



Jesus, Our Lord and Savior

Begin

Ask: What do you know about Blessed Mother Teresa? **Say:** As a young nun, Mother Teresa went to India to teach. She was so moved by the extreme poverty that she decided to dedicate her life to helping people who were poor, sick, or homeless. Blessed Mother Teresa is an example of how God can work through an ordinary person to bring good to the world. Read aloud the unit title on page 22.

Say: This unit helps us learn that God works through all kinds of people to bring good to the world.

Introduce the Saint

Focus your child's attention on the picture. **Say:** God used John Neumann, another ordinary person, to bring good to the world just as he did with Blessed Mother Teresa.

Have your child read aloud the text. **Ask:** Where was John Neumann ordained to be a priest? (New York City) What gift did he have that allowed him to speak with parishioners from many different countries? (He spoke eight languages.) What good works did he do for God? (established Catholic schools, helped immigrants, encouraged devotion to the Blessed Sacrament) How can we answer God's call to help others and do good work like Blessed Mother Teresa and Saint John Neumann? (help those in need, be kind, treat others with respect)

With your child add John Neumann's feast day, January 5, to your calendar. Plan an event together to celebrate the work of Saint John Neumann.



God Is Faithful

Engage: Page 22

- ▶ With your child discuss qualities that make a good person. **Ask:** *What one quality do you especially value in a good person?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response. **Ask:** *How do we know if our work is bringing good into the world?* **Say:** *In this session we will learn that God is faithful and guides us to bring good into the world.*
- ▶ Ask your child to consider the effects of the work he or she tries to do to take care of God's creation. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 23–24

- ▶ Ask your child to think about conflicts he or she has had with siblings or friends. **Ask:** *Why do you think conflicts occur?*
- ▶ Read aloud Jacob Deceives His Brother on page 23. **Ask:** *Do you think Jacob made the right choices? Why or why not?* **Say:** *Once Isaac requested a blessing from God, he was unable to ask God to undo it, even though he had requested it for the wrong son.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Say:** *As we pray and offer a sign of peace, we should pray for those with whom we need to make peace.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 24. **Say:** *Why do you think Jacob agreed to continue working another seven years so that he could marry Rachel? (He loved Rachel; he felt he was paying for his past mistakes.) Point out the vocabulary term. What lesson can we learn from Jacob's story? (God never gives up on us, even if we make mistakes.)*

Art Exploration: Page 174

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Joseph, Jacob's son.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage children to describe the picture in detail, including the clothes that Joseph is wearing.
- ▶ **Say:** *Sometimes families show feelings of both love and jealousy. At these times we can rely on God to help us understand our feelings.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 174. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Read aloud Jesus, Descendant of Jacob's. **Ask:** *Why is it important to learn about Jesus' ancestors in the Old Testament? How does it affect us today? (We all learn from our ancestors, just as Jesus did.)* **Say:** *Jesus' ancestors were faced with challenges but, through God's love and support, made choices that were part of God's plan. Jesus teaches us to have faith and trust in God's plan for us.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Your Own Family Tree. Work together to make your family tree on a separate sheet of paper. Have your child share his or her summary statement.
- ▶ **Say:** *Many ideas were passed down through generations. Here is one statement we find in the Gospel of Matthew.* Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature.
- ▶ Invite your child to design a storyboard that shows Joseph's story. Encourage him or her to read Genesis 37 and 39:1–8,40–45 to develop images to show on the storyboard. Ask your child to tell the story of Joseph to other family members, using the pictures.

Reflect: Page 25

- ▶ Together look at the top of page 25. **Ask:** *What time of day is the person celebrating in the picture? (morning)* Explain that even though this prayer is called the Morning Offering, we can pray it anytime.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the first paragraph and then pray aloud the prayer with you. Read aloud the next paragraph. Ask your child to write on a separate sheet of paper his or her prayers, works, joys, and sufferings. Tell your child to keep these private and use the list as he or she prays the Morning Offering. Pray *Amen* and the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the heading and first paragraph of Remember That God Loves You. **Say:** *If we do something bad intentionally, we are disrespecting God's love.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Accepting Consequences and complete the activity. Together share meaningful ways to apologize.

