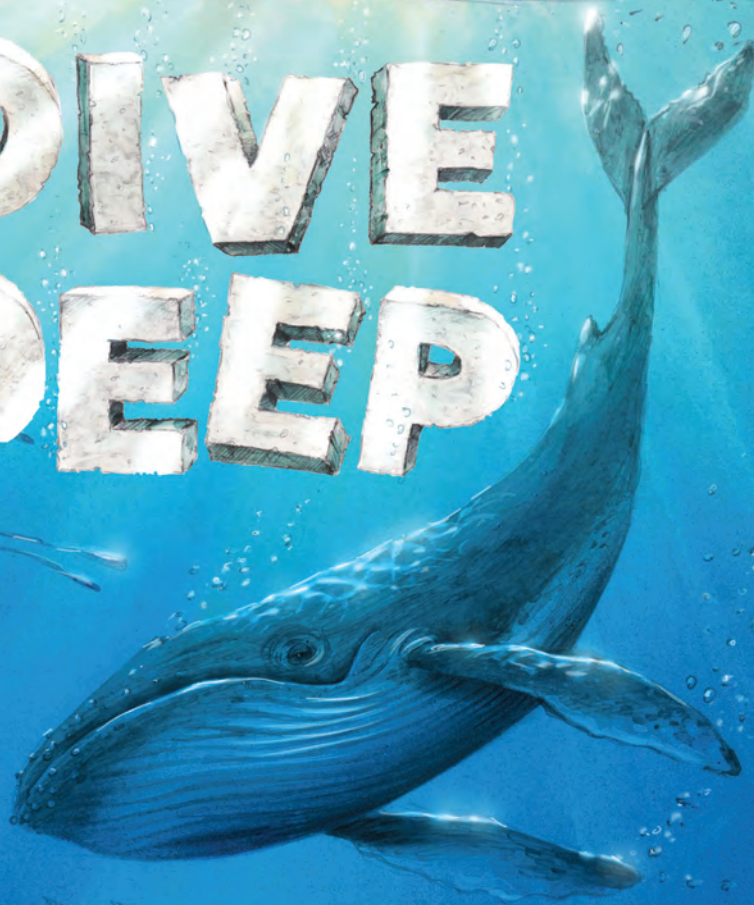




DIVE DEEP

**40 DAYS
WITH GOD
AT SEA**



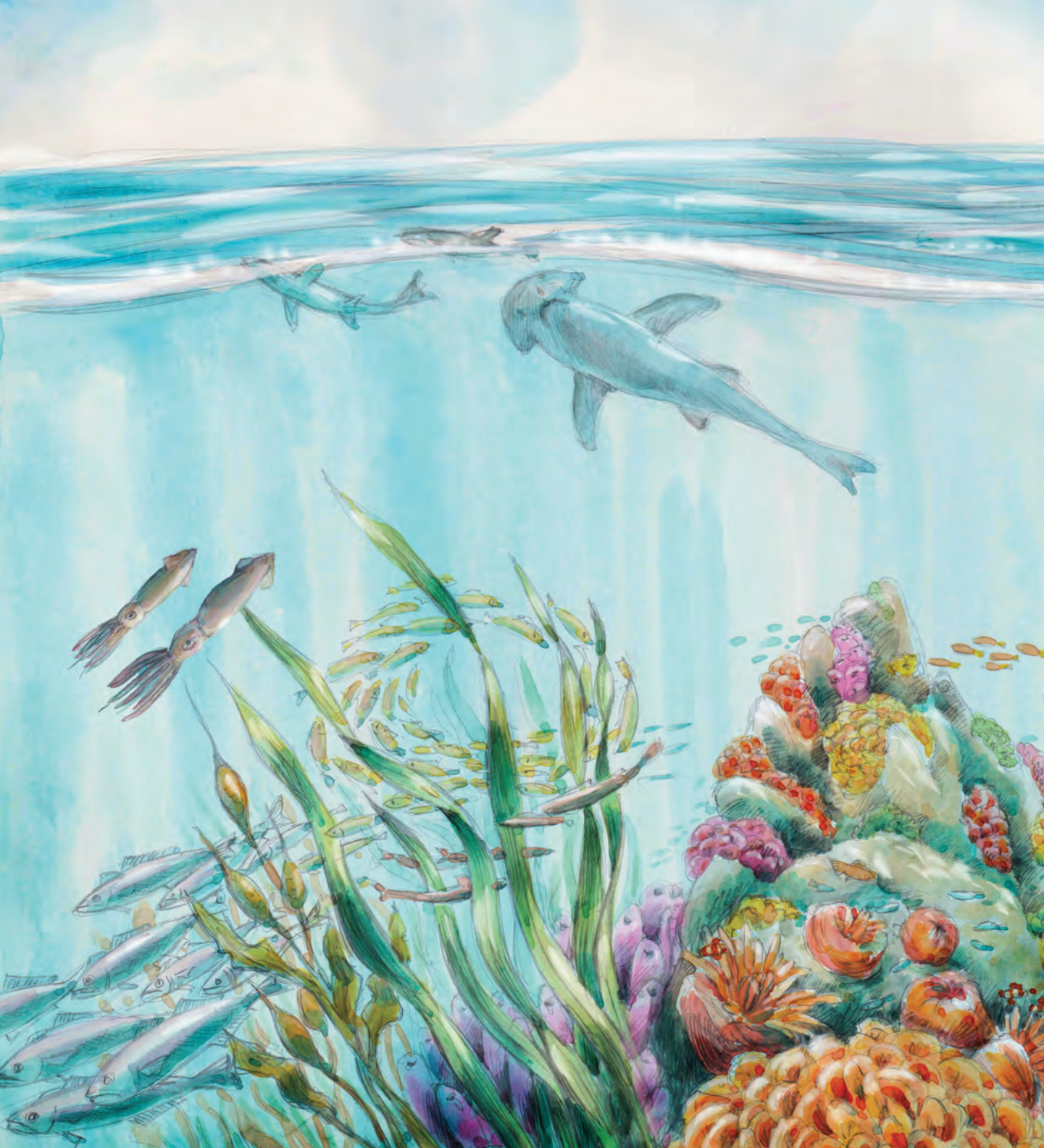
Written by Orienne Pietra René Dyck, FSP

