



Jesus, Our Lord and Savior

Begin

Ask: What do you like to do with your best friend? What do the two of you have in common? How would you feel if your best friend moved away? Read aloud the unit title on page 31. **Say:** This unit helps us learn about Jesus' friendships with the apostles and the disciples. We can be good friends and followers of Jesus as well as good friends to one another.

Introduce the Saint

Focus your child's attention on the picture. **Say:** Saints Scholastica and Benedict were brother and sister as well as best friends. Read aloud the text on page 31. **Ask:** What is a religious community? (a group of men or women who live, work, and pray together to serve God and others)

Turn to page 32 and point out the picture. **Say:** This is what an artist thought these saints looked like as children. Scholastica holds a dove, a symbol of her spirit. Benedict holds a raven that once saved his life.

Have your child read aloud the first paragraph. **Say:** Remember our discussion about how important friends are to us. Have your child read aloud the remaining paragraphs. **Ask:** What was so important about this storm? (It showed that God had heard Scholastica's prayer.)

With your child add Scholastica's feast day, February 10, and Benedict's feast day, July 11, to your calendar. Plan an event together to celebrate the friendship of Saints Scholastica and Benedict.

Jesus' Good News

Engage: Page 33

- ▶ Together with your child read one of Aesop's fables. When you are finished, **ask:** *What is the moral of this story? What does this story help us learn?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text in the blue box. Discuss your child's response. **Say:** *Jesus knew people enjoyed stories, so he told a lot of them. Jesus told us parables to teach us about God and his creation. In this session we will learn about some of his parables.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about fables he or she has heard. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 34–35

- ▶ Ask your child to act out these similes: busy as a bee, quick as a wink, drink like a fish, eat like a bird. **Say:** *Sometimes we can explain something by comparing it to something else.*
- ▶ Read aloud page 34. **Say:** *This parable helps us understand the Kingdom of God.* **Ask:** *What did Jesus say that a tiny mustard seed could do? (Even though a mustard seed is small, it can spread far and serve many.) What are small acts we might do to serve the kingdom? (respect elders, greet neighbors)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the heading and first paragraph on page 35. **Say:** *What did Jesus do to show us how to serve the Kingdom of God? (He worked hard, practiced his faith, and loved all people.)*
- ▶ Read aloud A Small Act of Kindness. **Ask:** *What are some ways we can help those in need? (donate toys, give money or items to charity, spend time with those who are lonely)* **Say:** *When others see our good deeds, it encourages them to do good deeds as well.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Random Acts of Kindness and complete the activity. Encourage him or her to share the responses with you.

Art Exploration: Page 232

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Saint Benedict and his sister Saint Scholastica.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage children to describe the picture in detail, including the background and how people are dressed.
- ▶ **Say:** *Saints Benedict and Scholastica grew up to found monasteries and convents. They dedicated their lives to God.*

- ▶ Have your child turn to page 232. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and the first three paragraphs. Point out the vocabulary word. **Say:** *Under Saint Benedict's direction, his twin sister founded a convent. From their followers came many more monasteries, convents, and schools.* **Ask:** *Why was Saint Benedict's work like planting a mustard seed? (The small seed of his monastery sprouted many branches.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud What's Your Motto? Give your child time to think about what his or her personal motto might be and then complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud Did You Know? **Say:** *Benedictions, or blessings, are signs, or sacramentals, of God's love reaching us through the actions of the Church.*
- ▶ Tell your child to imagine he or she has an animal friend, like Saint Benedict's raven, who could watch over him or her and warn of danger. Ask your child to sculpt this animal out of modeling clay and think of a story in which the animal helps him or her. Encourage your child to share the story and clay animal with family members.

Reflect: Pages 36–37

- ▶ Together look at page 36. **Ask:** *How is the boy in the picture aware of the presence of God in his life?* Discuss your child's response.
- ▶ Have your child find a comfortable position as you read aloud the first three paragraphs. After each question, give your child time to reflect. Read aloud the last paragraph. Ask your child to think of what he or she can do to serve God's kingdom.
- ▶ Read aloud Yeast Is Like the Mustard Seed on page 37. **Say:** *When dough is baked without yeast, the bread is flat. But if we add a little yeast to the dough, it rises and bakes into a bread loaf that is much larger than before it was baked.* **Ask:** *How does this story help us understand how to serve the Kingdom of God? (Each little thing that we do for others helps us serve the Kingdom of God.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Can You Be Like Yeast? Give your child time to write his or her ideas. Invite your child to share his or her response with you. Encourage your child to do the one small thing he or she wrote about.

