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God, Our Creator and Father

Unit Opener: Pages 2–4

- ▶ Say: *The title of this book is Finding God.* Ask: *Who is God?* (our Father and Creator) *Where do we find him?* Discuss with your child where you find God in your everyday life and how the Bible is a source to learn more about him. Read aloud the unit title. Say: *In this unit, we learn that God is our Father and Creator and reveals himself to us in the Bible.*
- ▶ Invite your child to turn to page 2. Focus your child's attention on the picture. Ask: *What is Saint Jerome doing?* (writing, thinking)
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the first paragraph on page 3. Say: *Hebrew is the language spoken by the Jewish people. Few Christians in Jerome's day could read and those who did read Latin, their everyday language.*
- ▶ Ask your child to read the last two paragraphs. Ask: *Why might Saint Jerome be the patron saint of librarians?* (He worked with the Bible, a kind of library.) Say: *Jerome's work made it possible for people to read the Bible in their own language.* Ask: *How did Jerome translate Scripture into deeds?* (When war broke out, he worked to help refugees.) *What do his actions say about God's plan for our lives?* (God wants us to help others.)
- ▶ With your child, add Jerome's feast day, September 30, to your calendar. Plan an event together to celebrate the work of Saint Jerome.
- ▶ Read aloud the Be Inspired feature. Ask: *Why are we called to seek out good in the world?* Discuss your child's responses.
- ▶ Invite your child to turn to page 4. Say: *Jerome led by example with his deeds, encouraging others to put God's Word into action.* Ask your child to read aloud Translating God's Word into Action.
- ▶ Read aloud the introduction and directions for Faith into Action Formula. Direct your child to each Scripture passage in the Bible and discuss each one. Then have him or her complete the activity.
- ▶ Direct your child to the Reading God's Word feature. Say: *Saint Jerome put his faith into action. He used his language skills to translate the Bible into a common language, Latin. He also went out to help people in need.* Ask your child to read aloud the psalm.

The Bible, God's Story

Engage: Page 5

- ▶ Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture.
- ▶ Read aloud Luke 34:27–32. Then say: ***The Gospel of the Lord***. Invite your child to respond *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*.
- ▶ Invite your child to think of some things he or she knows about his or her best friend. Ask: ***How did you learn these things?*** (Answers will vary.) Say: ***We learn about God from his words and actions revealed in the Bible***. Ask your child to read aloud the text on page 5. Say: ***We can grow closer to God by reading the Bible***.

Explore: Pages 6–7

- ▶ Discuss pieces of art you and your child are familiar with. Ask: ***What might have inspired the artist to make such a piece?*** Look up *inspired* in the Glossary and read the definition.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 6. Ask: ***What is the main story of the Old Testament?*** (the story of how God revealed himself to the Hebrew people and how they placed their faith in God) ***What is the main story of the New Testament?*** (the story of how God the Father revealed himself fully in Jesus, his Son; the early Christians; and their new faith and salvation through Jesus)
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. Discuss some of the books of the Bible you are both familiar with and tell what you know about them.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 7. Discuss the terms *Magisterium* and *interpretation*. Say: ***The Bible is the Word of God. God reveals himself to us through Scripture and Church Tradition. The Holy Spirit works through the Magisterium, who help us understand what Scripture means for our lives.***
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. Ask: ***What does this Bible verse mean to you?***

Art Exploration: Page 8

- ▶ Find in a magazine, a book, or online a picture of an illuminated, or decorated, Bible page.
- ▶ Say: ***What do you see in this picture?*** Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including letters, pictures, and scenes.
- ▶ Ask: ***Why do you think those who copied the Bible wanted it to be so beautiful?*** (Possible answer: to show the beauty of God's Word)
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 8. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Copying the Bible. Point out the two bolded words. Ask: ***Why is "everyday language" important for a Bible translation?*** (makes it easier to read) ***Why were scriptoriums important?*** (They produced copies of the Bible so that more people could use the Bible for prayer and worship.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Illuminated Bible and complete the activity.

