

You may consider using the *Children's Media Manual* to complement each lesson. Through the manual, you can access and choose from a variety of multimedia types, such as audio, video, and interactive content. Find Unit 1 on pages 1–6.



# 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 and how the Bible is a source to find out more about him. Read aloud the unit title.* **Say:** *Let's begin this book together by talking about God as our Father and Creator and learning how the Bible reveals him to us.*

## Introduce the Saint

Focus your child's attention on the picture. **Ask:** *What is Saint Jerome doing? (writing, thinking)*

**Ask:** *Why might Saint Jerome be the patron saint of librarians? (He worked with the Bible, a kind of library.)*

Read aloud the first paragraph. **Ask:** *What is Hebrew? (the language spoken by Jewish people) Explain that few Christians in Jerome's day could read and those who did read Latin, their everyday language.* **Say:** *Jerome's work made it possible for people to read the Bible in their own language.*

Have your child read aloud the last two paragraphs. Read aloud Jerome's quotation. **Ask:** *How did Jerome translate Scripture into deeds? (When war broke out, he stopped his work to help refugees.) What does his statement mean to you? (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.



## The Bible, God's Story

### Engage: Page 1

- ▶ Look through your Bible together. **Ask:** *What makes a Bible story interesting to you?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's choice. Share your own favorite Bible stories. Discuss the importance of reading and discussing the Bible with family members. **Say:** *In this session we will learn how God's words of everlasting life are in our most important book, the Bible.*
- ▶ **Optional use of Media Manual:** From your Bible, read together Luke 24:27–32. You may also listen to the audio recording and read the accompanying article through the media manual.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

### Explore: Pages 2–3

- ▶ Discuss pieces of art that you and your child are familiar with. Together find a piece or two online to observe. **Ask:** *What might have inspired the artist to make such a piece?* Invite your child to look up *inspired* in the Glossary and read aloud the definition.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 2. **Ask:** *What is the main story of the Old Testament? (the story of the Hebrew people and their faith in God) What is the main story of the New Testament? (the story of Jesus, 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 3. Discuss the vocabulary words *Magisterium* and *interpretation* in dark type. **Say:** *We believe the Bible is the Word of God. The Spirit of God works through the Magisterium, and we rely on its members to 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 169

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in 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 any ornate letters, pictures, and scenes.
- ▶ **Say:** *The colorful letters, flowers, animals, and scenes remind us of the beauty of God's creation.*



- ▶ Have your child turn to page 169. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Copying the Bible. Point out the two vocabulary words. **Ask:** *Why is "everyday language" important for a Bible translation? (makes it easier to read) Why were scriptoriums so 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. Ask your child to 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: Page 4

- ▶ Together look at page 4. **Ask:** *What does the dove on this page mean to you?*  
**Say:** *A prayer is a conversation. Think about the words you are praying and listen with your heart.*
- ▶ Together with your child, take turns praying aloud the prayer on page 4. Conclude by praying *Amen* and joining your child in praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the first paragraph and Bible passage of Making Choices.  
**Say:** *Moses is trying to convince the Hebrews that if they follow God's commandments, their lives will be blessed.* Then read aloud the next paragraph. **Ask:** *How can we use free will to follow God?* Discuss your child's response.

### 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. Invite your child to choose a psalm listed and read it aloud together.
- ▶ 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 Creates the World

### Engage: Page 6

- ▶ Look around your home to find something that your child has made recently.  
**Ask:** *How do you expect others to treat the things you make? (with respect) How do you think God expects us to treat his creation? (the same way, with respect and care)*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text in the blue box. **Ask:** *What can you do to help preserve the beauty of God's creation? (Do not litter. Conserve water and energy.) In this session we will learn about the wonders of God's creation and how we are called to take care of it.*
- ▶ **Optional use of Media Manual:** From your Bible, read together Ephesians 2:4–10. You may also listen to the audio recording and read the accompanying article through the media manual.
- ▶ Ask your child to look out your window and think of ways to care for God's creation in your own neighborhood. Pray aloud the prayer together.

