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## CHAPTER BACKGROUND

## A Mystery of Love

The creation of “all things visible and invisible” (Nicene Creed) was God’s first step in establishing his Covenant with humankind. It was “the first and universal witness to his all-powerful love” (see Genesis 15:5, Jeremiah 33:19–26, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 288). Simply put, God’s act of creation is an act of love, similar to a mother’s giving birth to a child. In the Book of Isaiah the Prophet we read:

But now, thus says the LORD,  
who created you, O Jacob,  
and formed you, O Israel:

Fear not, for I have  
redeemed you;

I have called you by name:  
you are mine.

When you pass through the  
water, I will be with you;  
in the rivers you shall not  
drown.

When you walk through  
fire, you shall not be  
burned;

the flames shall not  
consume you. . . .

Because you are precious in  
my eyes  
and glorious, and because  
I love you. *ISAIAH 43:1–2, 4*

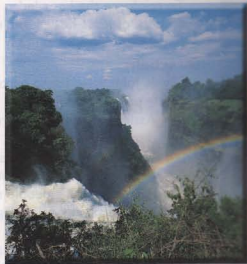
When we speak of the mystery of creation, we mean that we can

only understand God’s reason, or motive, for creating to be a mystery of love—the incomprehensible and completely free gift of divine love. Faith in that love and trust in God, the Creator, who is love, draws us forward through questions, pain, and other seemingly crushing difficulties of life. We exist—all creation exists—because of God’s love.

## Images of God’s Love

The mystery of creation is especially manifest in human beings. Although creation clearly reflects the grandeur of God, human beings do so in a unique way. God endows each and every human person with a nobility and dignity that exceed our ability to comprehend. He has created human beings in his image and likeness.

God gives human beings the responsibility to care for all creation. He has made us stewards of the household of his creation. We share in the mystery of creation by accepting the responsibility to care for the created world and let creation flourish as God wants it to flourish—fairly, justly, generously, and in such a way that it is preserved for generations to come.



## Traces of the Divine

Although we speak of the mystery of creation as incomprehensible, the mystery of creation gives us glimpses of the mystery of its Creator, God. The created world manifests traces of the divine beauty, goodness, and almighty power. In the beauty of creation, in its goodness, in its power, in its order, in its patterned complexity, the world clearly speaks of the One who has created it—out of nothing and out of love!

## FOR REFLECTION

*Where is God most clearly manifested for me in creation? What does creation tell me about God?*

*How can I help the young people live as good stewards of God’s household, creation?*

## First Thoughts

### Awesome Creation

The students are learning about the universe, the solar system, and our earth. Explore with them the size and complexity of the universe, the interdependency of the solar system, the intricate systems that make up life on Earth. Marvel with them at the vast panorama and beauty of the universe.

### Creator of All That Is, Seen and Unseen

Explain to the students that in times past it took hundreds of years for the total body of scientific knowledge of humankind to double. Today, the total scientific knowledge of humankind doubles in less than two to three years. Despite the amount of scientific knowledge that we are acquiring, our acquisition of knowledge itself seems endless. The universe is so complex, the earth so inextricably interdependent, the human person so unfathomable, we will never plumb all the secrets of creation. This realization can fill our minds and hearts with awe and wonder—a sense of thanksgiving to God, the Creator of all.



### The Church Teaches . . .

The *General Directory for Catechesis* reminds us that God is active in our lives and in the world. It teaches:

The Christian knows that every human event—indeed all reality—is marked by the creative activity of God which communicates goodness to all beings. GDC 16

Every *Faith First* chapter begins by helping the students situate the lesson concepts in their own life experience. Prayerfully reflecting on our life experiences is one way we can see “with the eyes of faith” the hand of the Almighty Creator at work in our lives and in the world.

### See the Catechism . . .

For more on the teachings of the Catholic Church on the mystery of creation, especially the spiritual soul, original justice, original sin, and Jesus the new Adam, see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 302–305, 356–373, 378–379, and 385–409.

*Jesus, Lord  
and Teacher,  
I place my trust in you.  
Calm the seas of my life  
and help me teach  
in your name. Amen.*

# LESSON PLANNER

## Chapter Focus

To understand that reflecting in faith on the diversity within creation helps us come to know who God is

### Focus

#### DAY 1

**Engage/Teach and Apply**  
Pages 39–41  
**Focus**

To discover the attributes of God seen in his work of creation

### Process

#### Opening Prayer

#### Discussion

What creations tells us about God

#### Presentation

Read, discuss, and summarize content.