Illustrated by Romi Caron



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For my goddaughter, Isabel.
May you have many great adventures with Jesus!





Sea *noun* 1. the salt water that covers most of the earth, as opposed to the land and the air; 2. salt water mostly surrounded by land, but connected to the ocean, such as the Caribbean Sea; 3. ocean; 4. a large body of water that is landlocked, a large lake, such as the Caspian Sea

An artistic illustration of an underwater scene. The background is a light blue gradient representing water. At the top, a school of small blue fish swims horizontally. On the left, a tall green seaweed stalk rises from a pink flower-like coral base. On the right, a large, branching pink coral structure is prominent. At the bottom, there are several grey rocks and a large, dense cluster of orange and white coral. Various colorful fish, including clownfish, are scattered throughout the scene.

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An underwater scene with various marine life. On the left, there is a large, branching pink coral structure. In the center, a school of small blue fish swims upwards. On the right, a tall green seaweed stalk is surrounded by several orange and white striped clownfish. At the bottom, there are grey rocks, a large orange and white clownfish colony, and a pink sea anemone.

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Charting the Course

Dear Reader,

You are about to cross many seas and meet people from thousands of years of human history who were seeking the heart of God. As you join them in their experiences at sea, we pray that you will find yourself encountering that same God.

The Bible, or Sacred Scripture, is a very special gift to us, because it is the word of God. Over hundreds of years, the Holy Spirit inspired authors from all walks of life to share specific stories, memories, historical accounts, or personal experiences. The Holy Spirit did this so that, together, all the words of these authors would reveal to us the truth of who God is! As Scripture says in Hebrews 4:12, “the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword. . . .” The word of God doesn’t get dull over time—it stays sharp. Since the word of God is living, God always has something new to tell us through it.

Bible stories tell us different kinds of things. First, each story of the Bible tells us about experiences of God and his people in their journey together. When we look at all the stories together, we can see God working through everybody’s lives!

Some stories show us what not to do, such as say horrible things or make bad decisions. Other stories show us people full of courage who tried to do what was good. In them we develop “best friends” in the Bible, people that we relate to or who inspire us.

God can also use each story to speak directly to us. He can answer our questions by showing us how he helped someone going through a situation like ours. Or he

can use a piece of a story to give us a new idea. God can use one story to tell us several different things, as you will see in this devotional. For each Bible story, you will pray with two very different things that God reveals to us through it. So read each Bible story very carefully and refer back to the stories as you pray with the reflection of that day. Some of the longer Bible stories are abbreviated to fit the pages of this devotional. We kept in all the important bits, but if you'd like to pray with the full story, open up a Bible and find the right passage. (Use the citations included under the story's title, and the instructions on page 163.) Some days have material for further exploration, which you can find on page 167.

