

***Student Activity Booklet***



***Catholic  
Connections***  
*for Middle Schoolers*

***Gloria Shahin***

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saint mary's press

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The quotation by Pope Paul VI on page 120 is from "Message of His Holiness Pope Paul VI for the Celebration of the Day of Peace, at [www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/messages/peace/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_mes\\_19711208\\_v-world-day-for-peace\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/messages/peace/documents/hf_p-vi_mes_19711208_v-world-day-for-peace_en.html), accessed January 12, 2010.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Revelation

Thoughtfully and reflectively, respond to the following questions.

Think about the events of a typical day for you—your classes in school, sports or other activities you participate in, and time with family and friends. How do you experience the presence of God in your day?

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Look at the picture on page 16 in your handbook. This is one depiction of God's role in the creation of the universe. Describe how your own artistic depiction of Creation would look. What elements would you include to convey God's power?

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Choose one of the elements you selected and explain how it conveys God's power.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Live It!

There are many ways to reveal God's Word to others. Sometimes we do so through our words, while at others times we do so through our actions. In the chart below, list three ways you can reveal God's Word to others through your words, and three ways you can do so through your actions.

Through My Words	Through My Actions
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Imagine that you are telling a friend who is not a Christian why you are a follower of Jesus. What are the two most important things you would share?

\_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Scripture and Tradition

Complete the following sentences, then find each answer in the word search below. Words can appear in any direction.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Catholic Church is a summary of the central teachings of our Tradition.
2. The part of the Mass in which we hear readings about what God has done for our salvation is the Liturgy of the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ is another name for Sacred Scripture.
4. The Bible's authors were guided by the \_\_\_\_\_ to record without error what God wants us to know for our salvation.
5. At the Council of Trent, the bishops made clear that both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are necessary for our salvation.
6. The Bible contains the forty-six books of the \_\_\_\_\_ and the twenty-seven books of the \_\_\_\_\_.
7. God's Revelation is complete in \_\_\_\_\_.
8. In \_\_\_\_\_, we are called to be prophets by sharing God's Word with others in our words and actions.

T M B H Y O Q U E C M N B F M  
L I Y A P L Z R Z C E D I T S  
Y R R E P D U M M W A I B R I  
G D E I Y T I M T W A R L X H  
H U R D P E I E Z S A B E W C  
N P O I T S S S Z C P J F J E  
J Q R W H T Y Y M Y A Z Y A T  
T C Y P A A U L Q U X R W Y A  
S I X M Y M V M O G R E A F C  
G M E D V E P A Y H L C V D H  
I N Y H L N M F V Z K X U P N  
T V I W D T P U A P X A X J Q  
C C O T S I R H C S U S E J P  
M R Z P C O J C B N E O I C N  
D T R A D I T I O N L Y N S S

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Who Is God?

Thoughtfully and reflectively, respond to the following.

In the Gospels, Jesus sometimes called on God as Abba, or Father. He taught us to address God in the same way. What are some characteristics of God that help you relate to him as a loving father or parent?

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In your own words, write a short prayer to God as your loving Father, asking him for blessings or thanking him for his loving care.

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In teaching his disciples about salvation and how we can spend eternity in Heaven with God, Jesus said to his disciples, "Everything is possible for God" (Mark 10:27). How does this statement give you hope not only in thinking about your own salvation but also in living your everyday life?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## God the Father

How is your relationship with God like a relationship between a child and a parent?

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What steps can you take to grow closer to God?

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How can you be an example to others of God's love?

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## Looking Back

The Old Testament writers pictured God as a warrior who protected his people when they were good. However, the Scriptures and Tradition tell us that God is a loving and forgiving Father.

Describe at least two examples from Scripture that show God's love for us.

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Describe at least two examples from the world today that make visible God's loving and forgiving nature.

