



# The Early Life of Jesus

## Begin

Read aloud the unit title on page 45. **Say:** *This unit is about Jesus, the Son of God, and the mystery of the union of his divine and human natures.* Discuss the kind of work that an ambassador does. **Say:** *Today we will learn about a woman who was like an ambassador for God.* **Ask:** *How could you represent God among others without traveling to another country?* (Possible answers: by living peacefully with others, by following the Ten Commandments)

## Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 45. **Say:** *You probably count on your family and other important adults to help you make important decisions. Marie's dream to become a nun might have surprised her family.* **Ask:** *How do you know if your life's work is what God planned for you?* (Possible answers: You feel called. You feel fulfilled.) *What lesson can we learn from Blessed Marie?* (Possible answers: Be patient. Trust in God. Ask for God's guidance.)

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saint Relates. Explain that we are like Blessed Marie of the Incarnation when we encounter God in those we serve.

Turn to page 46. Take turns reading aloud Blessed Marie of the Incarnation. **Say:** *The belief that Jesus has two natures, divine and human, united in one Person is distinct to our Christian faith. Every time we pray the Nicene Creed, we reaffirm our belief in the Incarnation.* **Ask:** *How was Marie suited to work with the young women, or novices, who entered the convent but had yet to take vows?* (She enjoyed instructing and felt enthusiasm for proclaiming Jesus.) *What challenges did she face as a missionary?* (She had to overcome cultural and language barriers.)

Take turns reading aloud Past Meets Present. Explain that the truth of Jesus Christ is intended for all nations. **Say:** *Jesus called the Apostles to preach the Gospel in the written and spoken word. Saint Paul changed the hearts of others by acknowledging their human and spiritual needs. Saint Damien of Molokai spread God's Word by tending to and living with those who were very sick.*

Together with your child, add Blessed Marie of the Incarnation's feast day, April 18, to your calendar. Discuss ways to give selflessly to people just as Blessed Marie did in her courageous yes to God's call.



## Jesus Became One of Us

### Engage: Page 47

- ▶ Share some riddles you know with your child. For example, **say:** *The more you have of it, the less you see. What is it?* (darkness) Point out how some riddles are hard to “get,” even when the answer is given.
- ▶ Read aloud and discuss the text in the box on page 47. Identify some people who understand both of you well. **Say:** *When the disciples were learning who Jesus was, they often didn’t “get it.” As human beings, we can never fully comprehend the mystery of Jesus’ divine and human natures. Though divine, Jesus understands our human concerns and experiences.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together. Pray together the Sign of the Cross.

### Explore: Pages 48–49

- ▶ Together look at photos taken at different stages of your child’s life. Tell stories that reflect various reactions to events at different times in your lives. Brainstorm human emotions such as happiness, jealousy, love, anger, joy, despair, hopefulness, and gratitude. **Say:** *As members of the human race, we have much in common.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title The Word Became Flesh. Then read aloud the text on page 48. **Say:** *Jesus was always divine. God’s plan for our Salvation was to send his only Son.* Have your child read aloud John 3:16 in the Bible. Connect the verse to the Incarnation, the Word became flesh. Explain that Jesus was to be, and still is, our model of holiness. To emphasize our Catholic belief in the Incarnation, turn to page 276 in Prayers and Practices and pray aloud the Nicene Creed.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud Our Catholic Character. Review the meaning of *catholic* in the Glossary. Discuss how the Catholic Church has a clear structure of hierarchy with the pope as the leader of the worldwide Church. The pope is assisted by cardinals, bishops, priests, and other Church leaders.
- ▶ Look at page 49. Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Discuss the heart as a symbol of Jesus’ love for us. **Say:** *When we imitate the heart of Jesus in the things we say and do, we best reflect Jesus’ divine nature.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the section Fully God, Fully Man on page 49. Discuss the meanings of *miracle*, *heresy*, and *consubstantial*. **Ask:** *What did the first Council of Nicaea teach?* (In 325 the first ecumenical council of Nicaea decreed that Jesus is of the same substance with the Father.) Locate and read aloud the lines of the Nicene Creed that relate to the council’s teaching.
- ▶ Work together while using the Bible to complete the God and Man activity.
- ▶ Close the session by asking questions. **Ask:** *When you contemplate Jesus as man, what is your favorite thought? What do you think of first when you contemplate Jesus’ divine nature?* (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Explore: Pages 50–51