Respond: Page 26

- ▶ 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 God is working in his or her 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.



Passover and the Eucharist

Engage: Page 27

- ▶ With your child visualize the sights, sounds, smells, touch, and tastes of a family celebration. Together write a poem about it and share it with your family.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the text in the blue box. Discuss your child's responses. Point out the picture. **Ask:** *What do you think these people are celebrating?* **Say:** *In this session we are going to learn about an event that Jewish people have celebrated for centuries and also how we celebrate Jesus' presence in the Eucharist.*
- ▶ Ask your child to name ways his or her friends have family celebrations that are different from your own. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 27–28

- ▶ Discuss what it would be like to move and start over in a new place where nobody knows you. **Ask:** *How would you feel at first? What would be the hardest part for you?*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the heading and Scripture passage on page 27. Point out the vocabulary words. **Ask:** *What name did Jacob's descendants come to be called as they grew and prospered? (Israelites, Hebrews) How did God help the Israelites? (He sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt.) Why do you think the Israelites did not give up hope? (They knew God had promised to take care of them.)*
- ▶ Read aloud page 28 and point out the vocabulary words. **Ask:** *What did God promise Moses? (to set the Hebrew slaves free and to be with them always) What made the pharaoh change his mind about Moses's request to set the Israelites free? (God performed many wonders, including Passover.)*

Art Exploration: Page 175

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online an interpretation of a Seder celebration, which is part of Passover.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the clothing worn by the people and the food they are eating.
- ▶ **Say:** *Remember to celebrate the gifts and talents God has given you by sharing them with others.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 175. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Have your child read aloud Passover and the Sabbath. Point out the vocabulary word. **Ask:** *Why is Passover a memorial for Hebrew people? (to help remember the night the angel of death passed over Hebrew houses)* **Say:** *The Passover meal is called the Seder.*
- ▶ Read aloud Your Sunday and have your child complete the activity. Compare the Sabbath for Jewish people and Sunday for Christians.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Say:** *We feel unworthy at times, but God stays with us and invites us to ask for forgiveness.*
- ▶ Have your child cut out the shape of a house from drawing paper and sketch a celebratory family meal inside. Ask him or her to title the artwork with the name of the celebration. Invite your child to reflect with a silent prayer of thanks for special family time at meals.

Reflect: Page 29

- ▶ Together look at page 29. **Ask:** *What do you see in the picture? As your child prepares to pray, remind him or her to inhale God's love and exhale worries, hurts, and distractions.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the first two paragraphs. Read aloud the psalm and the last paragraph. Provide time for your child to talk to God in his or her heart. Close the prayer by praying *Amen* and joining your child in praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud Celebrating the Eucharist. Together look up *Eucharistic liturgy* in the Glossary and read aloud the definition. **Say:** *During the Eucharistic liturgy, the consecrated bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Say: Eastern Catholic Churches also celebrate the Eucharist. Eastern Catholic Churches can be found in Greece, Syria, Armenia, Lebanon, and other countries.* Together find these countries on a map.

Respond: Page 30

- ▶ 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 feed others in need.
- ▶ 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 Leads His People

Engage: Page 31

- ▶ On poster board draw a road to represent the journey of faith with your child. Invite him or her to write and illustrate prayers, the Eucharist, sacraments, and trust as ways to help on the journey.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's vacation memories. **Ask:** *What was the best part about traveling with our family? What was the most difficult part? Why?* **Say:** *In this session we will learn about an amazing journey that the Israelites made when they left Egypt.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about how he or she can rely on God on his or her own journey of faith. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 31–32

- ▶ **Ask:** *What kinds of problems we might face when we travel long distances? (accidents, bad weather, flight delays) How might you feel after traveling for hours? (tired, hungry)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud The Great Exodus. Point out the vocabulary words. **Ask:** *How long did the Israelites travel in the desert? (40 years) How did God take care of the Israelites as they traveled? (He gave them manna and water, and he provided a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to guide them.)*
- ▶ Read aloud God Saves the Israelites on page 32. **Ask:** *How did Moses and the Israelites show their trust in God? (They followed Moses along the path through the sea to get away from the Egyptians.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Trusting God Through It All and complete the sentences. Invite your child to share his or her responses with you.