**Did you know:** Saint Teresa of Avila

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:31, Deuteronomy 6:4–5, Romans 1:20

**Faith Connection:** Make a symbol of the first part of the Nicene Creed.

### Materials and Options

#### Materials

pencils or pens, markers or crayons, paper, construction paper

#### Options

**Called to Prayer and Liturgical Lessons booklet:** See options for daily, seasonal, and liturgical prayer and lessons.

**Enriching the Lesson (TG page 111)**

- Creating a Photographic Essay Book
- Making a Word Map for the Divine Attributes

#### DAY 2

**Teach and Apply**  
Pages 42–43  
**Focus**

To discover how God's attributes are reflected in human life

#### Prayer

#### Presentation

Read, discuss, and summarize content.

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:26, 27, 2:7; 2 Samuel 7:28; Isaiah 24:10; 1 John 4:8, 16

#### Activity

Describe the relationship of men and women in God's plan of creation.

#### Materials

pens or pencils

#### Options

**Activities and Assessment Tools**

**booklet:** Mystery of Creation Word Puzzle (page 13)

#### DAY 3

**Teach/Apply and Connect**  
Pages 44–45  
**Focus**

To discover that God is at the center of the divine plan of salvation

#### Prayer

#### Presentation

Read, discuss, and summarize content.

**Scripture:** Genesis 3:1–24; 1 Corinthians 15:20–28

**Faith Connection:** List the ways your class cooperates with God's plan.

#### Our Church Makes a Difference

Discover how students reach out and become a living image of God for others.

#### Materials

poster board, markers or felt-tipped pens

#### Options

**Enriching the Lesson (TG page 111)**  
Joining in a Service Ministry

#### DAY 4

**Connect and Apply**  
Pages 46–47  
**Focus**

To discover ways of building healthy relationships

#### Prayer

#### What Difference Does Faith Make in My Life?

Learn how to build healthy relationships.

#### Activity

Illustrate the signs of a healthy relationship.

#### Faith Decision

Choose one thing you can do this week to build a healthy relationship with someone.

#### Materials

pens or pencils

#### Options

**Faith First Creed and Prayer video**  
Segment 4: "Real Life Interviews/Story of Faith"

#### DAY 5

**Pray and Review**  
Page 48

#### We Pray

Pray "Praise God," alternating verses.

#### We Remember

**Activities:** Complete the review exercises to reinforce the concepts of the chapter.

**Family Discussion:** Encourage the students to share and discuss the "Family Discussion" question with their family this week.

#### Materials

pens or pencils, paper

#### Options

**Activities and Assessment Tools**  
**booklet:** Administer chapter 4 test.

**Music Connection (TG page 111)**



## PRAY

- Call the students to prayer and have them open their books.
- Begin with the Sign of the Cross, and ask the students to reflect on the stained-glass window.
- Ask a volunteer to proclaim Genesis 1:31.
- Have the class sit for a brief period of silence, reflecting on the goodness and beauty of God revealed in creation.

## FAITH FOCUS

Read aloud and invite responses to the “Faith Focus” question. Summarize by sharing that in this chapter they will learn more about the teaching of the Catholic Church on God’s Revelation of himself as Creator.

## DISCOVER

Access the young peoples’ prior knowledge of the teaching of the Catholic Church on the mystery of creation.

- Write the terms in “Faith Vocabulary” on the board. Ask the young people to share what they already know about the meanings of the faith vocabulary terms. Write their responses next to the appropriate terms on the board.
- Ask the students to read the opening paragraph. Then invite responses to the first question.
- Build on their responses and read aloud the second paragraph. Ask volunteers to respond to the concluding question.

## The Mystery of Creation

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## FAITH FOCUS

Why does reflecting in faith on the diversity within creation help us come to know more and more about who God is?

## FAITH VOCABULARY

attribute	divine Providence
eternal	soul
omnipresence	

*Who do you know who is an image of one of their parents?*

Think about children who closely resemble one or the other of their parents. There is no doubt they are all members of the same family.

We can apply the same connections to God and creation. Taking a close look at creation, we can get a glimpse of God, who is the source of all creation.

*What might a mountain or sunset or field of wheat tell you about God?*

God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good.

