



God, Our Creator and Father

Begin

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 each find God in your everyday life. Tell your child that you find God in him or her and in your love for him or her. Read aloud the unit title. Say: Let's begin this book together by talking about God as our Father and Creator. God created everything that is. His creation shows his love for us.*

Introduce the Saint

Have your child turn to page 1. Read aloud the saint's name and the sentence below it.

Discuss the picture of Saint Francis of Assisi. **Ask:** *What else do you see in the picture? (animals) What kind of clothing is Saint Francis wearing? (a brown robe) Is his clothing fancy? (No.) Do you think Saint Francis was a rich man? (No.)*

Ask: *How would you feel if you saw a person talking to a wild animal such as a wolf? (Possible answers: scared, nervous, curious) How did the wolf react to Saint Francis? (It was calm and gentle.) Say: Saint Francis loved everything God created. He loved the animals as if they were his brothers and sisters. He treated them kindly. We are going to learn how God makes everything and how prayer helps us show our love for all creation.*

With your child add Francis's feast day, October 4, to your calendar. Plan an event together to celebrate the love that Saint Francis had for animals.



God Makes Everything

Engage: Page 1

- ▶ Invite your child to take a nature walk with you around your neighborhood. Collect small treasures from God's creation—leaves, rocks, dandelions. **Say:** *God made all things to show us how much he loves us.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's answer. **Say:** *In this session we're going to learn that God is good to all of us!*
- ▶ Display your nature-walk treasures and talk about all the beautiful things God has made. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 2–3

- ▶ Look out a window of your home with your child. Together draw pictures of things that you see that God has created.
- ▶ Read aloud page 2. Point out the vocabulary words, *God* and *Creator*. **Ask:** *Who is God? (God is the Creator because he makes everything.) What do you see in each picture? (a tree, a happy child, flowers)* Discuss how we want to remember to thank God in our hearts whenever we see something he made for us.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and first paragraph on page 3. Point out the photo. **Ask:** *Why are these children recycling? (They want to take care of God's world.)* Read aloud the last two paragraphs. **Ask:** *What does Amen mean? (We pray Amen to show we really mean the words we pray.)* **Say:** *A saint is a person who shows love for God in a special way. Saint Francis showed his love for God by caring for God's creatures.*

Art Exploration: Page 157

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Saint Vincent de Paul helping people who are sick.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the actions of Saint Vincent de Paul.
- ▶ **Say:** *Saint Vincent de Paul helped people who were poor and in need. This is how he showed God his love.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 157. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and the first paragraph. Talk about different organizations that help people in need, such as Habitat for Humanity. Explain that some parishes have a St. Vincent de Paul Society of volunteers who help those in need. **Ask:** *Why do you think the organization is called the St. Vincent de Paul Society? (It helps people in need, as Saint Vincent de Paul did.)*



- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the activity. Together find clothes in your closet that you could donate to a St. Vincent de Paul center or a similar organization in your area.
- ▶ With your child use watercolor paints, crayons, markers, or colored pencils to make get-well cards for future use. Help your child write *Get Well Soon!* on the cards and sign his or her artwork. When a family member or neighbor becomes ill, have your child choose a card to show he or she cares.

Reflect: Page 4

- ▶ Together look at page 4. **Say:** *We will learn a prayer that reminds us that we belong to God. It's called the Sign of the Cross.*
- ▶ Face your child as you demonstrate the gestures for the Sign of the Cross. Then turn your back and use exaggerated movements, making sure your child can see where you're placing your hands. Read aloud the first paragraph on page 6. Pray the Sign of the Cross together. Read aloud the second paragraph. Pause to allow your child to talk to God silently.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and verse of God Makes Good Things. **Ask:** *Why do you think God said, "It is very good?" (All that comes from God is good.) What are some of your favorite things that God has made?*
- ▶ Read aloud the next paragraph and have your child complete the activity.