- ▶ With your child seated, hold a pencil just out of his or her reach. Ask your child to try to touch the pencil without moving his or her body from the chair. **Say:** *You can reach as far as you can, but you will never touch the pencil. Remember this demonstration as we read the article.*



- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the article title *Pray as Jesus Taught Us* on page 50. Take turns reading aloud the page. Read aloud the definition of the *Great Commandment* in the Glossary. **Say:** *When you reached for the pencil, you got close but never quite touched it. In contrast, Jesus doesn't just bring us closer to the Father. Jesus puts us directly into contact with God the Father, removing all distance between us.* Read aloud John 10:30. **Ask:** *How can knowing Jesus mean knowing the Father?* (The Father and Son are actually one.)
- ▶ Continue reading aloud the sections *Jesus Prays to Abba* and *Relationship with God* on pages 50 and 51. **Ask:** *How can you invite Jesus into your life?* (through prayer and loving actions) **Say:** *Inviting God into our daily lives is contagious. We have a choice to pray and live in relationship with God, inviting new friends along the way.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the *Sacred Art* feature. Remind him or her that God created man in his own image. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us that every person possesses dignity because God made us in his image. Read aloud the meaning of *dignity of the human person* in the Glossary.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud John 15:12–17. Discuss the meaning of this Scripture by asking your child to talk about his or her responsibilities to God and to others.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Reflect: Pages 52–53

- ▶ Read aloud the title *Enter Fully into Prayer* on page 52. Ask your child to read aloud the paragraphs in the left column. Discuss the meaning of *lectio divina*. Compare this form of prayer to the way we read personal mail—we savor it, often rereading parts of it.
- ▶ Guide your child through the steps of *lectio divina*. Pray the Scripture verses. Follow the steps of meditation, prayer, and contemplation. Together recite the All part and pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Look at page 53. Read aloud the introductory text of *Where Do I Fit In?* Discuss whether it is harder to offer help or to receive it. **Say:** *Both offering and receiving help are ways of growing closer to God.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud *I Am Not Alone*. **Ask:** *What did the author learn about important responsibilities?* (They must often be shared.) *What did she learn about the workings of God?* (He often works through the love and support of others.) Have your child complete the *Living for Others* activity. Invite him or her to share the article with a family member and then ask your child to tell a story about receiving God's help through the actions of others.

### Respond: Page 54

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the directions in *What's What?* Point out the secret phrase. Have your child complete the activity independently.
- ▶ Review the terms you learned in this session in *Say What?*
- ▶ Read aloud *Now What?* Discuss strengths and weaknesses before your child writes a response to the activity. Ask him or her to reread the response each day as a way to grow closer to Jesus during the week.
- ▶ Invite your child to access a 3-Minute Retreat at [www.loyolapress.com/retreat](http://www.loyolapress.com/retreat).



## Jesus Is God with Us

### Engage: Page 55

- ▶ Discuss some nicknames of friends and family. Discuss how each person got his or her nickname.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the text in the box on page 55. Point out that a nickname might be related to a person's personality, abilities, or character traits. Ask your child to think of an adjective that describes him or her in a distinct way. Explain that the names for Jesus that are revealed in Scripture carry great significance.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together. Then pray together the Sign of the Cross.