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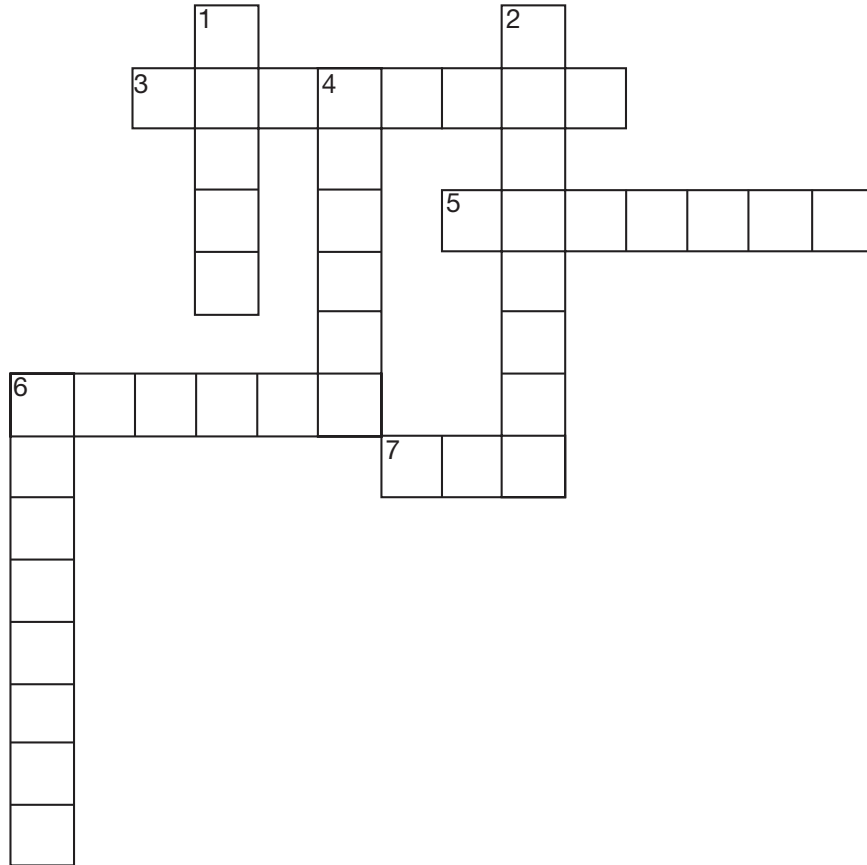
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Mystery of God

Complete the Scripture quotes and sentences to solve the crossword puzzle about the mystery of God.



## Across

3. God always keeps his \_\_\_\_\_.
5. “My thoughts,” says the LORD, “are not like yours. . . . / As high as the \_\_\_\_\_ are above the earth, / so high are my ways and thoughts above yours” (Isaiah 55:8–9).
6. “No one knows the \_\_\_\_\_ except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Matthew 11:27).
7. “Whoever does not love does not know \_\_\_\_\_, for God is love” (1 John 4:8).

## Down

1. We say that God is \_\_\_\_\_ simply because what he tells us is true.
2. Whatever we know about God, we know because he \_\_\_\_\_ it to us.
4. “I will comfort you . . . as a \_\_\_\_\_ comforts her child” (Isaiah 66:13).
6. God is always \_\_\_\_\_ to his people.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Praying to the Blessed Trinity

Before you were even aware of the meaning of this great mystery, you had probably heard about God as the Father, as Jesus Christ, his Son, and as the Holy Spirit. This is the mystery of three Persons in one God. Although all three Persons of the Trinity are one and the same, each also has different characteristics. Based on that, there are times when you might turn to God the Father in prayer, times when your prayers address Jesus, and times when you call on the help of the Holy Spirit.

In the space below, describe occasions when you might specifically address each Person of the Trinity in prayer.

I pray to God the Father when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I address my prayers to Jesus when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I call on the Holy Spirit in prayer when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In your own words, write a short prayer addressed to one of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Live It!

Each of us belongs to many communities. The first is our family. In addition, we belong to our classroom and school community, our parish, our neighborhood, and so on. Choose two communities to which you belong, and describe specific actions you can take to contribute to each community's well-being and harmony.

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## People of Faith

Despite the hardships he experienced in Ireland as a captive, Saint Patrick later freely chose to return there to preach the Gospel.

Why might Saint Patrick have felt a desire to return to Ireland to teach about God?

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Describe a situation in which you might teach others about God, through your words or your example, despite difficulties.

