



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

Turn to page 1. **Say:** *Saint Teresa of Ávila spent a lot of time praying and thinking about prayer. She also wanted to help other people learn how to pray.*

Ask: *Who helps you learn how to pray? (Possible answers: family members, priests, catechists)*

Focus your child's attention on the picture of Saint Teresa of Ávila.

Ask: *What can we tell about Saint Teresa of Ávila based on this picture? (She was a holy person.)*

Have your child read aloud the top half of the page. **Ask:** *What did Teresa discover she liked about living in a convent? (the simple life) What title did Teresa receive for what she wrote? (Doctor of the Church) Explain that the Church believes that her writings about prayer are very important to Church teachings. Say: We remember Saint Teresa of Ávila because she dedicated her life to prayer. We are going to learn how we can grow closer to God through prayer.*

With your child add Teresa's feast day, October 15, to your calendar. Plan an event together to celebrate the teachings of Saint Teresa of Ávila.

God Creates the World

Engage: Page 1

- ▶ Together with your child, look out a window and find beautiful aspects of God's creation. **Ask:** *What makes these things beautiful? Why do you think God created them?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's responses. **Say:** *There are many ways we can take care of creation. In this session we will learn about the wonders of God's creation and how we are called to help care for what God has given us.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about what you both saw out your window and how we are called to help care for what God has given us. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 2–3

- ▶ **Say:** *Think of a time you saw a rainbow.* **Ask:** *How did you feel when you saw the colors of the rainbow?* **Say:** *God has created those amazing colors.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 2. Point out the vocabulary terms. **Say:** *Having a soul makes us human and makes us beings who are made in the image and likeness of God.* **Ask:** *What is free will? (our ability to choose good because God has made us like him) What kinds of choices do you think God wants us to make regarding the earth? (God wants us to use our free will to choose to care for everything he has given us.)*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *Everything God makes is good, and he takes care of everyone and everything.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Caring for the Earth on page 3. **Ask:** *Why is it important not to waste the resources we have received from God? (It shows our gratitude for the gift of creation.)* Then invite your child to write his or her response.
- ▶ Read aloud the directions to Gifts from God. Have your child complete the activity and discuss his or her responses with you.

Art Exploration: Page 169

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of a tree with flowers and butterflies.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the colors and the flowers.
- ▶ **Say:** *Creation is a gift from God. There are many ways we can thank him for this gift.*

- ▶ Have your child turn to page 169. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud God the Creator. Point out the vocabulary word in dark type. **Say:** *The psalms were first written as poems. They are like song lyrics and can be sung as hymns.* **Ask:** *What aspects of God's creation are included in this psalm? (the earth, water, fields, grain, plants, pastures, valleys)* **Say:** *Creation is full of life. The living things that surround us remind us to thank God for the gift of creation.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Say:** *There are different types of psalms. We can use some of them to pray prayers of thanks, prayers of praise, and prayers of sorrows.*
- ▶ Ask your child to draw on a sheet of paper an outline of a tree. Taking turns, decorate the tree with aspects of God's creation that you and your child believe to be especially beautiful. Conclude by praying together a prayer thanking God for the gift of creation.

Reflect: Page 4

- ▶ Together look at page 4. **Ask:** *What is the girl in the picture focusing on?* **Say:** *Before you pray, focus your attention on a specific image or idea to help you concentrate and reflect.*
- ▶ Read aloud God Calls Us to Pray. Pause after the last two paragraphs to give your child time to reflect. Provide time for your child to talk silently with God. Together pray *Amen* and the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ **Ask:** *Why is it important to thank people for the gifts they give us? (to show how much we appreciate their thoughtfulness) What are some things we can do to show God how thankful we are for the gift of creation? (pray a prayer of thanks, recycle, use only what we need)* Read aloud Thanking God for Creation and have your child complete the activity. Invite him or her to share the drawing and the prayer.

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 other ways he or she can thank God for the gift of creation.
- ▶ 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.

