

# 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. We grow closer to him by loving and serving others.*

## Introduce the Saint

Turn to page 1. **Say:** *Saint Augustine was a teacher whose writings brought many people closer to God. Ask: Who helps you learn more about God? (Possible answers: parents, catechists, priests)*

**Say:** *We remember Saint Augustine because he wrote about the Holy Trinity, helped Catholics understand God's love, and encouraged people to have courage and hope in God.*

Take turns reading aloud the page. **Ask:** *What was Augustine like when he was young? (He often got in trouble.) Point out that like most people, Augustine did not always make the right choices, but the Church did come to recognize him as a saint.*

With your child add Augustine's feast day, August 28, to your calendar. Plan an event together to celebrate the teachings of Saint Augustine.



## God Creates Us

### Engage: Page 1

- ▶ Together with your child, close your eyes and visualize favorite places or things in nature that you have seen or visited. Use descriptive words to tell about each one and tell what you liked about each thing from God's creation.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's list. **Say:** *In this session we will learn how God created everything in the world, including all our favorite things. Everything can remind us of God if we are aware of its presence.*
- ▶ Think of places you would both like to visit or see and write them on your list. **Say:** *Let us ask God for help in appreciating all that he has given us. Pray aloud the prayer together.*

### Explore: Pages 2–3

- ▶ Ask your child to close his or her eyes and imagine the world without his or her favorite things. **Ask:** *What if the world were only a mass of darkness, wind, and water? How would you feel?*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the first paragraph on page 2. Remind your child that Genesis is the first book in the Bible. **Say:** *The word Genesis means "beginning" in Greek, and the word abyss means "a vast, bottomless ocean."* **Ask:** *What are some things that God created on the other days? (light, sky, land, life) Then read aloud the last three paragraphs.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *Through faith we can look at the order and beauty in the world around us and understand that God created everything.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Creation Is the Work of the Trinity on page 3. **Ask:** *What is the mission of each Person in the Trinity? (the Father created the world, the Son saved us, and the Holy Spirit gives us grace to believe.)*
- ▶ Read aloud Prayers Honoring the Trinity. Point out the vocabulary words in dark type. Pray together the Sign of the Cross and the Glory Be to the Father. **Say:** *The Sign of the Cross reminds us of our Baptism, when our foreheads were marked by the cross to show that we belong to Christ.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. Review the *Gloria* with your child.

### Art Exploration: Page 169

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of a person arranging or taking care of flowers.
- ▶ **Say:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the person's actions and the beauty of the flowers.



- ▶ **Say:** *Being among God's creatures is a great way to be near God. We can see and feel God's love in flowers, trees, animals, butterflies, and streams.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 169. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title and first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *Why did God make the world? (He was inspired to do so.)* Have your child read aloud God Continues to Care for the World. **Say:** *We show that we care for God by caring for all of God's creation.* **Ask:** *What would happen if we didn't protect God's creations? (animals die, water is contaminated, pollution, acid rain)* **Say:** *God created us because he loves us, just as he loves all his creations. It is our responsibility toward God's creation to care for it.*
- ▶ Read aloud Taking the Pledge. Have your child complete the activity and share his or her responses.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Say:** *The Eucharistic Prayer is the liturgical expression of praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done in creation.*
- ▶ Provide art supplies for your child. Ask him or her to consider which of God's gifts in nature inspire him or her to feel God's presence and then draw a picture of it. Display the artwork in your home.

### Reflect: Page 4

- ▶ Together look at page 4. **Ask:** *How would you describe the setting of the picture? (quiet, peaceful, someone's favorite place)* **Say:** *Through reflective prayer we are invited to hear God speak to us and to develop a friendship with him.*
- ▶ Read aloud the first paragraph of God Invites Us to Reflect and pray the Sign of the Cross. Ask your child to close his or her eyes. Read aloud each paragraph. Remind your child to answer the questions silently. Conclude the prayer time by praying *Amen*.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions for Reflecting on Creation and do the activities. Discuss your child's response for section A. While your child writes a prayer for B, write your own prayer. Share it with your child.

### 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 show love and respect for things in 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.



## God Saves Us

### Engage: Page 6

- ▶ Discuss someone your child knows who helps others. It can be a famous person or someone he or she knows personally. **Ask:** *What heroic qualities do you think this person has?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Together make a list of some problems that need solutions. **Ask:** *Are these world problems or neighborhood problems?* **Say:** *In this session we will learn ways that people help think of solutions.*
- ▶ Ask your child to use his or her own heroic qualities to help think of solutions to problems. Pray aloud the prayer together.