### Explore: Pages 56–57

- ▶ Write the letters A.K.A. and ask your child if he or she knows that they mean “also known as.” Point out that some people are better known by other names. **Say:** *Samuel Clemens wrote under the name Mark Twain. Identify other names that some writers, musicians, or entertainers go by in the entertainment world. **Say:** Jesus is known by other names too, but Jesus' names have significant meanings. They are not just for flair.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title Explore Names for Jesus on page 56. Then read together the first three sections. Discuss the meaning of *Infancy Narrative*. **Ask:** *Why is it significant that the angel addresses Joseph as “son of David”? (It fulfills the prophecy that the Messiah will rise from the House of David.) How does Jesus live up to the meaning of his name, “God saves”? (Jesus won Salvation for our sins through his Death and Resurrection.)*
- ▶ Read aloud the sections God Is with Us and Jesus the Christ on pages 56 and 57. **Ask:** *What does Emmanuel mean? (God is with us.) How does Matthew's Infancy Narrative show that Jesus is the New Covenant? (In the events surrounding Jesus' birth, many prophecies were fulfilled. Events in Matthew's narrative parallel events in the Old Testament, such as Jesus retracing Moses's journey when the Holy Family escapes to Egypt.) What does the word Christ mean? (It is the Greek version of the Hebrew word for Messiah.) Explain that Messiah means “anointed one.” **Say:** The name Christ is important to our faith and one of many titles assigned to Jesus.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Discuss the questions about the art. **Ask:** *How does this artist's portrayal bring you closer to understanding “God is with us”?*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Explore: Pages 58–59

- ▶ **Ask:** *What is your favorite way to speak with a friend? Is it by telephone, e-mail, tweeting, video chat, text messaging, or face-to-face? How do you speak with Jesus? (Possible answer: in personal prayer, spoken and written)*
- ▶ Turn to page 58. Take turns reading aloud the page. Discuss how names are used during communication. Explain that God is always listening and always inviting us to respond. **Say:** *God truly has “called you by name.” **Ask:** What are some ways God speaks to you? (Possible answers: in nature, in family, in the sacraments, through other people)*



- ▶ Read aloud the Our Catholic Character feature. Explain that we encounter God through the inspired words of Scripture in the Mass. We celebrate Jesus' institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the sending forth of the disciples to serve Christ.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the sections Through People and In Dreams and Other Ways on page 59. **Say:** *Almost everyone has heard the advice "Follow your dreams." God certainly had that in mind when he spoke to people in dreams.* Read aloud Genesis 15:1 as your child follows along and repeat "the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision." **Say:** *Abraham experienced God in the stillness and quiet of his sleep.* **Ask:** *How might technology, media, and computers separate us from an experience with God?* (Possible answer: They may distract us from God's presence.)
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the remaining three sections on page 59. Point out that some things we desire may not be part of God's plan. **Say:** *Focus on what God wants, and listen with your mind and heart in a prayerful, reflective way.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. Read aloud the definitions of *monstrance* and *adoration* in the Glossary. Explain that Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI began an important new tradition at the celebration of World Youth Day in 2005 when he ended the vigil with silent Eucharistic adoration instead of a loud musical finale. The 2011 World Youth Day featured a monstrance set into a towering 16th-century silver-and-gold structure because the pope wished to proclaim Jesus Christ as the central person of World Youth Day.
- ▶ Close the discussion by asking some questions. **Ask:** *How has God spoken to you? How did you recognize his voice?*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Reflect: Pages 60–61

- ▶ Read aloud the title Called by Name on page 60. Then ask your child to read aloud the paragraphs in the left column. Encourage your child to think of prayer as a movement toward God.
- ▶ Before beginning the guided reflection, **say:** *Respond to the questions in the silence of your heart.* Slowly pray aloud the guided reflection "Am I Who I Say?" Provide time for reflection between parts. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Look at page 61. Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? **Say:** *To discover how God answers our prayers, we can pay attention and listen closely for what God wants us to know during the events of our lives.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Answered Prayers. **Ask:** *What was Coach Wagner's advice? (Try another sport.) What was the outcome of the advice for the author? (The author discovered a new talent and met his best friend.)*
- ▶ Have your child complete the Becoming You activity independently.

