

IMAGE OF GOD SERIES®

TEACHER'S
MANUAL

6

God's Merciful Love

THE HISTORY OF GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE



Updated Second Edition

GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Sixth Grade Teacher's Manual

GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Sixth Grade Teacher's Manual

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

God's Merciful Love: The Old Testament is a Catholic religion curriculum for sixth-grade students. This curriculum is centered on a new approach found in the writings and teachings of Saint John Paul II. This approach stresses the dignity of each individual as a person made in the image of God (see General Instructions, the last section of this introduction).

The sixth-grade textbook has as its emphasis two key Concepts of Faith. The first key Concept of Faith is that we are persons created in God's image. The students will learn from the very first book of the Bible, from the Book of Genesis, that God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (1:26). This truth affects who we are and how we choose to act. The second key Concept of Faith is that the Bible is a history of God's merciful love. Merciful love is God's ability to draw good out of evil. The students are gradually led to recognize that no matter how often the human person chooses to reject God through sin, God is always willing to draw that person closer to him through his loving mercy.

For the most part, the sixth-grade curriculum limits its study of the Bible to the Old Testament, with special emphasis given to the Book of Genesis. The two key Concepts of Faith just described form the unifying element of the lessons. The material in each lesson revolves around the fundamentals of our faith stated in terms that the students can understand and remember.

This program was designed to be used in either a parochial school setting (five-days-a-week program) or a parish religion program (one-day-a-week program). See the end of the introduction for additional curriculum-planning information.

In addition to this manual, this sixth-grade program includes a textbook for the students. The teacher's manual consists of nineteen lessons, including an extensive explanation of the Church year (Lesson 19). The content of each lesson is discussed in the directions for the specific settings. The student textbook contains readings, review questions, discussion questions, and worksheets directly related to the lesson presentation. The student textbook should be sent home at frequent intervals to facilitate parent-child faith discussions.

The materials of the *God's Merciful Love* program form an integrated whole, and we hope that these materials will aid catechists in bringing God's message of salvation to the students.

Lesson Format

Because of the wide diversity in classroom settings, each lesson provides enough material to fill five thirty- to forty-minute class periods for use in a Catholic school, but is easily adaptable to the schedule of a weekly faith-formation class setting. Most lessons require two or more weeks to cover the material thoroughly. It is not necessary, however, to cover every lesson in order for the students to gain an understanding of the key Concepts of Faith. We will suggest several optional courses of study at the conclusion of this introduction.

The lesson format consists of the following main components: Lesson Focus, Lesson Explanation, Living the Lesson—Application, Celebration, and Activities. Since it is essential for the success of the program that the students' families are involved in the learning process, each lesson also has a Take Home section that instructs the catechist to distribute a copy of the lesson's family notes, to be used as take-home material (the family notes are located in the appendix of the teacher's manual).

Lesson Focus

This section defines the lesson within the context of Saint John Paul II's new synthesis and helps the teacher prepare for each lesson. It includes a Scripture quotation; introductory notes (Emphasis section); a list of references to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that correspond to the lesson; the vocabulary words; a Concepts of Faith section; a Proclamation section; and references to the *Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church* (YOUCAT) and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, for a deeper understanding.

You might want to purchase a Bible timeline of the Old and New Testaments. If in a classroom setting, this could be posted inside the classroom or even in the hallway outside the classroom. The students could use a dry-erase marker to show their progress as they read their way through the Bible.

It is highly recommended that each student has a copy of the Bible. One of the goals of the sixth-grade curriculum is that each student should become competent and confident in using the Bible. For classrooms that cannot supply individual copies of the Bible, summaries have been provided in the Lesson Explanation section. The Ignatius Bible, Revised Standard Version, Second Catholic Edition,

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2006, is the Bible edition used throughout the Image of God series. If students use other editions, you should note the variations in translation and adjust the lesson accordingly.

In addition to these materials, you might consider having each student bring a highlighter to class to mark the material you wish them to remember. If you give the students additional information, you may want to have them bring a spiral-bound notebook to keep notes.

Scripture Verse

In the student textbook, each lesson begins with a Bible quotation related to the lesson's theme. The lesson develops this theme in the presentation of the vocabulary words and the Concepts of Faith; Scripture accounts; discussions of the Scripture accounts; and review questions.

Emphasis

This section provides an insight into the main emphasis of the lesson.

Correspondence to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

This section lists the topics taught in the lesson and provides references to the corresponding paragraphs in the *Catechism*.

Vocabulary and Concepts of Faith

The vocabulary words that are key to each lesson are listed and defined for the students. In both the teacher's manual and the student textbook, the Concepts of Faith and the vocabulary words are listed at the beginning of the lesson. The Concepts of Faith and the vocabulary words can be reinforced all through the lesson and again at the end of each lesson to check the students' mastery of the lesson.

Proclamation

The proclamation is a brief sentence or two, rooted in the faith that summarizes the main message of the lesson. It is a simple statement of truth that encompasses the whole theme of what is being taught.

Dig Deeper with YOUCAT and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Throughout the teacher's manual we have provided applicable references to YOUCAT and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that the teacher can use not only for lesson prep, but also as opportunities for the students to begin to learn

how to reference these books. Copies of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and YOUCAT should be available to students.

Lesson Explanation

The Lesson Explanation section gives directions for presenting to the students the message of the Catholic faith in that lesson. Readings and Scripture accounts are provided, followed by review questions that are designed to help the students' retention of the reading material. Additional assessment options are provided.

Scripture Lesson

A brief introductory paragraph is followed by a direction either to read a Scripture passage directly from the Bible, or to read a summary or paraphrase of that particular passage. It is not necessary to read both. The Scripture text selected is designed to meet a variety of teaching settings. For those unable to provide Bibles for each student, summaries have been provided within the Lesson Explanation. Except for a few lessons, we recommend that the students read directly from the Bible.

Discussion of Scripture

A discussion of the Scripture passage follows. This is an explanation of the Scripture verses or of the summary just read by the students. The discussion includes the Church's interpretation of the Scripture reading and its application to our present-day lives.

Assessing Student Learning

Options to assess student learning are provided through several sources: lesson review questions and activities are within the student textbook; quizzes and tests for each lesson are provided in the appendix of the teacher's manual.

Living the Lesson—Application

The students have learned that they are created in the image of God. The human individual, however, often dims this image through the personal choice of sin. Hence, the title of this component of the program means that by living the lesson we can become better reflections of God's image.

This component of the program is designed to stimulate discussion by offering the students an opportunity to apply the focus of the lesson to their daily lives. The answers suggested to the questions in this teacher's manual are not

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necessarily the answers the students will give, but you will be able to lead the discussion toward these or similar answers. We occasionally suggest projects for the students to complete. It is not essential for the students to complete every discussion question or to do every project suggested. These are optional assignments, dependent upon the particular teaching setting.

Celebration

The teacher and the students will join in prayer at the conclusion of each lesson, to thank God for his merciful love and end the lesson in conversation with him.

Below is a list of some scriptural prayers appropriate for this grade level.

Old Testament canticles:

Song of Moses	Deuteronomy 32:1–12
David’s Song	1 Chronicles 29:10–13
Judith’s Song of Praise	Judith 16:13–17
Solomon’s Prayer for Wisdom	Wisdom 9:1–12
Thanksgiving Song of the Redeemed	Isaiah 12:1–6
Isaiah’s Song: Promise of Salvation	Isaiah 40:10–17
God Will Gather His People	Jeremiah 31:10–14
The Three Youths’ Praise of Creation.	Daniel 3:52–68

Old Testament prayers:

Solomon’s Personal Prayer	1 Kings 3:5–10
David’s Thanksgiving Prayer	1 Chronicles 29:10–19
Jeremiah’s Prayer	Jeremiah 32:16–24
Daniel’s Prayer	Daniel 9:3–19
Jonah’s Prayer	Jonah 2:1–9
Judith’s Prayer.	Judith 9:5–6, 11–12, 14
Prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving	Sirach 51:1–2, 7–12

New Testament canticles:

God’s Plan Fulfilled in Christ	Ephesians 1:3–10
Imitating Christ’s Humility	Philippians 2:1–11
Song of the Mystery of Our Faith	1 Timothy 1:12–17
Praise of God’s Power.	Revelation 12:10–12
Song of Moses and the Lamb	Revelation 15:3–4

New Testament prayers:

The Angel’s Greeting	Luke 1:28
Mary’s Reply	Luke 1:38
Elizabeth’s Greeting	Luke 1:42, 45
Song of the Angels	Luke 2:14
Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem	Matthew 21:9
First Words on the Cross.	Luke 23:34
The Good Thief	Luke 23:42
A Living Hope.	1 Peter 1:3–5
The Christian’s Call and Election	2 Peter 3:18
The Four Living Creatures	Revelation 4:8
All Creatures and the Universe	Revelation 5:13

Psalms of Praise of God:

Psalm 8	The Majesty of God and the Dignity of Man and Woman
Psalm 16	God Is Praised Because He Is the Supreme Good
Psalm 19	God’s Glory in the Heavens and in the Law
Psalm 33	Praise to God, Who Is Faithful in His Promises
Psalm 65	Thanksgiving for God’s Blessings
Psalm 95	A Call to Praise and Obedience
Psalm 96	The Glories of the Lord, the King of the Universe
Psalm 104	Praise of God the Creator
Psalm 128	God’s Blessings on Those Who Show Their Faith in Him
Psalm 136	Hymn of Thanksgiving for the Everlasting Kindness of the Lord (verses 1–9)
Psalm 139	The All-Knowing and Ever-Present God
Psalm 146	God’s Blessings on Those Who Show Their Faith in Him
Psalm 147	Zion’s Grateful Praise to Her Bountiful Lord
Psalm 148	Hymn of All Creation to the Almighty Creator
Psalm 150	Final Doxology with Full Orchestra

Activities

This section includes worksheets, art projects, discussion questions, and other activities to extend the lesson. The worksheets are in both the student textbook and the teacher’s manual. Other art projects and activities are described in detail in the teacher’s manual. These activities are optional and can be used at your discretion.

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Planning the Curriculum

A monthly liturgical calendar is a great aid throughout the school year; any monthly calendar can be used if you add the liturgical feasts and seasons listed in Lesson 19, “The Church Year”. Also note the following:

1. School calendar dates
2. Activities that affect class time (school Masses, special events, etc.)

After each monthly calendar has been completed, use the table of contents or the optional courses of study (below) to determine which lessons you will teach. Note these lessons on the calendar. Also allow time for planning, and choose the date for sending home each lesson’s family note.

The following notes may help you with your planning:

1. The sixth-grade curriculum is designed for flexibility to suit various settings.
2. It will be an exceptional setting that allows for completing this curriculum in its entirety.
3. It is not necessary for the students to read every lesson in order to learn the key Concepts of Faith.
4. It is important to involve the parents. Frequent contact with the parents through the family notes will ensure the completion of homework assignments and foster dialogue between parents and their children.
5. Remember to choose either the reading of the Scriptures from the Bible *or* the reading of the Scripture summary. It is redundant and time-consuming to read both.
6. Don’t hesitate to assign the Scripture readings or summaries for homework. This is the ideal assignment in which to include parents. Then begin the next class period with a discussion of the Scripture reading.

Optional Courses of Study

To help you determine which lessons to teach, read the Lesson Focus of each lesson. These brief summaries will give you an overview of the curriculum. Then you can decide which course of study will best meet the needs of your students for your teaching setting. The three options presented below are only suggestions. You can use one of these three or devise a similar course of study.

Some of the lessons, however, have a special importance in this curriculum:

Lesson 1: Learning about the Bible. This lesson lays the foundation for the entire curriculum. It should be included in every optional course of study.

Lesson 2: Genesis—The Creation of the World and of Man and Woman. This lesson begins the study of the Book of Genesis.

Lesson 8: Jacob and His Family. This lesson includes a review of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It should be included in every optional course of study.

Lesson 9: Joseph. This lesson concludes the study of the Book of Genesis.

Lessons 10, 11, and 12: Moses and the Flight to Freedom; The Israelites and God’s Covenant of Love; The Journey to the Promised Land. These three lessons contain the complete story of Moses.

Lesson 15: Women of Faith in the Old Testament. This lesson can be studied entirely or in part, at any time throughout the course of the year. Several of the ten women presented in this lesson are also discussed within the context of other lessons (e.g., Sarah is discussed in Lesson 6, “Abraham, Our Father in Faith”).

Lesson 19: The Church Year. We recommend that this lesson be included in any adaptation of this curriculum. Various parts of the lesson can be presented throughout the year, during the corresponding liturgical seasons.

Option One (Recommended) for a 10–12 week program

Lessons 1 through 12; Lesson 19

Option Two for a 12–13 week program

Lessons 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, 15 (part), 16, 18, 19

Option Three for a 13–15 week program

Lesson 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19

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Suggested Time Allotment

One-day-a-week program

Proclamation, Vocabulary, Concepts of Faith: 10 minutes

Lesson Explanation: 25 minutes

Living the Lesson—Application: 15 minutes

Activity from Activities section, Celebration: 10 minutes

Five-days-a-week program

Day 1: Proclamation, Vocabulary, Concepts of Faith

Day 2: Vocabulary and Concepts of Faith (review), Lesson Explanation (begin)

Day 3: Lesson Explanation (continue)

Day 4: Lesson Explanation (complete), Living the Lesson

Day 5: Lesson Explanation and Concepts of Faith (review), Activity from Activities section, Celebration

If you finish early on a day, you may choose an activity from the Activities section.

General Instructions

THE IMAGE OF GOD SERIES' PRESENTATION OF IMAGE OF GOD IN CONFORMITY WITH THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The *God's Merciful Love* sixth-grade curriculum is a Catholic religion curriculum for children of sixth-grade age. Catechesis on the human person created in the image and likeness of God is used throughout the series. It is the intent of the authors of the Image of God Series to present the creation of man and woman in the image of God in the series as “image of God” is defined and presented in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC). Above all, however, it is the intent to make Jesus Christ, “the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, the visible and invisible” (Colossians 1:15–16; cf. CCC 241), the heart, center, and focus of the Image of God Series.

The impetus for the use of the theology of the “image of God” in the series is an insight of Saint John Paul II that highlights both the human dignity and proper

human activity of man and woman created in the image of God. Each human being has been created by God in his image and likeness. “The divine image is present in every man” (CCC 1702). Our dignity is further ennobled by Jesus Christ, who took upon himself our human nature in order to redeem it. “Christian, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God’s own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning” (CCC 1691, quoting Saint Leo the Great, *Sermo 21 in nat. Dom.*, 3: PL 54, 192C¹).

Most importantly, it is Jesus who redeems the human race and reveals human beings to themselves. “It is in Christ, Redeemer and Savior, that the divine image, disfigured in man by the first sin, has been restored to its original beauty and ennobled by the grace of God” (CCC 1701). Furthermore, “In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear” (CCC 359, quoting *GS 22 § 1*). “Christ . . . makes man fully manifest to man himself and brings to light his exalted vocation” (CCC 1701, quoting *GS 22 § 1*). “Christ, the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear” (*GS 22 § 1*).²

All creation reflects God, who made all things. However, it is especially man and woman who bear a resemblance to God because they have been created in his image and likeness. “All creatures bear a certain resemblance to God, most especially man, created in the image and likeness of God. The manifold perfections of creatures—their truth, their goodness, their beauty—all reflect the infinite perfection of God. Consequently, we can name God by taking his creatures’ perfections as our starting point, ‘for from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator’ (Wis 13:5)” (CCC 41).

“Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with

¹For a list of the spelled-out forms for all abbreviations used for the *Catechism* references, please see the appendix.

²All translations of *Gaudium et Spes* that are not part of an internal quotation from the *Catechism* are from the Vatican’s website (http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html).

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other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead” (CCC 357). “‘In creating men “male and female,” God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity’ (FC 22). ‘Man is a person, man and woman equally so, since both were created in the image and likeness of the personal God’ (MD 6)” (CCC 2334).

The human person, both male and female, is created in the image of God. “Man and woman have been *created*, which is to say, *willed* by God: on the one hand, in perfect equality as human persons; on the other, in their respective beings as man and woman. ‘Being man’ or ‘being woman’ is a reality which is good and willed by God: man and woman possess an inalienable dignity which comes to them immediately from God their Creator (cf. Gen 2:7, 22). Man and woman are both with one and the same dignity ‘in the image of God.’ In their ‘being-man’ and ‘being-woman,’ they reflect the Creator’s wisdom and goodness” (CCC 369; emphasis in original).

Man and woman each possess a spiritual soul. The soul is the invisible part of the human being because it is spiritual. Soul “refers to the innermost aspect of man, that which is of greatest value in him, that by which he is most especially in God’s image: ‘soul’ signifies the *spiritual principle* in man” (CCC 363; emphasis in original).

The personal soul possesses the powers of intellect and will. The intellect is the power to know, to reason, to think, and to understand. The will is the power to choose the good and to love. “By his reason [intellect], he [the human person] is capable of understanding the order of things established by the Creator. By free will, he [the human person] is capable of directing himself toward his true good. He [the human person] finds his perfection ‘in seeking and loving what is true and good’ (GS 15 § 2)” (CCC 1704).

The human person is blessed by God with a free will. Freedom is an attribute of a being created in the image of God. “By virtue of his soul and his spiritual powers of intellect and will, man is endowed with freedom, an ‘outstanding manifestation of the divine image’ (GS 17)” (CCC 1705).

In addition to a personal soul, Adam and Eve also had bodies. “The human body shares in the dignity of ‘the image of God’: it is a human body precisely because it is animated by a spiritual soul, and it is the whole human person that is intended to

become, in the body of Christ, a temple of the Spirit: ‘Man, though made of body and soul, is a unity. Through his very bodily condition he sums up in himself the elements of the material world’ (GS 14 § 1)” (CCC 364).

“The unity of soul and body is so profound that one has to consider the soul to be the ‘form’ of the body: i.e., it is because of its spiritual soul that the body made of matter becomes a living, human body; spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single nature” (CCC 365).

In the beginning, God created man and woman (Adam and Eve) in his image and likeness. God placed them in a beautiful garden. They had a friendship or intimacy with God. They loved each other. They were integrated or experienced a wholeness or harmony within themselves. Their intellect and will governed their bodies in truth and love. They lived in true or authentic freedom, using their freedom to choose the good. They were not subject to death. They lived in harmony with all creation.

“By the radiance of this grace all dimensions of man’s life were confirmed. As long as he remained in the divine intimacy, man would not have to suffer or die. The inner harmony of the human person, the harmony between man and woman, and finally the harmony between the first couple and all creation, comprised the state called ‘original justice’” (CCC 376).

However, “‘Man, enticed by the Evil One, abused his freedom at the very beginning of history’ (GS 13 § 1). He succumbed to temptation and did what was evil. He still desires the good, but his nature bears the wound of original sin. He is now inclined to evil and subject to error: ‘Man is divided in himself. As a result, the whole life of men, both individual and social, shows itself to be a struggle, and a dramatic one, between good and evil, between light and darkness’ (GS 13 § 2)” (CCC 1707).

Original Sin wounded and disfigured human beings, but did not destroy them. “Disfigured by sin and death, man remains ‘in the image of God,’ in the image of the Son, but is deprived ‘of the glory of God’ (Rom 3:23), of his ‘likeness.’ The promise made to Abraham inaugurates the economy of salvation, at the culmination of which the Son himself will assume that ‘image’ (cf. Jn 1:14; Phil 2:7) and restore it in the Father’s ‘likeness’ by giving it again its Glory, the Spirit who is ‘the giver of life’” (CCC 705).

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“In the act of creation, God calls every being from nothingness into existence. ‘Crowned with glory and honor’ (Ps 8:5), man is, after the angels, capable of acknowledging ‘how majestic is the name of the Lord in all the earth’ (Ps 8:1). Even after losing through his sin his likeness to God, man remains an image of his Creator, and retains the desire for the one who calls him into existence” (CCC 2566).

We inherit Original Sin and its consequences. Due to Original Sin, we are born without grace, God’s life in us. We lack the likeness to God. Also, due to Original Sin, the powers of our souls are affected. Our minds are darkened and our wills weakened. In our bodies, we suffer from concupiscence. Concupiscence means that our “human appetites or desires . . . remain disordered due to the temporal consequences of original sin, which remain even after Baptism, and which produce an inclination to sin” (see CCC, Glossary). In other words, we lack integration or wholeness. Due to Original Sin, we also suffer and we die.

Original Sin “is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted: it is wounded in the natural powers proper to it; subject to ignorance, suffering, and the dominion of death; and inclined to sin—an inclination to evil that is called ‘concupiscence’” (CCC 405).

Jesus Christ is *the* Image of the invisible God or the Perfect Image of God (uncreated, consubstantial with the Father). Jesus Christ is the second person of the Blessed Trinity, who became human without giving up his divinity. In other words, Jesus is God incarnate or the Word made flesh. “The unique and altogether singular event of the Incarnation of the Son of God does not mean that Jesus Christ is part God and part man, nor does it imply that he is the result of a confused mixture of the divine and the human. He became truly man while remaining truly God. Jesus Christ is true God and true man” (CCC 464).

On the other hand, all of us as men and women created in the image of God have the divine image in us. It is Jesus, as true God and true man, who reveals us to ourselves and makes us fully manifest to ourselves. He reveals to us our identity—that is, who we are, human beings, persons created in the image of God. “‘Christ, . . . in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, makes man fully manifest to himself and brings to light his exalted vocation’ (GS 22). It is in Christ, ‘the image of the invisible God’ (Col 1:15; cf. 2 Cor 4:4), that man has been created ‘in the image and likeness’ of the Creator” (CCC 1701).

It is Jesus who manifests to us how we should act. Jesus is our example and our model. “In all of his life Jesus presents himself as *our model*. He is ‘the perfect man’ (GS 38; cf. Rom 15:5; Phil 2:5), who invites us to become his disciples and follow him” (CCC 520). “In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear” (CCC 359, quoting GS 22 § 1).

“It is in Christ, Redeemer and Savior, that the divine image, disfigured in man by the first sin, has been restored to its original beauty and ennobled by the grace of God” (CCC 1701). As stated earlier, “The promise made to Abraham inaugurates the economy of salvation, at the culmination of which the Son himself will assume that ‘image’ (cf. Jn 1:14; Phil 2:7) and restore it in the Father’s ‘likeness’ by giving it again its Glory, the Spirit who is ‘the giver of life’” (CCC 705).

“God is love: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God freely wills to communicate the glory of his blessed life. Such is the ‘plan of his loving kindness,’ conceived by the Father before the foundation of the world, in his beloved Son (Eph 1:4, 9): ‘He destined us in love to be his sons’ (Eph 1:5) and ‘to be conformed to the image of his Son,’ through ‘the spirit of sonship’ (Rom 8:15, 29)” (CCC 257).

Due to the Paschal Mystery—that is, the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ—grace is made available to us. Grace is God’s life in us or God dwelling in us. “For well-disposed members of the faithful, the liturgy of the sacraments and sacramentals sanctifies almost every event of their lives with the divine grace which flows from the Paschal mystery of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ” (CCC 1670, quoting SC 61).

By his Passion, Death, and Resurrection, Jesus returns the love of the Father that was rejected by Adam and Eve at the beginning. This love is returned because of Jesus’ obedience to the Father. Out of love for the Father, Jesus said: “Not my will, but yours, be done” (Luke 22:42). “Jesus is the new Adam who remained faithful just where the first Adam had given in to temptation. Jesus fulfills Israel’s vocation perfectly: in contrast to those who had once provoked God during forty years in the desert, Christ reveals himself as God’s Servant, totally obedient to the divine will” (CCC 539).

Through the sacrifice of the Cross, Jesus gives us the grace to imitate him and to return the love that God has for us. “The cross is the unique sacrifice of Christ, the ‘one mediator between God and men’ (1 Tim 2:5). But because in his incarnate

INTRODUCTION

divine person he has in some way united himself to every man, ‘the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery’ is offered to all men (*GS* 22 § 5; cf. § 2). He calls his disciples to ‘take up [their] cross and follow [him]’ (Mt 16:24), for ‘Christ also suffered for [us], leaving [us] an example so that [we] should follow in his steps’ (1 Pet 2:21)” (*CCC* 618).

“We ask our Father to unite our will to his Son’s, in order to fulfill his will, his plan of salvation for the life of the world. We are radically incapable of this, but united with Jesus and with the power of his Holy Spirit, we can surrender our will to him and decide to choose what his Son has always chosen: to do what is pleasing to the Father” (*CCC* 2825; cf. John 8:29). The power of the Holy Spirit or grace empowers us to choose what Christ chooses.

“Grace is a *participation in the life of God*. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body” (*CCC* 1997; emphasis in original). Sanctifying grace “heals our human nature wounded by sin by giving us a share in the divine life of the Trinity.” It makes us “holy, and Christlike” (see *CCC*, Glossary). Sanctifying grace comes to us through Baptism and through the other sacraments. The sacraments themselves are the fruits of the Paschal Mystery and are personal meetings with Jesus Christ through sensible signs.

“By Baptism *all sins* are forgiven, original sin and all personal sins, as well as all punishment for sin. In those who have been reborn nothing remains that would impede their entry into the Kingdom of God, neither Adam’s sin, nor personal sin, nor the consequences of sin, the gravest of which is separation from God” (*CCC* 1263; emphasis in original). “Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ’s grace [sanctifying grace], erases original sin and turns a man back toward God, but the consequences for nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and summon him to spiritual battle” (*CCC* 405).

However, sanctifying grace helps us to prevail in our spiritual battles and to overcome the consequences of Original Sin in our lives. Our likeness to God is restored by grace (see *CCC* 705). By the power of sanctifying grace we are enabled and strengthened to reflect God in what we think, and say, and do. Grace enables us to imitate the Perfect Image of God, Jesus Christ. As our Lord himself taught: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (*CCC* 2842, quoting Jn 13:34).

Imitating Jesus constitutes the moral life, and through the power of sanctifying grace, we grow more loving in our relationship with God by imitating Jesus.

It is important to note, however, that “it is impossible to keep the Lord’s commandment [‘that you love one another, even as I have loved you’] by imitating the divine model from outside; there has to be a vital participation, coming from the depths of the heart, in the holiness and the mercy and the love of our God. Only the Spirit by whom we live (cf. Gal 5:25; Phil 2:1) can make ‘ours’ the same mind that was in Christ Jesus (cf. Phil 2:5)” (*CCC* 2842).

In other words, sanctifying grace (God’s life within us) enlightens our minds, strengthens our wills, and helps us to overcome concupiscence. Sanctifying grace helps us to exercise our freedom properly—that is, to choose what is truly good. We still suffer death, but, at the end of time, Jesus will raise our mortal bodies and make them like his own. For those who are united with Jesus at their death, eternal life in heaven awaits them.

“By his Passion, Christ delivered us from Satan and from sin. He merited for us the new life in the Holy Spirit. His grace restores what sin had damaged in us” (*CCC* 1708). “He who believes in Christ becomes a son of God. This filial adoption transforms him by giving him the ability to follow the example of Christ. It makes him capable of acting rightly and doing good. In union with his Savior, the disciple attains the perfection of charity which is holiness. Having matured in grace, the moral life blossoms into eternal life in the glory of heaven” (*CCC* 1709).

God revealed his plan of salvation gradually, over time, through words and deeds. “It [God’s plan] involves a specific divine pedagogy: God communicates himself to man gradually. He prepares him to welcome by stages the supernatural Revelation that is to culminate in the person and mission of the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ” (*CCC* 53). “Indeed, ‘the economy of the Old Testament was deliberately so oriented that it should prepare for and declare in prophecy the coming of Christ, redeemer of all men’ (*DV* 15)” (*CCC* 122).

Catechesis on the image of God in the series may be summed up in the following five points:

1. the human person has been created in the image and likeness of God;
2. the fall did not destroy the image of God in us, but seriously tarnished it. The fall also deprived human beings of the glory of God, of his “likeness”. Due

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to the fall, we experience a divided heart, darkened mind, and weakened will and concupiscence in the flesh, as well as suffering and death;

3. Christ is *the* Perfect Image of the invisible God and has restored the likeness to God for us in principle;
4. Baptism restores the likeness sacramentally;
5. the Christian moral/spiritual life, drawing on the grace of Baptism, engages in the daily struggle to live out the restored likeness in the experience of daily living;
6. Christian daily life involves the imitation of Christ, who “in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and his love, makes man fully manifest to himself and brings to light his exalted vocation” (CCC 1701).

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

LESSON FOCUS

Scripture Verse

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

—2 Timothy 3:16–17

Emphasis

As the opening quotation from Scripture indicates, the focus of this first lesson is the Bible and its importance in our lives. This chapter first instructs the student about the very source of the Sacred Scriptures, divine revelation, and then encourages the student to recognize the relationship between divine revelation and the Church. The lesson concludes with instruction on the history and organization of the Bible. Students should become not only competent at using the Bible, but also confident in its use as a prayerful and enlightening means for deepening their knowledge of the truth and therefore their knowledge of themselves as created in the image of the Truth, God himself.

Correspondence to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Apostolic tradition and apostolic succession: CCC 75–79, 96

Canon of Scripture: CCC 120, 138

Heritage of the faith entrusted to the whole Church: CCC 84

Holy Spirit, interpreter of Scripture: CCC 109–14, 137

Incarnation: CCC 461–63, 479

Inspiration and truth of Scripture: CCC 105–8, 136

Magisterium of the Church: CCC 85–87, 100

New Testament: CCC 124–27, 138–39, 515

Old Testament: CCC 121–23, 138

Relationship between tradition and Sacred Scripture: CCC 80–83, 97

The revelation of God: CCC 50–73

Transmission of divine revelation: CCC 74, 96

Ways to coming to know God: CCC 31–38, 46–48, 286

Note to the teacher: To this day, Jews have such respect for the name of God that they rarely, if ever, pronounce it aloud. In deference to this reverence, some modern translations substitute “LORD” whenever the personal name of God appears in the Hebrew text.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Vocabulary

reveal: to make known something that was not previously known

divine revelation: the hidden truths God chose to reveal about himself

Incarnation: God the Son, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, assumed human nature and is both true God and true man.