### Explore: Pages 6–7

- ▶ 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 Book of Genesis and The First Story of Creation.  
**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.)*
- ▶ Read aloud Far from Home and the caption on page 7. **Ask:** *What was it like for the exiled Jews? (They were treated badly.) Have your child look up *culture* and *racism* in the Glossary. Discuss the definitions. **Say:** *Many Americans are immigrants, and most are 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 170

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in 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.*



- ▶ **Say:** *God created all people equally. Everyone should be treated with the same dignity.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 170. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the first three paragraphs. **Ask:** *What does God ask of us today? (to care for the earth) Even though Adam and Eve disobeyed God, what did God still show them? (love and mercy) 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.*
- ▶ Using art supplies, ask your child to draw a comic strip panel to tell one Creation story. When it is finished, encourage your child to share it with a family member.

### Reflect: Page 8

- ▶ Together look at page 8. **Ask:** *What do you see in the picture? (a ladybug) Remind your child to use his or her imagination in this prayer. Explain that your child will use all of his or her senses.*
- ▶ Read aloud the first four paragraphs slowly and with expression. Allow time for your child to imagine what is being described. Read aloud the last paragraph and provide time for quiet reflection. Close the prayer by praying *Amen* and the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud Equal in the Eyes of God. Point out the vocabulary word. **Ask:** *What is our duty as Catholics regarding sexism and racism? (to oppose any kind of discrimination)*

### 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 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 the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



## Sin and Salvation

### Engage: Page 10

- ▶ Together with your child, name people in your community whom you trust, such as a police officer, a teacher, a crossing guard, and your next-door neighbor. **Ask:** *What do you trust each of these people to do for you?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. Discuss the picture. **Say:** *God wants you to place your trust in him.*
- ▶ **Optional use of Media Manual:** From your Bible, read together Romans 5:19–21. You may also listen to the audio recording and read the accompanying article through the media manual.
- ▶ Ask your child to think about the people he or she trusts. **Ask:** *How can you show your trust in God? (through prayer, by obeying his commandments) In this session we will learn about people who did not trust in God. We will also learn that God always forgives us, even when we make mistakes.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

### Explore: Pages 10–11

- ▶ 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 Trusting God and Adam and Eve Disobey God on page 10. Point out the vocabulary word. **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 their consequences? (They had to leave the garden; their lives became more challenging.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Cain and Abel on page 11. **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 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)*

### Art Exploration: Page 171

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online an interpretation of Noah building the ark.
- ▶ **Say:** *Whom 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 Adam and Eve, and just as he shows us.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 171. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *God Chooses Noah*. **Ask:** *Why did Noah and his family survive the flood? (They listened to God, obeyed God, and trusted in God.)*
- ▶ Read aloud *God's Promise*. **Ask:** *What was God's promise to Noah? (to never send such a flood again) What does it mean for us? (to never give up on people)* Read aloud *Your Promise*. 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 watercolor 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: Page 12

- ▶ Together look at page 12. Point out the picture. **Say:** *The boy looks happy and 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 first paragraph on page 12. **Say:** *Let's pray aloud each line of the Hail Mary together. After each line, we'll silently read the sentences that follow and think about what they mean.* Conclude by praying *Amen* and the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *God's Mercy, Our Trust*. Read aloud the directions for *Words of Wisdom*. Look up the Bible verses together and discuss the meaning of each.

### 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 use verses from Scripture to strengthen his or her faith 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.



## Abraham Listens to God

### Engage: Page 14

- ▶ Together with your child, talk about difficult tasks both of you have completed.  
**Ask:** *How do you usually feel after completing a difficult task?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss the picture. **Ask:** *Why is this activity difficult? (It requires working together. It is physically demanding.) In this session we will learn about Abraham and Sarah and how they were faithful and obedient to God under difficult circumstances.*
- ▶ **Optional use of Media Manual:** From your Bible, read together Acts of the Apostles 3:13–16. You may also listen to the audio recording and read the accompanying article through the media manual.
- ▶ Ask your child to think about how a difficult task he or she has completed compares with the one that God gives us to obey his commands. Pray the prayer together.