Genesis 1:31

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## National Directory for Catechesis

**Implementing the National Directory for Catechesis: Learning Through Human Experience.** The National Directory teaches: Catechesis “enables people to explore, interpret, and judge their basic experiences in light of the Gospel” (NDC 29A, page 98). In this chapter the students will be reminded that God created the world in its richness and diversity. Invite the students to name the diverse groups and cultures they have encountered in your parish school and community. Ask them to share how these individuals and groups help them understand the Gospel message.

*Helping children find their own way to understand the Gospel message is a goal of catechesis. Encourage them to think of ways they can help one another.*

# Day 1

## Teach

### FOCUS

Remind the students that creation gives us a glimpse of God, who is the source of all creation. Explain to the class that these pages will help them understand some of the attributes of God that are manifested in creation.

### DISCOVER

- Ask the students to capture in their mind an image or picture of some aspect of creation that helps them ponder the awesomeness of God the Creator.
- Invite the class to look up the word *attribute* in the glossary.
- Have the class read pages 40 and 41 to better understand the divine attributes “Creator,” “one,” and “eternal.”

## God the Creator

### God the Almighty One

When we open our eyes and minds to ponder the majesty and the mystery of creation, we cannot help but be led to a sense of awe before the Creator whose image is traced in such vastness and diversity.

Paul the Apostle writes: Ever since the creation of this world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what he has made. ROMANS 1:20

We use the word *attribute* to classify some of the things we have come to know about God. An attribute is a quality or characteristic that belongs to a person or thing. The many attributes the Church uses for God only give us a glimpse into the infinite mystery of God who has freely chosen to reveal himself to us.

### God Is the Creator

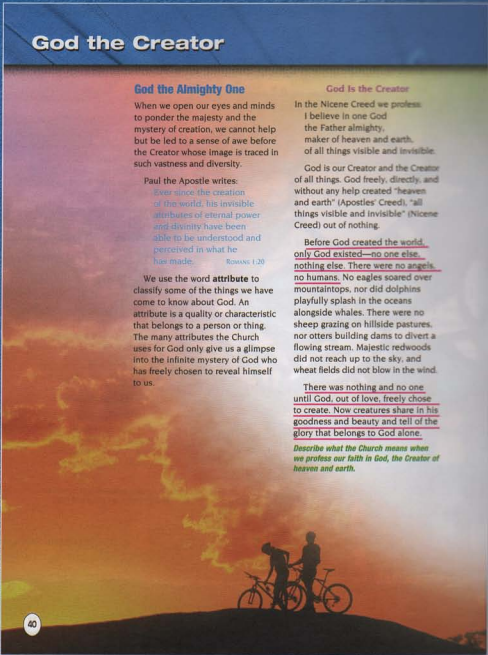
In the Nicene Creed we profess: I believe in one God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

God is our Creator and the Creator of all things. God freely, directly, and without any help created “heaven and earth” (Apostles’ Creed), “all things visible and invisible” (Nicene Creed) out of nothing.

Before God created the world, only God existed—no one else, nothing else. There were no angels, no humans. No eagles soared over mountaintops, nor did dolphins playfully splash in the oceans alongside whales. There were no sheep grazing on hillside pastures, nor otters building dams to divert a flowing stream. Majestic redwoods did not reach up to the sky, and wheat fields did not blow in the wind.

There was nothing and no one until God, out of love, freely chose to create. Now creatures share in his goodness and beauty and tell of the glory that belongs to God alone.

*Describe what the Church means when we profess our faith in God, the Creator of heaven and earth.*



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## Background: Doctrine

**The Mystery of God and Creation.** God is a mystery beyond our comprehension. We say God is everything and yet he is more than everything. We say he is like but unlike anyone or anything we know. The truth is that the more we come to know God, the more we realize how little about him we really do know. Creation is the work of the Creator. Reflecting on creation with the young people is a prayerful way to help them know God and his love.

### Enriching the Lesson

The “Creating a Photographic Essay Book” activity on page 111 is related to today’s content. You may wish to include it in today’s lesson.

**God Is One**

At the heart of God's revelation of himself is that he is One. In the Old Testament we read:

"Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength."  
Deuteronomy 6:4-5

The Israelites came to know God to be One. They believed, unlike their neighbors, that there is only one true God who is the Creator of everything.

The belief in one God is called monotheism. It was far different from what the neighbors of the Israelites and the majority of the people who lived in Old Testament times believed about God. Most believed there were many gods. We call this belief polytheism.

**God Is Eternal**

The Israelites also came to know that God alone has no beginning and no end. We use the attribute **eternal**, or everlasting, to describe this characteristic of God. God alone always was and always will be. The attribute belongs to God alone.