The Church: all the baptized united together with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit

Mystical Body of Christ: all Christians are members of Christ, so that with him, they form one Mystical Body; Christ is the head of the body, the Church; Christ and his Church together make up the “whole Christ”.

Old Testament: the first division of the Bible; includes forty-six books written before the time of Christ

B.C.: abbreviation of “before Christ”

New Testament: the second division of the Bible; includes twenty-seven books written after Christ was born

A.D.: abbreviation of the Latin *anno Domini*, which means “in the year of our Lord”

Sacred Scripture: the books of the Old and New Testaments; the Bible; Scripture is the inspired Word of God—that is, it is God who is the author of the Bible

Magisterium: the teaching authority given by Christ to the Church; the pope and the bishops united with him

translations: different versions of the Bible

manuscript: handwritten text

scribes: people who, throughout the ages, copied books

Vulgate: the most famous Latin translation of the Bible, made by Saint Jerome

literary forms: different types of writing

prophet: a messenger; a person chosen by God to speak to his people

epistle: a letter

Concepts of Faith

What did God the Father send his Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to reveal?

The truth.

What do we call the event in which God the Son, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, assumed human nature and is both true God and true man?

The Incarnation.

What is divine revelation?

The hidden truths that God chose to reveal about himself.

What are the two ways divine revelation is transmitted?

Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

What image can be used to describe the intimate union of Christ and his Church?

The Mystical Body of Christ.

What is Sacred Tradition?

The handing down from generation to generation of all that Christ has revealed. Tradition is preserved under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

What are the names of the two major divisions of the Bible?

The Old Testament and the New Testament.

What role did the human authors play in the writing of Sacred Scripture?

They were divinely guided by God to write down, through their own thoughts and choices, what God wished them to write.

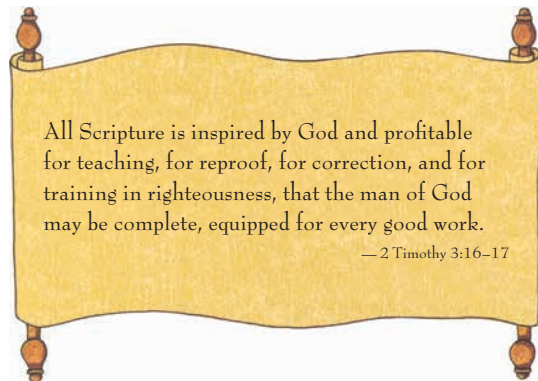
What is the Magisterium of the Church?

It is the teaching authority of the Church—the pope and the bishops of the Church in union with the pope.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Read and discuss the vocabulary words and the Concepts of Faith with the students.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE



Vocabulary

reveal: to make known something that was not previously known
divine revelation: the hidden truths God chose to reveal about himself
Incarnation: God the Son, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, assumed human nature and is both true God and true man.
The Church: all the baptized united together with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit
Mystical Body of Christ: all Christians are members of Christ, so that with him, they form one Mystical Body. Christ is the head of the body, the Church; Christ and his Church together make up the "whole Christ".
Old Testament: the first division of the Bible; includes forty-six books written before the time of Christ
b.c.: abbreviation of "before Christ"
New Testament: the second division of the Bible; includes twenty-seven books written after Christ was born
A.D.: abbreviation of the Latin *anno Domini*, which means "in the year of our Lord"
Sacred Scripture: the books of the Old and New Testaments; the Bible. Scripture is the inspired Word of God—that is, it is God who is the author of the Bible.
Magisterium: the teaching authority given by Christ to the Church; the pope and the bishops united with him
translations: different versions of the Bible

1

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Vocabulary (continued)

manuscript: handwritten text
scribes: people who, throughout the ages, copied books
Vulgate: the most famous Latin translation of the Bible, made by Saint Jerome
literary forms: different types of writing
prophet: a messenger; a person chosen by God to speak to his people
epistle: a letter

Concepts of Faith

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What role did the human authors play in the writing of Sacred Scripture?
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What is the Magisterium of the Church?
It is the teaching authority of the Church—the pope and the bishops of the Church in union with the pope.

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LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Proclamation

(Proclaim slowly.)

God makes himself known to man.

Dig deeper with YOUCAT and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Instruct the students to look up the following references for a deeper understanding:

- To learn more about the relationship of Scripture and tradition read YOUCAT 12.
- To learn more about divine inspiration read YOUCAT 14.
- To learn more about Jesus as true God and true man read CCC 469.
- To learn more about the Magisterium and the teaching authority of the Church read YOUCAT 13.
- To learn more about the Creeds read YOUCAT 26–29.

LESSON EXPLANATION

You may wish to lead a prayer service, possibly before the beginning of this lesson or as an extension of the lesson, depending on the readiness of the class. The presentation of a Bible to each student (as a gift from the school or from their parents) could be included in the service. An invitation to the pastor to present and bless the Bibles would help the students to recognize the importance of this event. Perhaps the presentation could be included at the weekly school Mass or at a Sunday Mass.

You should make a special effort to encourage the students, both through instruction and example, to handle the Bible (their own, or the property of the school) with reverence. Remind the students that the Bible is the Word of God. Remind them of how the Sacred Scriptures are carried high at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. There should be a special place in the classroom where the Bibles can be stored, away from the dangers that lurk inside students' desks! Perhaps displaying a large Bible on a special table with a lit, battery-operated candle before the daily recitation of prayer would also help the students recognize that the Sacred Scriptures are indeed sacred.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Have the students read and discuss pages 3–4 in their textbooks and complete the Review Questions on pages 4–5.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Dig deeper with YOUCAT and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- To learn more about the relationship of Scripture and Tradition read YOUCAT 12.
- To learn more about divine inspiration read YOUCAT 14.
- To learn more about Jesus as true God and true man read CCC 469.
- To learn more about the Magisterium and the teaching authority of the Church read YOUCAT 13.
- To learn more about the Creeds read YOUCAT 26–29.

Divine Revelation

God the Father, in his infinite mercy and love, sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to the world to reveal himself to us and to give himself to mankind. “Through an utterly free decision, God has revealed himself and given himself to man. This he does by revealing the mystery, his plan of loving goodness, formed from all eternity in Christ, for the benefit of all men. God has fully revealed this plan by sending us his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit” (CCC 50).

From Adam and Eve onward throughout the ages, God revealed himself gradually. “God has revealed himself to man by gradually communicating his own mystery in deeds and in words” (CCC 69). However, in the fullness of time, God revealed himself fully in Jesus Christ. “God has revealed himself fully by sending his own Son, in whom he has established his covenant for ever. The Son is his Father’s definitive Word; so there will be no further Revelation after him” (CCC 73).

God the Son, Jesus Christ, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, assumed human nature and is both true God and true man. The Church calls this event the Incarnation. To reveal means to make something known that was not known before. Christ revealed God to us. By our natural reason, we could never have known him in the way Christ revealed him to us. Divine revelation is the revelation of God himself to us through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. It is the hidden mystery of God revealed to us in Christ.

The Role of the Church

While on earth, Jesus knew that, following his Passion, Death, and Resurrection, he would return in glory to the right hand of his Father in heaven (the Paschal Mystery). But not wishing to leave us as orphans, he established the Church on earth. Saint Paul tells us that “he is the head of the body, the Church” (Colossians 1:18). The *Catechism* says the Church can be described using a number of different, yet complementary images. One dominant image is the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. “The comparison of the Church with the body casts light on the intimate bond between Christ and his Church. Not only is she gathered *around him*; she is united *in him*, in his body” (CCC 789; emphasis in original). Stressing the intimacy of the union between Christ and the Church, the *Catechism* also states: “Christ and his Church thus together make up the ‘whole Christ’ (*Christus totus*). The Church is one with Christ” (CCC 795).

3

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Pope Pius XII explains the teaching in this way: “The unbroken tradition . . . from the earliest times teaches that the Divine Redeemer [Christ] and the Society which is His Body [the Church] form but one mystical person.”¹ The *Catechism* quotes Saint Thomas Aquinas when she teaches that Christ and the Church are “one and the same mystical person” (CCC 795).² “Because Christ, the only mediator and redeemer of men, is head of the Church, Christ and the Church are one single mystical person, the total Christ. He [Augustine] writes with force: ‘We have become Christ. Just as He is the head, we are the members; the whole man is He and ourselves.’ This doctrine of the total Christ is one of the teachings that mattered most to the Bishop of Hippo, and one of the most fruitful themes of his ecclesiology.”³

The Mystical Body of Christ formed by the intimate personal union of Christ and his Church, head and members, continues Christ’s work to reveal the truth. Since her foundation, more than two thousand years ago, and today, and for all earthly time to come, the Church continues to reflect on divine revelation and to restate it for each generation to understand. Still, it is important to note that Jesus completed his work of revealing the Father to us while he was with us on earth.

Saint John the Evangelist was most likely the last eyewitness to record the events of Jesus’ life. Therefore, divine revelation ended with the death of Saint John (ca. A.D. 100). But the Church continues to reflect on and interpret the entire Word of God for each new age.

Review Questions

1. What did God the Father send his Son, Jesus Christ, to the world to reveal?

The truth.

2. What do we call the event in which God the Son, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, assumed human nature and is both true God and true man?

The Incarnation.

3. What is divine revelation?

The hidden truths that God chose to reveal about himself.

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Note to the teacher: See the Activities section for further information about the Fathers of the Church.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Review Questions (continued)

4. What does divine revelation teach us?

It teaches us about God and ourselves.

5. What do we call the Mystical Body of Christ, Christ as the head united to his body?

The Church.

6. Why did Christ establish the Church?

To continue his work on earth.

7. How does the Church continue Christ's work to reveal the truth?

By reflecting on and interpreting the entire Word of God for each new age.

8. Who was most likely the last eyewitness to record the work of Jesus?

Saint John the Evangelist.

Before discussing the section on Sacred Tradition in the student textbook, you may wish to discuss inspiration with the students.

Ask: Where do you get your ideas for writing your stories or papers?

How is this like inspiration?

How is it different from divine or biblical inspiration?

The students may remember the earliest dates and locations that the books of the Bible were written down if it is put in a rhyme such as, “The Bible was compiled for you and me—at the Council of Hippo in 393,” or, “The Bible was compiled for me and you—at the Council of Rome in 382.”

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Have the students read and discuss pages 6–7 in their textbooks.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Sacred Tradition

The Catholic Church teaches that Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition are the two ways that divine revelation is transmitted. “Both the living Tradition and the written Scriptures have their common source in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ” (CCC, Glossary, s.v. “Tradition”). Sacred Tradition is the handing down from generation to generation of all that Christ has revealed. Tradition is preserved under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Church. The word “tradition” comes from the Latin word *tradere*, “to hand over”. The first recorded statement of Sacred Tradition is the Bible. Our word “Bible” comes from the Greek word *biblion*, which means “book”. The Bible is our most important book. It is, in a way, a history of what God has done in our world. It is God’s proclamation. It is a book that tells us who God is and who we are as persons created in the image of God.

Sacred Tradition, however, also includes such things as the Apostles’ Creed, the writings of the Fathers of the Church (such as Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome, Saint Gregory the Great, and Saint Ambrose), the Church’s divine liturgy, and the decrees of the Church.

Sacred Scripture

The Bible is not a single book but rather a collection of seventy-three books separated into two major divisions: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament contains forty-six books all written before Christ was born (B.C.). The New Testament contains twenty-seven books written after Christ was born (A.D., an abbreviation of the Latin *anno Domini*, “in the year of our Lord”). Together, the books of the Old and New Testaments, the Bible, are known as Sacred Scripture.

The Bible was not sent to us through the mail; it did not arrive on a fax; it did not just drop down from the sky. So, just where did the Bible come from? The Catholic Church first made a written list of the literary manuscripts that were in use at the time. This happened at the councils of Rome and Hippo in A.D. 382 and 393, respectively. The councils decided that seventy-three books were divinely inspired. Later, many other local councils agreed on the same seventy-three books.

This was accepted throughout the entire Christian world until the time of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. Following the Reformation, the Catholic Church at the ecumenical Council of Trent declared that these seventy-three books form the canon of Sacred Scripture. “It was by the apostolic Tradition that the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the list of the sacred books. This complete list is called the canon of Scripture. It includes 46 books for the Old Testament (45 if we count Jeremiah and Lamentations as one) and 27 for the New” (CCC 120).⁴

Divine Inspiration

The books of the Bible were written by many different people. All of them, however, were guided by God, who is the Author of all Sacred Scripture. They wrote down, through their own thoughts and

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

choices, what he wished them to write. This guidance by God is called divine inspiration. God the Holy Spirit inspired the human authors of Sacred Scripture to write God’s message to his people.

Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. For Sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, while sacred tradition takes the word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known.

Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei verbum*
(November 18, 1965), II, 9

The Magisterium of the Church

Remember that Jesus Christ revealed the truth and is the full revelation of God the Father. Since the Church is one with Christ, the Church alone can guarantee that the revelation of Christ contained in Sacred Scripture and in Sacred Tradition is taught to each successive age. “The one mediator, Christ, established and ever sustains here on earth his holy Church, the community of faith, hope, and charity, as a visible organization through which he communicates truth and grace to all men” (CCC 771).⁵ This teaching authority of the Church, given by Christ to the successors of the Apostles (the bishops in union with the pope), is called the Magisterium (from the Latin *magister*, meaning “teacher”). The Magisterium is responsible for teaching divine revelation to the People of God.

Once we understand this mystical bond between Christ and his Church, we can easily understand why all Sacred Scripture must be interpreted in light of the Church’s teaching authority.



Throughout the Church’s history there have been many councils and synods. At these meetings, the bishops of the world, together with the pope, share the responsibility of teaching and guiding the Church. There have been numerous synods, such as the 1990 World Synod of Bishops pictured here. There have been twenty-one ecumenical or general councils of the Church. The first council was Nicaea I, held in the year 325. The most recent ecumenical council was Vatican II, which met from 1962 to 1965.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Have the students complete the Review Questions on pages 8–9 in their textbooks.

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Review Questions

1. V
2. V
3. V
4. V
5. V
6. V
7. V
8. V

Answer Key blocked out for online posting

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Review Questions (continued)

9. V
10. V
11. V
12. V
13. V
14. V
15. V

Answer Key blocked out for online posting

9

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Have the students take the Lesson 1 quiz 1.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson 1 Quiz 1

1. What are the two ways that divine revelation is transmitted?

Answer Key blocked out for online posting

2. _____

3. _____ nature and _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

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Have the students read and discuss pages 10–11 in their textbooks. It is suggested that teachers read paragraphs 115–19 in the Catechism of the Catholic Church about the senses of Scripture and to include this teaching in classes whenever applicable.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE



Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in caves.

How Was the Bible Written?