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 do small things to help 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.

Following Jesus

Engage: Page 39

- ▶ Ask your child think of a person who is very important to him or her. Have your child write the person's name on a sheet of paper. **Say:** *Think of words that tell why you trust this person. The words should start with the letters of the person's name.* Have your child share his or her "trustworthy" word picture.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text in the blue box. Discuss your child's responses. Point out the picture. **Ask:** *What are these children doing? (helping one another cross the stream) Why do you trust Jesus? (He loved others and always did what was right.)*
- ▶ Ask your child to think of other people he or she trusts, along with Jesus. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 40–41

- ▶ Ask your child to name some favorite personal objects. **Ask:** *How would you feel if you had to give these objects away?*
- ▶ Read aloud page 40. **Ask:** *What was more important for the young man—keeping his money or following Jesus? (keeping his money) What do you think the young man will do next?* Discuss your child's response.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the heading and the first two paragraphs on page 41. **Ask:** *What does it mean to sin? (to make a choice that hurts our friendship with God and with other people) Who gives us the grace to turn back to God? (the Holy Spirit)* **Say:** *Conversion means "change." It is a change of heart that directs us away from sin and toward God.* Have your child read aloud the third paragraph and complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Say:** *When we offer the Sign of Peace, we recognize those around us as brothers and sisters of Jesus.*

Art Exploration: Page 233

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of someone praying.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the background and how he or she knows the person is praying.
- ▶ **Say:** *Following the Ten Commandments helps us stay close to God. There are also many places and times that we can feel close to God.*

- ▶ Have your child turn to page 233. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud Showing Our Love. **Say:** *When we are close to God, we show our faith by our actions.* **Ask:** *What are some ways that faith is shown through actions?* (follow the Ten Commandments, pray often, keep an open heart, be ready to help)
- ▶ Read aloud Paying Attention and have your child read aloud each situation. Have him or her consider the situations and circle the answer.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *Take a moment to think of the people and things you treasure most. If you share your treasure with others, your love will spread.*
- ▶ Invite your child to think about when and where he or she likes to pray. Ask him or her to draw or paint a picture of this place. Encourage your child to express why he or she chose that spot.

Reflect: Pages 42–43

- ▶ Together look at page 42. **Ask:** *What sounds do you think you might hear if you were in the place shown in the picture?* Remind your child that silence is welcome during prayer so that God can speak to your child's heart.
- ▶ Softly and slowly read aloud the reflection. Pause at the end to allow your child to answer the questions silently. Close the reflection time by praying *Amen*.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Obey the Ten Commandments on page 43. **Say:** *By following Jesus' example, you are taking the next step in being a good Christian.*
- ▶ Read aloud What I Want and What I Need and have your child complete the activity. Encourage him or her to give reasons for the choices.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. **Ask:** *What can our family do to feed people who are hungry?*

Respond: Page 44

- ▶ 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 cheerfully do things for 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.

Jesus Gathers Disciples

Engage: Page 45

- ▶ **Ask:** *How do friends show they care for each other?* Discuss ways you both have shown that you care for your friends. Have your child make a card out of construction paper for a friend he or she is thankful for.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text in the blue box. Discuss your child's response. Point out the picture. **Ask:** *What are these children doing?* (picking up litter) **Say:** *The way Jesus cared for and loved others shows us how we should treat friends. In this session we will learn that Jesus wants us to know that we can accomplish much when we work together.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think of other friends he or she would like to send thank-you cards to. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 46–47