*What does it mean that God is one and eternal?*

**Did you Know...**

Saint Teresa of Avila (1515–1582) was a Spanish mystic who is one of the few saints the Church has honored with the title "Doctor of the Church." Teresa's life may be summarized as a prayerful journey in search of communion with God, the only true source of happiness. This journey is brilliantly described in her autobiographical masterpiece, *The Interior Castle*. Saint Teresa of Avila is the patron saint of Spain. The Church celebrates her feast day on October 15.

**FAITH CONNECTION**

*Make a symbol for the first part of the Nicene Creed. Use the symbol to teach the creed to a younger group of children.*

**Affirm appropriate responses.**

**REINFORCE**

- Ask volunteers to describe what the Catholic Church teaches when she professes that God is the Creator of heaven and earth.
- Write the divine attributes "Almighty," "one," and "eternal" on the board. Discuss with the students what each of the attributes tells about the mystery of God. (See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 200–202, 212–213, and 268–274.)

**INTEGRATE**

- Share "Did you know" to help the students learn about the life and work of Saint Teresa of Avila and how her faith in God gave direction and purpose to her life.
- Ask the students to work in groups to do the "Faith Connection" activity.

**PRAY**

Invite the students to quiet themselves for prayer. Together pray, "I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible" (from the Nicene Creed).

**Catholic Social Teaching**

**Care for God's Creation.** We show our respect for God the Creator by caring for all that he created. Care for creation is a requirement of Christian faith. First, we are called by God to show respect for all people who are all created in his image. This is the foundation of our human dignity. Second, we have the God-given responsibility to be stewards of the earth. Christians must measure every choice by the impact it has on human life and on the environment.

**Tip:** Invite the students to discuss the importance of conservation and protecting creation for future generations. Encourage them to think of ways they can better care for creation.



# Day 2

## Teach

### PRAY

Have the students quiet themselves for prayer. Proclaim Isaiah 54:10 and have the students prayerfully reflect on the passage.

### FOCUS

Remind the students that we profess faith in one God who is the Creator, almighty, and eternal. Have a volunteer read aloud the "Faith Focus" question on page 39. Tell them that these pages will explore additional attributes of God and that all people are created in his image.

### DISCOVER

- Have the class silently read page 42 to deepen their understanding of the divine attributes presented on the page.
- Write the divine attributes *truth, always present, and love* on the board. Ask volunteers to share key words and phrases that they learned about each of the terms on the board.
- Share that God created all people in his image and likeness.
- Invite the students to silently read page 43 and write questions about the text that they have after reading it.
- Ask volunteers to share their questions and respond to them. (See *Catechism of Catholic Church* 214–221.)

*God is love,  
and whoever remains in love  
remains in God and God in him.*

1 John 4:16

#### God Is Truth

In reflecting on creation and God's word to his people, the inspired writers of the Bible share with us their belief that God alone is the source of all truth and knowledge.

*And now, loved God, you are God and your word's are truth.*  
1 JOHN 1:9

Because God is the source of all creation, all truth ultimately comes from him. God is Truth itself.

We believe and trust everything the living God reveals to us. He gives us his word, and his word is always true. God always keeps his word. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Church guides us in understanding the meaning of the truth that God reveals.

#### God Is Always Present

God's people in the Old Testament also use the term *presence* to describe God. This expresses their belief that God does not create and abandon his

people. He is always present to all of his creation. Without God's presence, creation would cease to exist.

We call this attribute of God his **omnipresence**. We believe the almighty power and loving care of God, or **divine Providence**, is always with us.

*Though the mountains leave their place and the hills be shaken, my love shall never leave you.*  
ISAIAH 54:10

#### God Is Love

By sending the Son, who would freely choose to die for us, God revealed the Innermost mystery, or secret, about himself:

*God is love.* 1 JOHN 4:8

God created us and saved us. He chose us to be his people because of who he is: love.

*What does it mean that God is Truth and always present with us?*

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## Liturgy Tip

**Acknowledging the Goodness of God.** Connect the prayers and rites of the liturgy with what the young people learn during the sessions. For example, recall the words of the acclamation prayed at the conclusion of the Preface of the Mass and have the group pray it during the lesson to praise God for the gift of creation:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

FROM ROMAN MISSAL

**Created in God's Image**

The first story of creation in the Book of Genesis (see Genesis 1:1–2:4a) makes it clear that people are the summit of God's creation. After God finished creating the universe and saw how good it was, he said,

*"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."* Genesis 1:26

The writer of the second story of creation in Genesis (see Genesis 2:4b–25) describes the creation of the first human this way:

*"[The Lord] God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being."* Genesis 2:7

Made from the clay of the earth, we have received the breath of life from God.