The Old Testament was originally written mostly in Hebrew, with seven books written in Greek. The New Testament was written in Greek. Since then there have been many translations, or versions, of the Bible. The original manuscripts, handwritten texts, of the books of the Bible have not survived. The earliest surviving manuscripts are known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. They were found in 1947, buried in a cave near the Dead Sea. Many of them date from as early as the second century B.C. That means they were written about two hundred years before Christ was born. Their discovery was important because biblical scholars could then compare the texts they had known with these newly discovered texts. Do you know what they learned? In over a thousand years of copying texts, there were almost no differences! The scribes, the people who had copied these books of the Old Testament, had been very careful not to make mistakes. In this effort God had helped them. And so God's message was passed on and continues to be passed on to each generation. Today the Bible can be read in more than two thousand different languages!

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Languages of the Bible

The first book of the Bible is Genesis, and the first sentence in Genesis is, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Here we see that sentence written in Hebrew and Greek, the original languages of the Bible texts, and in Latin, according to the translation by Saint Jerome. There are many versions of the Bible in English. In this book we are using the Ignatius Bible, Revised Standard Version, Second Catholic Edition, © 2006.

Hebrew. The Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew. Hebrew is read from right to left.

בראשית א
פראשית פרא אלהים
את השמים ואת הארע

Greek. The New Testament was originally written in Greek. Here is the first sentence of Genesis, chapter one, written in Greek.

ΓΕΝΕΣΙΣ, ΚΕΦ. α.
Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν.

Latin. Latin uses the same alphabet as English. The most famous Latin version of the Bible is called the Vulgate. The Vulgate was translated by Saint Jerome from Hebrew and Greek versions.

GENESIS, CAPUT I.
In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram.

English. This is the same passage from Genesis, from the Ignatius Bible, Revised Standard Version, Second Catholic Edition, © 2006.

GENESIS, CHAPTER 1
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

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Have the students read and discuss pages 12–14 in their textbooks.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Literary Forms

When you go to the library you find many different types of books from which to choose. You may wish to read, for example, a biography of a famous person or a history book that tells about the American Revolution. Or you may choose a novel or a collection of poems. Biography, history, novel, and poetry are all literary forms. Literary forms are different types of writing. The books of the Bible are written in many literary forms. In order to understand God’s message found in the Scriptures, it is important to know what literary forms were used to tell this message.

The Books of the Bible and Their Literary Forms

Old Testament Literary Forms

The books of the Old Testament include these literary forms: history, law, prophecy, prayer, and wisdom.

History books. The core of these books is historical. It is important to remember that the human author is writing these books not to teach a history lesson, but to teach a religious truth. The history books include Genesis, parts of Exodus, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Lamentations, Baruch, and 1 and 2 Maccabees.

Law books. These books give an account of the various laws and rules that the Jewish people followed. They include Exodus (in part), Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Prophecy books. These books contain the words of the prophets. The word “prophet” comes from the Greek word *prophetes*, which means “one who speaks before others”. The prophets, then, were special people or messengers, chosen by God, to speak to his people. The prophets include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, as well as Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Prayer book. The Book of Psalms is a prayer book, a collection of songs and poems that are used to worship and praise God.

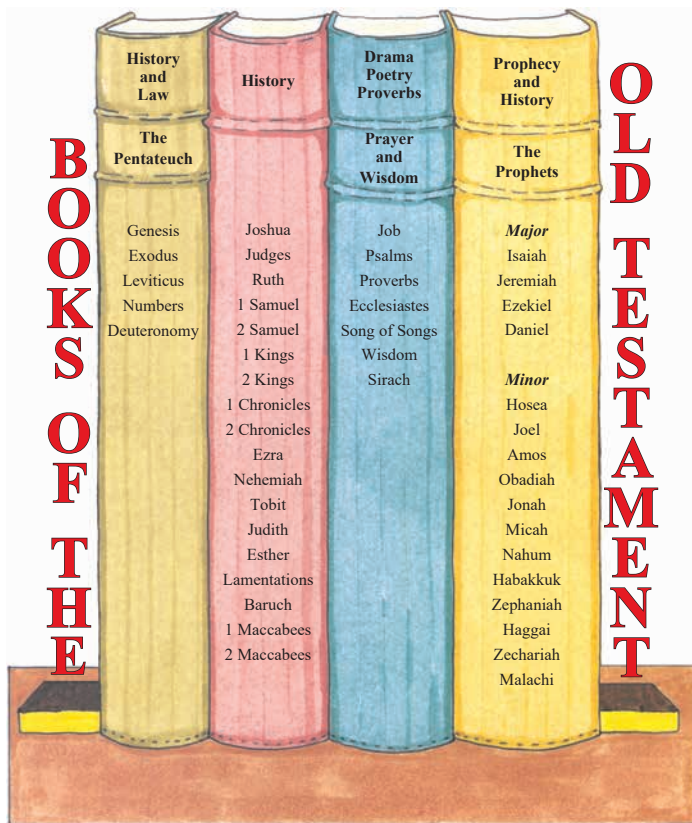
Wisdom books. These books give insight or common sense about human life and our actions toward each other and toward God. They include Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, and Sirach.

12

Note to the teacher: The Book of Exodus is listed under both history and law because of its varied content.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE



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LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

New Testament Literary Forms

The books of the New Testament include these literary forms: Gospel, letters, history, and prophecy.

Gospel. The Gospels are factual accounts of the deeds and words of Jesus Christ. They were recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Letters. These books of the New Testament are actual letters, or epistles, that were written by several disciples to various Christian communities and to friends. They include the Letters written by Saint Paul to the Romans, Corinthians (1 and 2), Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Hebrews, and Thessalonians (1 and 2), as well as to Timothy (1 and 2), Titus, and Philemon. They also include the epistles written by Saint James, Saint Peter (1 and 2), Saint John (1, 2, and 3), and Saint Jude.

History book. The Acts of the Apostles is the only history book of the New Testament. It is a historical account of the early Christian Church.

Prophecy book. One New Testament book, Revelation, is a kind of prophecy about the end of the world and the fulfillment of the kingdom of God.

The Gospels

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John

Letters (or Epistles)

Romans	Titus
1 Corinthians	Philemon
2 Corinthians	Hebrews
Galatians	James
Ephesians	1 Peter
Philippians	2 Peter
Colossians	1 John
1 Thessalonians	2 John
2 Thessalonians	3 John
1 Timothy	Jude
2 Timothy	

Church History

Acts of the Apostles

Prophecy Book
Revelation

14

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Have the students complete the Review Questions on page 15 in their textbooks.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Review Questions

1. In what languages was the Bible originally written?

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2.

3.

4.

5.

15

Note to the teacher: For scriptural prayers, see the Celebration section of the introduction.

LIVING THE LESSON—APPLICATION

For the questions in the Living the Lesson—Application section on page 16 in their textbooks, have the students write down the various answers they collect and share the answers with the class.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

LIVING THE LESSON—APPLICATION

Discuss the following questions with your classmates, family, and friends.

1. You have learned that the Bible is our most important book. How can you use the Bible in your daily life with your family?
2. How can the Bible remind us that we are important to God and to each other?

CELEBRATION

You need to know what you believe. You need to know your faith with that same precision with which an IT specialist knows the inner workings of a computer. You need to understand it like a good musician knows the piece he is playing. Yes, you need to be more deeply rooted in the faith than the generation of your parents so that you can engage the challenges and temptations of this time with strength and determination. You need God's help if your faith is not going to dry up like a dewdrop in the sun.

Pope Benedict XVI, Introduction to *YOUCAT 2010*

Prayer

The Apostles' Creed is like a mini-catechism. It is a statement of our beliefs as Christians.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

16

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

CELEBRATION

Have the students read and discuss this section on page 16 in their textbooks.

Prayer

The closing prayer for Lesson 1 is the Apostles' Creed, found on page 16 in their textbooks. Explain that the Apostles' Creed is like a mini-catechism; it is a statement of our beliefs as Christians. Also, the students should know that the basic belief of all Christians is the Blessed Trinity. We believe in three persons in one God; we believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Since the time of Jesus Christ, this has been the common belief of all Christianity.

Prayer

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The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

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TAKE HOME

Have each student take home a copy of the family notes for Lesson 1.

ACTIVITIES

Have the students complete worksheet 1 on pages 17–18 in their textbooks.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

ACTIVITIES

Worksheet 1: Old and New Testament Relationships

Jesus said that he came to fulfill the law found in the Old Testament, not to destroy it. Therefore, it is important to study the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. We cannot understand Jesus unless we understand what he fulfilled. This worksheet lists some of the prophecies of the Old Testament that Jesus fulfilled in the New Testament.

Directions: Find both the Old and New Testament Scripture references in your Bible, and then write a short answer that completes the sentence. If you do not know the abbreviation for the book, look it up in the list of abbreviations in your Bible. The first number that follows the abbreviation of the book is the chapter number; the number or numbers after the colon are the verse numbers. For example, "Is 7:14" means the Book of Isaiah, chapter 7, verse 14.

1. Is 7:14; Mt 1:23

Jesus would be born of a virgin and would be called Emmanuel.

2. Jer 23:5–6; Mk 11:9–10

Jesus would be a descendant from the house of David.

3. Mic 5:1–2; Mt 2:1, 5–6

Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.

4. Mal 3:1; Mt 11:10

God sent a messenger to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus.

5. Zech 11:7; Jn 10:11

Jesus would be the good shepherd.

6. Is 42:7; Jn 8:32

Jesus will open the eyes of the blind,
and you will know the truth,
and the truth will set you free.

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LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

7. Ps 118:22; Mt 21:42
Jesus is the _____

8. Ps 41:10; Jn 13:18
Je _____

9. Ps 22:18; Mt 27:35

They divid

10. Ex 12:46; Jn 19:36
Jesus woul _____

Answer Key blocked out for online posting

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Have the students complete worksheet 2 on page 19 in their textbooks.

LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Worksheet 2: Other Names for Jesus

Throughout the Bible, Jesus is given many names.

Directions: Match each name for Jesus with its correct Scripture reference by placing the letter of the name on the line next to the reference.

Answer Key blocked out for online posting

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LESSON 1: LEARNING ABOUT THE BIBLE

Prayer and the Bible

One way we can use the Bible in our daily lives is for prayer. Have the students look up Sirach 35:12–18 in their Bibles. Ask one student to read aloud this passage, which reminds us that God always hears and answers our prayers.

Materials needed:

Ignatius Bible, RSV-2CE
8½" × 11" white unlined paper
pencils or pens

The psalms are sung prayers. Have the students read through the Book of Psalms to choose a favorite psalm. Give them time to find one that applies to them and to their lives today.

Have the students copy the psalms they have chosen on the unlined paper. On the back of that paper, ask the students to write what the psalm they have chosen means and how its meaning applies to their particular situation. (For example, Psalm 23 tells us that God is our Shepherd who loves and cares for us. Today, God continues to love and care for us; he gives us his grace, he gives us all that we need, he forgives our sins, and he guides us in all we do.)

Fathers of the Church

You may wish to provide additional information to the students or ask them to do individual or group projects on the Fathers of the Church and their contributions to Sacred Tradition.

The Fathers of the Church were theologians and writers who lived during the first seven centuries of the early Church. They were men of holiness and great learning. Their explication of various doctrines is accepted by the Church as consistent with apostolic Tradition and Sacred Scripture.

The four greatest Fathers of the Church in the West are Saints Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

LESSON FOCUS

Scripture Verse

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . . And God saw that it was good. . . . Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”

—Genesis 1:1, 10, 26

Emphasis

The emphasis of Lesson 2 is the creation of the world and the creation of man and woman. The biblical texts are chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis, which contain the first and the second stories of creation. This lesson speaks in detail of God’s creative power, wisdom, and love made manifest in the two accounts of creation. The text discusses both accounts of creation and emphasizes the creation of the human person in the image of God. (We will discuss the fall of Adam and Eve in Lesson 3.)

Correspondence to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Attributes of God shown in and through creation: CCC 293–95, 315, 341

Catechesis on creation: CCC 282–89

Common good: CCC 1905–12, 1924–26

Communal character of the human vocation: CCC 1877–85, 1890–92

Creation: CCC 279–81, 315

Correspondence to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (continued)

Dignity of the human person: CCC 1700–12

Equality and difference in man and woman willed by God: CCC 369–73, 383

Family in God’s plan: CCC 2201–6, 2249

God as Creator of heaven and earth: CCC 279–81, 325–27

God creates an ordered and good world: CCC 299, 337, 341

God creates “out of nothing”: CCC 296–98, 317–18

God creates out of wisdom and love: CCC 295, 315

God is love: CCC 218–21, 231

God’s omnipotence: CCC 268–78

Grace: CCC 1996–2005, 2021–24

Inspiration and truth of Sacred Scripture: CCC 105–8, 136

Man as body and soul: CCC 362–68, 382

Man created in the image of God: CCC 355–57, 380–81

Man in paradise: CCC 374–79, 384

Mystery of creation: CCC 295–301, 315, 317–18, 320

Respect for the integrity of creation: CCC 2415–18, 2456–57

Respect for the human person: CCC 1929–33, 1943–44

Responsibility and participation for the common good: CCC 1913–17, 1927

Ways of coming to know God: CCC 31–38, 46–48, 286

The world was created for the glory of God: CCC 293–94, 319

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Vocabulary

atheist: a person who does not believe in the existence of God

Pentateuch: the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy

Genesis: the first book of the Bible

evolution: a scientific theory that claims human beings have developed from a simpler form of life

literary forms: different styles of writing

create: to make something out of nothing

ornament: to decorate

ornamentation: decoration

universe: all of God’s visible creations

eternal: everlasting

image: a reflection; a resemblance

dignity: value; worth

dominion: authority to govern the earth

stewardship: responsibility to care for all of God’s creations

grace: a free and supernatural gift from God in which he shares his divine life and friendship with us and helps us to live as persons created in the image of God

sanctifying grace: “heals our human nature wounded by sin by giving us a share in the divine life of the Trinity ... making us ‘perfect,’ holy, and Christlike” (CCC, Glossary)

actual grace: God’s intervention and help to conform our lives to his will

original holiness: the state of friendship with God shared by Adam and Eve before they sinned. “This grace of original holiness was to ‘share in ... divine life’ ” (CCC 375).

original justice: before sin, the mastery or governance that Adam and Eve experienced over themselves; freedom from death

Vocabulary (continued)

Original Sin: the first sin committed by Adam and Eve. We inherit Original Sin from Adam and Eve, which means that we are conceived and born with a wounded human nature and therefore are deprived of original holiness and original justice; we are in need of the grace of salvation won for us by Christ (CCC 1250).

supernatural: “surpassing the power of created beings; a result of God’s gracious initiative. Our vocation to eternal life is supernatural” (CCC, Glossary).

faith: the theological virtue that enables us to believe and accept all that God has revealed. Faith is necessary for us to live someday with God in heaven.

Concepts of Faith

What is the name given to the first five books of the Bible?

The Pentateuch.

What is the name of the first book of the Bible?

Genesis.

What do we mean by the term “divine inspiration”?

The gift of the Holy Spirit that assisted the human authors in writing the Bible. Because of this inspiration, God is the author of Scripture, and it teaches without error all he wanted to reveal.

What is a personal soul?