### Explore: Pages 6–7

- ▶ Together look at the headlines in newspapers or magazines. Draw stars next to good-news headlines and underline bad-news headlines. **Ask:** *What kinds of problems did the headlines describe?*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 6. Point out the vocabulary term. **Ask:** *What is the contradictory nature of the human condition?* (While there are people who make bad choices that inflict pain on others, there are also people who make good choices and work to help those in trouble.) *What is sin?* (humans' rejection of God and opposition to his plan)
- ▶ Read aloud page 7. **Say:** *The word reconcile means "to restore to friendship."* **Ask:** *What were the effects of Adam's sin?* (Sin entered the world, and with it came death.) *What does Jesus bring to the world?* (victory over sin and death)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Meet a Saint feature. **Say:** *Josephine Bakhita overcame suffering by holding on to her faith in God's promise of Salvation.*

### Art Exploration: Page 170

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Saint Peter Claver.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including what Saint Peter Claver looks like and what he is doing.
- ▶ **Say:** *Saint Peter Claver was an advocate for enslaved people. He had faith in Jesus' mission, just as we should when faced with hard choices.*



- ▶ Have your child turn to page 170. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *How did Saint Peter Claver help the enslaved people of South America? (He was an advocate for enslaved people; he worked to lessen their hardships.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Humanity. **Ask:** *Can you think of other ways in which you can live as Saint Peter Claver did, in your daily life?* Have your child write a goal.
- ▶ Using art supplies, ask your child to make a poster that promotes positive actions and living as good Christians. Suggest that he or she think of images or slogans that might encourage family members to make positive actions. Display the poster in your home.

### Reflect: Page 8

- ▶ Together look at page 8. Invite your child to get comfortable and focus his or her attention inward during reflective prayer.
- ▶ Read aloud Making Good Choices slowly. Pause at the end of each paragraph to allow time for personal reflection. Close by inviting your child to speak to Jesus about whatever else is in his or her heart. Conclude the prayer by praying *Amen*.
- ▶ Read aloud the first paragraph and the directions of Social Justice Roundtable. Take turns reading each problem and brainstorming solutions. Point out that each problem may have more than one correct solution.

### 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 include someone who is being excluded.
- ▶ 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 Revelation

### Engage: Page 10

- ▶ Together with your child, recall stories about parents and grandparents. **Say:** *These stories make up our family history, the story of how our family came to be.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's responses. **Say:** *The Old Testament stories took place thousands of years ago, from about 2000 B.C. In this session we will learn about the history of our faith through the Old Testament stories.*
- ▶ Ask your child to recall names and stories he or she is familiar with from the Old Testament. Pray aloud the prayer together.

### Explore: Pages 10–11

- ▶ Read aloud from the Bible the story of Abraham in Genesis 12:1—17:16.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud The Story of Abraham. Point out the vocabulary words. **Ask:** *What three words do you think best describe Abraham?* (trusting, obedient, honest)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the paragraphs and caption on page 11. **Ask:** *To whom are the books of the Old Testament important?* (Jews, Christians, and Muslims) *What is the fundamental belief that Christians receive from the Old Testament?* (God is One.) **Say:** *We as Christians believe the Old Testament is God's revelation, which is continued in the New Testament.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Say:** *The readings are part of the Liturgy of the Word, a very important part of the Mass.*

### Art Exploration: Page 171

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Moses with the tablets of the Ten Commandments.
- ▶ **Say:** *Whom do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the tablet.
- ▶ **Say:** *Moses is important to us because he delivered the Ten Commandments.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 171. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Have your child read aloud God's Word. **Ask:** *What tools did God give us for living peaceful and loving lives?* (the Ten Commandments)
- ▶ Read aloud Finding Bible Passages. Have your child use his or her Bible to find and then read the passages listed in the activity. Discuss the answers. (1. in a fire flaming out of a bush; 2. rescue them from the Egyptians and lead them to a land of milk and honey; 3. to go to Pharaoh and lead the Israelites out of Egypt)
- ▶ **Say:** *In today's culture we no longer use stone tablets to communicate.* Have your child draw or write the Ten Commandments in a modern way so that they can be shared with many people, such as on a billboard, TV commercial, social media, text, tweet, or Web site. Encourage your child to illustrate his or her modernized version of the Ten Commandments. Share the results with family members.

### Reflect: Page 12

- ▶ Together look at page 12. **Ask:** *How would you describe the boy in the picture?* **Say:** *We pray the Lord's Prayer to give praise and glory to God and to ask for what we need.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introduction on page 12. Pray aloud the Lord's Prayer together. Finish by praying aloud *Amen*. Read aloud the last paragraph, pausing after each suggestion. Invite your child to use these ideas and talk to God.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud The Ten Commandments on page 161 at the back of the book. **Say:** *The Ten Commandments are like a set of rules. Rules and laws are designed not to hinder us, but to help us make a peaceful world.* Invite your child to complete Living by the Ten Commandments. Discuss how the Ten Commandments apply to your lives.

### 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 honor God and be kind 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.



## God Directs Our Lives

### Engage: Page 14

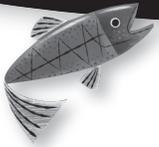
- ▶ Together with your child, think about the people you encounter every day. **Ask:** *In what ways do we depend on some of these people?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's lists. Point out the picture. **Ask:** *How does this picture show people depending on others? (It requires working together. It is physically demanding.)*
- ▶ **Say:** *In this session we will learn about ways that we depend on God and one another.*
- ▶ Ask your child to choose one or two people you talked about earlier and write an "I Promise" pledge, giving specific ways that he or she plans to help the person. Pray aloud the prayer together.