God created us with a body and a soul. Our soul is the spiritual part of who we are that is immortal, or never dies. God has given us an intelligence and a free will. These powers are gifts from God that give us the power to know and love God, other people, and ourselves. This unique privilege is ours alone among all the creatures of earth. From the first moment of our existence these wonderful gifts show that God created us to know and love him now and forever in heaven.

**Male and Female**

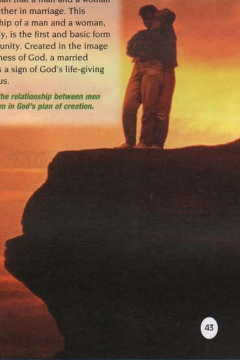
When we read or listen to the first creation story, God also tells us that he did not create us to be alone.

There is another side to us. We have been created to live in community. We read:

*"God created man in his image, in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them."* Genesis 1:27

Men and women share equally the honor and dignity of being made in God's image and likeness. Men and women have been created to live as partners. It is part of the divine plan that a man and a woman join together in marriage. This partnership of a man and a woman, the family, is the first and basic form of community. Created in the image and likeness of God, a married couple is a sign of God's life-giving love for us.

*Describe the relationship between men and women in God's plan of creation.*

**Background: Scripture**

**The Two Biblical Accounts of Creation.** There are two accounts of creation in the Book of Genesis. Biblical scholars agree that the first creation account was probably written after the second account. The first account (Genesis 1:1–2:3) is a beautiful poem about the "days" of creation. What the biblical writer is trying to get across to the Israelites is that there is only one God and he created everything good. The second creation account (Genesis 2:4–25) has a different emphasis. Its purpose is to show that God's plan of creation is based on the relationship between people and God. The two accounts do not contradict one another. They build upon each other and express important truths about God and people.

**REINFORCE**

Refer to the question at the bottom of page 43 and discuss with the students the relationship between men and women in God's plan of creation. Men and women have been created to live as partners in marriage and share equally the honor and dignity of being made in God's image and likeness.

**INTEGRATE**

Brainstorm with the class ways they can grow in their love and knowledge of God.

**PRAY**

Invite the students to quiet themselves for prayer. Have the students quietly read and reflect on 1 John 4:8 and Genesis 1:27. Conclude by praying the Act of Love on page 135 together.

**Enriching the Lesson**

The "Making a Word Map for the Divine Attributes" activity on page 111 is related to today's content. You may wish to include it in today's lesson.

# Day 3

## Teach

### PRAY

Invite the students to quiet themselves for prayer. Proclaim Luke 10:21–23. Allow time for silent, prayerful reflection.

### FOCUS

Write on the board the “Faith Focus” question on page 39. Ask the students how they might now answer it. Remind the class that God’s loving care is always with us. Tell the young people that this page will explore that God is at the center of the divine plan of salvation.

### DISCOVER

- Briefly point out that the term *original justice* states the original relationship of the first humans to God, prior to original sin.
- Have the students silently read “Original Justice” and “New Creation” to discover God’s desire that all people always share in his love, now and forever in heaven.

## Apply

### REINFORCE

Ask volunteers to share in their own words God’s plan of goodness for all creation.

### INTEGRATE

- Have the young people work in groups to complete the “Faith Connection” activity.
- Display the diagrams and invite groups to briefly discuss the items they included.

### Original Justice

God created the first humans in the state of original justice. The word *justus* means “being in the right order.” God created us in a life-giving relationship with him, with one another, and with all creation.

The Book of Genesis (see Genesis 3:1–24) tells us that the first humans, Adam and Eve, lost that state of original justice not only for

themselves but for all human beings. They committed the original, or first, sin. They knowingly and freely rejected God’s plan of creation. They knew God’s plan and chose to replace it with their own. We call this story in Genesis the Fall.