- ▶ Ask your child to study the illuminated Bible page and imagine what it would take to copy not only the Scripture, but also to illuminate the page. Have your child reflect on how long it would take to copy the page and focus on the concentration the illuminators must have had to complete each page. Close with a silent prayer thanking God for revealing himself through the Bible.

Reflect: Pages 9–10

- ▶ Together look at page 9. Say: ***Praying is different from reading or reciting. A prayer is a conversation. Think about the words you are praying and listen with your heart.***
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the paragraph on page 6. Then pray aloud the prayer together. Guide your child to understand that you will pray the verse, they will respond with the refrain, and you will pray together the second paragraph. Conclude by praying *Amen* and joining your child in making the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Making Choices on page 10. Ask: ***How can we use free will to follow God and do good in the world?*** (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Seeking Advice and think of a situation to write about. Discuss the situation and response after he or she is finished writing.

Respond: Pages 11–12

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary on page 11. Review the Words I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Invite your child to choose one of the psalms listed and read it aloud together.
- ▶ Say: ***Let's give thanks for the gift of God's Word.*** Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud With My Family on page 12. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer together. Say: ***With the guidance of God's Word and the Holy Spirit, we can live our lives as witness to the Good News and build Christ's Church.***

God Creates the World

Engage: Page 13

- ▶ Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture.
- ▶ Read aloud Ephesians 2:4–10. Then say: ***The Word of the Lord.*** Invite your child to respond *Thanks be to God.*
- ▶ Invite your child to recall a news story with a dramatic rescue. Say: ***Think about a time when someone rescued you from a difficult situation. God the Father sent his Son, Jesus, to save us from sin because we are incapable of saving ourselves.***
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the paragraphs on page 13. Ask: ***What can we do to receive grace from God?*** (Nothing. It is given to us by God freely.)
- ▶ Say: ***Let's thank Jesus for our salvation and ask for help to do his work.*** Pray aloud the prayer together. Conclude the prayer by praying *Amen.*

Explore: Pages 14–15

- ▶ Together close your eyes and visualize something wonderful that God has created. Ask: ***What amazing things did you see?*** Make a list of your responses.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the top sections of page 14. Ask: ***What did the writer of the first Genesis story want to make clear?*** (God created every part of the world and saw everything as good.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud It's All Good. Ask your child to name something that they typically think of as bad but ask them to tell you something good about it. For example, forest fires seem bad but the fires remove underbrush and help new trees grow. Then have your child to complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud page 15. Ask: ***What was it like for the exiled Jews?*** (They were treated badly.) Look up *culture* and *racism* in the Glossary. Discuss the definitions. Say: ***Most Americans are immigrants or the descendants of immigrants, so someone in our family might have had to get used to a new culture and may have faced racism.***
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Meet a Saint feature. Ask: ***How do people working for minority rights do God's work?*** (They care for others and treat others as equals.)

Art Exploration: Page 16

- ▶ Find in a magazine, a book, or online a picture of Adam and Eve being expelled from the Garden of Eden.
- ▶ Ask: ***What do you see in this picture?*** Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including any emotion being expressed by Adam and Eve. Ask: ***How would you feel if you were told to leave the place where you lived?*** (Answers will vary.)

- ▶ Have your child turn to page 16. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud The Second Story of Creation. Ask: ***What does God ask of us today?*** (to care for the earth) ***How did God show mercy to Adam and Eve?*** Discuss *stewardship*.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Mercy and Love and write a prayer.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. Ask your child to explain Psalm 8 in his or her own words. Say: ***Psalm 8 praises God for making human beings so special.***
- ▶ Ask your child to create a comic strip panel to tell one creation story. When it is finished, encourage them to share it with a family member.