Art Exploration: Page 176

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Michelangelo's statue of Moses.
- ▶ **Say:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the position of Moses and the expression on his face.
- ▶ **Say:** *Remember that even though anger exists, God always wants us to be at peace.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 176. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Have your child read aloud *God Gives Moses the Ten Commandments*. **Ask:** *Why did the Hebrews agree to follow God's commandments? (God asked them to be his people; God led them out of slavery.) Why should we follow the Ten Commandments today? (Jesus lived by them; they guide us to a more meaningful relationship with God and with others.)*
- ▶ Read aloud *Moses Leads* and give your child time to complete the activity.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *Reading God's Word*. **Say:** *The Israelites said this prayer of commitment to God. It is still said today.*
- ▶ Explain that this prayer is part of a Jewish declaration of faith. It appears in mezuzahs, containers attached to the doorpost in some Jewish homes. Invite your child to write and decorate the prayer. Encourage him or her to display it in your home. Close by reading the prayer together.

Reflect: Page 33

- ▶ Together look at page 33. **Ask:** *Where do you think the girl in the picture is praying?* **Say:** *Prayer is a conversation with God. Traditional prayers, songs, and talking to God are good ways to pray.*
- ▶ Read aloud *Write a Personal Prayer*. **Say:** *You can write a personal prayer about trusting God. When your child is finished, ask him or her to pray the prayer silently. Close by praying *Amen* and the Sign of the Cross together.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *Exploring the Ten Commandments*. Work together to complete the activity. Encourage your child to give reasons for his or her responses.

Respond: Page 34

- ▶ 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 follow the Ten Commandments to be more like Jesus.
- ▶ 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.



Being Faithful to God

Engage: Page 35

- ▶ Invite your child to think of three characters from books or movies that he or she thinks are good role models. **Ask:** *What traits of each character do you admire?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response. **Ask:** *What important choices do you have to make each day? (to study, to tell the truth, to be kind to others)* **Say:** *In this session we will learn about making choices involving right and wrong and the consequences of our choices.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about the people in his or her life whom he or she admires as a good role model and say a silent prayer of thanks for the guidance this role model provides. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 35–36

- ▶ **Ask:** *Would you rather sleep longer or eat a healthy breakfast? Do you finish your homework before you play with friends?* Discuss the consequences of making good and bad choices.
- ▶ Take turns with your child reading aloud Choices. Point out the vocabulary word. **Ask:** *How can the personal stories in the Bible help us? (They show us the importance of good choices and the consequences of our decisions.) Why did David's ability to make good decisions begin to change? (He was so powerful that he believed he could do anything.)*
- ▶ Take turns with your child reading aloud David's Choice on page 36. **Ask:** *What two commandments did David break? (You shall not commit adultery. You shall not kill.)* **Say:** *We know that God does not abandon us. David made bad decisions, but God forgave him when he prayed for forgiveness and promised not to sin again.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *This Scripture verse tells us that Jesus was a descendant of David's.*

Art Exploration: Page 177

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of a scene from the story of the Book of Ruth.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the love shown by the people in the picture.



- ▶ **Say:** *The goodness of God within us helps family members care for one another, just as Ruth cared for those close to her.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 177. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the first two sections. **Ask:** *What does Ruth's decision to go with Naomi teach us about her? (She is a good person; she is loyal and kind; she is selfless.)*
Say: *Ruth is a model we can follow in our own lives.* Compare life-changing decisions made by David and Ruth. **Say:** *David's decisions were based on his needs, but Ruth's decisions were based on the needs of another.*
- ▶ Read aloud The Right Decision and have your child complete the activity. Discuss times when you have both had to make difficult decisions.
- ▶ Remind your child that Ruth's homeland was Moab and that she chose to move to Israel. Ask him or her to imagine that postcards existed back then. Invite your child to use a note card to make a postcard and write a message from Ruth to her relatives back in Moab. Close with a silent prayer thanking God for his guidance.