### New Creation

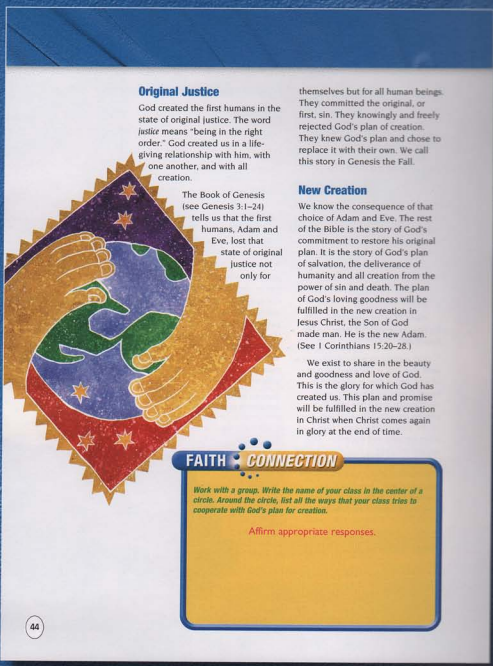
We know the consequence of that choice of Adam and Eve. The rest of the Bible is the story of God’s commitment to restore his original plan. It is the story of God’s plan of salvation, the deliverance of humanity and all creation from the power of sin and death. The plan of God’s loving goodness will be fulfilled in the new creation in Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man. He is the new Adam. (See 1 Corinthians 15:20–28.)

We exist to share in the beauty and goodness and love of God. This is the glory for which God has created us. This plan and promise will be fulfilled in the new creation in Christ when Christ comes again in glory at the end of time.

### FAITH CONNECTION

Work with a group. Write the name of your class in the center of a circle. Around the circle, list all the ways that your class tries to cooperate with God’s plan for creation.

Affirm appropriate responses.



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### Teaching Tip

“Me” or “Us.” Young adolescents are understandably self-focused as this is natural at this stage of their development. While affirming the talents and gifts of each member of the class and helping them grow in a healthy sense of self-esteem, it is vital to help them understand that the human person has been created by God not only as a unique individual but as a social person. Life is not only about me, but also about us.

# OUR CHURCH MAKES A DIFFERENCE

## Recreating All Things in Christ

The students, faculty, and families of Bishop Lynch High School in Dallas, Texas, work diligently to put into practice the faith they talk about and study in school. One way they do this is by building life-giving relationships within their school community and within the larger civic and Church community of which their school is a part. These life-giving relationships are strengthened through a peer ministry program called "Peer Helpers" and through participation in the "Hearts & Hammers" project.

### Peer Ministry

At the beginning of the school year, Peer Helpers serve as ambassadors. They welcome new students, answer questions, guide the lost, and make everyone feel comfortable. Peer Helpers also sponsor a one-day camp for new students to help them become familiar with their school, one another, and the entire school community. Other peer ministry programs include a one-on-one tutoring program and the Student Symposium, where students can openly discuss school issues, seek advice, and discover solutions to problems they identify.

### Hearts & Hammers

Members of the Bishop Lynch community are also involved in the civic community. They clean area parks, paint over graffiti, work with area food banks, and join with the Hearts & Hammers project. They join with other volunteers to renovate the homes of the elderly, the disabled, those families living immediately above or below the poverty level, and homeowners who are in danger of losing their homes because they are physically or financially unable to keep the property in compliance with code requirements.

*In what new ways could your class be a living image of God the Creator for others?*

**Affirm appropriate responses.**



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# Day 3

## Connect

### HIGHLIGHT

Remind the class that God created us to share in his love. Point out that everyone has the responsibility to live as images of God and to care for his creation.

### DISCOVER

- Ask volunteers to read aloud "Recreating All Things in Christ." Have everyone highlight key words and phrases that would guide them to put their faith in God into practice as Jesus taught.
- Discuss with the students how serving others expresses one's faith in God and gives witness to the truth that we are living images of God.

### INTEGRATE

Brainstorm with the class ways they are and ways they could be living images of God the Creator.

### PRAY

Invite the young people to open their Bible to Psalm 150 and quiet themselves for prayer. Have a volunteer prayerfully proclaim Psalm 150.

## Teaching Tip

**Developing Affirmation Skills.** Respecting and affirming one another builds a community of faith, hope, and love. Take this opportunity to work with the young people and develop a list of responses they can use during the sessions to praise and support and affirm one another. Listen for these words of encouragement as you observe their group interactions. Use their kind words to affirm them throughout the lesson. Encourage the young people to use these same words of respect and affirmation at school and at home.

### Enriching the Lesson

The "Joining in a Service Ministry" activity on page 111 is related to today's content. You may wish to include it in today's lesson.

# Day 4

## Connect

### PRAY

Invite the students to quiet themselves for prayer. Ask them to place themselves in the presence of God. Allow for a moment of silence and together pray the Glory Be.