Reflect: Pages 17–18

- ▶ Together look at page 17. Ask: ***What do you see in the picture?*** (a family enjoying nature) Say: ***God's gift of creation was an act of tremendous love.***
- ▶ Read aloud the first four paragraphs on page 17. Allow time for your child to imagine the vast richness of God's creation. Then pray together the prayer slowly and with expression. Close the prayer by praying *Amen* and praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud Equal in the Eyes of God on page 18. Point out the bolded word. Ask: ***What is our duty as Catholics regarding sexism and racism?*** (to oppose any kind of discrimination)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud We Can Be Good and complete the activity. Discuss the response and drawing with other family members.

Respond: Pages 19–20

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Words I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can be kind to other people and care for God's creation.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud With My Family on page 20. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer. Say: ***Remember that God made you in his image. He created your body as well as your immortal. It is our destiny to live in heaven with our Father. We are called to follow Jesus' example by treating people as he would treat them.***

Sin and Salvation

Engage: Page 21

- ▶ Together with your child, name people in your community that you trust such as a police officer, a teacher, the crossing guard, and the next-door neighbor. Ask: *What do you trust each of these people to do for you?* (Answers will vary.) Say: *Our Father in heaven wants you to place your trust in him. When we follow his Law and Jesus' teachings, we are responding to his grace and are led to salvation.*
- ▶ Invite your child to quiet him or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture. Read aloud Romans 5:19–21. Then say: *The Word of the Lord.* Invite children to respond *Thanks be to God.*
- ▶ Say: *Sometimes we feel distance from people we love, and we need the help of someone else to bring us together.* Ask: *How did God eliminate the distance caused by sin?* (by sending his only Son, Jesus)
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer. Then conclude the prayer by praying the Sign of the Cross.

Explore: Pages 22–23

- ▶ Discuss times that your child regretted a choice he or she made, such as telling a lie, not doing chores, or not sharing with a sibling. Ask: *How did you feel? What were the consequences?*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 22. Point out the bolded term. Ask: *Why do you think Adam and Eve ate the one fruit that God had forbidden them to eat?* (They wanted to be wise like God.) *What were the consequences?* (They had to leave the garden; their lives became more challenging.)
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. Ask: *What other word does enmity look or sound like?* (enemy) *What do you think the word enmity means?* (hatred) Say: *These are the words God said to the snake before sending Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Cain and Abel on page 23. Say: *God showed Cain mercy.* Ask: *What is mercy?* (a kind and tolerant response to a difficult time)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions for God's Mercy and complete the activity. Discuss your child's responses.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. Say: *Through the Holy Spirit, our conscience helps us judge the moral qualities of our actions.*

Art Exploration: Page 24

- ▶ Find in a magazine, a book, or online an interpretation of Noah building the ark.
- ▶ Say: *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including what the ark looks like and who is boarding the ark.

- ▶ Say: *God showed mercy to Noah's family, just as he showed to Adam and Eve, and just as he shows to us.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 24. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the story. Ask: *Why did Noah and his family survive the flood?* (The listened to God, obeyed God, trusted in God.)
- ▶ Read aloud God's Promise. Ask: *What was God's promise to Noah? What does it mean for us?* (to never send such a flood again, to never give up on people) Have your child complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. Say: *Noah and his family were thankful for God's mercy. During Mass, we give thanks for God's mercy too.*
- ▶ Identify the colors of the rainbow. Have your child use water color paints or pastels to make a rainbow, demonstrating the correct color order. Have your child draw a cloud and write a promise he or she will make to God. Display the artwork in your home.

Reflect: Pages 25–26

- ▶ Together look at page 25. Point out the picture. Say: *The girl looks peaceful just as we do when we pray. Remember that we can ask Mary, our Blessed Mother, to support and help us as we present our needs to God.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 25. Say: *Let's pray aloud each line of the Hail Mary together. After each line, we'll read silently the sentences that follow and think about what they mean.* Conclude by praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud God's Mercy, Our Trust on page 26. Then read aloud the directions for Words of Wisdom. Look up the Bible verses together and discuss their meaning. Then have your child write a poem in the Trust in the Lord activity. Invite your child to share the poem with you.

