



The Early Life of Jesus

Begin

Read aloud the unit title on page 45. **Say:** *This unit is about Jesus, the Son of God, and the mystery of the union of his divine and human natures.* Discuss the kind of work that an ambassador does. **Say:** *Today we will learn about a woman who was like an ambassador for God.* **Ask:** *How could you represent God among others without traveling to another country?* (Possible answers: by living peacefully with others, by following the Ten Commandments)

Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 45. **Say:** *You probably count on your family and other important adults to help you make important decisions. Marie's dream to become a nun might have surprised her family.* **Ask:** *How do you know if your life's work is what God planned for you?* (Possible answers: You feel called. You feel fulfilled.) *What lesson can we learn from Blessed Marie?* (Possible answers: Be patient. Trust in God. Ask for God's guidance.)

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saint Relates. Explain that we are like Blessed Marie of the Incarnation when we encounter God in those we serve.

Turn to page 46. Take turns reading aloud Blessed Marie of the Incarnation. **Say:** *The belief that Jesus has two natures, divine and human, united in one Person is distinct to our Christian faith. Every time we pray the Nicene Creed, we reaffirm our belief in the Incarnation.* **Ask:** *How was Marie suited to work with the young women, or novices, who entered the convent but had yet to take vows?* (She enjoyed instructing and felt enthusiasm for proclaiming Jesus.) *What challenges did she face as a missionary?* (She had to overcome cultural and language barriers.)

Take turns reading aloud Past Meets Present. Explain that the truth of Jesus Christ is intended for all nations. **Say:** *Jesus called the Apostles to preach the Gospel in the written and spoken word. Saint Paul changed the hearts of others by acknowledging their human and spiritual needs. Saint Damien of Molokai spread God's Word by tending to and living with those who were very sick.*

Together with your child, add Blessed Marie of the Incarnation's feast day, April 18, to your calendar. Discuss ways to give selflessly to people just as Blessed Marie did in her courageous yes to God's call.



Jesus Became One of Us

Engage: Page 47

- ▶ Share some riddles you know with your child. For example, **say:** *The more you have of it, the less you see. What is it?* (darkness) Point out how some riddles are hard to “get,” even when the answer is given.
- ▶ Read aloud and discuss the text in the box on page 47. Identify some people who understand both of you well. **Say:** *When the disciples were learning who Jesus was, they often didn’t “get it.” As human beings, we can never fully comprehend the mystery of Jesus’ divine and human natures. Though divine, Jesus understands our human concerns and experiences.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together. Pray together the Sign of the Cross.

Explore: Pages 48–49

- ▶ Together look at photos taken at different stages of your child’s life. Tell stories that reflect various reactions to events at different times in your lives. Brainstorm human emotions such as happiness, jealousy, love, anger, joy, despair, hopefulness, and gratitude. **Say:** *As members of the human race, we have much in common.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title The Word Became Flesh. Then read aloud the text on page 48. **Say:** *Jesus was always divine. God’s plan for our Salvation was to send his only Son.* Have your child read aloud John 3:16 in the Bible. Connect the verse to the Incarnation, the Word became flesh. Explain that Jesus was to be, and still is, our model of holiness. To emphasize our Catholic belief in the Incarnation, turn to page 276 in Prayers and Practices and pray aloud the Nicene Creed.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud Our Catholic Character. Review the meaning of *catholic* in the Glossary. Discuss how the Catholic Church has a clear structure of hierarchy with the pope as the leader of the worldwide Church. The pope is assisted by cardinals, bishops, priests, and other Church leaders.
- ▶ Look at page 49. Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Discuss the heart as a symbol of Jesus’ love for us. **Say:** *When we imitate the heart of Jesus in the things we say and do, we best reflect Jesus’ divine nature.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the section Fully God, Fully Man on page 49. Discuss the meanings of *miracle*, *heresy*, and *consubstantial*. **Ask:** *What did the first Council of Nicaea teach?* (In 325 the first ecumenical council of Nicaea decreed that Jesus is of the same substance with the Father.) Locate and read aloud the lines of the Nicene Creed that relate to the council’s teaching.
- ▶ Work together while using the Bible to complete the God and Man activity.
- ▶ Close the session by asking questions. **Ask:** *When you contemplate Jesus as man, what is your favorite thought? What do you think of first when you contemplate Jesus’ divine nature?* (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 50–51

- ▶ With your child seated, hold a pencil just out of his or her reach. Ask your child to try to touch the pencil without moving his or her body from the chair. **Say:** *You can reach as far as you can, but you will never touch the pencil. Remember this demonstration as we read the article.*



- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the article title *Pray as Jesus Taught Us* on page 50. Take turns reading aloud the page. Read aloud the definition of the *Great Commandment* in the Glossary. **Say:** *When you reached for the pencil, you got close but never quite touched it. In contrast, Jesus doesn't just bring us closer to the Father. Jesus puts us directly into contact with God the Father, removing all distance between us.* Read aloud John 10:30. **Ask:** *How can knowing Jesus mean knowing the Father?* (The Father and Son are actually one.)
- ▶ Continue reading aloud the sections *Jesus Prays to Abba* and *Relationship with God* on pages 50 and 51. **Ask:** *How can you invite Jesus into your life?* (through prayer and loving actions) **Say:** *Inviting God into our daily lives is contagious. We have a choice to pray and live in relationship with God, inviting new friends along the way.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Remind him or her that God created man in his own image. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us that every person possesses dignity because God made us in his image. Read aloud the meaning of *dignity of the human person* in the Glossary.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud John 15:12–17. Discuss the meaning of this Scripture by asking your child to talk about his or her responsibilities to God and to others.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 52–53

- ▶ Read aloud the title *Enter Fully into Prayer* on page 52. Ask your child to read aloud the paragraphs in the left column. Discuss the meaning of *lectio divina*. Compare this form of prayer to the way we read personal mail—we savor it, often rereading parts of it.
- ▶ Guide your child through the steps of *lectio divina*. Pray the Scripture verses. Follow the steps of meditation, prayer, and contemplation. Together recite the All part and pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Look at page 53. Read aloud the introductory text of *Where Do I Fit In?* Discuss whether it is harder to offer help or to receive it. **Say:** *Both offering and receiving help are ways of growing closer to God.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud *I Am Not Alone*. **Ask:** *What did the author learn about important responsibilities?* (They must often be shared.) *What did she learn about the workings of God?* (He often works through the love and support of others.) Have your child complete the *Living for Others* activity. Invite him or her to share the article with a family member and then ask your child to tell a story about receiving God's help through the actions of others.

Respond: Page 54

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the directions in *What's What?* Point out the secret phrase. Have your child complete the activity independently.
- ▶ Review the terms you learned in this session in *Say What?*
- ▶ Read aloud *Now What?* Discuss strengths and weaknesses before your child writes a response to the activity. Ask him or her to reread the response each day as a way to grow closer to Jesus during the week.
- ▶ Invite your child to access a 3-Minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.