### Explore: Pages 14–15

- ▶ Have your child make two columns on a sheet of paper. In one column, ask your child to write the rewards of receiving good grades in school, and in the other column, the consequences of getting poor grades. Discuss how obedience can bring rewards and blessings.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 14. **Ask:** *In what ways did God speak in this story? (He spoke directly to Abraham; he spoke to Abraham and Sarah through three visitors.) 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 15. **Say:** *Abraham proved how strong his faith was.* Invite your child to read aloud Why Did God Test Abraham? Point out the vocabulary 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 172

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in 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:** *As members of God's family, we can help others know and trust God.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 172. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Read aloud The Chosen People. Point out the vocabulary term. **Say:** *The Jewish faith is still a response to God's call.* **Ask:** *As Christians how are we called to be one of God's Chosen People? (pray, read the Bible, go to Mass, celebrate the sacraments)*
- ▶ Read aloud God's People. Ask your child to share his or her list with you.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Ask:** *When do we pray the Sign of the Cross at Mass? (at the 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 the circle spins.
  5. Move toward the center of the circle, holding hands in the air.
  6. Lower hands. Move backward. Repeat.

### Reflect: Page 16

- ▶ Together look at page 16. **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.*
- ▶ Read aloud the first paragraph on page 16. **Say:** *Many people learn this traditional prayer from memory.* Read aloud the Act of Hope slowly and with feeling. Pause for your child to reflect on the words. Then read aloud the last paragraph. Close the prayer by praying *Amen* and joining your child in praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud The Messengers of God. **Ask:** *Why does God use angels as messengers? (to help people understand and follow his plan)*

### 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 find an example of a Bible story or verse that can help strengthen a person's faith, such as Philippians 4:13.
- ▶ 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

- ▶ 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 its liturgical year.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. **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.)* **Say:** *In this session we will learn that Ordinary Time is the time of year when we learn about Jesus and how to experience his love through Scripture.*
- ▶ **Optional use of Media Manual:** From your Bible, read together 2 Samuel 7:12–17. You may also listen to the audio recording and read the accompanying article through the media manual.
- ▶ **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.*

### Explore: Page 19

- ▶ Take time to observe a plant in your home. **Ask:** *What do plants need to grow? (sun, water) What do we need so that our faith will grow? (prayer, Scripture, Mass)*
- ▶ Read aloud the first two paragraphs. **Say:** *We use Ordinary Time to learn how to listen better so that we can live the lives Jesus calls us to live. Give your child a few minutes to complete his or her prayer.*
- ▶ 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 ask God to be with us and teach us how to live a life that honors him.*

### Reflect: Page 20

- ▶ 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's promise. The second explores life in the early Christian communities. The Gospel is about his 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? (Their writings contain the Good News.)*
- ▶ Have your child read Symbols of My Faith and complete the activity.



### Art Exploration: Page 173

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online the symbols of the Evangelists.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the pictures in detail, identifying each symbol.
- ▶ **Say:** *Each picture is a symbol representing the theme of a specific Gospel writer. During Ordinary Time the Gospels play an important role.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 173. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud Evangelists' Symbols. **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 symbols to represent a person, an event, or an idea in the Church. Then have your child read aloud Church Symbols and complete the activity. Remind your child to look for Christian symbols in your church.
- ▶ Discuss if your child can identify with one of the four Gospel writers or their symbols. Review the symbols of the four Evangelists. Then have your child draw his or her own symbol. Invite your child to tell about the finished drawing. Ask your child to meditate on ways he or she can share the good news of God's Word with others.

### Respond: Page 21

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific blessings to thank Jesus that he or she can include in a prayer before meals.
- ▶ 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.