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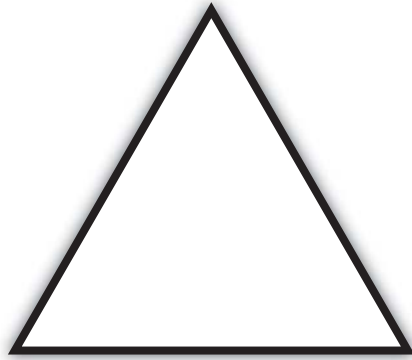
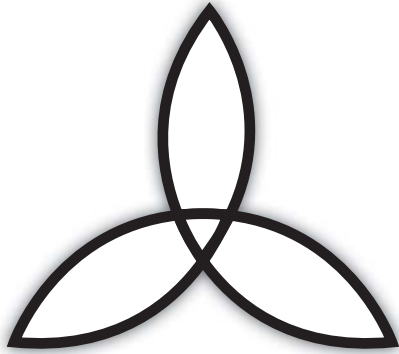
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Symbols for the Blessed Trinity

According to tradition, Saint Patrick used a shamrock to represent the Blessed Trinity—the one God in three Divine Persons. The following symbols, the triquetra (TREE keta), on the left, and the triangle are also symbols for the Trinity. In the space below, explain how each of these symbols is a good representation for the Trinity.




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## A Prayer to the Trinity

Solve the following cryptogram to decipher a simple prayer in which we recognize the mystery of one God in three Divine Persons.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1								14										24							

$\frac{I}{14}$   $\frac{\quad}{18}$   $\frac{\quad}{22}$   $\frac{\quad}{13}$   $\frac{\quad}{26}$   $\frac{A}{18}$   $\frac{\quad}{1}$   $\frac{\quad}{8}$   $\frac{\quad}{26}$   $\frac{\quad}{19}$   $\frac{\quad}{21}$   $\frac{\quad}{22}$   $\frac{\quad}{13}$   $\frac{\quad}{26}$   $\frac{A}{21}$   $\frac{\quad}{1}$   $\frac{\quad}{22}$   $\frac{\quad}{13}$   $\frac{\quad}{26}$   $\frac{\quad}{5}$ ,

$\frac{A}{1}$   $\frac{\quad}{18}$   $\frac{\quad}{10}$   $\frac{\quad}{19}$   $\frac{\quad}{21}$   $\frac{\quad}{22}$   $\frac{\quad}{13}$   $\frac{\quad}{26}$   $\frac{S}{24}$   $\frac{\quad}{19}$   $\frac{\quad}{18}$ ,  $\frac{A}{1}$   $\frac{\quad}{18}$   $\frac{\quad}{10}$   $\frac{\quad}{19}$   $\frac{\quad}{21}$   $\frac{\quad}{22}$   $\frac{\quad}{13}$   $\frac{\quad}{26}$

$\frac{\quad}{13}$   $\frac{\quad}{19}$   $\frac{\quad}{12}$   $\frac{\quad}{16}$   $\frac{S}{24}$   $\frac{\quad}{3}$   $\frac{I}{14}$   $\frac{\quad}{5}$   $\frac{I}{14}$   $\frac{\quad}{22}$ .

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## God Creates the World

In your Bible, read the First Story of Creation in Genesis 1:1–31. Then, in the space below, write a newspaper article summarizing the story of Creation. Include an illustration to accompany your story, and be sure to give the story a headline.

**GOOD NEWS**  
**Gazette**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Recognizing God's Goodness

Have you ever noticed how news reports often feature bad news: natural disasters, crime, accidents, and so on? Even in your own life, you may sometimes feel like there's bad news all around. But the reality is that despite the challenges we all face and negative events we might experience, the world is filled with God's goodness. In the space below, give three examples of God's goodness in the world around you. Then tell how each enriches your life.