May you have fair winds and following seas!



Part One

OLD TESTAMENT



It is our duty to thank the Creator for the impressive and marvelous gift of the great waters and all that they contain.

—Pope Francis, Fourth World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

God creates the earth and the first man and woman. Because he loves them, he gives them free will. With free will, they can choose to love God and one another. But when these first human beings choose to say no to God's love, they break their close friendship with God. They were meant to pass on to their descendants a whole and deep bond with God. They were meant to be stewards of creation. But now their sin is passed down to their descendants, and it also affects the whole world. But God won't abandon his people to their sin. He will give everything to save his people. Over many generations, he starts to prepare them, slowly but surely, to accept the Messiah that he is going to send to save them from their sins.



Creation

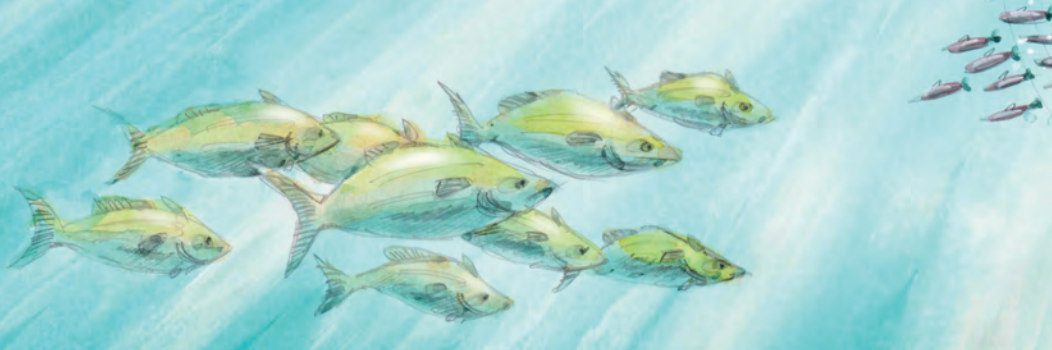
In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. . . . God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. . . .

And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. . . .

And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good

And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. . . . And God saw that it was good. . . .

And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every



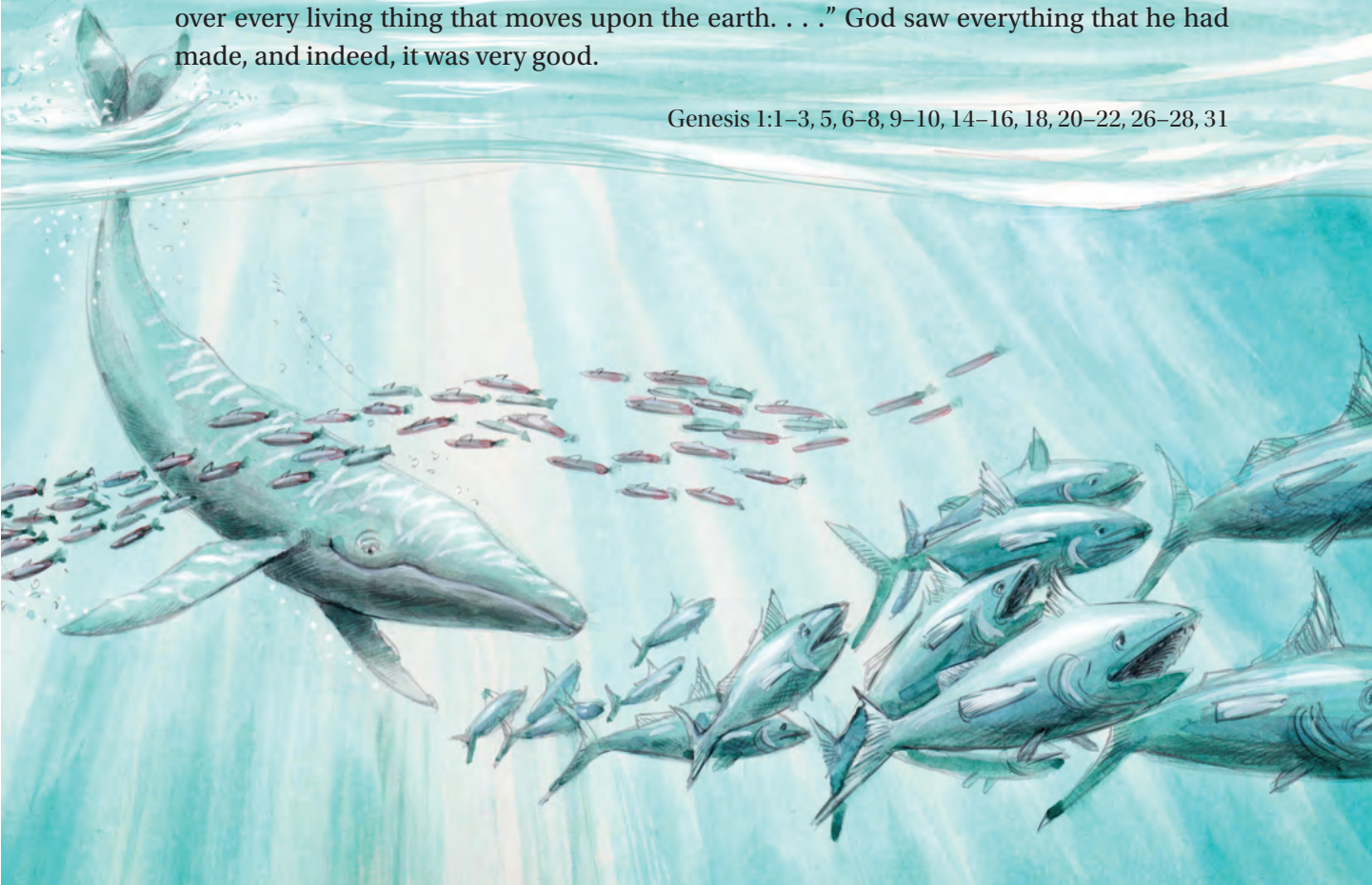
winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. . . .”