The personal soul is the invisible, spiritual, and immortal gift from God that gives each human being life.

What are the two main powers of the soul?

The mind and the will.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Concepts of Faith (continued)

What do we do with the intellect or mind?
We reason or think with the intellect or mind.

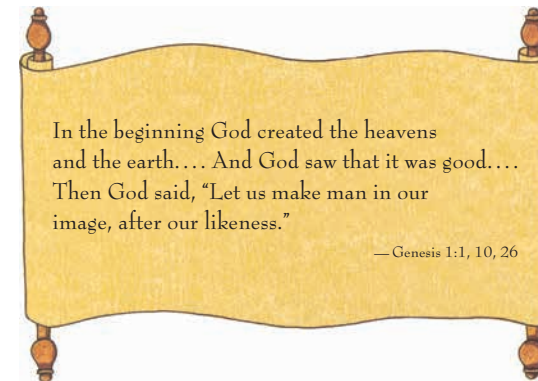
What do we do with the will?
We choose with the will.

What did God ask Adam and Eve to do after he created them?
To be fruitful and multiply and to have dominion over the earth.

What did God do so that Adam and Eve could love him and be his friends?
He created them in original holiness.

Read and discuss the vocabulary words and the Concepts of Faith with the students.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN



Vocabulary

- atheist:** a person who does not believe in the existence of God
Pentateuch: the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy
Genesis: the first book of the Bible
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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Vocabulary (continued)

sanctifying grace: “heals our human nature wounded by sin by giving us a share in the divine life of the Trinity . . . making us ‘perfect,’ holy, and Christlike” (CCC, Glossary)

actual grace: God’s intervention and help to conform our lives to his will

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The mind and the will.

What do we do with the intellect or mind?

We reason or think with the intellect or mind.

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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Concepts of Faith (continued)

What do we do with the will?

We choose with the will.

What did God ask Adam and Eve to do after he created them?

To be fruitful and multiply and to have dominion over the earth.

What did God do so that Adam and Eve could love him and be his friends?

He created them in original holiness.

Dig deeper with YOUCAT

- To learn more about what the Church teaches about evolution read YOUCAT 42.
- To learn more about the relationship between faith and science read YOUCAT 23.
- To learn more about using reason to conclude that the world could not have come into existence simply by chance read YOUCAT 43.

An Introduction to the Book of Genesis

The Pentateuch

The Pentateuch is the name given to the first five books of the Bible. These five books are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The word “pentateuch” comes from two Greek words: *penta*, which means “five”, and *teuchos*, a container for scrolls. In ancient times, messages were written on rolled pieces of paper called scrolls. A scroll is similar to a book. These five books are very important to the Jewish people because together they form “The Torah”, or “The Law”, the most important part of the Jewish Bible. It contains the account of the formation of the People of God, known as the Hebrews or Israelites. It includes creation, the stories of Abraham and Moses, and the beginnings of this Israelite nation.

The Book of Genesis

Genesis is the name of the first book of the Bible. The word “genesis” comes from the Greek word for “origin” or “birth”. This book narrates the origin, or beginning, of the world, the birth of the human race, and the early history of the Hebrew people.

As you look over the first few pages of the Book of Genesis in your Bible, you will notice that there is more than one account of creation. Are you surprised? In fact, there are many stories of creation; most

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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Proclamation

(Proclaim slowly.)

God is the Creator of heaven and earth, of all that is visible and all that is invisible.

Dig deeper with YOUCAT and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Instruct the students to look up the following references for a deeper understanding:

- To learn more about what the Church teaches about evolution read YOUCAT 42.
- To learn more about the relationship between faith and science read YOUCAT 23.
- To learn more about using reason to conclude that the world could not have come into existence simply by chance read YOUCAT 43.

LESSON EXPLANATION

A very easy way to help students to remember lists is using an acronym. To memorize the first five books of the Bible an easy sentence is “**G**osh **E**verybody **L**oves **N**otre **D**ame.” Now, some students may object if they like a different university. Remind the students that “Notre Dame” is French, and it translates into “Our Lady”, and we *all* love Mary!

This lesson presents the students with the creation of the world and everything in it by our loving God. As Catholic Christians we know that God created the world from nothing and keeps it in existence. Young people today are familiar with the idea that the entire world came to be by chance, that it just happened randomly. Catholics can believe in the theory of evolution or even the big bang theory, but we must believe that creation began through the creative action of Almighty God and was guided by his loving hand.

The Living the Lesson activity at the end of this lesson will use mathematical probability to demonstrate how improbable it is to believe that our universe was created by chance.

Students sometimes have a question concerning how all of mankind came into existence from just Adam and Eve since they only had two sons, Cain and Abel. Have them read Genesis 5:1–6 and they will see that Adam and Eve had more sons and daughters. When they study Noah in Lesson 4, they will see that he is a descendant of a son of Adam and Eve whose name was Seth. And then when they study Abraham they will see the lineage from Noah to Abraham.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Have the students read and discuss pages 22–23 in their textbooks.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Concepts of Faith (continued)

What do we do with the will?

We choose with the will.

What did God ask Adam and Eve to do after he created them?

To be fruitful and multiply and to have dominion over the earth.

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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

of the ancient peoples from all parts of the world have a story of creation that is part of their culture and tradition. In our present culture, science has its own story to tell about the origin, or beginning, of the world. In science class you may have studied the big bang theory, which claims that the earth came into existence as the result of an enormous explosion. You may have studied about evolution, a scientific theory that claims human beings have developed gradually from a simpler form of life.



So what are we to believe? How are we to know the truth about our beginning? From your reading of the first chapter in this text, you may remember several important facts. The writers of the Bible were inspired by God. Do you remember what that means? Divine inspiration means that God sent the gift of the Holy Spirit to assist a human author to write a biblical book in such a way that it has God as its author; and it teaches faithfully and without error all the saving truths that God wished to reveal. Although God guided them to write his message, he did not dictate each word to them. He allowed them to do his work through the use of their own thoughts and their own words. The Church holds that all of Scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit, and therefore “it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings.”¹ This cannot be said of the other stories of creation that are part of folklore or mythology.

Another important fact to remember is that the books of the Bible were written in several different literary forms. History, law, and prophecy are just a few examples. Although the Book of Genesis is classified as a history book, it is not primarily concerned with *when* God created the world and man and woman. Nor is it primarily concerned with *how long* creation took. The Bible tells us that God made everything from nothing. The miracle of creation is the same whether it took six days or six years or six million years! We must always remember that the number of days is not important. Saint Peter tells us, “With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Peter 3:8).

Science and our belief in God need not be in competition with each other. For example, we can learn about the big bang theory. We can believe, as some scientists do, that the universe began from a huge explosion of gases and matter. But what caused the explosion? And who created the gases and matter? Science does not know the answer. For the big bang theory to be correct there had to be something to explode, and if nothing existed, there was nothing to explode. Our faith tells us that God created everything from nothing. He is the ultimate source of all knowledge, including all of what science teaches us. Thus, science can help us to understand the development of God’s creations. If we remember the important truth that God is the Creator of all things and the source of all knowledge, the teachings of science and the teachings of our faith will never be in conflict.

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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Not all scientists agree that the universe began with an explosion—the big bang theory. Scientists who do support this theory do not know what would have caused such an explosion. There are other scientific theories about the beginning of the universe. Many scientists do agree that at one time, nothing existed. The important point of this section of the lesson is to remember that God is the First Cause, regardless of any scientific theory of how the universe was formed.

See the Living the Lesson section for further discussion of this topic.

Note to the teacher: In the Scripture Summary sections, the students do *not* need to read the summaries in their textbooks if the accounts are read from the Bible. It is recommended that the Bible texts are read, rather than the summaries.

The topic of divine or biblical inspiration can be cross-referenced in paragraph 105 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* or in the Glossary of the *Catechism* under the title “Biblical Inspiration”.

Have the students complete the Review Questions on page 24 in their textbooks.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Review Questions

1. What is the name given to the first five books of the Bible?

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7.

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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Have the students read and discuss page 25 in their textbooks.

Have the students read and discuss pages 26–29 in their textbooks.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Scripture Summary

Read the first account of creation found in your Bible, Genesis 1:1–31 and 2:1–4, or read the following summary.

The First Account of Creation

Based on Genesis 1:1–31; 2:1–4

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing. On the first day, “God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good” (Genesis 1:3–4). “God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night” (Genesis 1:5).

On the second day, “God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters’” (Genesis 1:6). “And God called the firmament Heaven” (Genesis 1:8). And he saw that it was good.

Then on the third day, “God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear.’ . . . God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas” (Genesis 1:9–10). God saw how good it was. Then “God said, ‘Let the earth put forth vegetation’” (Genesis 1:11). And so it happened. God saw how good it was.

Then “God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years . . . to give light upon the earth’” (Genesis 1:14–15). And so God made the sun and the moon and the stars. And God saw how good it was on the fourth day.

On the fifth day, “God said, ‘Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens’” (Genesis 1:20). And so it happened. God saw how good it was, “and God blessed them” (Genesis 1:22).

Then “God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds’” (Genesis 1:24). And so it happened on the sixth day. And God saw how good it was.

“Then God said: ‘Let us make man in our image, after 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 earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth’” (Genesis 1:26). God created man in his image; male and female he created them; in the divine image he created them (see Genesis 1:27). “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’” (Genesis 1:28). And so it happened. God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed—the sixth day (see Genesis 1:30–31).

Because God was finished with his work on the seventh day, he rested. He blessed the seventh day and made it holy.

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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

The Seven Days of Creation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Light Darkness	Upper and Lower Waters	Land Sea Vegetation	Sun Moon Stars	Birds Fishes	Animals Man and Woman	God rested.

A Discussion of the First Account of Creation

In this first account, God’s creation took place in six days. To create means to make something out of nothing. Each creative act was introduced by the words “God said”. During the first three days God prepared the world to receive the work of the next three days. Saint Thomas Aquinas referred to days four, five, and six as works of ornamentation. At Christmas time, when you place ornaments on the Christmas tree, you decorate it. It seems that God wished to decorate or ornament his first three days of creation. On day one, God created the light and the darkness. On day four, God ornamented the light and darkness with the sun, the moon, and the stars. On day two, God created the upper and lower waters. Then he filled them with the birds and fishes on day five. On day three, God created the land and sea and plants. The earth was now prepared to receive animals and man and woman on day six. After seeing that all he made was good, God rested on day seven.

The Church teaches us many things from the first account of creation. What can we learn about God and about ourselves as persons created in the image of God from this first account of creation? We come to know ourselves and the world around us. One of the first things we learn is that God existed before everything else. He is the Creator. No one created him.

With respect to creation, it is important to remember that God is one, but he is also three. In the one God, there are three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, we think of God the Father as the maker of heaven and earth, as we recite in the Nicene Creed at Sunday Mass. But, even “though the work of creation is attributed to the Father in particular, it is equally a truth of faith that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together are the one, indivisible principle of creation” (CCC 316). In other words, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit act as one in the act of creation.

God was present at the beginning of time. In fact, we know that God always was, always is, and always will be. He is everlasting. He is eternal. Some people have a problem understanding this truth. They say, “Everything has to have a beginning and an end!” Just take a moment and think about the science of mathematics. What if someone asked you to begin at the number “0” and count backward until you came to the beginning number and then begin again at the number “0” and count forward until you reached the

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end number? You'd probably tell him that numbers do not have a beginning or an end; numbers go on (in either direction) to infinity. Saint Thomas Aquinas says it best in his *Summa theologiae*: God is the uncaused cause and the unmoved mover.

We cannot imagine how powerful God must be to create everything out of nothing. And how wise he must be! God's design of creation is wonderful. He shaped our world in the first three days and then beautified it during the next three days. He takes care to provide us with every need. *Everything* comes from God, and all that comes from him is good. How often this phrase is repeated: "And God saw that it was good." In fact, when God created man and woman, the Bible says, "And behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). We not only wonder at the power of God through which all things are made and on which all things depend, but we are amazed at his wisdom and goodness. What more can God do to show us his love?

And yet God does do more: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). Out of all God's creation—the sun, the moon, the stars, the fish and birds, the plants and animals—only we, male and female, are made in his image. What does this word "image" mean? When you look at yourself in the mirror, you see a reflection, a resemblance, an image of yourself. Is this what God means? Do we look like God? How can this be? God the Father is a spirit. He does not have a body. Therefore, to be made in God's image must mean more than to be a physical reflection of God.

We resemble God in that we are persons. "All creatures bear a certain resemblance to God, most especially man, created in the image and likeness of God" (CCC 41). God is a personal being with a mind or intellect, and a will, as well as the power to reason or think and the power to choose. What makes human beings different from God's other earthly creatures is that we, like God, are persons. We are human persons. Each person of the Blessed Trinity, on the other hand, is a divine person. In the one God, there are three divine persons. "We firmly believe and confess without reservation that there is only one true God, eternal, infinite (*immensus*) and unchangeable, incomprehensible, almighty, and ineffable, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; three persons indeed, but one essence, substance or nature entirely simple" (CCC 202).² On the other hand, we are persons, but human persons, created by God. "In creating men 'male and female,' God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity" (CCC 2334).³ "Man is a person, man and woman equally so, since both were created in the image and likeness of the personal God" (CCC 2334).⁴

As the *Catechism* teaches, "Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead" (CCC 357).

God created human persons with personal souls. A soul is the spiritual part of a person. Our souls give us the power to reason or think and the power to choose. We reason or think with our minds or

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intellects, and we choose with our wills. The animals and plants are not persons. They cannot reason or think, and they cannot choose. Human persons can reason or think, and they can choose.

What is more, God created each of us with a body. Our bodies are given to us by God so that the acts of our minds and wills might be expressed in physical ways. Our bodies are a unique gift to us from God. They should always express God-like actions. Because God created each and every one of us in his image and because he values us beyond measure, we have dignity and worth. We should act according to our dignity. We should never use or mistreat ourselves and others in a way that would offend human dignity. God loves us so much that he shares his very existence with us. Because we are created in the image of God, we are like him. We too should love each other as persons and value the goodness in all of God's creation.

"I praise you, for I am wondrously made. Wonderful are your works!"

—Psalm 139:14

What are our responsibilities as beings created in the image of God?

God gives us the answer in Genesis 1:28: "And 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.'" There are two very important messages in this verse. (1) "Be fruitful and multiply". God invites Adam and Eve to form a family. He invites them to cooperate with him and to "fill the earth" with more human persons who are made in his image. He invites them to love as he loves. In other words, he asks them to share in the gift of creation by forming families and having children. (2) "Have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds



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Have the students complete the Review Questions on pages 29–31 in their textbooks.

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of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” What does this mean? God did not give Adam and Eve the world to use for mere pleasure and enjoyment. He gave them the responsibility to govern the earth, to “subdue it”. He gives us the same responsibility. We must use this responsibility wisely. We should take care of all of God’s creation. This responsibility is called stewardship. God cares for us. In order to act as persons created in the image of God, we should do the same for all of his creation.