Respond: Pages 27–28

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Words I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can use verses from the Scriptures to strengthen his or her faith in God.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Then Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud With My Family on page 28. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Then pray the family prayer together. Say: *We sin when we fail to trust God and choose to disobey his law. It hurts our relationship with him and others. You can always pray to the Holy Spirit for strength to live as Jesus wants us to live.*

Abraham Listens to God

Engage: Page 29

- ▶ Together with your child, talk about difficult tasks both of you have completed. Ask: *Did you need help to overcome the challenges of completing the task?*
- ▶ Invite your child to quiet him or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture. Read aloud Acts of the Apostles 3:13–16. Then say: *The Word of the Lord*. Invite children to respond *Thanks be to God*.
- ▶ Ask your child whom they would trust to come through for them if they were desperate for help. Have your child read aloud the paragraphs on page 29. Say: *When we face challenges as we serve God and others, we can always pray and ask God for help.*
- ▶ Pray the prayer together. Then conclude by praying the Sign of the Cross.

Explore: Pages 30–31

- ▶ Have your child make two columns on a sheet of paper. In one column, write the rewards of following a teacher's directions. In the other column, list the consequences of disobeying those directions. Discuss how obedience can bring rewards and blessings.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 30. Ask: *What are some ways God speaks to us?* (through Bible stories, our conscience) *What can we do to be sure we hear God's voice?* (Slow down, quiet our minds, and listen for God as we pray.)
- ▶ Read aloud Abraham Is Tested on page 31. Say: *Abraham proved how strong his faith was*. Now invite your child to read aloud Why Did God Test Abraham? Point out the bolded word. Ask: *What lessons did the Jewish people learn?* (God did not want human sacrifice. He wanted faith and obedience.) Say: *This is an example of how God always wants us to value and show dignity to all people.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. Say: *Why are we all children of Abraham?* (because we have faith in God)

Art Exploration: Page 32

- ▶ Find in a magazine, a book, or online an interpretation of a traditional Jewish dance, the hora.
- ▶ Ask: *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, the formation of the people and the movement that is suggested.
- ▶ Say: *The artwork shows a traditional dance handed down through generations.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 32. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud page 32. Point out the bolded term. Ask: ***As Christians, how are we called to be one of God’s Chosen People?*** (by helping other people learn about and trust God)
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud God’s People and complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. Ask: ***When do we pray the Sign of the Cross at Mass?*** (beginning and end of Mass and before the Gospel) Say: ***When we make this gesture, we pray silently, “God be in my mind, on my lips, and in my heart.”***
- ▶ Teach your child the following version of the hora, moving counterclockwise. Play Jewish music to accompany the dance. 1. Step to the right. Left foot behind the right foot. 2. Right foot beside left foot. 3. Step to the right. Left foot in front of right foot. 4. Continue as circle spins. 5. Move toward center of circle, holding hands in the air. 6. Lower hands. Move backward. Repeat.

Reflect: Pages 33–34

- ▶ Together look at page 33. Ask: ***What do you think the word hope means as it relates to faith and God?*** Discuss your child’s response. Say: ***Hope is the confidence that God will always be with us and guide us.***
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the introductory paragraph on page 33. Say: ***Many people learn this traditional prayer from memory. Pray in your heart as I pray aloud the prayer. Think about your hope and trust in God.*** Read aloud the Act of Hope slowly and with feeling. Pause for your child to reflect on the words. Close the prayer by joining your child in the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud The Messengers of God on page 34. Ask: ***Why does God use angels as messengers?*** (to help people understand and follow his plan)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Angels in Action. Together find the passages in your Bible and write what each angel did.