- ▶ Discuss what it is like to go fishing. **Say:** *Sometimes you catch a few fish, and sometimes you don't catch anything.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the heading and the first paragraph on page 46. Point out the vocabulary word. **Say:** *The Gospel tells us the Good News about God's mercy and love, as well as stories of Jesus' life and teachings. These stories are in four books in the New Testament. The books are the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.* **Ask:** *What is an apostle?* (a special friend of Jesus') Read aloud the rest of page 46. **Ask:** *Why might it be hard for Peter to trust Jesus?* (He did not know Jesus.) *Why did Peter tell Jesus to leave him?* (He felt he was not good enough to be a follower of Jesus')
- ▶ Read aloud page 47. **Ask:** *What does it mean that Jesus accepted Peter as he was?* (Jesus knew Peter was trying his best to be a good person.) **Say:** *Jesus knows we aren't perfect, but he accepts us the way we are.*
- ▶ **Say:** *In the early years of the Church, Christians used the shape of a fish as a symbol of their faith.* Have your child make a fish out of a 12-inch craft stem. Tell him or her to bend the stem in half and twist it together near the end to make a tail. Pull the middle apart to resemble a fish. Have your child hang the fish in his or her room.

Art Exploration: Page 234

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of the apostles and the disciples spreading God's Word.

- ▶ **Say:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the actions of the speakers and the crowd.
- ▶ **Say:** *All of us can be disciples by proclaiming God's message and by doing good deeds to serve the Kingdom of God.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 234. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and the first two paragraphs. Point out the vocabulary word. **Ask:** *Whom did Jesus choose to proclaim God's kingdom? (Peter, the other apostles, and the disciples) Who helps do Jesus' work now? (priests, nuns, deacons, family members)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Lean on Me and complete the activity. Encourage your child to share his or her responses with you.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. **Say:** *The pope is the head of the Church. He follows in Saint Peter's footsteps.*
- ▶ Invite your child to draw a picture of a present-day disciple. Explain that it could be a priest, teacher, godparent, or even himself or herself. Then ask him or her to write a sentence or two explaining how the person in the picture is a disciple.

Reflect: Pages 48–49

- ▶ Together look at page 48. **Say:** *Imagine you are the girl in the picture. Use your senses to describe what she sees, hears, feels, and smells.*
- ▶ **Say:** *When we quiet ourselves for prayer, we can listen for Jesus' call and respond to him in our hearts.* Read aloud the reflection and ask your child to imagine the scenes. Pause after each paragraph to give your child time to reflect. Close by praying *Amen*.
- ▶ Read aloud the heading and the first paragraph on page 49. **Say:** *Jesus knew that he could accomplish more with the help of his friends, the apostles.* Ask your child to complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *Why did Jesus need more workers? (It takes many people to accomplish a big job.)*

Respond: Page 50

- ▶ 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 listen to and respect the members of a group.
- ▶ 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.

Jesus Dies and Rises

Engage: Page 51

- ▶ Invite your child to trace around his or her hand on a sheet of paper and cut it out. On each finger have your child write a word that tells how to show love. (hugging, giving, sharing, comforting) **Say:** *Our actions show our love for others.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text in the blue box. Discuss your child's responses. Point out the picture. **Ask:** *How does the girl show she cares? (by being gentle and caring to the lamb)* **Say:** *Jesus proclaimed his love for us in a very special way. In this session we will learn about how Jesus proclaimed his love for us.*
- ▶ Invite your child to try each of the suggestions on his or her "hand" this week as a way to show love to others. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 52–53

- ▶ Together recall times each of you has wanted to proclaim good news about something that happened. Explain that *proclaim* means "to announce publicly."
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the heading and the first two paragraphs on page 52. **Say:** *The term Paschal Mystery describes how Jesus saved us through his life, Death, and Resurrection.* Point to the picture. **Ask:** *What does the cross represent? (Jesus' Death) How does Jesus share his life with us? (He sent us the Holy Spirit.)*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Ask:** *What does Jesus mean when he says that if we believe in him, we will never die? (If we are faithful to God and serve others, we will live with Jesus in Heaven forever.)*
- ▶ Read aloud We Believe in the Paschal Mystery on page 53. **Say:** *This states our belief in God the Creator; his Son, Jesus Christ; and the power of the Holy Spirit. Each sentence describes part of the Paschal Mystery. We proclaim our belief in the Paschal Mystery when we pray the Apostles' Creed.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Say:** *This summarizes the basic meaning of the Paschal Mystery.*

Art Exploration: Page 235

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Saint Paul with his letters that helped spread God's Word.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including what Saint Paul is holding.