What is more, God’s creation was made for everyone. We should share the good things of the earth with all peoples. God has given us many talents and skills. We are all asked to use our gifts, to give of ourselves, to work toward using the things of the world to benefit others. This creative work will help us to appreciate our own dignity as creatures made in the image of God. By practicing a proper stewardship over the things of the earth, we accept God’s invitation to have dominion, and we love others as God loves them.

Review Questions

1. In God’s act of creation, how are the first three days related to the next three days?

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2. V

3. V

4. V

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Review Questions (continued)

5. What does the Church teach us about God from the account of creation?

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6.

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8.

9.

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Review Questions (continued)

10. What do we do with the will?

We choose with the will.

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11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

31

Have the students take the Lesson 2 quiz 1.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Lesson 2 Quiz 1

1. What is the name given to the first five books of the Bible?

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3

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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Have the students read and discuss pages 32–34 in their textbooks.

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Read Psalm 148, and praise God for his wonderful creation!

Scripture Summary

The second account of creation is found in Genesis 2:4–25. Read these verses from your Bible, or read the following summary.

The Second Account of Creation

Based on Genesis 2:4–25

When the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, he saw that there was no man to till the soil. So 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. Then the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and he placed there the man whom he had formed. God made many different trees grow that were delightful to look at and good for food. And in the middle of the garden God planted the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

The garden was made where the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers join with two other streams to form a single river.

Then God took man and settled him in the Garden of Eden, to cultivate and to care for it. The Lord God said to man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die” (Genesis 2:16–17).

Then God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18). So God created various wild animals and birds, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them. The man gave

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names to all the cattle, the birds, and all the wild animals. But none proved to be the suitable partner for the man.

So God cast a deep sleep on the man, and he took out one of his ribs. From this rib God created a woman. When God brought her to the man, “the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man’ ” (Genesis 2:23). That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.

The man and his wife were both naked, yet they felt no shame.

A Discussion of the Second Account of Creation

This second account of creation is different from the first. The first account is an exciting drama. The writer seems to be watching the very act of creation. Each creative act is described in detail. The second account is written from a different point of view. It is chiefly concerned with the creation of man and woman. All of God’s other creative actions are mentioned to help us understand more about the creation of the human person.

What is God telling us in this second account of creation? God creates man before the rest of his creatures, indicating that they are made for man’s sake. How does God make man? God portrays himself as a potter, who molds man’s body out of clay. Then God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). This “breath of life” is man’s soul. You may remember from the discussion of the first account of creation that the soul is the spiritual part of a person. The soul gives a person the power to reason or think and the power to choose. God then places man in the Garden of Eden. He provides man with various trees that are “pleasant to the sight and good for food” (Genesis 2:9). One of these trees is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

What is unique about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? What makes it different from the other trees in the garden? God tells man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die” (Genesis 2:16–17). In this chapter of Genesis, Adam does not question God’s will. He does not wonder why the fruit of this tree is forbidden. He accepts God’s wisdom and love. He does not question God. Adam knows that God loves him, cares for him, and wishes only what is good for him. In the third chapter of Genesis, we will learn more about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

In chapter 2, verse 18, God says, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” But God does not make woman immediately. He first creates the birds and animals and brings them to Adam to name. Man is given the opportunity to be a part of God’s creative act—to show his wisdom and to name God’s creatures, “but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him” (Genesis 2:20). Adam recognizes that he is unique. Among all of God’s creatures there is none like himself. Further, he sees that there is no other human person he can love. He needs to share his love with another human person. Created in the image of God, he needs to love another human being in a God-like way. Hence, woman is created and is intended to be the full partner of his life. What joy Adam expresses when he says, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Genesis 2:23).

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Note to the teacher: You may wish to read Psalm 148 aloud with the students, and praise God for his wonderful creation!

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How wise and wonderful God is! God allows Adam to feel lonely when he is naming the animals. Adam is lonely because he doesn't have another human person to love. When he meets Eve, he knows the joy of loving another human person. God creates woman so that man and woman will be able to express their love for each other through their bodies. Adam's joy is great, because he knows that, like him, Eve is created in the image of God. Adam knows his own dignity as a person created in God's image, and therefore he values Eve. Eve also knows her dignity as a person created in God's image, and therefore she values Adam.

This is the reason why Adam and Eve felt no shame, even though they were naked. Shame is an emotion caused by guilt over a willful thought or action that is wrong. Adam and Eve knew what was good. They knew that each one of them was of incredible worth and value. Their actions toward each other reflected this knowledge. They were able to love each other in a God-like way. That is why "a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). God blessed their union and laid the foundation for the Sacrament of Matrimony, which Jesus would later institute.

God's message to us is very clear. All human beings have dignity. We have value and worth because we are created in God's image and likeness. When we see and appreciate our own dignity, we can value the dignity of others. With God's grace, we can love others as God loves us. Human beings are capable of sharing God's very life, grace. Grace is a gift from God that helps us act in a God-like way. "Grace is the help God gives us to respond to our vocation of becoming his adopted sons. It introduces us into the intimacy of the Trinitarian life" (CCC 2021). Through grace we are capable of acting in a God-like way. We can do what God created us to do. We can love him and others through him. We should also have faith in God. Faith is the theological virtue that enables us to believe and accept all that God has revealed.

Have the students complete the Review Questions on page 35 in their textbooks.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Review Questions

1. How does the second account of creation differ from the first?

Answer Key blocked out for online posting

2. I

3. V

4. V

5. V

6. V

7. V

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

LIVING THE LESSON—APPLICATION

Have the students read and discuss this section on pages 36–37 in their textbooks.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

LIVING THE LESSON—APPLICATION

The Order in Creation Can Reveal God to Us

Try to apply your understanding of mathematics to your understanding of creation.

The number that shows the probability of having fifty-two playing cards end up in a specific order after being tossed in the air is a huge number. This huge number is just for fifty-two items. Imagine what the number would be for all the various types of living beings and nonliving things in the entire universe. The order in creation makes it beyond the realm of probability that it simply came to be by chance resulting from a big bang. We know that everything was created by Almighty God.

The story is often told of Saint Maximilian Kolbe riding on a train; one day he found himself sitting next to an atheist. An atheist is a person who does not believe in God. This is a serious sin against the First Commandment. The atheist asked him, “How can you believe in God? I don’t believe in anything that I cannot see, taste, touch, smell, or feel.” Maximilian asked the man, “When you boarded this train you could not see the engine; do you believe that there is an engine at the front of this train?” The man answered, “Of course there is an engine; we are moving, you know!” Maximilian asked him, “How do you know that we are moving?” The man answered again, “Look out the window; you can see that we are moving.” Maximilian replied to the man that he knew that there was an engine on this train, not by seeing the engine himself, but by looking at creation moving past his window. Likewise, Maximilian explained that he knows that there is a God when he looks at the order and beauty in creation.

The theory of evolution and the big bang theory are just that: theories. They are not laws of science.

Dominion

Make a list of things that you can do to carry out God’s invitation to have dominion over all the earth.

1. What can you do to take care of the environment (air, water, and land)?
2. What can you do to take care of animals (your pets and other animals)?

Discuss these things with your family and friends, and then do one of the things you wrote on your list.

Respect

We have learned that we should always respect one another because we are all made in God’s image.

1. How do we sometimes use or mistreat people?
2. How should we act toward one another?
3. What can we do to help those who are mistreated?
4. What can we do to help people in need?

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Creation

Discuss these ideas with family and friends. The creation account teaches us many things about God. Take a look at the world around you.

1. Is creation continuing today? In what ways?
2. Are you a part of God’s ongoing creative work?
3. What does our part in God’s ongoing creative work teach us about God and ourselves?



Psalms of Praise

Psalms that contain praises of God the Creator:

Psalm 8	The Majesty of God and the Dignity of Man and Woman
Psalm 19	God’s Glory in the Heavens and in the Law
Psalm 65	Thanksgiving for God’s Blessings
Psalm 95	A Call to Praise and Obedience
Psalm 96	The Glories of the Lord, the King of the Universe
Psalm 104	Praise of God the Creator
Psalm 136	Hymn of Thanksgiving for the Everlasting Kindness of the Lord (verses 1–9)
Psalm 139	The All-Knowing and Ever-Present God
Psalm 147	Zion’s Grateful Praise to Her Bountiful Lord
Psalm 148	Hymn of All Creation to the Almighty Creator
Psalm 150	Final Doxology with Full Orchestra

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Note to the teacher: It is recommended that you do this quick, easy, and fun demonstration with your students. This points out to them how improbable it is that the world was created by chance. This demonstration takes only a few moments of class time. You can open the class by reading the student textbooks and finish with this demonstration.

Have one student throw fifty-two regular playing cards in the air. Explain that the goal is to have the cards land with all Spades, Hearts, Diamonds, and Clubs together. The cards are also to be in order of highest to lowest. Allow them to try a few times, cheering them on as they go. The class can join in on the cheering; you can try a second student to see if he could do better.

Materials needed:

1 deck of fifty-two playing cards

Now ask the same student to organize the cards in order while looking at them. It should take only a couple of minutes. Point out to them how when the student was able to use his intelligence it took only a couple of minutes to complete the task. Explain how some people believe that the big bang just simply happened; they do not believe that God was involved. They believe that all of creation exists simply due to chance.

Encourage the students to apply an understanding of mathematics to their understanding of creation.

Explain that the number that shows the probability of having fifty-two playing cards end up in a specific order is a huge number. This huge number is just for fifty-two items. Have the students imagine what the number would be for all the various types of living beings and nonliving things in the *entire universe*. The order in creation makes it beyond the realm of probability that it simply came to be by chance resulting from a big bang. We know that everything was created by Almighty God.

Tell the students the story that is often told of Saint Maximilian Kolbe while he was riding on a train. One day he found himself sitting next to an atheist. The

atheist asked him, “How can you believe in God? I don’t believe in anything that I cannot see, taste, touch, smell, or feel.” Maximilian asked the man, “When you boarded this train you could not see the engine; do you believe that there is an engine at the front of this train?” The man answered, “Of course there is an engine; we are moving, you know!” Maximilian asked him, “How do you know that we are moving?” The man answered again, “Look out the window; you can see that we are moving.” Maximilian replied to the man that he knew that there was an engine on this train not by seeing the engine himself, but by looking at creation moving past his window. Maximilian explained that likewise he knows that there is a God when he looks at the order and beauty in creation.

Explain that the theory of evolution and the big bang theory are just that: theories. They are not laws of science.

The Saints

The study of Genesis and, in particular, the gift of creation provides an opportunity to extend the students’ interest in and knowledge of the lives of the saints. Saint Francis of Assisi held an uncommon love for all of God’s creation. He believed that to see the world with the eyes of faith was to see the world both as a gift from God and as a sign of the presence of Christ, who redeemed the world. “The Canticle of Brother Sun” is a beautiful poem about creation. The poem lends itself to illustration and to individual or group recitation. In addition, there are many other stories and anecdotes that reflect Saint Francis’ thoughts on the everyday relationship among the created world, its creatures, people, and the Creator. The story “The Wolf of Gubbio” is one example. Encourage the students to read about the life of Saint Francis and the legends surrounding this saint, which testify to his love for God and the creatures of the world.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Have the students take the Lesson 2 test.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson 2 Test

Matching

Write the letter of the corresponding definition or explanation.

Answer Key blocked out for online posting

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CELEBRATION

Have the students read and discuss this section on page 38 in their textbooks.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

CELEBRATION

God created the world and everything in it. We pray to keep our faith in him always.

At the origin of every human being there is not something haphazard or chance, but a loving plan of God. This was revealed to us by Jesus Christ, the true Son of God and a perfect man. He knew whence he came and whence all of us have come: from the love of his Father and our Father.

Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, City of Arts and Sciences, Valencia, Spain
(July 9, 2006)

Prayer

An Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
I believe that your divine Son became man
and died for our sins
and that he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches
because you have revealed them
who are eternal truth and wisdom,
who can neither deceive nor be deceived.
In this faith I intend to live and die. Amen.

LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Prayer

The closing prayers for Lesson 2 are the Act of Faith and “The Canticle of Brother Sun” (by Saint Francis of Assisi), on pages 38 and 39, respectively, in their textbooks. Regarding faith, tell the students that the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, “Though faith is above reason, *there can never be a contradiction between faith and science* because both originate in God. It is God himself who gives to us the light of both reason and of faith” (no. 29; emphasis added). This does not mean that there can never be a contradiction between some scientists’ opinions and faith but rather between true science and the one true faith.

Prayer

An Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine persons,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
I believe that your divine Son became man
and died for our sins
and that he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches
because you have revealed them
who are eternal truth and wisdom,
who can neither deceive nor be deceived.
In this faith I intend to live and die. Amen.

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The Canticle of Brother Sun

Most High, omnipotent, good Lord,
To you alone belong praise and glory,
Honor, and blessing. No man is worthy to breathe thy name.

Be praised, my Lord, for all your creatures.

In the first place for the blessed Brother Sun,
Who gives us the day and enlightens us through you,
He is beautiful and radiant with his great splendor,
Giving witness of thee, Most Omnipotent One.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon and the stars
Formed by you so bright, precious, and beautiful.
Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Wind
And the airy skies, so cloudy and serene;
For every weather, be praised, for it is life giving.
Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Water,
So necessary yet so humble, precious, and chaste.

Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Fire, who lights up the night.
He is beautiful and carefree, robust, and fierce.

Be praised, my Lord, for our sister, Mother Earth,
Who nourishes and watches us
While bringing forth abundance of fruits with colored
Flowers and herbs.

Be praised, my Lord, for those who pardon through your love
And bear witness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
For they will be crowned by you, Most High.
Be praised, my Lord, for our sister, Bodily Death,
Whom no living man can escape.
Woe to those who die in sin.
Blessed are those who discover thy holy will.
The second death will do them no harm.
Praise and bless my Lord.
Render thanks.
Serve him with great humility. Amen.

— Saint Francis of Assisi
(translated by Lawrence Cunningham)

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LESSON 2: GENESIS—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN AND WOMAN

Psalms of Praise

Pray one of the Psalms of Praise at the end of class.

Psalms that contain praises of God the Creator:

Psalm 8	The majesty of God and the dignity of man and woman
Psalm 19	God's glory in the heavens and in the law
Psalm 65	Thanksgiving for God's blessings
Psalm 95	A call to praise and obedience
Psalm 96	The glories of the Lord, the king of the universe
Psalm 104	Praise of God the Creator
Psalm 136	Hymn of thanksgiving for the everlasting kindness of the Lord (verses 1–9)
Psalm 139	The all-knowing and ever-present God
Psalm 147	Zion's grateful praise to her bountiful Lord
Psalm 148	Hymn of all creation to the almighty Creator
Psalm 150	Final doxology with full orchestra

Art and Crafts—Creation Illustration

Have the students illustrate the six days of creation. Divide the class into six groups. Assign each group one day of creation to illustrate. Give each group a large strip of newsprint or rolled paper (at least six feet long) to use as the basis for their collage or mural. Each group can discuss and decide on the medium to be used and the style of mural. Teamwork is essential to ensure a coherent result. Display the finished work in the hallways of the school or church. Perhaps students can try to illustrate the seventh day as well.