God's Goodness in the World	How This Makes My Life Better
1. _____ _____	_____ _____
2. _____ _____	_____ _____
3. _____ _____	_____ _____

## People of Faith

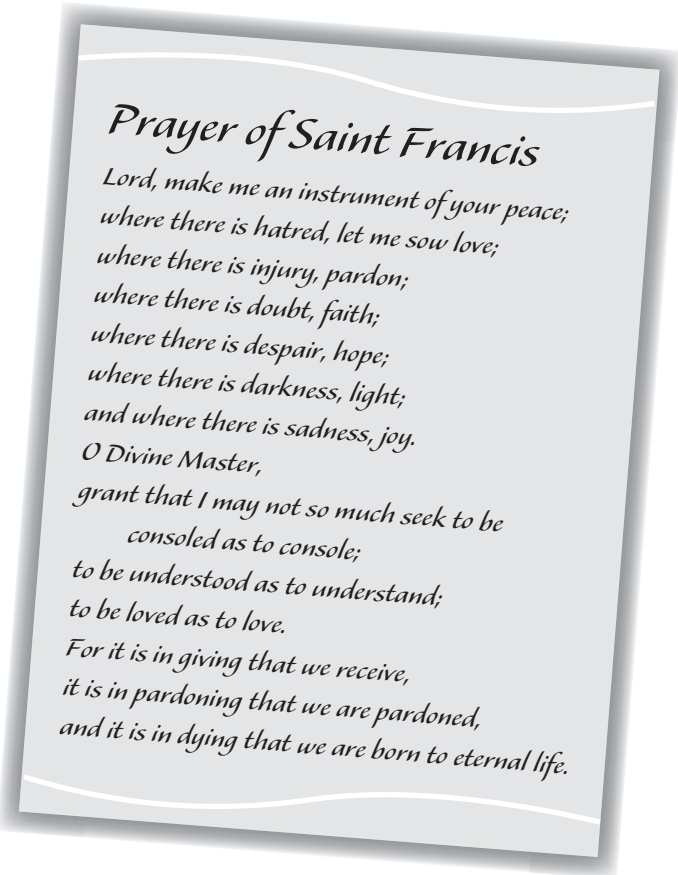
Saint Francis is known for his life of holiness and devotion to God. He is also known for the prayer for peace, called the "Prayer of Saint Francis." Quietly and reflectively, read the words of the prayer. Then choose two lines of the prayer and describe an example of how you might live each one in your everyday life.

Prayer lines I can live in my own life:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How I can live them:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## A Creation Story Scramble

Unscramble the words and write them in the boxes. Then use the unscrambled words to complete the sentences below. Finally, take the letters in the circles and unscramble them to solve the final message below.

HEFRAT      □ ○ □ ○ □ □ □  
REETH      ○ ○ □ □ □ □  
NELAG      ○ ○ □ □ □ □  
LYRFOGI    □ □ □ ○ □ □ □ □  
NIS          ○ □ □ □  
RACTERO    □ □ ○ ○ ○ □ □ □  
GEOSNSOD   □ □ □ ○ □ ○ □ □ □  
DENE        ○ □ ○ ○ □ □

Although we associate Creation most closely with God the \_\_\_\_\_,  
it is important to recall that it is the work of all \_\_\_\_\_ Persons of the Trinity.  
The word \_\_\_\_\_ comes from a Greek word meaning “messenger.”  
Angels \_\_\_\_\_ God and watch over each of us every moment of our lives.  
One reason that explains the existence of evil in the world is human \_\_\_\_\_.  
When we pray the Nicene Creed at Mass, we acknowledge God as the  
\_\_\_\_\_ of all that is visible and all that is invisible.  
God wants all people to share in his wisdom and \_\_\_\_\_ and live in union  
with him.  
Adam and Eve, our first parents, rejected God’s love in the Garden of \_\_\_\_\_.

The Book of Genesis proclaims that God created the

□ □ □ **V** □ □ □    □ □ □    □ □ □    □ □ □ □ **H**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Called to Serve

As part of one human family, created by God, we are all called to care for and love one another. Some people live that call in exceptional ways. In the space below, create two medals recognizing people you know or have heard about who have made a difference in the world by their actions. Then award the third medal to yourself. In that space, write your name and describe an action you aspire to that will help make the world a better place.

The image shows three circular medals with a scalloped outer edge. Each medal has a dark grey border and a lighter grey center. Inside each medal, there is a horizontal line above the text "is honored for". Below the text, there are two more horizontal lines for writing. The medals are arranged in two rows: two in the top row and one centered in the bottom row.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Created in God's Image

Every human being is made in the image of God. This means that we must strive to treat others with God's love, and that we must see God's image in all people. Reflectively read the prayer at the top of page 61 in your handbook and tell in your own words what it says about how we are to treat others.