- ▶ **Say:** *Christ died for our sins and three days later rose from the dead. If we believe this, we will be saved.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 235. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the title and the first paragraph. Read aloud the scroll and the last paragraph. **Ask:** *What was Saint Paul worried about? (that people had forgotten what he had told them about Jesus' Death and Resurrection) Why did Jesus die? (because he loved us and wanted us to know and love God)*
- ▶ Read aloud *What Would You Say?* and have your child complete the activity. Discuss other things you want people to know about Jesus.
- ▶ Give your child a brown paper bag and invite him or her to draw a map showing Paul's travels. Provide a map and give your child time to review other maps online for reference. When the map is finished, crumple the bag to give it an "ancient" look.

Reflect: Pages 54–55

- ▶ Together look at page 54. **Say:** *The cross in the picture serves as a symbol of the Paschal Mystery.* Remind your child that when we pray the Apostles' Creed, we are affirming the basic truths of our faith.
- ▶ Together pray the first part of the Creed. Then read aloud the first paragraph on page 54. Pray aloud the new part of the Creed together. Read aloud the last paragraph. Give your child time to reflect and then close by praying together *Amen*.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the heading and the first three paragraphs on page 55. **Ask:** *What happens to a caterpillar in the chrysalis? (It turns into a butterfly.)* **Say:** *After waiting in its chrysalis, the butterfly rises up to an even more beautiful life, just as Jesus did on Easter. When we see a butterfly, it reminds us of Jesus and his new life after he rose from the dead. The butterfly is a symbol of Jesus' Resurrection.* Read aloud *Color the Butterfly*. Give your child crayons or markers to color the butterfly.

Respond: Page 56

- ▶ 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 enemies.
- ▶ 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 57

- ▶ Together with your child, share family memories of past Advent seasons you have celebrated.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text on page 57. Discuss the pictures. Then ask your child to turn to page 151 in his or her book and locate the season of Advent on the liturgical calendar. **Say:** *In this session we will learn about Advent—the time of year when we pray and prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus.*
- ▶ Ask your child to prepare for Advent by thinking of a special way to show love for his or her family on each Sunday before Christmas. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Page 58

- ▶ Together recall symbols of Advent that your family displays, such as the figures in a Nativity scene or an Advent calendar. **Say:** *Families have their own ways of preparing during Advent.*
- ▶ Read aloud We Prepare During Advent. **Ask:** *How can we open our hearts to make room for Jesus? (by helping others) How were Mary and Joseph faithful to God? (Mary agreed to become the mother of Jesus. Joseph agreed to marry Mary and become the foster father of Jesus.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud We Prepare, We Remember and complete the activity. Help your child complete the third sentence.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *Jesus' birth was a sign to the world that God loves us. The story of his birth is told each year at Christmas Mass.*

Reflect: Page 59

- ▶ Together sing or read aloud the lyrics to "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." **Say:** *God sent his Son, Jesus, to show us how to live and to save us from our sins.*
- ▶ Read aloud Mass During Advent and What We Experience on page 59. **Ask:** *What are some items that you see in our church during Advent? (evergreen trees, poinsettias, tree with tags of children's names so that parishioners can purchase gifts) What is the color of the priest's vestments or altar cloth during Advent? (purple)*
- ▶ Have your child complete the My Advent Hymn activity and share his or her ideas with you.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. **Ask:** *Why is the arrival of Jesus so important? (It shows God's love for us.)*

Art Exploration: Page 236

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture that shows a family preparing for the celebration of Jesus' birth.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the setting and the actions of the people.
- ▶ **Say:** *While we wait for the anniversary of Jesus' birth, we work to fill our hearts and actions with God's love.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 236. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud Celebrating Advent. **Ask:** *What does Advent prepare us for?* (the anniversary of Jesus' birth, Christmas)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Family Traditions. Discuss your own traditions as your child completes the activity.
- ▶ Together with your child play a memory game. **Say:** *I'm preparing myself during Advent, and I'm going to . . .* (make an Advent wreath, go to church, pray the Rosary) Take turns saying the sentence starter and then complete it with your idea. Each time you say the sentence starter, repeat the ideas mentioned prior to your new idea until your list gets too long to remember. See how many ideas you and your child can come up with.

Respond: Page 60

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can put someone else's needs first.
- ▶ 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.