### Respond: Page 62

- ▶ Read aloud the directions in What's What? Explain that there is only one best answer. Encourage your child to refer to the pages shown to find the answers.
- ▶ Review the terms you learned in this session in Say What?
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Discuss ideas with your child before he or she completes the activity independently.
- ▶ Invite your child to access a 3-Minute Retreat at [www.loyolapress.com/retreat](http://www.loyolapress.com/retreat).



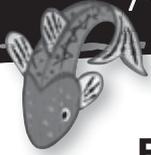
## Jesus Is for All People

### Engage: Page 63

- ▶ Ask your child to accompany you outside to an open area. **Say:** *Imagine it is impossible to return to our home or any form of shelter for an entire week.* **Ask:** *What would be a hardship for you? What conveniences would you miss?* (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ Read aloud and discuss the text in the box on page 63. **Say:** *When you face hardships in life, it doesn't mean that God has left you. He is with you every step of the way. Jesus didn't come to lead only the rich or powerful; Jesus was a king for all people.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together. Then pray aloud the Sign of the Cross.

### Explore: Pages 64–65

- ▶ Remind young people that Jesus was not an earthly king but a divine king. On a world map or globe, point out countries that have or have had some form of monarchy or one-leader rule, such as Cuba, Syria, Great Britain, Spain, North Korea, and Saudi Arabia. **Say:** *When people asked Jesus where they could find the Kingdom of God, the Gospel of Luke tells us that he replied, "[T]he kingdom of God is among you."* [Luke 17:21]
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title The Birth of Jesus on page 64. Then read aloud the opening paragraphs and the section Luke's Infancy Narrative. **Ask:** *Who was the Roman emperor at this time? (Caesar Augustus)* **Say:** *Caesar Augustus was a symbol of Roman power because he defeated all his enemies and unified the Roman Empire. Luke wanted his readers to see Jesus as a bringer of peace in a completely different way.*
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the remaining sections on page 64. Read aloud the meanings of *census* and *swaddling* in the Glossary. Discuss the significance of Jesus being born in Bethlehem and the prophecies fulfilled with Jesus' birth. **Ask:** *What is significant about Jesus being wrapped in swaddling clothes?* (The swaddling was symbolic of the poverty and humility of Jesus' birth. It reminds us of Jesus' kingship because King Solomon was wrapped in swaddling clothes too.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the activity directions. Point out that a tagline is a memorable phrase that recalls the big idea. Together brainstorm taglines about the meaning of Jesus' birth.
- ▶ Read aloud the sections Manger and Shepherds on page 65. **Ask:** *What does the detail about the manger reveal?* (Jesus will be food for the flock.) Explain that the image of a shepherd was often used to describe the kings of the Old Testament because the kings were to care for God's people with the same responsibility as a shepherd would care for his flock. **Say:** *Jesus is often shown as a shepherd because of his care for us.*
- ▶ Read aloud the last section Savior. **Say:** *Jesus calls us to realize that we all stand in need before God. Jesus welcomed sinners and outcasts out of social exile.* Identify social exiles today, such as those who are poor, homeless, or suffering from illnesses. **Say:** *One way we can act with care and compassion is by speaking up for those who are weak.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. Explain that the Christmas crèche is a popular Catholic sacramental. Point out that the songs in *Las Posadas* ask for *posada*, or shelter. The nine days of the procession in this Christmas novena correspond to the nine months Jesus was in Mary's womb. Read aloud the definition of *novena* in the Glossary.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.