### FOCUS

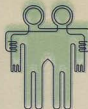
Recall the “Faith Focus” question on page 39. Ask volunteers to answer it, using what they have learned in this chapter. Point out to the class that all people have been created to live in relationship with God and others.

### DISCOVER

- Ask volunteers to think about the relationships that are part of their life.
- Invite volunteers to share characteristics of healthy relationships and how healthy human relationships can be images of God.
- Ask the young people to silently read “Building Relationships” to learn more about the signs that identify healthy, life-giving relationships.

# WHAT DIFFERENCE

## Does Faith Make in My Life?



### Building Relationships

You have been created in the image and likeness of God, who is one God in three Persons. Relationship is a word we think about when we reflect on the meaning of the Holy Trinity for our own lives.

You have been created to live in relationship with God and with others. Jesus summed up this truth this way. We are to love God with our whole mind, heart, soul, and strength. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves. (See Matthew 22:34–40.)

*You now live in many relationships. What are some of those relationships?*

*Affirm appropriate responses.*

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### Healthy Relationships

As you grow you continually need to develop skills that help you live in healthy relationships with others. Respect and life-giving are two of the most important qualities of healthy relationships.

- Respect honors the dignity of yourself and others. Developing respect in our relationships works toward eliminating prejudice, violence, and all other forms of verbal, physical, and spiritual harm from our relationships.
- People in life-giving relationships support one another. We develop one another's gifts and talents.

*Describe some of the ways that respect is part of your relationship with others.*

*Affirm appropriate responses.*

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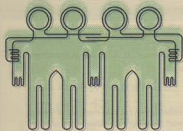


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## Teaching Tip

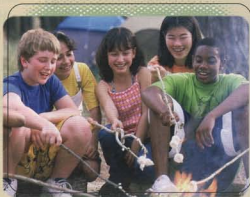
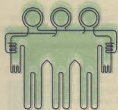
**Examining Relationships.** This would be an excellent time for you to pause and examine your relationship with the class as well as the relationships you observe among the young people. Take a few moments and reflect on these or similar questions:

- How can I help the students to be more inclusive?
- How are the relationships within the group inclusive or exclusive?
- What cliques may be forming within the group?
- Which, if any, of the young people are perceived to be favored or neglected by me?



#### Signs of a Healthy Relationship

- Respect for Each other
- Loving, loyal, listening
- Attentiveness, attitude of caring
- Trust of each other
- Interest in each other's well-being
- Openness to each other, freely sharing and expressing opinions
- Nurturing and supporting each other to be one's best
- Sharing hopes, dreams, fears, beliefs, spirituality
- Humor
- Integrity, honor and loyalty, treating others as you wish to be treated
- Positive attitude, play fair, disagree peacefully
- Skills that you need to practice.



## Faith Decision

- Choose one of the signs of a healthy relationship. Select magazine photos that illustrate the sign you have chosen. Combine your photos with those of the other students to create a "Healthy Relationship" collage.
- Think of one thing you can do this week to work at building a healthy relationship with someone. I will

Affirm appropriate responses.

### RESPOND

- Have magazines available and display a large piece of newspaper or poster paper that can be used for making a collage.
- Have the students work in a group to do the collage activity in "Faith Decision."

### CHOOSE

- Invite the students to use the collage as a source of prayerful reflection on all they have learned about the mystery of creation.
- Have everyone make and write their faith decision.
- Encourage everyone to put their faith decision into practice.

### PRAY

Invite the students to quiet themselves for prayer. Ask a volunteer to proclaim Genesis 1:31.

## Teaching Tip

**Respecting Diversity.** It is important to be sensitive to the variety of cultural backgrounds represented by the students in your group. Be aware of stereotypes of cultures often perpetuated by television, movies, and other media and recognize that these can influence the way we respond to people. Consciously invite the students to share family and faith customs with the group. This will help the young people value the diversity of people and cultures as a reflection of the infinite beauty, goodness, and love of God.

# Day 5

## Pray and Review

### FOCUS

Point out to the class that today's prayer is a prayer of praise that acknowledges that God alone is God and we give him glory "simply because HE IS" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2639).

### PRAY

- Select a volunteer to lead the prayer.
- Gather the class for prayer.
- Have the young people quietly recall and reflect on the many attributes of God.
- Pray the prayer together.