### Explore: Pages 14–15

- ▶ Give your child a note card. Ask him or her to write the following: *In the story of the child being first in the Kingdom of God, Jesus wants to teach me \_\_\_\_\_.* *Because of this story, I will \_\_\_\_\_.* Ask your child to complete the sentences after reading page 14 and then put them on the refrigerator as a reminder of Jesus' lesson.
- ▶ **Ask:** *Who did Jesus say was the greatest in the kingdom? (a child) Why do you think he said this? (A child is humble and recognizes his or her dependence on parents.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud The Members of God's Kingdom on page 15. **Ask:** *Why are the Beatitudes important to follow? (They help us live as members of God's kingdom and act as signs of God's goodness.)*

### Art Exploration: Page 172

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Saint Philip Neri listening to the confession of Pope Clement VIII.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, noting the actions and dress of the people.



- ▶ **Say:** *We feel good when we can talk to a trusted friend and when we can be that friend to someone else.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 172. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *How did Philip inspire others?* (He encouraged people to be happy and to receive the sacraments.) Have your child read aloud Following the Example. Invite your child to complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know...? feature. Discuss people you know who try to live their lives like Jesus, such as clergy or teachers.
- ▶ On a sheet of paper, draw an outline of your child. Tell him or her to decorate the outline with talents and attributes he or she is proud of such as *"I'm a good singer"* or *"I'm a good listener."* Then ask your child to write one way he or she can use his or her talents to help someone.

### Reflect: Page 16

- ▶ Together look at page 16. **Ask:** *How is the girl dressed?* (in pajamas) *What time of day do you think it is?* (morning) **Say:** *Praying the Morning Offering gives us direction for daily living.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introduction on page 16. Invite your child to pray the prayer silently. Then read aloud the final paragraph. Lead your child in praying the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ Read aloud Find the Beatitudes. Have your child locate the Scripture verse cited. Invite him or her to read the Beatitudes and choose one to illustrate.

### 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 specific ways he or she shows concern for others by volunteering to help those who are less fortunate.
- ▶ 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

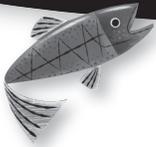
- ▶ Together with your child, talk about your favorite seasons and identify them by the months of the calendar. **Say:** *The liturgical year is the Church calendar that marks seasons and days in a special way.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. **Ask:** *What does Ordinary Time refer to? (counted time)* **Say:** *In this session we will learn about Ordinary Time—the part of the year when we strive to understand Jesus better and think about how to follow his ways.*
- ▶ Turn to the liturgical calendar on page 106. Ask your child to identify the seasons that fall during Ordinary Time. Pray aloud the prayer together.

### Explore: Page 19

- ▶ Invite your child to talk about the sacraments he or she has received, such as Baptism, First Communion, and Reconciliation. **Say:** *One way to be more like Jesus is to celebrate the sacraments.*
- ▶ Read aloud the first paragraph. **Say:** *Sacramentals are reminders of Jesus, and we use them to connect us to the sacraments.* Ask your child each of the three questions following the first paragraph. Invite your child to answer each one.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud How Can I Grow? and complete the activity. Discuss his or her picture and sentence.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *We pray to Jesus and ask him to be with us and guide our steps to live as he did. When we ask this of Jesus, God blesses our lives.*

### Reflect: Page 20

- ▶ Have your child read aloud Mass During Ordinary Time. **Ask:** *What are some examples of sacramentals? (sacred oils, prayers, rosaries)* **Say:** *We incorporate sacramentals into our everyday lives to help us remember how much God loves us and how he is ever present in our lives.*
- ▶ Ask your child to close his or her eyes as you read aloud What We Experience. Give your child time to visualize your church during Ordinary Time.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud God Touches My Life and complete the activity. Discuss your child's response.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know...? feature. **Say:** *Vestments and altar cloths reflect the season's designated color: white is for Holy Thursday, Christmas, and Easter; red is for Pentecost, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and for celebrating Confirmations; green is for Ordinary Time; and violet is for Advent, Lent, and Holy Saturday.*



### Art Exploration: Page 173

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of symbols or objects that represent peace.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail.
- ▶ **Say:** *Ordinary Time is when we think about what keeps us centered in God's love.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 173. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the first two sections. **Say:** *During Ordinary Time we focus our attention to the gift of the sacraments.* **Ask:** *What are the sacraments?* (Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ordinary Joy and complete the activity.
- ▶ **Say:** *One kind of sacramental object is the rosary.* Give your child beads, a simple cross, and thread to string a decade of the rosary. Remind your child how to pray a decade of the Rosary. Encourage your child to pray a decade of the Rosary daily.

### 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 be kind to younger children.
- ▶ 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.