Role-Play

Explain to the students that we have learned that we should always respect one another, because we are all made in God's image. But even though we know better, sometimes we might use or mistreat another person, or we might see someone being used or mistreated and refrain from doing anything.

Choose students to role-play the following situations. Then discuss as a class how the situation was handled.

1. If Jacob doesn't bring his math grade up, he will not be able to play on the basketball team this season. David is one of the top math students in the class, but he is not well-liked. Jacob thinks about pretending to be friends with David so that David will help him with his math homework. But Jacob doesn't really want to be friends with David. What should Jacob do?

If Jacob pretends to be friends with David, what will Jacob's friends think? What will David think? How will David feel if he finds out Jacob was just using him?

Discussion Questions

*How do you feel when you use another person?
How do you feel when another person uses you?*

2. Amanda is a very popular girl in sixth grade. She has a large group of friends, and Karen is one of her friends. Karen likes Amanda and likes being her friend, but sometimes Amanda is unkind to girls who are not in her group of friends. Lisa is a new girl in class. She is friendly and kind, but she is a little bit heavy. At lunchtime, Karen sits with Lisa. Amanda starts making fun of Lisa's weight. Then she tells Karen that Karen can't be friends with Lisa, because Lisa doesn't belong to their group. What should Karen do?

*Should Karen let Amanda tell her who her friends can be?
If Karen defends Lisa, will she lose Amanda's friendship?
If Karen doesn't defend Lisa, how will that make Karen feel?
How will Lisa feel if Karen decides not to be her friend because of what Amanda has said?*

Discussion Questions

*How do you feel when you make fun of and mistreat another person?
How do you feel when another person makes fun of you and mistreats you?
Should you let a friend tell you whom you can have for friends?*

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

LESSON FOCUS

Scripture Verse

Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may last for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

—Psalm 30:4–5

Emphasis

Three main concepts are emphasized in this lesson. First, a discussion of Original Sin is presented through the story of Adam and Eve. Second, the effects of Original Sin on the human person are related through the story of Cain and Abel. And third, a discussion of God's merciful love is demonstrated in both stories. An introduction to the word "sacrifice" and its meaning within the Mass is also presented.

Correspondence to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Consequences of Original Sin: CCC 55–58, 399–400, 402–9, 416–19

Definition of sin: CCC 1849–51, 1871–72

God is love: CCC 218–21, 231

God's mercy as Father: CCC 270, 277

God's promise of a Redeemer: CCC 410–12, 420–21

Grace: CCC 1996–2005, 2021–24

Grace conferred by the sacraments: CCC 1127–29, 1131

Grace of Baptism: CCC 1262–74, 1279–80

Jesus as our teacher and model of holiness: CCC 468–69, 516, 519–21, 561

Jesus' mission of salvation: CCC 456–60

Man as body and soul: CCC 362–68, 382

Man created in the image of God: CCC 355–57, 380–81

Man in paradise: CCC 374–79, 384

Mercy and sin: CCC 1846–48

Original Sin: CCC 388–90, 396–401, 415

Sacrifice: CCC 2099–100

Why did the Word become flesh?: CCC 456–60

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Vocabulary

sin: an offense against God; knowing that something is wrong and choosing to do it anyway

Original Sin: the first sin committed by Adam and Eve. We inherit Original Sin from Adam and Eve, which means that we are conceived and born with a wounded human nature and therefore are deprived of original holiness and original justice; we are in need of the grace of salvation won for us by Christ (CCC 1250).

enmity: hatred or hostility

sacrifice: an action in which someone or something is offered to God as a sign of love

merciful love: love that draws something good out of evil

Concepts of Faith

What do we call the first sin?

Original Sin.

How did Adam and Eve wound themselves when they chose to sin?

They lost original holiness and original justice; that is, (a) they lost their friendship with God and were not able to respond fully to God's love here on earth or to live with him in heaven, (b) they wounded their abilities to reason or think and to choose, but did not destroy them, and (c) they wounded their bodies, so that they suffered from concupiscence and would experience suffering and death.

How are we affected by Original Sin?

We are born without original holiness and original justice; that is, (a) we are born in need of the grace of salvation won for us by Christ (CCC 1250), (b) our abilities to reason or think and to choose are wounded, but not destroyed, and (c) we experience concupiscence, and our bodies will experience suffering and death.

Concepts of Faith (continued)

Why did God the Son become a man?

God the Son became man to teach us who we are and to show us how we should act as persons created in the image of God. Jesus does this by the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love. He became man to return God the Father's love and to help us return God's love. Jesus does this by reconciling us with God, who "loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Only the Savior, Jesus Christ, could make up for Original Sin and all other sins and repair our relationship with God. Only the Savior, Jesus Christ, could be our model and example.

What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is a physical sign, given to us by Jesus, through which Jesus meets us and gives us grace.

What are the effects of Baptism?

- 1. It removes Original Sin and all personal sins,*
- 2. imparts a special indelible character,*
- 3. makes us adopted children of God,*
- 4. gives us sanctifying grace,*
- 5. gives us the theological virtues,*
- 6. gives us God the Holy Spirit and his gifts, and*
- 7. makes us members of the Church.*

What is sanctifying grace?

"The grace which heals our human nature wounded by sin by giving us a share in the divine life of the Trinity." It makes us "holy and Christlike" (CCC, Glossary).

Why did God make you?

God made me to know him, to love him, and to serve him in this world so I can be happy with him in the next (heaven).

What are the three theological virtues?

Faith, hope, and charity.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Concepts of Faith (continued)

What is charity?

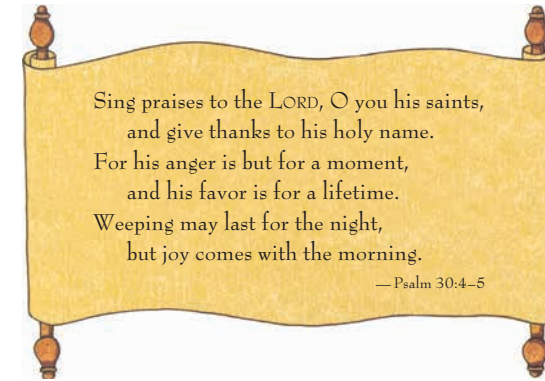
Charity is the theological virtue that enables us to love God above all things and love our neighbor as ourselves.

What is re-presented at every Mass?

The sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross is recalled and re-presented.

Read and discuss the vocabulary words and the Concepts of Faith with the students.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE



Vocabulary

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LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

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How are we affected by Original Sin?

We are born without original holiness and original justice; that is, (a) we are born in need of the grace of salvation won for us by Christ (CCC 1250), (b) our abilities to reason or think and to choose are wounded, but not destroyed, and (c) we experience concupiscence, and our bodies will experience suffering and death.

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God the Son became man to teach us who we are and to show us how we should act as persons created in the image of God. Jesus does this by the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love. He became man to return God the Father's love and to help us return God's love. Jesus does this by reconciling us with God, who "loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Only the Savior, Jesus Christ, could make up for Original Sin and all other sins and repair our relationship with God. Only the Savior, Jesus Christ, could be our model and example.

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- 7. makes us members of the Church.*

What is sanctifying grace?

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LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Concepts of Faith (continued)

Why did God make you?

God made me to know him, to love him, and to serve him in this world so I can be happy with him in the next (heaven).

What are the three theological virtues?

Faith, hope, and charity.

What is charity?

Charity is the theological virtue that enables us to love God above all things and love our neighbor as ourselves.

What is re-presented at every Mass?

The sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross is recalled and re-presented.

Dig deeper with YOUCAT and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- To learn more about Adam and Eve and Original Sin read YOUCAT 66, 68.
- To learn more about God's merciful love read YOUCAT 9 and CCC 55, 70.
- To learn more about man made in the image of God read YOUCAT 58.
- To learn more about why God made man read YOUCAT 59.

Adam and Eve were created in God's image. They were persons with souls. They had minds or intellects, and free wills. They had the abilities to reason or think and to choose in a God-like way. They shared God's life to help them to act as persons created in the image of God in the way that they lived (original holiness). They lived a life that had no sickness or death (original justice). All nature lived in harmony around them. They knew that God loved them.

Adam and Eve loved God. But God wanted to give Adam and Eve a chance to love him even more. So, in Genesis 2:16-17, God told them, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." Adam and Eve had the freedom to love God and to do as he asked. They were also told how they would harm themselves if they chose not to love God. They knew all of this, and yet they chose to eat the fruit.

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LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Proclamation

(Proclaim slowly.)

Adam and Eve turned away from God and sinned. God showed his merciful love; he promised to send a Savior.

Dig deeper with YOUCAT and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Instruct the students to look up the following references for a deeper understanding:

- To learn more about Adam and Eve and Original Sin read YOUCAT 66, 68.
- To learn more about God's merciful love read YOUCAT 9 and CCC 55, 70.
- To learn more about man made in the image of God read YOUCAT 58.
- To learn more about why God made man read YOUCAT 59.

LESSON EXPLANATION

If the students question the phrase “you shall die” from Genesis 2:17 (found in paragraph 2, p. 43, in their textbooks), explain that Adam and Eve would eventually suffer death because of their sin. It does not mean an immediate physical death. You might also speak of the spiritual death of a soul, which is caused by serious sin.

Have the students read and discuss pages 43–46 in their textbooks.

Adam and Eve were created in God's image. They were persons with souls. They had minds or intellects, and free wills. They had the abilities to reason or think and to choose in a God-like way. They shared God's life to help them to act as persons created in the image of God in the way that they lived (original holiness). They lived a life that had no sickness or death (original justice). All nature lived in harmony around them. They knew that God loved them.

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LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Scripture Summary

Read Genesis 3:1–24, which tells of Adam and Eve's sin, or read the following summary.

Adam and Eve's Sin

Based on Genesis 3:1–24

Satan told Eve that God knew that if she ate the fruit of this tree, she would be like God and as wise as God. Eve saw that the fruit was delicious; she wanted to be like God and as wise as God. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. "To be like God" is good in and of itself because we are created in the image of God. However, Satan's temptation to Eve and then to Adam was not to simply be "like God", but to take God's place. The temptation was for Adam and Eve to live life without God by displacing him.

So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then Eve gave some of the fruit to Adam, who ate it also. They both fell to Satan's temptation. "In that sin man *preferred* himself to God and by that very act scorned him. He chose himself over and against God, against the requirements of his creaturely status and therefore against his own good. Constituted in a state of holiness, man was destined to be fully 'divinized' by God in glory. Seduced by the devil, he wanted to 'be like God,' but 'without God, before God, and not in accordance with God'" (CCC 398).¹

As soon as Adam and Eve both had eaten the fruit, they knew that they had sinned. They were ashamed when they saw that they were naked, so they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. They tried to hide themselves from God and were afraid to answer him when he called to them. God said, "Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" (Genesis 3:11). Adam replied, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate" (Genesis 3:12). God asked Eve, "What is this that you have done?" Eve answered, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate" (Genesis 3:13). First, God told the serpent what would happen to him because he had tempted Adam and Eve. Then God spoke to Adam and Eve. They would have to work hard all their lives and could no longer live in the Garden of Eden. They would know suffering and death. After this, God showed his merciful love. He promised to send a Savior, and he made leather garments for them to wear.

Original Sin

What was the sin that Adam and Eve committed that had such severe effects? Was it the tree and its fruit that caused the sin? What kind of fruit was on the tree? Why did Satan choose the form of a snake?

All of these questions come to mind when we read the account of Adam and Eve and their sin. Before we answer these questions, we should remember what we have learned about the writers who were inspired by God to tell his message.

God allowed the writers to use their own thoughts and experiences to relate his message. At the time this text was written, the writers wished to represent Satan in a way that would suggest to their readers

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

all that was evil and hateful. Many of the pagan gods of the Near East were pictured as serpents. The people who worshipped these serpent gods believed that the gods possessed magical powers of evil. The writers of Genesis wanted to encourage worship of the one true God, so it was natural for them to choose the form of a serpent to represent all that was evil. We, of course, know that snakes are important to the environment and provide a beneficial function in the cycle of nature. It was the devil, or Satan, who tempted Adam and Eve, not a snake.

Does it matter what kind of fruit was on the tree? No. What matters is that Adam and Eve chose not to love God. Instead, they chose to sin. Sin is an offense against God. Adam and Eve offended God because they chose to believe the devil when he promised them that they could "be like God," but "without God, before God, and not in accordance with God." Their pride caused them to sin. They knew that to eat from the tree was wrong, because God had told them. Yet they chose to do it anyway.

This is when they sinned. Because it was the first sin, it is called Original Sin.

When Adam and Eve chose to sin, they hurt or wounded themselves in three ways. First, they lost God's life, original holiness, and their friendship with God, and were not able to fully respond to God's love here on earth and to live with God in heaven. Second, they wounded their abilities to reason or think and to choose. Their minds or intellects were "darkened" by sin, and their wills were weakened. Third, they "wounded" their bodies, letting them become subject to concupiscence, suffering, and death. Concupiscence means that their feelings and emotions were unsettled and thus produced in them an inclination to sin. These last two effects came about due to their loss of original justice.

Why were the effects of their sin so severe? We must remember that before they sinned, Adam and Eve were not exactly like us. They possessed original holiness and original justice. They were enlightened by their participation in God's life. Their minds or intellects were not darkened, and their wills were not weakened. Their minds and wills could govern their bodies and their feelings. They did not find it as easy as we do to commit sin. This is why the first sin and its consequences were so serious.

Adam and Eve represent the entire human race. They are our first parents. Just as parents pass on to their children certain traits, so Adam and Eve have passed on to us, their children, Original Sin and its effects. We are all conceived and born with Original Sin. We are without original holiness and original justice. We are in need of the grace of salvation won for us by Christ (CCC 1250). Our bodies are "wounded"; we get sick, and someday we will die. Our minds are darkened and our wills are weakened. We cannot easily govern our feelings and emotions; that is, we are affected by concupiscence. We find it easy to sin. We often act like Adam and Eve when we are tempted to do wrong. How often do we let our pride



LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Have the students complete the Review Questions on pages 46–47 in their textbooks.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

influence us to choose what is wrong? When our parents tell us to do something, how often do we think, "Who are they to tell me what to do?", "I know what is best for me", or "I'll do what I want to do"? And when we are caught in an act of disobedience or in a lie, how often do we blame someone else for our sinful behavior? Just as Eve said, "The serpent beguiled me", so we say, "My friends said it was okay." Or just as Adam said, "[Eve] gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate", so we often say, "Johnny made me do it." Just as Adam and Eve felt ashamed when they sinned and tried to hide from God, we too feel guilty when we sin and often try to cover up our sin or to hide the truth from our parents.

How are we to know the truth? How do we determine if something is a sin? We can know because God has told us. God has revealed the truth to us through the Sacred Scriptures and through the teachings of the Church. It is from these sources that we can know what is right and what is wrong. We must always remember that God created us to know him, to love him, and to serve him in this world so that we can be happy with him in the next (heaven). We should want to learn how we are to know, love, and serve him. Then, when it comes time for us to make a choice, we can remember the words of Jesus, spoken in the garden the night before he died: "Father . . . not my will, but yours, be done" (Luke 22:42).