Respond: Page 5

- ▶ 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 another way to show that he or she loves God's world.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



God Cares for Us

Engage: Page 6

- ▶ Discuss what it feels like to be a part of your family. **Ask:** *How do we as a family show that we care about one another?* (help with chores, play together, hug family members)
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. Discuss your child's responses. **Ask:** *What would you do to help someone new feel welcome?* (say hello, include him or her in a game)
Say: *In this session we'll learn how much God loves us and how we can show his love to others.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about how he or she cares for other people. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 6–7

- ▶ Together draw a picture of your church. **Say:** *A church is a special place where we celebrate Mass together.*
- ▶ Read aloud Showing God We Care and point out the two vocabulary words. **Ask:** *What do you think is going on in these pictures?* (People are praying and singing.) *What do we do at Mass?* (hear stories about God, pray, sing) Explain that the liturgy is a prayer that we pray with other people.
- ▶ Read aloud page 7. **Say:** *The Mass is an example of a liturgy. We can praise and thank God at Mass.* **Ask:** *How do we celebrate God's love?* (We sing and pray together at Mass.)
- ▶ Discuss your favorite part of the Mass. Invite your child to draw a picture of his or her favorite part of the Mass. Ask your child why this is his or her favorite part.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Ask:** *What can we do to enjoy the good things God has given us?* (take walks outside, recycle, take care of flowers and animals)

Art Exploration: Page 158

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of a playground full of children playing together.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the actions of the children toward one another.
- ▶ **Say:** *When someone is kind to us or when we see someone being kind, it can make us think about being kind too.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 158. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Read aloud the title and the first paragraph. **Ask:** *How do people around us feel when we are kind? (loved, cared for)* **Say:** *This is how we show God's love to one another.*
- ▶ Read aloud the directions and complete the activity together. Discuss times when you and your child showed love at home.
- ▶ With your child use watercolor paints to make a scene of a playground full of children. After the artwork dries, help your child add a caption to the painting to describe what is happening.

Reflect: Page 8

- ▶ Together look at page 8. **Ask:** *What is the boy in the picture doing? (praying) How is he holding his hands? (folded together)* Remind your child that he or she can pray anytime or anyplace he or she likes.
- ▶ Read aloud the first paragraph. Invite your child to say the special words of praise with you. Read aloud the last two paragraphs. Invite your child to spend a few moments in silence to thank God. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading, verse, and the following line of God's Perfect World. **Ask:** *What kinds of good things does God give us? (food, friends, water)* **Say:** *God takes good care of us by giving us everything we need.*
- ▶ Read the directions for the activity. Invite your child to name the good things in the picture and then color the picture. At your next meal together, discuss the good things God has given your family.

Respond: Page 9

- ▶ 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 to show he or she cares for family, friends, and neighbors.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



God Is Our Father

Engage: Page 10

- ▶ Invite your child to plan a birthday celebration for a family member or pet. Make a list of different things your child can do to make it a really special day.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. Discuss your child's responses. Point out the picture. **Ask:** *What are the people doing? (having a party)* **Say:** *This family is sending a message of love to one another by celebrating with the birthday child.* **Say:** *In this session we will learn about God's special message to us.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think of ways to show love to his or her family. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 10–11

- ▶ On a sheet of paper, write a special message to each other such as *God loves us* or *I love you so much*. Leave out a few letters and fill them in together as you read them.
- ▶ Help your child read aloud the heading and the first two sentences. Read the card aloud. **Ask:** *Why did Dad write a message to Ben? (It is Ben's birthday.)* Read aloud the questions and discuss them.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and the first paragraph on page 11. Point out the vocabulary words. Show your child a Bible. **Say:** *The Bible contains the story of God's promise to care for us.* **Ask:** *Who is Jesus? (God's Son)* **Say:** *The Bible tells us all about Jesus.*
- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the sentence and draw a picture. Invite your child to take time to look through your Bible and ask questions about it.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Ask:** *At Mass what kinds of stories do you hear from the Bible? (stories about God and Jesus)*