Reflect: Page 37

- ▶ Together look at page 37. **Ask:** *Why do you think the boy in the picture looks so calm?* Remind your child to pay close attention to the meaning of the words in his or her prayers.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the first paragraph. **Say:** *This prayer is an important psalm of forgiveness.* Take turns reading aloud the two parts of the prayer. Pray *Amen* and conclude by praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Read aloud Moral Decisions. **Ask:** *What should we do before we make a decision? (remember the instructions of God and the Church, consider the consequences of our actions) What should you do if you make a bad moral choice? (seek God's forgiveness by praying, make a confession, and try not to make the same mistake again)*

Respond: Page 38

- ▶ 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 remember God's instructions to make good decisions.
- ▶ 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 Advent

Engage: Page 39

- ▶ **Ask:** *What are things you do when you get a party invitation? (mark the date on a calendar, buy a gift and a card, plan an outfit)* **Say:** *Advent is like that time of waiting. We have four weeks until we can celebrate Jesus' birth on Christmas Day.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. Discuss the picture. **Ask:** *How do the words arrival and coming soon make you feel? (anxious, excited)* **Say:** *In this session we will learn about Advent, a time of hope and preparation.*
- ▶ Ask your child to make a list of things he or she can do each day of Advent to prepare to celebrate Jesus' coming. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Page 40

- ▶ Together with your child, make a time line of things you would need to do to prepare for a birthday party. **Say:** *Just as we anticipate and prepare for a party, people felt the same before Jesus' birth. They anticipated and prepared for the coming of the Savior.*
- ▶ Read aloud We Reflect During Advent and We Are God's People on page 40. Explain that thousands of years before Jesus was born, God's people knew that a Savior was coming. **Say:** *You had distant relatives waiting for the birth of Jesus.* Invite your child to write a letter to his or her relatives, sharing what Advent is like now that Jesus has been born. **Say:** *Tell your relatives that Jesus did come. Share some of the things you do today during Advent to prepare yourself for celebrating Jesus' birth.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *God asks us to be calm and to wait. All we need to do is make sure we have our homes and our hearts ready to receive and welcome him.*

Reflect: Page 41

- ▶ Ask your child to illustrate his or her favorite symbol for Jesus and explain its meaning.
- ▶ Read aloud Mass During Advent. **Say:** *Isaiah talks about the coming of Jesus in symbolic form: a shoot growing from the stump of Jesse. Jesus is that shoot growing out of the great family of Jesse.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the section What We Experience. **Say:** *It took tremendous faith and bravery to spread the news of Jesus' coming. We honor these prophets in our church in different ways, such as through stained-glass windows, statues, or paintings.*
- ▶ Read aloud Growing Closer to Jesus and have your child complete the activity. Invite him or her to share the sentences with you.



Art Exploration: Page 178

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture that shows a stained-glass version of a Jesse Tree.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the symbols found on the tree.
- ▶ **Say:** *As we prepare during Advent, let us pay special attention to the Old Testament readings at Mass and turn the messages into action in our lives.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 178. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud *The Church Celebrates Advent*. Point out the vocabulary term. **Ask:** *What are some ways we can prepare for Christmas?* (send Christmas cards, bake cookies to give as gifts, sing carols, decorate a tree)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *A Family Jesse Tree*. **Ask:** *How can we remember the people in the Old Testament?* (by reading Scripture, observing their symbols in church, making a Jesse Tree) Invite your child to complete the activity.
- ▶ Ask your child to imagine he or she is standing in a church, looking up at the stained-glass window of the Jesse Tree. Describe the colors. **Ask:** *What do you think the stained glass feels like? What does it remind you of?* Give your child time to have a silent conversation with Jesus about his family tree and think about his or her own family tree. Close by having your child pray with Jesus, asking his help to prepare joyfully for Christmas.

Respond: Page 42

- ▶ 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 forgive a friend or a family member who has made a bad choice.
- ▶ 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.