Review Questions

1. How were Adam and Eve to show their love for God?

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3. V

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4. V

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46

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Review Questions (continued)

5. How do we know that something is wrong?

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47

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD’S MERCIFUL LOVE

Have the students read and discuss pages 48–49 in their textbooks.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD’S MERCIFUL LOVE

God’s Merciful Love

God continued to love Adam and Eve after they sinned, as he continues to love us after we sin. In Genesis 3:21, God made leather garments for Adam and Eve to wear. God provided for their needs. The clothing is a sign of his merciful love. Merciful love is love that draws something good out of evil. By providing clothing for them, God saved them from one of the effects of their sin—suffering from the elements. They must have been grateful to him for this. Their gratitude drew them closer to God. In this way God drew good out of evil. This is an example of God’s merciful love.

A more important example of God’s merciful love can be found in Genesis 3:15. God is speaking to Satan when he says, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” The word “enmity” means “hatred” or “hostility”. The Church teaches us that the woman mentioned here is Mary. The seed or offspring of Satan are his followers. The seed or offspring of Mary is Christ. This passage says that there will be hostility on the part of Satan toward Christ. In other words, Satan will hate Christ.

This passage, then, is the first promise of a Savior. This promise is a sign of God’s merciful love. God loves us so much that he brings good out of the evil of sin. He promises to send us his Son as our Savior. When the sin of our first parents destroyed the relationship between God and man, God did not abandon us but almost immediately promised to send a Savior to redeem us (see Genesis 3:6, 15). Only the Savior could make up for Original Sin and all other sins and repair our relationship with God. God the Son became man to teach us who we are and to show us how we should act as persons created in the image of God. Jesus does this by the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love. He became man to return God the Father’s love and to help us return God’s love. Jesus does this by reconciling us with God, who “loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10). It is through Jesus that we are drawn closer to God. It is through Jesus, God the Son, that we are drawn closer to God the Father. When Jesus chose to do what his Father asked and suffered Death on the Cross, he showed us the meaning of perfect love. By his teachings and example, Jesus shows us who we are and how we should act as persons created in the image of God. Jesus does this by the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love.

Although man was banished from the immediate presence of God, God continued to show his merciful love to his people, to reveal himself and his plan for salvation. In the next few lessons we will see that after Adam and Eve, God entered into covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. With each covenant, the relationship between God and his people continued to grow; and the number of people included in the covenant increased. “God . . . revealed himself fully by sending his own Son, in whom he . . . established his covenant for ever” (CCC 73). Down through the ages, God was preparing his people for the fulfillment of revelation, the coming of the Savior promised to our first parents in Genesis 3:15.

God’s merciful love is also expressed through the sacraments. The sacraments are physical signs, given to us by Jesus, through which Jesus meets us and gives us grace. One of the sacraments Jesus Christ

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD’S MERCIFUL LOVE

gave us is the Sacrament of Baptism. It is the first sacrament that we receive; the *Catechism* tells us that Baptism gives us “access to the other sacraments” (CCC 1213). Baptism removes Original Sin and all personal sins (if the person is above about seven years old), gives us sanctifying grace, makes us members of the Church, and gives us the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. These virtues “inform all the moral virtues and give life to them” (CCC 1841). Baptism imparts a special indelible character that changes us. This change is caused by the Sacrament of Baptism. The character makes us more like Christ in a permanent, indelible way. Because of the baptismal character, one is made capable of receiving the other sacraments. This indelible spiritual sign consecrates us for Christian worship, especially the Mass. Finally, Baptism allows us to live with God someday in heaven. When we receive the sacraments, the grace we are given restores our friendship with God, draws us closer to him, and helps us to act as baptized persons created in the image of God.

Review Questions

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Have the students complete the Review Questions on pages 49–50 in their textbooks, then read and discuss pages 50–52.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Review Questions (continued)

5. What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is a physical sign, given to us by Jesus, through which Jesus meets us and gives us grace.

6. What are the three theological virtues?

Faith, hope, and charity.

7. What does the Sacrament of Baptism do for us?

It gives us sanctifying grace, which removes Original Sin and all personal sins, makes us members of the Church, and makes it possible for us to live someday with God in heaven.

Scripture Summary

Read Genesis 4:1–16 for the scriptural account of Cain and Abel, or read the following summary.

Cain and Abel

Based on Genesis 4:1–16

Adam and Eve named their first son Cain. Their second son they called Abel. Abel became a shepherd, while Cain was a farmer. It was the custom in those days to thank the Lord for his goodness and to show love for him by offering a burnt sacrifice. The best animal of the flock or the best fruits of the harvest were given back to the Lord in this way. Abel, who was a shepherd, brought one of the best lambs from his flock. Cain brought some of the fruit from his harvest. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and accepted his offering. But God did not accept Cain's offering. Perhaps the fruit that Cain offered was not his best produce. Perhaps Cain did not offer his sacrifice in a spirit of love and thanksgiving. Cain became angry with the Lord and jealous of his brother. The Lord asked Cain why he was angry. He told Cain to take control of himself and to rid himself of resentment.

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LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

But Cain would not control his anger. He plotted against his brother. Cain said to his brother, Abel, "Let us go out to the field" (Genesis 4:8). And when they were in the field, Cain attacked Abel and killed him. Later, when the Lord asked Cain where Abel was, Cain replied, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9). The Lord knew that Cain had murdered his brother. He then told Cain the consequences of his terrible sin. Cain would no longer be able to work the field in which he had murdered his brother. He would no longer be able to live with his family. Wherever he went, he would not be a successful farmer. He would, instead, "be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth" (Genesis 4:12). Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear" (Genesis 4:13). Cain was afraid that, with no family and no home, there would be no one to protect him from harm. So the Lord put a mark on Cain and said, "If anyone slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold" (Genesis 4:15). Then Cain left the Lord's presence and became a nomad, wandering from place to place throughout the desert.



A Discussion of the Scripture Account of Cain and Abel

The account of Cain and Abel can teach us several things. It is an account that illustrates the effects of Original Sin. One of these effects is that the human person finds it easy to sin. It was difficult for Cain to control his concupiscence. In Genesis 4:7, God says to Cain, "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it." God is encouraging Cain to do good and warning Cain that it can be easy to sin. The writer of this passage chose to use something "lurking" behind a door to represent sin. When we think of something lurking behind a door, waiting to "get" us, pictures of monsters and evil spirits come into our minds. These can be frightening! Is God trying to scare Cain? Of course not. God is trying to make Cain, and us, understand that there are temptations in our world that can lead to sin. We all have an inclination to give in to these temptations. The temptation to sin can often be very difficult to avoid or to overcome. And yet God gives Cain hope that he can overcome the inclination to sin and be the "master" of sin.

God's grace can help all of us to choose to act as persons created in the image of God. There is never a temptation to sin that is so great that God's grace cannot help us overcome it.

But Cain did not master his feelings of anger; he sinned. He chose to let his feelings influence him so that he did not act as he should as a person created in the image of God. These sins increased in their intensity until he murdered his own brother. Cain did not make any effort to change his ways. One sin led to another until Cain totally rejected his brother. He did not love his brother as he should have. In killing Abel, Cain not only ended the life of his brother, but he seriously hurt his relationship with God, and he hurt himself. In sinning, Cain created a world for himself that was very different from the one God wished for him.

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LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

God is a loving God, who cares for all his children. As persons created in the image of God, we have a responsibility to love and to care for all our brothers and sisters in the world. The answer to the question "Am I my brother's keeper?" is a very definite "Yes", even when we have to master our emotions to care for people. God gives us the gifts we need to be able to be "our brother's keeper". He gives us sanctifying grace in Baptism, and at Baptism we receive the theological virtues. One virtue we receive is charity. Charity is the theological virtue that enables us to love God above all things and love our neighbor as ourselves.

The account of Cain and Abel also teaches us about sacrifice. A sacrifice is an action in which someone or something is offered to God as a sign of love. Offering sacrifice was a religious custom practiced by most ancient civilizations. Ancient peoples, in order to show their love for God, to give thanks, or to praise him, often offered something precious or valuable, such as prize crops or a spotless lamb. "Because God blesses the human heart, it can in return bless him who is the source of every blessing" (CCC 2645). The account of Cain and Abel describes the offering of such sacrifices.

In the Letter to the Hebrews (Hebrews 11:4), we read that it was not what Abel offered, but his faith that made his gift acceptable. Abel's sacrifice was accepted because he offered it with an attitude of faith. Cain's attitude of anger and jealousy showed that he offered his sacrifice with a different spirit.

Abel's sacrifice, pleasing and acceptable in God's sight, prefigures, or shows ahead of time, another more important sacrifice. That sacrifice is perfect, holy, and spotless and is offered by God himself for our redemption, or salvation, from our sins. It is the sacrifice of the spotless Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, on the Cross on Calvary. That sacrifice on Calvary—the same sacrifice offered in an unbloody manner—is recalled and re-presented again every time Mass is celebrated. Jesus offered himself in love to the Father.

When we attend Mass, we should offer ourselves with Jesus to the Father in a spirit of love and faith. Do we come to Mass with an attitude of sincere faith? Do we make an effort to praise and to adore God with our prayers? Do we thank God for all the wonderful things he has given us? Do we pray and ask him to help us when we are troubled? Do we tell him that we are truly sorry for our sins? Or do we just sit in the pew and passively wait for the hour to end? How many times have we grumbled to ourselves, "Why do I have to go to Mass?" or "I don't get anything out of church; it's boring." "The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover, the making present and the sacramental offering of his unique sacrifice, in the liturgy of the Church which is his Body" (CCC 1362). Understanding the meaning of offering sacrifice can help us answer these questions. We offer sacrifice to praise and to adore God, our Creator, to thank him for his many blessings, to ask him for help when we are in need, and to show him that we are sorry for our sins. The choice to worship God, to express our love for him, is one that is freely made. God will not force us to love him. If we offer sacrifice with a spirit like Cain's, we may face the consequences of wandering from place to place without the joy and comfort of God's grace. The spiritual riches to be gained by offering ourselves to God in a spirit of sincere faith are beyond all measure. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" (2 Cor 13:13) have to remain with us always and bear fruit beyond the Eucharistic celebration" (CCC 1109).

Have the students complete the Review Questions on page 53 in their textbooks.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Review Questions

1. What effects of Original Sin are illustrated by the Bible account of Cain and Abel?

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2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Have the students take the Lesson 3 quiz 1.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson 3 Quiz 1

1. What is a sacrament?

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

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Note to the teacher: Anger and jealousy are feelings that are neither bad nor sinful in themselves. They become sinful when we freely choose to allow them to influence our actions so that we do not act as persons created in the image of God.

LIVING THE LESSON—APPLICATION

During the reading and discussion of this section in the student textbook, further discussion of the example in paragraph 1, on page 54, might help to illustrate the point that a sin is a social action. Stealing is a sin. When we steal, we hurt our relationship with God and hurt ourselves. Stealing also sets a bad example for a friend who may be with us. We might brag about “getting away with it” to some of our friends, and they might be tempted to steal. The price of a candy bar could be increased by the store owner whose livelihood is hurt by stealing. Draw these conclusions from your students.

Here might be an opportunity to lead a discussion about resisting peer pressure in more serious situations, such as drug abuse, or simply in doing unpopular acts of kindness. (1) We can literally be our brother’s or sister’s keeper when we babysit. (2) By acting as persons created in the image of God, we set a good example. This is a way of caring for others. (3) We can do a kind deed for someone, such as mowing a neighbor’s yard or running an errand for an older person. (4) We can visit the sick. (5) We can donate part of our allowance to the poor.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Have the students read and discuss this section on page 54 in their textbooks.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

LIVING THE LESSON—APPLICATION

1. You have learned that one effect of Original Sin is that we find it difficult to make our minds and wills master our feelings. In other words, we suffer from concupiscence. For example, suppose that you are walking home from school. You are hungry and really want a candy bar. But you do not have enough money to buy one. You are walking by a store. You know that it would be easy to go into the store and to sneak a candy bar into your book bag when the clerk isn't looking. You know that it is wrong to steal. But your stomach is growling! What do you do? Discuss this situation with your friends and family.
2. You have learned that when we sin, we not only hurt our relationship with God, but we hurt ourselves and our relationship with others. In other words, sin is not only an action against God, but it is also a social action. Think of an example that would illustrate that sin hurts our relationship with others.
3. In the Scripture account of Cain and Abel, when God asked Cain if he knew where Abel was, Cain replied, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" The Church teaches us that we should be responsible for and care for each other. Discuss the many ways in which we can demonstrate that we are our "brother's keeper".



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Have the students take the Lesson 3 test.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson 3 Test

Matching

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LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

TAKE HOME

Have each student take home a copy of the family notes for Lesson 3.

ACTIVITIES

Have the students complete worksheets 1 and 2 on pages 56–58.

LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

ACTIVITIES

Worksheet 1: The Gift of Grace

God, in his goodness and merciful love, has given us the gift of grace to help us to live as persons created in the image of God. "The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it" (CCC 1999).

Directions: Below are listed some of the ways in which our relationship with God is strengthened. Write a short paragraph describing how each of these opportunities can help you become a better reflection of God.

PRAYING

ATTENDING MASS

RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS

RECEIVING THE HOLY EUCHARIST

GOING TO CONFESSION

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LESSON 3: ORIGINAL SIN, THE FIRST MURDER, AND GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

Worksheet 2: God's Merciful Love and the Existence of Pain and Suffering

If God loves us so much, then why does he allow pain and suffering to exist? You have learned that one effect of Original Sin is that we experience suffering and death. Knowing this, however, does not always make it easy to understand or accept.

Some reasons for suffering are easier to understand and accept than others. For example, if a person commits a terrible crime, it is easy for us to understand that that person should be punished for committing the crime by going to jail.

But what about the suffering that is caused by a natural disaster, such as an earthquake, or by an illness, such as cancer? The suffering caused by these examples is not easy to understand or accept. No terrible crime or sin was committed by the people affected. We should never think that God sent an earthquake because the people it affected were bad. God does not punish people for sin by sending illness or disasters. And yet many innocent people suffer from illness or disasters.

And so we ask the question, why does God allow suffering to exist? We will probably never be able to answer this question completely. God does show us, however, that good can be drawn out of evil. Remember, God loves us mercifully. Even the suffering and Death of his Son, Jesus, was followed by the Resurrection. Time and time again, God shows us his merciful love.

Directions: Read the following story about a disaster. In the space given, write your thoughts about the good that can be drawn from the suffering caused by this disaster.

You have lived next door to your friend John since you were in the first grade. Your family and his are more than just good neighbors; you are all good friends. One night, John's house burns down. Luckily, no one is hurt. But the entire house and all the family belongings are destroyed in the fire. Your neighbors have nowhere to live, no clothes, no furniture, nothing.

Possible answers:

This disaster can provide an opportunity to show your love for your friends. You can help them (a) by thanking God that no one was hurt; (b) by offering them a place to stay; (c) by offering them food and clothing; (d) by asking others to pray for your friends and to help them, etc.

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