### REVIEW

- Have the young people share the meanings of the terms in "Faith Vocabulary" and compare their definitions with those in the glossary.
- Use the "Main Ideas" and the "Critical Thinking" sections to clarify any questions the students may have concerning what they have learned in the chapter.
- Remind everyone to share and discuss the "Family Discussion" question with their family.

### Before Moving On . . .

Reflect on these questions before moving on to the next chapter.

*What have I learned about the different gifts and talents of the students? How often do I consciously affirm their use of their gifts?*

# PRAY and REVIEW

## Praise God

### Leader:

Lord, holy Father,  
almighty and eternal God,  
we praise you as the God  
of creation,  
as the Father of Jesus,  
the Savior of the world,  
in whose image we seek to live.

### All:

Holy, Holy, Holy!  
Jesus loved the children  
of the lands he walked  
and enriched them with  
his witness of justice and truth.

### Leader:

Jesus lived and died  
that we might be reborn  
in the Spirit  
and filled with love for all people.

### All:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord  
God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full  
of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in  
the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

BASED ON THE PRAYER FOR INTERCESSORS DAY  
ROMAN MISSAL

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### FAITH VOCABULARY

Define each of these faith terms:

1. attributes p. 40
2. eternal p. 41
3. omnipresence p. 42
4. divine Providence p. 42
5. soul p. 43

### MAIN IDEAS

Choose either (a) or (b) from each set of items. Write a brief paragraph to answer each of your choices.

1. (a) Explain what the Church means when it teaches that God is the Creator of all, seen and unseen. p. 40  
(b) Name and explain two attributes of God. pp. 40-42
2. (a) Explain what it means to say that people are created in the image and likeness of God. p. 43  
(b) Compare the terms *original justice* and *salvation*. p. 44

### CRITICAL THINKING

Using what you have learned in this chapter, briefly explain this statement:

[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth.

Colossians 1:15-16

Affirm appropriate responses.

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

What are some things we can do to help one another grow in our knowledge and love of God?

For more ideas on ways your family can live your faith, visit the "Faith First for Families" page at [www.FaithFirst.com](http://www.FaithFirst.com). Check out the extra activity for this chapter on the Teen Center.



## Evaluate

Take a few moments to evaluate this week's lesson. I feel (circle one) about this week's lesson.

- a. very pleased
- b. OK
- c. disappointed

The activity the students enjoyed most was . . .

The concept that was most difficult to teach was . . . because . . .

Something I would like to do differently is . . .

# ENRICHING THE LESSON

## Creating a Photographic Essay Book

### Purpose

To reinforce that God is the Creator (taught on page 40)

### Directions

- Discuss with the students what images the following sentences from the chapter evoke in them:  
—“We exist to share in the beauty and goodness and love of God.”  
—“This is the glory for which God has created us.”
- Have the young people work in groups to create photographic essays illustrating the title “Sharing in the Beauty and Goodness of God’s Love.”
- Have the groups use magazines, photographic calendars, or their own photographs.
- Invite the groups to combine their essays to make a book.

### Materials

construction paper, magazines, calendars, markers or crayons, scissors, glue sticks

## Making a Word Map for the Divine Attributes

### Purpose

To reinforce an understanding of the attributes of God (taught on pages 40–42)

### Directions

- Have the students work with partners to create a word map for God.
- Have them print the word *God* in the center of a sheet of paper. Around the word *God* have them add words or symbols for the attributes of God.
- Invite everyone to use creative lettering for their design.

### Materials

construction paper  
markers or crayons

## Joining in a Service Ministry

### Purpose

To reinforce ways the young people can be living images of God (taught on page 45)

### Directions

- Discuss with the class ways the people in the school and parish are making a difference by living their faith. Use parish bulletins in the discussion.
- Invite the students to identify a work currently being done in the school or parish that serves people.
- Have the students work in groups to create a “Help Wanted” ad encouraging young people of the parish to serve people by volunteering to help out with an appropriate school or parish service group.
- Remind the students to describe in detail in the “Help Wanted” ad the qualifications needed for a person to serve in that work.
- Seek the appropriate permission and post the ad.

### Materials

poster board  
markers or felt-tip pens



## Music Connection

- “All You Works of God,” M. Haugen. *Gather Comprehensive* #492.
- “God, Creator, God Most High,” J. Vogt. *Spirit and Song (SS)* #115.
- “God’s Love Is Everlasting,” T. Tomaszek. *SS* #87.
- “Yes, We Believe,” P. Tate. *Voices As One* #103.