### Explore: Pages 66–67

- ▶ Discuss some news stories. Categorize them as triumph or hardship stories. Read aloud the article title. **Say:** *Luke's Infancy Narrative introduces us to a Savior who is rooted in God's promises to Israel but destined for the Salvation of the whole world.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud each section on page 66. Read aloud the definitions of *refugees* and *Magi* in the Glossary. **Say:** *The hardships in Jesus' early life reflect his humanity.* **Ask:** *Who accepts the Good News? (the Magi) Who rejects it? (Herod) Point out that, similar to Jesus' flight to Egypt, many refugees are building new lives in the United States and other nations. Cite examples such as scientist Albert Einstein, who fled Germany in the 1930s.*
- ▶ Read aloud Our Catholic Character. Discuss the meaning of *solidarity* as a call to action that dismisses the notion of a world intended to benefit those who "have" versus those who "have not." Ask your child to read aloud the definition of *solidarity* in the Glossary.
- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Stress the unusual and painstaking method used to make the painting. **Ask:** *What effect might you suppose the artist is seeking with an audience? (realism and a connection to the event) Connect the displacement of the Holy Family fleeing to Egypt with Catholic Social Teaching regarding solidarity.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the sections on page 67. Ask your child to read aloud the definition of *prophecy* in the Glossary. **Ask:** *How did Jesus conquer the bloodshed that surrounded his human life? (His Death and Resurrection secured our eternal life.) Explain that the Infancy Narratives reveal truths concerning Jesus' divinity that the early Church gained over a period of time following Jesus' Resurrection.*
- ▶ Discuss these questions with your child. **Ask:** *When have I fled from carrying the message of God's love to all people? What can I do to follow Jesus' example of acceptance of all people? (Answers will vary.)*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Reflect: Pages 68–69

- ▶ Read aloud the title and paragraphs on page 68. Point out that a psalm is a prayer in the form of a poem, intended to be sung, with the intent of expressing deep human emotion.
- ▶ Invite your child to reflect on God's justice as you both pray aloud God Delivers the Just. Take turns praying the different parts. Pause between each Side for the Response.
- ▶ Look at page 69. Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? Ask your child to interpret the title. **Say:** *Because God is always with us, and we always belong to him, we always belong—no matter where we are.* Read aloud the article. Discuss the importance of a sense of belonging. Brainstorm ways to rediscover God's welcoming presence.
- ▶ Invite your child to complete the Always Welcome activity.

### Respond: Page 70

- ▶ Read aloud the directions in What's What? Suggest using the process of elimination to narrow choices before your child completes the activity.
- ▶ Review the terms you learned in this session in Say What?
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Have your child write a response. **Say:** *Any action that brings us closer to others also brings us closer to God.*
- ▶ Invite your child to access a 3-Minute Retreat at [www.loyolapress.com/retreat](http://www.loyolapress.com/retreat).



## Jesus Grew in Wisdom, Age, and Grace

### Engage: Page 71

- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the box on page 71. Discuss your child's skills and interests. Ask your child what he or she hopes to do in the future. **Say:** *When Jesus was your age, he began to dream about how he wanted to spend the rest of his life. Allowing yourself to imagine future scenarios is a way to "try on" your ideas.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together. Pray aloud the Sign of the Cross.

### Explore: Pages 72–73

- ▶ **Say:** *Coming of age means "the attainment of respectability or maturity." This is an impressive milestone.* **Ask:** *Do you think everyone comes of age at the same time? Why or why not? (No, everyone's life journey is different.)*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title Jesus in the Temple on page 72. Then take turns reading aloud the page. **Say:** *When Jesus stayed behind, he sat among the rabbis.* **Ask:** *Why is Jesus a good model of behavior? (He listened to the Jewish teachers and asked questions.) How does this reflect wisdom? (Possible answers: Jesus was more interested in following his Father's will than proving his knowledge. Jesus respected the accumulated knowledge of his elders.)*
- ▶ Read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Say:** *Like our physical health, our spiritual health has requirements. The Cardinal Virtues are essential if we want to live close to God and to others.* Discuss the Cardinal Virtues. Brainstorm ways to live according to each one.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the two sections on page 73. Discuss the Fourth Commandment and its application to both children and their parents. **Ask:** *How do Mary and Joseph keep the Fourth Commandment? (They begin to recognize their responsibility to prepare Jesus for the work that God wants him to do.)* Read aloud the Mutual Respect activity directions and complete it together.
- ▶ Challenge your child to think of ways that he or she can come of age and still show respect and obedience to you as a parent or caregiver.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Explore: Pages 74–75

- ▶ Talk about a sport or game that you or your child has learned from someone with greater experience. Discuss how that person's knowledge helped you. Point out that the best way to learn to pray is by praying with someone who can teach us how to pray. **Say:** *We learn to pray with our families.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title Finding God in Family on page 74. Take turns reading aloud the page. Read aloud the definition of *domestic church* in the Glossary. **Say:** *When we pray, we take prayers to heart. We think about what the words mean and experience the prayer in a deep and meaningful way.* Reread the quotation from Pope John Paul II and ask your child to explain what it means to him or her.



