for them just as he does for us.*
- ▶ Read aloud the section Choosing God and have your child complete the activity. Talk about good choices that you can make every day.
- ▶ Ask your child to close his or her eyes and imagine that he or she is in the Garden of Eden. **Ask:** *What do you see? What can you smell? What noises do you hear? Can you feel the sunshine on your face? Do you see Adam and Eve? What might you say to them?* Encourage your child to have a silent conversation with God, thanking him for creating us, loving us, and forgiving us.

Reflect: Pages 18–19

- ▶ Together look at page 18. **Ask:** *Where is the girl sitting?* (under a tree) **Say:** *Jesus is always with you wherever you are—indoors, outdoors, at home, at school, or at church.*
- ▶ **Say:** *Sometimes we pray to ask God to help us follow his rules. Let's get ready to pray.* Pray aloud page 18. **Say:** *Sometimes we make bad choices, but God still loves us.* Give your child time to pray silently. Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the text on page 19. **Say:** *Sometimes we don't follow God's rules. We tell God we are sorry. We pray for God's forgiveness and help. God forgives us.*
- ▶ Read each sentence in the activity. If it tells a way to stay close to God, give it a thumbs-up with your child and have him or her color in the heart. If not, give it a thumbs-down and leave the heart blank. **Say:** *We are never alone. God is always with us.*

Respond: Page 20

- ▶ Read aloud the Faith Summary. Have your child trace the term *Original Sin*. **Say:** *We have learned about God's rules.*
- ▶ Invite your child to pray silently as you pray aloud. **Say:** *Thank you, God, for listening, loving, and helping me every day.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the words from the story in With My Family and have your child say the picture words. Use the Picture Glossary on pages 206–207 if needed. Invite your child to answer the question at the end of the story.



God Promises a Savior

Engage: Page 21

- ▶ Take a neighborhood walk, looking for small creatures and animals. **Ask:** *What do all these creatures need?* (food, water, air) Discuss how people can help God's creatures.
- ▶ **Say:** *Let's read a poem about little creatures who might need our help.* Read aloud the session title and the poem. **Ask:** *How was each animal cared for?* (They were put in a safe place.) **Say:** *God sent Jesus to care for and protect us.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about ways we protect animals and one another. Pray aloud the prayer together. Then pray *Amen*. **Say:** *It takes great love to keep others safe and protected.*

Explore: Pages 22–23

- ▶ Together find and identify pictures of people who take care of us, such as doctors, firefighters, and police officers. **Ask:** *How do they protect us?* (They keep us safe.) **Say:** *It feels good to feel safe and loved.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the sentences on page 22. Have your child point to the word *Savior*. Help him or her find the word *Savior* in the Glossary. Discuss the definition. **Say:** *God promised to send a Savior to protect us. He kept his promise. God sent his Son, Jesus.* Read aloud the directions. Demonstrate how to write the letter *S* and have your child complete the activity. Then read aloud the completed sentences.
- ▶ Read aloud the I Go to Church feature. **Say:** *Jesus knows that sometimes we make bad choices in the things we say and do. His love and forgiveness keep us close to him.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the sentence on page 23. Point out the word *heaven*, and help your child find it in the Glossary. Discuss the definition. **Say:** *Jesus' love for us is so big that he makes heaven possible for us.* Then read aloud the directions and have your child complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *God's love for us was so great that he sent us his only Son, Jesus. Jesus is our Savior.*



Art Exploration: Explore Art Print 4 Blackline Master

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of the prophet Isaiah.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture? What is the man doing?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail.
- ▶ **Say:** *The man in the picture is the prophet Isaiah. A prophet is someone who delivers a special message of hope and love from God.*
- ▶ Display the Art Print 4 Blackline Master. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the section The Prophet Isaiah. **Ask:** *What special messages do we get from our friends and family in cards, e-mails, and phone calls? (We are loved; we are special; they are proud of us.)* **Say:** *Isaiah's message was that God was going to send his Son, Jesus, to save us.*
- ▶ Read aloud the section My Message and assist your child in completing the activity. Discuss the message about God that your child wrote.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *Isaiah's message was true. Jesus really did come to save us.*
- ▶ Help your child write special messages to family members or friends about Jesus, our Savior, and put them in a place where they will be surprised by the message. **Ask:** *How are we being like the prophet Isaiah? (We are delivering messages of hope and love.)*