Our Father in Heaven

Engage: Page 6

- ▶ Using markers, ask your child to draw a tree and write the name of a different family member on each branch. **Ask:** *How does God want us to treat our family members? (lovingly)*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response. **Ask:** *How are some families alike? How are some different?* **Say:** *In this session we are going to learn more about how God calls us to treat one another.*
- ▶ On the "family tree," encourage your child to write on the branch one nice thing he or she can do for each family member. Encourage your child to follow through with his or her ideas during the next week.

Explore: Pages 6–7

- ▶ Discuss why we pray. **Ask:** *What are some of the prayers you know by heart? In addition to praying these prayers, how else can we pray? (sing a song, go to Mass, read the Bible)*
- ▶ Take turns with your child reading aloud *God Listens to Us*. **Ask:** *Why does God listen to our prayers? (because he loves us and wants to help us) Why might we pray the Lord's Prayer? (to develop a closer relationship with God)*
- ▶ Read aloud the first three paragraphs on page 7. **Ask:** *How might we describe the Kingdom of God? (It is proclaimed in the Gospels. It is present in the Person of Jesus.)* **Say:** *Through Jesus and the Gospels, we learn how to follow God's plan for us. This is the way we build up God's kingdom.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *Serving God's Kingdom* and have him or her complete the activity. Discuss your child's response.

Art Exploration: Page 170

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of God.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including what God looks like.
- ▶ **Say:** *This picture tells us that God created everything.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 170. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Read aloud the heading and the first paragraph. **Ask:** *What happens when we choose to follow God's plan for us? (We build up the Kingdom of God.)*
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the second paragraph. **Ask:** *What do we read about in the Gospels? (Jesus' life, Death, and Resurrection) Point out in your Bible where your child can find the Gospels.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Jesus, the Son of God. Give your child time to read the passage and complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Ask:** *What can we do to grow in our relationship with Jesus? (pray, attend Mass, celebrate the sacraments)*
- ▶ Using art supplies, invite your child to make his or her own image of God the Creator. Suggest that your child include his or her favorite aspects of God's creation. Then ask your child to write a caption for the artwork that indicates what the images teach about God.

Reflect: Page 8

- ▶ Together look at page 8. **Ask:** *Where is the boy in the picture? (in a forest) Why do you think he is looking up? **Say:** We can talk to God in the quiet of our heart.*
- ▶ Read aloud the sentence before the prayer. **Say:** *When we profess our belief in God, we profess our belief in the Trinity.* Pray aloud the Act of Faith slowly and with expression. Read aloud the paragraph after the prayer. After giving your child a few quiet moments, close the prayer by asking your child to join you in praying the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ Read aloud Faith, Hope, and Charity. Point out the vocabulary term. **Ask:** *What do the words faith, hope, and charity mean to you? (Faith is trust in God, hope is the belief that God's promises will be fulfilled, and charity is love of God and one another.) What are some ways you can practice faith, hope, and charity in your life? (pray, trust in God, treat others as I want to be treated)*

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 he or she can practice faith, hope, and charity in everyday life.
- ▶ 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's Plan for Salvation

Engage: Page 10

- ▶ With your child listen to or watch a news broadcast. **Ask:** *Are the people in these stories helping or hurting one another? Why might people choose to help one another?* Discuss your child's responses.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response. **Ask:** *Do you think God wants us to help people who have been hurt? Why?* (because we are all brothers and sisters in God, because it is the example Jesus gave us)
- ▶ Ask your child to think about the people he or she watched on the news. **Ask:** *What can you do right now to help those who have been hurt?* (pray) Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 10–11

- ▶ Invite your child to share what he or she knows about Adam and Eve.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud Adam and Eve. **Ask:** *What temptation did Adam and Eve face?* (whether to eat the fruit from the tree that God had told them not to eat) *What choice did they make?* (to eat the fruit) *What were the consequences of their decision?* (God told them to leave the garden. Their relationship with God was injured.)
- ▶ Read aloud page 11. **Ask:** *What is a promise?* (a commitment we make) **Say:** *Original Sin is the loss of holiness and justice that resulted from Adam and Eve's choice to turn away from God.* **Ask:** *What is the result of Original Sin?* (a world full of temptation where it can be difficult to follow God's plan for us) *How can we make up for our bad choices?* (celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, say "I'm sorry")
- ▶ **Say:** *God knows that sin is part of our world. However, God has sent a Savior to show us how to live and to save us from our sins.*
- ▶ Invite your child to make a picture book of the story of Adam and Eve for younger children in your neighborhood to enjoy.