- ▶ Have your child read aloud Past Meets Present. Explain that children are reminders of the potential that exists in God's kingdom and that some children, through no fault of their own, need help when their own family structure is broken. Remind your child that we are all members of God's family and that God is our Father.
- ▶ Read aloud the sections Who Is Family? and Family's Role in Society on page 75. **Ask:** *Why did Jesus' relatives fear that Jesus was out of his mind?* (Jesus' healing was causing a stir, and even some of his own relatives did not believe.) **Say:** *Often our world is not a very peaceful place.* **Ask:** *How can a peaceful family help build a peaceful world?* (Possible answer: The family is a small part of society. So a greater number of peaceful families contributes to a more peaceful society.)
- ▶ Read aloud the Social Roles activity directions on page 75 and complete it together.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Reflect on Blessed John Paul II's words by telling modern stories in the news about people acting as good samaritans. Challenge your child to think of something he or she can do at home this week to help strengthen a relationship with someone in your family.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Reflect: Pages 76–77

- ▶ Read aloud the title Gifts Received, Gifts Given on page 76. Read aloud the paragraphs in the left column. Discuss how we can use our gifts as disciples of Jesus.
- ▶ Invite your child to become aware of God's presence as you read aloud the guided reflection about sharing our gifts with others. Pause after each paragraph to allow for meditation. Pray aloud the All part together. Pray together the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Look at page 77. Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? Ask your child to name something he or she has made and of which he or she is proud. Discuss how the creative process is made up of a series of decisions, actions, and adjustments that seem partly controlled by us and partly controlled by something greater than us. Take turns reading aloud How Do I Discover My Real Identity? Ask your child to describe a time when he or she did something courageous, loving, or impressive when he or she least expected. **Say:** *At these times, God was moving in your life, shaping you into something that you weren't before.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the directions for the Who Are You Meant to Be? activity and make the collage independently. Ask him or her to explain the completed collage to you.

### Respond: Page 78

- ▶ Read aloud the directions in What's What? Remind your child to refer to the cited pages to find the details that answer each question.
- ▶ Review the terms you learned in this session in Say What?
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Together brainstorm ways that your family demonstrates that it is a domestic church. Ask your child to write the response.
- ▶ Invite your child to access a 3-Minute Retreat at [www.loyolapress.com/retreat](http://www.loyolapress.com/retreat).



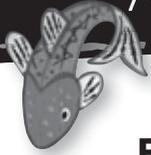
## Celebrating Advent and Christmas

### Engage: Page 79

- ▶ Discuss customs or traditions that help families and communities prepare for Christmas.
- ▶ Read aloud and discuss the text in the box on page 79. Then read aloud the page.  
**Ask:** *How can we remember the reasons why we are celebrating Advent and Christmas?* (Possible answers: We can pray special prayers. We can notice God at work in friends and family. We can attend Mass regularly.)
- ▶ Pray the prayer together. Pray aloud the Sign of the Cross.