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## Resisting Temptation

Because of Original Sin, we are weakened in our ability to resist temptation. What are some common temptations a young person your age might face?

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What are some things you can do to grow stronger in resisting temptation and avoiding sin?

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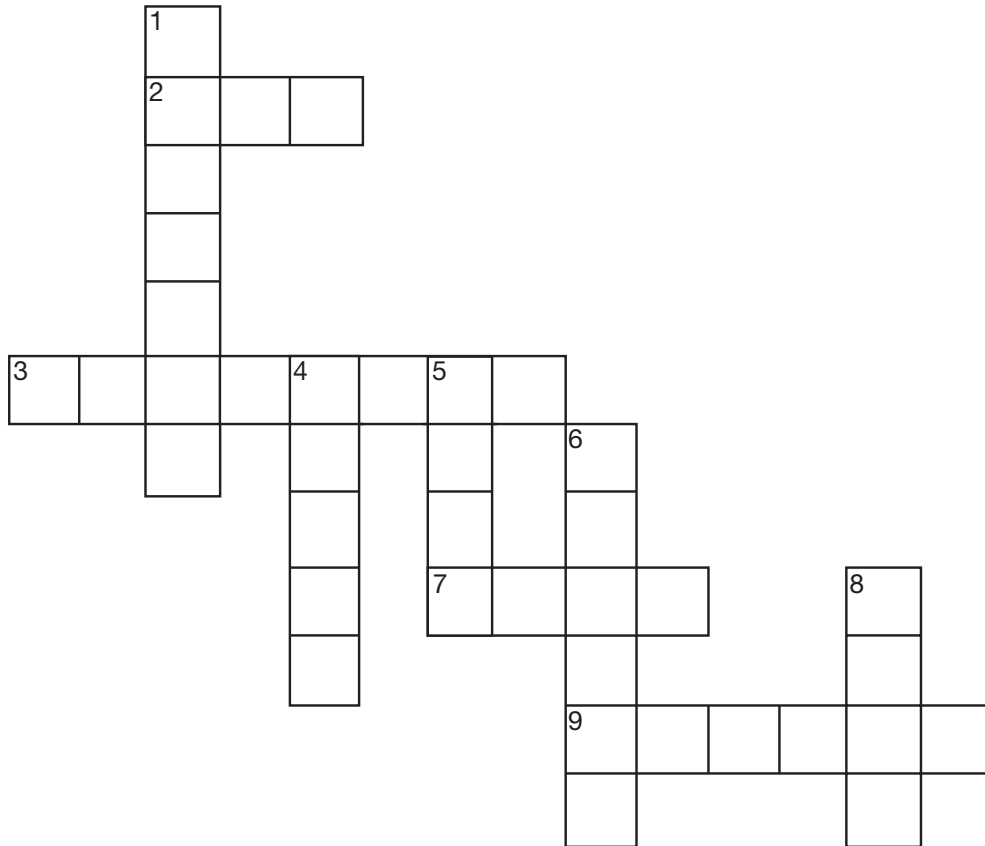
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Humankind and Original Sin

Complete the crossword puzzle.



### Across

- \_\_\_\_\_’s name comes from the Hebrew word for “life.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ sin is the sin that our first parents committed, and the sinful condition that all people have from birth.
- Original Sin affects every person except Jesus and \_\_\_\_\_.
- A temptation makes something \_\_\_\_\_ seem fun or good to do.

### Down

- The Book of \_\_\_\_\_ contains two Creation stories.
- Every human being is made in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
- The name \_\_\_\_\_ comes from the Hebrew word for “man.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the model of the perfect human being.
- All people are living beings made up of both a physical body and an immortal, spiritual \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## God's Love and Mercy

From the time of Creation, God has been at work in the lives of his people, offering them help and guidance in remaining faithful to him. What are some examples of how God has helped you in remaining faithful to his laws and his will?

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Who in your life is a source of guidance for you of how to live as God wants?

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God is merciful and forgiving, and gives us second chances even when we fail to follow his will. How does knowing this give you comfort and strength?