Reflect: Pages 24–25

- ▶ Together look at page 24. **Ask:** *What do you think the children in the picture might say to God? (Answers will vary.)* **Say:** *God is always glad to hear what is in our hearts.*
- ▶ Point to and read aloud the All part: *Jesus saves us.* Have your child repeat it. Explain that you will pray aloud the Leader part while your child responds with *Jesus saves us.* Prompt your child to respond at the appropriate times. Close by praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the sentence on page 25. **Say:** *God the Father sent Jesus to us. What do you say when someone does something for you? (Thank you.)* Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the prayer card. Encourage him or her to share it with your family.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. **Ask:** *What is the name of the Savior whom God sent to protect us? (Jesus)* **Say:** *Thank you, God and Jesus, for protecting us and loving us.*

Respond: Page 26

- ▶ Read aloud the Faith Summary. Have your child trace the words *Savior* and *heaven*. **Say:** *We learned that God sent us a Savior. Our Savior is God the Father's Son, Jesus.*
- ▶ Invite your child to pray silently as you pray aloud. **Say:** *Thank you, Father, for sending us Jesus our Savior to help us make good choices and live the way you want us to live.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the words from the story in With My Family and have your child say the picture words. Use the Picture Glossary on pages 206–207 if needed. Invite your child to answer the question at the end of the story.



Celebrating Ordinary Time

Engage: Page 27

- ▶ Together look at the picture. Point out the symbols of the four seasons. Take turns pantomiming activities that people enjoy doing during each season. **Say:** *The Church celebrates seasons too.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text. Point out the term *Ordinary Time* and help your child find it in the Glossary. Discuss the definition. **Say:** *In this session, we will learn about a Church season called Ordinary Time. It is a time to give thanks and praise.*
- ▶ Look at a calendar with your child. Help him or her write something to be thankful for on each day of the coming week. Together pray aloud the prayer and include a sentence about what you are thankful for today. Conclude by praying *Amen*.

Explore: Page 28

- ▶ Write the word *THANKS* vertically on a sheet of paper. Together think of people or things you are thankful for that start with each letter of the word. Record the words next to the letter. Take turns using your ideas to complete this sentence: I am thankful for _____.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the sentence. **Say:** *During Ordinary Time, we slow down and thank God for all the gifts he gives us. Ordinary Time is a time to be grateful for all living things.* Read aloud the directions and give your child time to complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Ask:** *How can we celebrate the world that God created for us?* (Be kind to others; take care of plants and animals; recycle; praise and give thanks to God in our prayers.)

Reflect: Page 29

- ▶ **Say:** *Show me how you might react if you received a gift you were not expecting.* Encourage your child to pantomime being surprised, happy, or grateful.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the text. Ask your child to point to the word *grace*. Help him or her find it in the Glossary. Discuss the definition. **Say:** *God gives us a gift every day called grace. God's grace helps us make good choices. He gives it to us because he loves us.*
- ▶ Read aloud the directions. Point out each picture, beginning at *Start*, and help your child determine if it shows a way to follow Jesus. If the answer is yes, have your child color the footprint. Discuss other things you can do with your family and friends that show they are positively responding to God's grace.



Art Exploration: Explore Art Print 5 Blackline Master

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of people praying at Mass.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture? What are the people doing?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the people's expressions.
- ▶ **Say:** *Ordinary Time is a special time of year for the Church. During Ordinary Time, we give thanks and praise to God in prayer. We also learn about the life of Jesus.*
- ▶ Display the Art Print 5 Blackline Master. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the section Ordinary Time. **Say:** *In the Church calendar, each season has a special color. The color for Ordinary Time is green. We celebrate Ordinary Time two times a year.*
- ▶ Read aloud the section Church Seasons. Assist your child in completing the activity. Use construction paper for the chain if beads are not available. **Say:** *During Ordinary Time, we celebrate God's love.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. **Say:** *We use colors to remind us of the season we are celebrating at Mass. The priest wears green clothes at Mass during Ordinary Time.*
- ▶ Together look for pictures of green things in magazines and cut them out. Glue the pictures to a large sheet of paper. Help your child label the picture *Green Is Good*. Encourage your child to tell others that the color green stands for Ordinary Time when they see it at church.

Respond: Page 30

- ▶ Read aloud the Faith Summary. Have your child trace the words *Ordinary Time* and *grace*. **Say:** *We have learned that during Ordinary Time we thank God for creation and learn about the life of Jesus.*
- ▶ Invite your child to pray silently as you pray aloud. **Say:** *Thank you, God, for creating this beautiful world for us to enjoy. We will help care for animals, plants, and people.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the words from the story in *With My Family* and have your child say the picture words. Use the Picture Glossary on pages 206–207 if needed. Invite your child to answer the question at the end of the story.