Respond: Pages 35–36

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary on page 35. Review the Words I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to find an example of a Bible story or verse that can help strengthen their faith, such as Philippians 4:13.
- ▶ Read aloud Holy Servants. Brainstorm with your child ways you can serve God. Invite your child to complete the activity by filling out the chart.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud With My Family on page 36. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer. Say: ***As you learn more about what it means to be a servant of God, remember that he is always with you to lead and guide you. Keep in mind that serving God helps us grow deeper in our faith.***

Celebrating Ordinary Time

Engage: Page 37

- ▶ Ask your child to describe the current season of the year and tell how it differs from the other three seasons. Say: *Our Church also celebrates special seasons throughout the liturgical year.* Ask: *How is celebrating the Church's special feasts and seasons the same as gathering for a family celebration?* (We gather as God's family.)
- ▶ Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture. Read aloud 2 Samuel 7:12–17. Then say: *The Word of the Lord.* Invite your child to respond *Thanks be to God.*
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the paragraphs on page 37. Say: *Ordinary Time is the time of year when we learn about Jesus and how to experience his love through Scripture and the sacraments.*
- ▶ Say: *We can make the season of Ordinary Time extraordinary by beginning each day with a prayer or saying a prayer of thanksgiving before each meal.* Pray aloud the prayer together. Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.

Explore: Page 38

- ▶ Take time to observe a plant in your home. Ask: *What do plants need to grow?* (sun, water) *What do we need so our faith will grow?* (prayer, Scripture, Mass, the Eucharist)
- ▶ Read aloud the first section. Say: *The Word of God speaks to our hearts.* Ask: *Why are the Gospels called Good News?* (They tell the story of the birth, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Savior, Jesus Christ.) Say: *During Ordinary Time, we learn how to listen better so we can live the lives that Jesus calls us to live.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud How Can I Grow? and complete the activity. Discuss your child's responses.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. Say: *We try to live our lives as God wants. Sometimes we need a gentle hand guiding us. We ask God to be with us and teach us how to live a life that honors him.*

Reflect: Page 39

- ▶ Have your child read aloud Mass During Ordinary Time. Say: *The Scripture readings from Mass look at Jesus' life from three perspectives. The first looks at Jesus as the fulfillment of God the Father's promise. The second explores life in the early Christian communities. The Gospel is about Jesus' life and teachings.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud What We Experience. Ask: *What is an evangelist?* (one who spreads the Good News) *Why do you think we give these four men the title of*

Evangelist? (They spread the Good News through their writings.) Say: ***We can be evangelists in our daily lives by sharing the Good News with others through our words and actions.***

- ▶ Have your child read Symbols of My Faith and complete the activity.

Art Exploration: Page 40

- ▶ Find in a magazine, a book, or online symbols of each of the Evangelists.
- ▶ Ask: ***What do you see in these images?*** Encourage your child to describe the pictures in detail, identifying each symbol.
- ▶ Say: ***Each image is a symbol representing the theme of a specific Gospel writer.***
- ▶ Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question on page 40.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud Evangelists' Symbols. Say: ***During Ordinary Time, the Gospels play an important role. Reading the Gospels can help us grow closer to Jesus.*** Ask: ***What do we read about in the Gospels?*** (Jesus' life and teachings)
- ▶ Discuss everyday symbols and what they mean, such as street signs and symbols for holidays, birthdays, or weddings.
- ▶ Together brainstorm Christian symbols that appear in your parish church. Then have your child complete the activity.
- ▶ Invite your child to think about qualities that make them unique. Then review the symbols of the four Evangelists. Discuss if your child can identify with one of the four Gospel writers or their symbols. Then have your child draw his or her own symbol. Invite your child to tell about the finished drawing. Ask him or her to meditate on ways he or she can share the Good News of God's Word with others.

Respond: Pages 41–42

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary on page 41. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific blessings he or she can include in a prayer before meals to thank Jesus. Then invite your child to complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud With My Family on page 42. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer. Invite your child to make an effort this week to be faithful and obedient through prayer and action. Say: ***Remember that Jesus was faithful and God's promises were fulfilled through him***