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. . . .” God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

Genesis 1:1–3, 5, 6–8, 9–10, 14–16, 18, 20–22, 26–28, 31



DAY 1

Setting Sail



Did you know that there are actually two different creation stories in Genesis? And they're not the same! They give different takes on when God created what, and how. That might seem confusing, but these two stories aren't meant to be scientific records. We aren't supposed to read them that way. They are stories that God inspired to help us understand real truths from the beginning of time, long before people had developed systems of reading or writing. So they aren't totally literal accounts. But that doesn't mean they aren't true. They do tell us important truths that we need for understanding ourselves and God.

Did you notice that in this first creation story, water was one of the first things created? The seas were basins of life, where all sorts of species came to be. Did you also notice that in this story, humans were created last? That doesn't mean that *Homo sapiens* were the last species of creature that ever came to be. Both scientific research and the second creation story in Genesis show that humans weren't the last species to ever develop. But in the first creation story, the creation of humans at the end does teach us that human beings were the peak of God's creation. And it reminds us that we didn't see how God did most of the creating—we have to explore the world to discover many of these things.

When God created the waters, he created what Scripture calls “swarms” of living creatures—basically, A LOT. All these years later, humans still haven't discovered them all! We have very little idea of just what the sea is like in its deepest places, or what might be down there.

FACT: We actually have better maps of the surface of Mars than we do of most of the ocean floor! Even after hundreds of years of research and advances in modern technology, most of the ocean remains a complete mystery.

There is ALWAYS more to learn about the ocean, always more to discover, and always more to love. Just as there is with God. Sometimes it feels like getting to know God is hard. Even though God is always near, he really can be a mystery. Other times we may feel like we know everything about him. But just when we think we have figured out exactly who he is and how he acts, we discover more! God is infinite—there is always more to get to know about his heart. There is always more to discover. There is always more to love.

What is your experience of God? Do you feel like you've never really met God? Like you've heard *about* him, but don't really *know* him yourself. . . . Or do you feel like you know God pretty well? Like you've been talking to him for years? Wherever you are at in your life's walk with God, these forty days will help you encounter him in a new way in your life. Getting to know God won't end on Day 40. God is vast enough for you to keep discovering amazing new things for the rest of your life and beyond!



Prayer Prompt

Lord, you know me and love me so well, but I am still getting to know you. I am excited to get to know you better. Please help me to notice you around me today.



Sailor's Log

What are three things that you already know or have heard about God? Note them with bullet points or illustrations:

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