Art Exploration: Page 171

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a statue of Jesus with his arms outstretched.
- ▶ **Say:** *Whom do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the position of Jesus' arms.



- ▶ **Say:** *Jesus is always ready to welcome us. He is always ready to accept us. He loves us.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 171. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *Why is Salvation through Jesus the greatest gift God has given us? (It allows us to live with God forever in Heaven.) What choice does God want us to make when we are faced with temptation? (to follow his plan for us, resist temptation, and accept the gift of Salvation)*
- ▶ Read aloud *Saved by Jesus*. Explain that an acrostic is a poem with a word written vertically and words or phrases written horizontally that describe the vertical word. The horizontal words use one of the letters in the vertical word. With your child brainstorm a list of words or phrases for the first line. Then invite your child to finish it and share the final acrostic.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Say:** *When we pray the Penitential Act, we ask God to forgive us and to help us mend the relationships we have harmed through our sinful choices. We can use this prayer any time we want to express our sorrow to God.*
- ▶ Using modeling clay, ask your child to sculpt his or her own statue of Jesus. Encourage your child to portray one of Jesus' characteristics in the statue, such as his love, compassion, or forgiveness. Display the statue in a place of honor in your home.

Reflect: Page 12

- ▶ Together look at page 12. **Say:** *The Act of Hope and the Act of Faith are like family keepsakes—these two prayers have been passed on from generation to generation.*
- ▶ Read aloud the sentence before the prayer. Invite your child to pray the prayer together with you. Read aloud the paragraph that follows it. Allow time for your child to pray silently. Close the prayer by praying *Amen* and the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and first paragraph of *Using Our Free Will*. Take turns reading aloud the situation with your child and discussing how to use free will to make good choices.

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 demonstrate to others that he or she has trust in God.
- ▶ 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 Calls Us to Obey

Engage: Page 14

- ▶ Together with your child, read news articles in which people have made both good and bad choices. **Ask:** *Why is it important for us to follow rules? (to keep us safe)*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response. **Say:** *In a free society, citizens have certain rights. With rights come responsibilities that help keep us safe. In this session we are going to learn about the importance of making good choices. We'll also discuss behaviors that help us follow God's plan for us.*
- ▶ Ask your child to discuss how the stories with bad choices could have had different results with better decisions. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 14–15

- ▶ Ask your child to recall the story of Pinocchio. Explain that Jiminy Cricket serves as Pinocchio's conscience. **Ask:** *What does your conscience help you do? (distinguish between right and wrong)*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud page 14. **Ask:** *What are the Fruits of the Holy Spirit? (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)* Point out the vocabulary word, *prudence*. **Say:** *When you are faced with temptation, you can pray to the Holy Spirit for help.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Examination of Conscience on page 15. **Ask:** *When might you make an examination of conscience? (as part of your prayer before going to bed, before celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation)*
- ▶ Read aloud Positive Choices. Ask your child to make an examination of conscience, using page 159 in the back of his or her book. Then have your child complete the activity. Discuss your child's response.

Art Exploration: Page 172

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online an image of a dove surrounded by the apostles.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, noting how the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

- ▶ **Say:** *The Holy Spirit helped the apostles make good choices in their lives just as he helps you do the same in your life.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 172. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud Living in Freedom. **Ask:** *When we are faced with temptation, what can we do to help us find the strength to live in true freedom?* (follow the Ten Commandments, practice the virtues, pray to the Holy Spirit for strength)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Help from the Holy Spirit. Ask your child to complete the activity by writing a prayer.
- ▶ Together with your child, use art supplies to make a small mural that shows people using their free will to make good choices. Display the mural in your home.