### Explore: Pages 80–81

- ▶ Invite your child to participate in a demonstration. Ask him or her to walk to the door while blindfolded. For safety, be sure to clear away any obstacles. **Ask:** *What was it like to walk around in darkness?* **Say:** *We're going to read about Advent and its relation to darkness and light.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title Living in the Light of Advent on page 80. Take turns reading aloud the page. **Ask:** *In Scripture, what does darkness represent? (evil, sin, not following God, turning away from God) What does light represent? (goodness, Jesus Christ, Salvation, following God the Father and Jesus Christ)* Read aloud these passages and discuss the meanings of light and darkness: John 8:12, 1 Timothy 6:11–16, 2 Samuel 22:29, Job 12:22.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud Our Catholic Character. Point out that the Catholic Church is worldwide and honors the same saints. Invite your child to read aloud the definition of the *Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe* in the Glossary. Point out that the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is important for all Catholics, and because it reflects cultural tradition for Mexican Catholics, it is especially important to them.
- ▶ Read aloud the sections Awake from Sleep and In History, Grace, and Glory on page 81. **Ask:** *What are some ways that you can be "awake" in your daily life?* (Possible answers: You can pray before meals and bed; you can notice goodness in others; you can pause to give thanks for blessings throughout the day.) *Who will experience Jesus' final coming?* (everyone) Read aloud the section Your Advent. Talk about what your family can do to personalize the Advent experience.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the directions and write responses for the Awake or Asleep? activity on page 81.
- ▶ Close the article discussion by asking your child to name some things or events for which he or she anxiously awaits. **Ask:** *What do you do while you wait? What might cause your hope to waver as you wait? What do you do to keep your hope alive?* (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.



### Explore: Pages 82–83

- ▶ Ask your child to choose a favorite baby picture. Share the story of his or her birth. Point out that just as this story was retold and passed along, the Christian community retold and passed along the story of Jesus' birth.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article The Gift of Christmas on page 82. Review the meaning of *Nativity* in the Glossary. **Ask:** *Which two Gospel writers tell us about Jesus' birth? (Matthew and Luke) What is unique about Luke's account?* (He stresses a different kind of king and kingdom. He points out that Jesus came to save everyone, including those who are poor and outcast. He highlights Mary's role in Salvation History.)
- ▶ Together read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Discuss the questions, guiding your child to recognize the difficult journey to Bethlehem for Mary and Joseph.
- ▶ Read aloud the section First Gifts on page 83. Ask your child to read aloud the meaning of *sanctuary* in the Glossary. **Ask:** *How is God's power unlike any other power?* (Possible answers: God's power is in service to others, not in service to self.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the section One True Gift. Discuss the meanings of the sayings "Jesus is the reason for the season" and "Put Christ back in Christmas."
- ▶ Read aloud Past Meets Present. Explain that Roman paganism represented a variety of religions whose followers believed in many gods. In the early days of Christianity, Christians made up only about 10 percent of the population and were routinely persecuted for their beliefs.
- ▶ Together write ideas for a new Christmas tradition that will help your family stay focused on Jesus.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Reflect: Pages 84–85

- ▶ Read aloud the title Welcome Jesus! on page 84. Take turns reading aloud the paragraphs in the left column. Read aloud the definitions of *Holy Days of Obligation* and *feast days* in the Glossary. Explain that there are six Holy Days of Obligation, and refer your child to page 291 for more information about these days.
- ▶ Take turns praying aloud the parts of Give Glory to the Lord. Pause for meditation following each part. Conclude the prayer by praying the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Look at page 85. Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? **Say:** *In times of darkness, the light we offer others shines more brightly.* Read aloud Being a Light to Others. Discuss areas in your lives where you feel you need to be perfect. **Ask:** *How can such an attitude keep us from doing God's work?* (Possible answer: It prevents us from saying anything at all.) **Say:** *We do not have to be the flashlight. We just have to be the mirror, angled toward God. Remembering this can relieve some of the pressure we feel.*
- ▶ Read aloud the directions and complete the Lighting a Way activity together.

### Respond: Page 86

- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the directions and each main idea in What's What? Ask him or her to complete the activity and share the responses.
- ▶ Review the terms you learned in this session in Say What?
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Together list ideas that you both can refer to during the week as a reminder to recognize the dignity of others.
- ▶ Invite your child to access a 3-Minute Retreat at [www.loyolapress.com/retreat](http://www.loyolapress.com/retreat).