

# UNIT ONE: I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER

## LESSON 2: God Our Father

### CONTENTS OF LESSON:

1. Jesus taught us to call God 'Father'. God is our father because
  - He is our creator: Our life has come from him.
  - He cares for all human beings as a loving parent, with the love of both a father and mother: protecting, planning, nurturing and providing for us. [CCC 239]
2. In Jesus, God becomes our father in a unique way. Since he is the true Son of God, when we enter his Body in Baptism, we become children of the Father in a new way. [CCC 240; 2780-82.]
3. *Since God is our Father, we must:*
  - *Desire to become like him.* [CCC 2825]
  - *Be humble and trusting, like children.* [CCC 2785]
  - *Be obedient to him, as Jesus was.* [CCC 2825]



REFERENCES: Genesis 1:28-30; Psalm 103:13,14. Matthew 5:44-45,48, 6:32,32, 7:7,11.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts, Bibles, Pictures of fathers and mothers with their children.

*(Teacher should bring some too. These could be shown as a power-point.)*

AUDIO-VISUAL (OPTIONAL): 'The Father's Love Letter'

### I. STARTER:

- Today we are going to think of the word 'Father' and what it means. *[Show pictures of fathers and ask the students to show the pictures they have brought].*
- When you think of the word 'Father' what words come to mind? How would you describe a father? Be honest and write any words that come, good or bad.  
*[Students write these words on a rough paper, then read them out. They are written on the blackboard. Accept all words, even if they are negative.]*
- Sometimes we may have a negative picture of a father. Our own father may not be exactly what we want him to be, or he may be absent from our lives. Actually no human person can be perfect. But we know what a good father should be. Let's circle the good qualities of a father.  
*[Words are circled on the board. They could be: CARES, PROTECTS, PROVIDES, LOVES, WORKS FOR, FEEDS, PLANS, FORGIVES, GOOD EXAMPLE, LEADS, DIRECTS etc.]*

### II. DEVELOPMENT:

1. Let's look at the first person of the Holy Trinity: God the Father. In what way is he our father?  
*[Let students suggest ways, then read **Genesis 1:28-30.**]*
- Does the passage show any of the 'fatherly' qualities we just mentioned?  
[PROVIDES: He gave them food; BLESSES, DIRECTS, (He gave them instructions), PLANS, CARES FOR etc.]  
*[Give out the handouts. The students do the top section, looking up the references and reading the quotes given. After they have finished, they share their answers. Bring out the following:]*

God is our father because...

1. We have received life from God.
2. Like a loving parent God protects, provides, feeds, loves, forgives, has compassion (understands our weakness), plans for us. God has the qualities of both a mother and father:  
He is tender, kind and sensitive like a mother, but also strong and protective like a father.
3. In Jesus God became our father in a new way because Jesus is the only begotten (means born) Son of God. He died for us and made it possible for us to be adopted into God's family. This happened to me when I was baptized.

### III. INTERIORISATION/PRAAYER:

*[The video: The Father's Love-Letter' could be used instead of the following exercise.]*

*[Ask the students to turn over their handouts and close their eyes.]*

- Let's look back at the scene at the beginning of time. Imagine yourself as the first human being. God takes you by the hand and shows you all that he has created... All the beautiful and grand things: the sky... the stars... the mountains... trees, flowers...birds and animals... He tells you, "I made this all for you... because of my great love for you."

Then God shows you all he has provided for you: food... shelter... occupation...

He even lets you peep into your own brain and body to see how wonderfully he has planned every detail, how much potential you have to think, design, create, solve problems...

God now points out far into the future... You see Jesus, coming down from heaven and becoming a little baby, growing into a man... walking around, teaching and healing... You see him suffering and dying on the cross and then rising out of the tomb.. God looks at you and says, "I sent him for your sake, so that you could become my son, my daughter..."

Be silent now and look up at the Father's tender smile.. Ask yourself, "How should I respond? What does my Father want from me?"

*[Ask the students to share their response. E.g. I think God wants me to love him, to thank him, to trust him...]*

### DEVELOPMENT [Continued]

2. Jesus tells us how we should respond to the Father's love. See if you can find out what the 3 main ways are.

*[Students look up the references in their Bibles and fill in the words. They try to think of suitable captions.. but don't write them in yet. Check on the answers after they have finished:]*

IF GOD IS MY FATHER, I SHOULD:

1. TRY TO BECOME LIKE HIM. 'I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes the sun rise on the evil and the good. Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.'
2. TRUST GOD LIKE A CHILD. 'Do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat? Or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' Indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.' 'Ask, and it will be given you.'
3. DO THE WILL OF THE FATHER, AS JESUS DID. 'I seek to do not my will, but the will of him who sent me. 'Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.'

**REFLECTION:** *[Ask the students to be silent for a minute and think about what change they want to make in their lives. They write it in the space provided. 'MY PERSONAL DECISION']*

### IV. ACTIVITY: (If time permits)

*[In groups, students pick out any aspect of a father's relationship with his son/daughter (see the words on the board). They dramatize it, using a modern-day scenario. They then compare this scenario with God's relationship with us.]*

E.g. A father and mother plan and prepare for their baby who is soon to be born. They buy clothes, a baby-cot, a cupboard, paint the walls with pretty pictures etc. The commentator ends: God our Father planned a beautiful world for us and took a lot of trouble to care for all our needs. We are very precious to him.'

#### HOME ASSIGNMENT:

⇒ Read the handout. ⇒ Read Psalm 139:1-18 slowly. Talk to God about it.