Art Exploration: Page 159

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Jesus being welcomed by a large group of children.
- ▶ **Say:** *Whom do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the emotions that show on the faces of the people.
- ▶ **Say:** *Jesus is with us wherever we are. He is friendly and he loves us. Jesus makes us feel happy with his presence.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 159. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Read aloud the heading and the first paragraph. **Say:** *Jesus teaches us that God is our Father. That's why we often refer to God as our Father in our prayers.*
- ▶ Read aloud the passage from the Bible. **Ask:** *Who is God's wonderful Son? (Jesus)* **Say:** *You can tell from God's words that he loves his Son, Jesus, very much.*
- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the activity. Discuss how much God loves all of us.
- ▶ With your child use construction paper, markers, crayons, and scissors to make a Hosanna banner to decorate his or her room. Use bright colors and help your child write the word *Hosanna*.

Reflect: Page 12

- ▶ Together look at page 12. **Ask:** *Where is the boy sitting? (in a field)* **Say:** *Jesus is always with you wherever you might be and loves spending time with you in prayer.*
- ▶ Read aloud How Special You Are in a prayerful manner. Pause between sentences, giving your child time to reflect. **Say:** *Now take a few moments to tell Jesus anything you like.* Close the prayer by praying *Amen* and the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and first paragraph of A Home with Jesus. Discuss the questions. **Ask:** *Does everyone live in a home like ours?* Discuss different kinds of homes and explain that all people should have a place to live.
- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the activity. Ask your child to tell what he or she would like best about Jesus visiting your home.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *When you love Jesus, God loves you.*

Respond: Page 13

- ▶ 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 share God's message of love.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



God Gives Us Peace

Engage: Page 14

- ▶ Invite your child to play a game that he or she enjoys playing with friends, such as hide-and-seek or checkers. Discuss how being with friends can make us feel good.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. Discuss your child's response. **Ask:** *If you feel sad, how can your friends help cheer you up?* (visit, play a game with you) **Say:** *In this session we will learn about God's wonderful gift of peace.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about how friends help one another feel happy and peaceful just as God does every day. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 14–15

- ▶ Ask your child to write a sentence on a slip of paper about how he or she can help someone in your family or neighborhood. Suggest that your child give the gift of his or her time or help with a chore. Put the paper in a small box and wrap it. Encourage your child to present the gift to the person at the end of this session or to use it as a reminder to help that person.
- ▶ Read aloud A Gift of Peace and discuss the picture. **Ask:** *Whom do you see in this picture? What do you think is happening?* (Jesus is telling his friends that the Holy Spirit is with them.) Then invite your child to breathe in and out. Point out the words *Holy Spirit*. Explain that God's Holy Spirit is as close as your own breath.
- ▶ Read aloud page 15. Point to the word *Trinity*. **Ask:** *Who are the three Persons of the Trinity?* (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit)
- ▶ Have your child look at page 15 to answer these questions: *Which Person of the Trinity made us?* (the Father) *Which Person of the Trinity brings us God's love?* (the Son) *Which person of the Trinity brings us God's peace?* (the Holy Spirit)

Art Exploration: Page 160

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of a dove holding an olive branch.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, noting the olive branch being held by the dove.
- ▶ **Say:** *The dove in this artwork holds an olive branch, which also stands for peace. People all over the world want peace and pray to God to help them find it.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 160. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Read aloud the title and the first paragraph. **Ask:** *When might we pray for peace? (when we are arguing, when we hear a sad story on the news)*
- ▶ **Say:** *Everyone can pass along peace simply by smiling.* **Ask:** *How else can you pass along peace? (treat others with kindness, say I'm sorry when making a mistake, forgive others)*
- ▶ Take turns smiling into a mirror. Then read aloud the directions and have your child complete the activity.
- ▶ Together read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *If we listen to God's messages and believe them, we will have peace.*
- ▶ Together with your child cut out dove silhouettes from sheets of white paper. Then complete the following sentence on each dove cutout: *I can bring peace by _____.* Decorate the other side of the doves with white feathers and glitter. Suspend them from string to decorate your home.