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God chose a rainbow as a sign of the promise he made to the Israelites. Describe why a rainbow is an appropriate symbol for God's promise to his people.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Living the Ten Commandments

When God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, he gave his law to all people. The Commandments give us a summary of how we are to live.

The following tablets contain the Ten Commandments, with an example of how to live several of them. In the empty spaces, explain in your own words what the Commandment means.

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor your father and mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

1. God is more important than anything else in our lives. We should not give material things excessive value.
2. Always speak God's name with respect.
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Protect all human life and treat other people with the dignity they deserve.
6. We must respect our own bodies and the bodies of others.
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. We must show respect for others' sexuality in our thoughts, words, and actions.
10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## A Salvation History Timeline

Put the following events in chronological order by numbering them 1 through 10. In the spaces provided, draw three symbols to represent events from salvation history.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Abraham and Sarah's descendants became God's people, the Israelites.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating from the forbidden tree.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God made a covenant with Noah never to destroy the human race with a flood again.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Through Moses, God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites to guide them in living their part of the Covenant they made with God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God established the New Covenant with all people by sending his only Son to become one of us.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God wiped out all human wickedness from the earth with a flood.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God made a covenant with Abraham and promised him many descendants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God created Adam and Eve and promised them they would live with him in happiness forever.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Faithful to God

It can be difficult to live in the modern world and remain faithful to God's will. What are three things in your life that distract you from your faith in God and from following his will? List them in the left-hand column below. In the right-hand column, describe what you can do to overcome each of these distractions.

Distractions from my faith in God	How I can overcome them
<b>1</b>          	          
<b>2</b>          	          
<b>3</b>          	          

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Our Faith in God

Faith is a gift from God that enables us to believe in him and all that he has revealed. Why do you think faith is an important element in our relationship with God?

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On pages 71 and 72 in your handbook, our faith in God's goodness is compared to the faith of a child who leaps from a ledge into his father's arms without fear because he believes that his father will catch him. Why is this a suitable comparison for the way we are to trust in God?

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Create your own comparison between a human interaction that shows trust and our trusting relationship with God.

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Reflect on a time when you were in an uncertain situation and placed your trust in God. How did your reliance on God help you accept the outcome of the situation?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Faith in Action

Choose the statements that are true and connect them to the word *faith* on the left.



- Having faith in God means we place our trust in him.
- When we trust God, we acknowledge that we cannot be truly happy without him.
- As Christians, we have faith in one God.
- We can have salvation without faith.
- Faith is a gift from God.
- God does not give us a choice but to believe in him.
- Only saints can have a strong faith in God.
- Our actions make real our beliefs and trust in God.

## A Faith Acrostic

For each letter in the word *faith*, write a phrase or sentence starting with that letter telling how you can put your faith into action.

F \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_

H \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## How Much Do You Know About Jesus?

Almost all that we know about Jesus, we know from the Gospels. See how much you know about Jesus by writing a brief summary about each of the following events in the life of Jesus. Be sure to include as many details as you can recall.

**The birth of Jesus** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Jesus' first public miracle** \_\_\_\_\_

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**The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand** \_\_\_\_\_

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**The Last Supper** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Jesus' suffering and Crucifixion** \_\_\_\_\_

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**The Resurrection** \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Comparing the Gospels

The four Gospel writers did not all write about the same events in Jesus' life. For example, only the Gospels of Matthew and Luke tell about the birth of Jesus. Even when the Gospels do tell of the same events, their writers did not always include the same details. As an example of this, compare Matthew's and Luke's accounts of Jesus' Resurrection. Read Matthew 28:1–10 and Luke 24:1–12. Then, in the space below, list the details that appear in both Gospels and those that appear only in Matthew's or only in Luke's Gospel. Be sure to include as many specific details as possible.

In Both Gospels	The Gospel of Matthew	The Gospel of Luke

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sharing the Good News

Choose one of the following Scripture stories and read it in your Bible. Then, in the space below, design a Web page containing a short news story about the events you read about. Be sure your Web page includes artwork about the event.

- The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1–7)
- The Miracle at the Wedding Feast at Cana (John 2:1–12)
- The Miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand (Matthew 14:13–21)