Reflect: Page 16

- ▶ Together look at page 16. **Ask:** *Where is the boy? What is he doing?* **Say:** *Think of a quiet place where you can open your heart and find God's grace.*
- ▶ Read aloud page 16. **Say:** *It is important to think about our relationships to make sure we are treating people with dignity and respect.* Ask your child to reflect silently on the questions in the text. Close by praying *Amen* and offering each other a sign of peace.
- ▶ Read aloud the Meet a Saint feature. **Ask:** *How can we be more like Saint Peter Canisius?* (We can make an effort to get along with one another. We can encourage our friends to treat other people with kindness and respect.)

Respond: Page 17

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Word I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest another way he or she can form a good conscience.
- ▶ 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 different types of calendars, such as academic, church, or family calendars. **Ask:** *Why do people use calendars?* (to remember appointments, to record special events)
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. Discuss the picture. **Ask:** *Why do we celebrate feasts and seasons?* (to remind us of the great things God has done for us) *How many times during the year do we celebrate Ordinary Time?* (two) *What two feasts do we celebrate in the fall, near the end of Ordinary Time?* (All Souls Day and All Saints Day)
Say: *In this session we will learn how Ordinary Time helps us grow as Jesus' disciples.*
- ▶ Encourage your child to make Ordinary Time stand out on one of the calendars you looked at. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Page 19

- ▶ List these virtues on a sheet of paper: *honesty, charity, patience, prudence, joy, hope, justice, courage, faith, temperance, self-control*. Take turns using each word in a sentence to show its meaning. Use the following to define the listed virtues: *honesty*: truthfulness; *charity*: love; *patience*: waiting for something, even when it is difficult to do so; *prudence*: being directed toward the good; *joy*: happiness; *hope*: trust that God will always be with us; *justice*: the desire to give to God and to others what is due to them; *courage*: bravery; *faith*: belief in something that cannot be seen; *temperance*: moderation in thought, action, and feeling; *self-control*: the ability to control one's thoughts, actions and feelings.
- ▶ Read aloud We Grow in Virtue During Ordinary Time. **Ask:** *What do we try to better understand during this season?* (Jesus' invitation to love God, to serve others, and to avoid sin) *What does God's grace help us do?* (grow in virtue and avoid temptation)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Growing Strong and complete the activity. Discuss your child's response.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *When we live in Jesus' light by following his teachings, we produce good things.*

Reflect: Page 20

- ▶ With your child find John 13:1–9 or Matthew 10:40–42 in your Bible. **Say:** *Here are two Gospel stories in which Jesus teaches what it means to be a disciple.* Read aloud the stories.
- ▶ Read aloud Mass During Ordinary Time. Point out the vocabulary word. **Ask:** *What do disciples do?* (believe in and follow Jesus' teachings)



- ▶ Have your child read aloud What We Experience. **Say:** *The candles in church symbolize the light of Christ and remind us that we are called to share Christ's light with others.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Sharing Christ's Light and complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know...? feature. Remind your child that Ordinary Time goes from the Monday after the Baptism of the Lord until the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, and then from the Monday after Pentecost until the First Sunday of Advent. Use a calendar to point out the days.

Art Exploration: Page 173

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of a person praying.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the actions and facial expression of the person who is praying.
- ▶ **Say:** *When we pray, we use traditional prayers, use our own words, read Scripture, or focus on an object or an image.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 173. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud Called by God. **Ask:** *How can we learn what God is calling us to do? (by praying) What do we discover when we take time to pray and reflect? (how God wants us to share his peace and love with others)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Respond to God's Call and complete the activity.
Say: *Pray a prayer of thanks to Jesus for giving us an example of how to share God's peace and love with others.*
- ▶ Together with your child, read your most recent parish bulletin or information on your parish Web site. Invite him or her to use art supplies to make a poster of different opportunities your family can participate in together through your church to serve others. Display the poster in your home and discuss what you would like to do as a family.

Respond: Page 21

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Word I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can practice the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.
- ▶ 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.