Reflect: Page 16

- ▶ Together look at page 16. **Ask:** *What do you think the girl in the picture is thinking about?* **Say:** *When you talk to Jesus in your heart, you can use any words you want because he always understands.*
- ▶ Read aloud the sentence above the prayer. Invite your child to read aloud the Glory Be to the Father with you. Read aloud the last paragraph. Allow your child time to pray silently and then Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Invite your child to draw a picture. Say the word *Trinity* together. **Ask:** *How many Persons are there in the Trinity? (three)*
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know...? feature emphasizing peace and goodness. **Ask:** *What are other ways we can be peacemakers? (by being good listeners, by making friends with people different from us)*

Respond: Page 17

- ▶ 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 other ways to share to bring God's love to others.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



Celebrating Ordinary Time

Engage: Page 18

- ▶ Together with your child, look at or make a calendar for the week. **Ask:** *Why do people use calendars?* (to record important events, to know when to complete tasks, to understand how much time has passed) List some of your family's activities on the calendar.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text. Point out the vocabulary words. Then ask your child to turn to page 106 in his or her book and locate both periods of Ordinary Time on the liturgical calendar. **Say:** *In this session we'll learn about Ordinary Time—a time to grow closer to God and give thanks for the gifts God gives us.*
- ▶ Ask your child to look at your calendar and discuss the family activities for which he or she is grateful. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Page 19

- ▶ Set a timer for one minute. Then ask your child to complete this sentence with as many responses as possible during the time limit: *I am grateful for _____.* Record his or her ideas and then read them aloud.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and first paragraph. **Say:** *We grow closer to God by being aware of and grateful for his many gifts.*
- ▶ Discuss the gifts in the children's drawings. **Ask:** *What gifts has God given you?* Read aloud the activity directions. **Say:** *God has given me the gift of friends, so I am going to draw a picture of my friends.* Then invite your child to complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Ask:** *When you pray, what do you thank God for?*

Art Exploration: Page 161

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of a seedling growing from the ground.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the sprout, the soil, and the sun.
- ▶ **Say:** *Ordinary Time is a time to be thankful for everyday miracles, like this sprout growing from a seed into a plant.*



- ▶ Have your child turn to page 161. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the first paragraph. **Ask:** *What are some things that grow?* (trees, grass, flowers, pets, people) **Say:** *During Ordinary Time, God asks us to grow in our faith and in our love for him.*
- ▶ **Ask:** *What are some ways we can grow closer to God?* (praying, attending Mass, showing God's love to others, being grateful for his gifts)
- ▶ Discuss joyful events that happened to both of you recently. Read aloud the directions and help your child complete the activity.
- ▶ Together with your child, try yoga poses patterned after God's gifts of animals. Ahead of time, use the Internet to find and learn easy animal yoga poses, such as cat pose, cobra pose, and butterfly pose. Demonstrate each pose for your child and try the poses together. Invite your child to make up poses that conjure the spirit of an animal or a natural object.

Reflect: Page 20

- ▶ Together brainstorm a list of items created by God and make a list. Discuss various items found in church that are created by God, such as flowers and plants, and by people, such as an altar, pictures, and statues.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and the first sentence. **Say:** *Creation means "all the things made, or created, by God."*
- ▶ Read aloud the next two sentences. **Ask:** *What does God's creation include?* (everything, such as people, the earth, the sun)
- ▶ Read aloud What We Experience. **Say:** *The gifts of Bread and Wine are offered at every Mass. During Ordinary Time we think about these gifts as a reminder that Jesus is with us and helps us grow.*
- ▶ Read aloud God's Special Gifts and invite your child to complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know...? feature. **Say:** *Green is a symbol that shows growth, life, and hope.* **Ask:** *What are some green items you have seen in church?*

Respond: Page 21

- ▶ 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 help out a family member.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.