

November

OVERVIEW

EXPLORING THE PROFESSION OF FAITH



VERSE OF THE MONTH

GENESIS 1:27

God created mankind in His image; in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.

SAINT OF THE MONTH

OLD TESTAMENT PATRIARCHS

LESSON 3

MADE IN HIS IMAGE, BUT FALLEN FROM GRACE



Overview

Your children will begin to learn what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God. We also begin to see the story of creation unfold: the Original Sin of Adam and Eve lost for them and all humanity the friendship and harmony they shared with God, each other, and all of creation. But although man offended God, God's mercy never faded. He promised a Redeemer and entered into covenants with mankind..

Catechism Articles to Read

- › 54-73
- › 287-289
- › 343
- › 355-356
- › 374-379

Words to Know

- › Immortal Soul
- › Original Holiness
- › Original Justice
- › Grace
- › Original Sin
- › Beatific Vision
- › Salvation History
- › Covenant
- › Advent
- › Prophet

LESSON 4

CALLED TO BE HIS PEOPLE, PROMISED A SAVIOR



Overview

Even though Adam and Eve lost the life of grace in their souls, God still loved them and wanted them to be able to live with Him forever in Heaven. So from the time of Adam and Eve's sin, God promised a Redeemer and entered into covenants with mankind.

Catechism

Articles to Read

- › 54-73
- › 287-289

Words to Know

- › Salvation History
- › Covenant
- › Advent
- › Prophet



BY THE END OF THIS MONTH, YOUR CHILDREN SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- ✓ Recite this month's Scripture Memorization
- ✓ Define this month's Words to Know
- ✓ Retell the story of the Fall
- ✓ Explain some ways we can know that God keeps His promises
- ✓ Tell you about Noah, Abraham, and Moses



YOUR *Catholic Home*

SCRIPTURE READING & LECTIO DIVINA



If your family is not in the habit of reading Scripture together, this month – with lots of Bible readings in the activities – would be a great time to start!

Practice It!

Set aside five to ten minutes each evening to read the Bible together. Children love being read to, and it is a wonderful way to spend quality time together. You can read with smaller children next to you or in your lap. Have older children take turns reading a few verses at a time.

With your older children, try praying together with the ancient art of *Lectio Divina*, which is done in the following manner: Choose a Gospel passage, read it aloud, and then pause for several seconds of silence. Ask your spouse and children if any word or phrase stood out to them. Then have one of your older children read the passage aloud again. Devote a few minutes of silence to discern what God is calling each of you to do through His Word. Conclude with an *Our Father*.

Celebrate!

OLD TESTAMENT PATRIARCHS

The patriarchs, prophets and certain other Old Testament figures have been and always will be honored as saints in all the Church's liturgical traditions.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 61



THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH:

- 1 Pray for a departed loved one, and remember him by doing a special activity he enjoyed together as a family.
- 2 Have a fish dinner to celebrate the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle on **November 30**.

VERSE OF THE MONTH GENESIS 1:27

God created mankind in His image; in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.

REMEMBER!

It is a Spiritual Work of Mercy to pray for the living and the dead. In November, we pray for the faithful departed in a special way.

Add this prayer to your Prayer Before Meals:

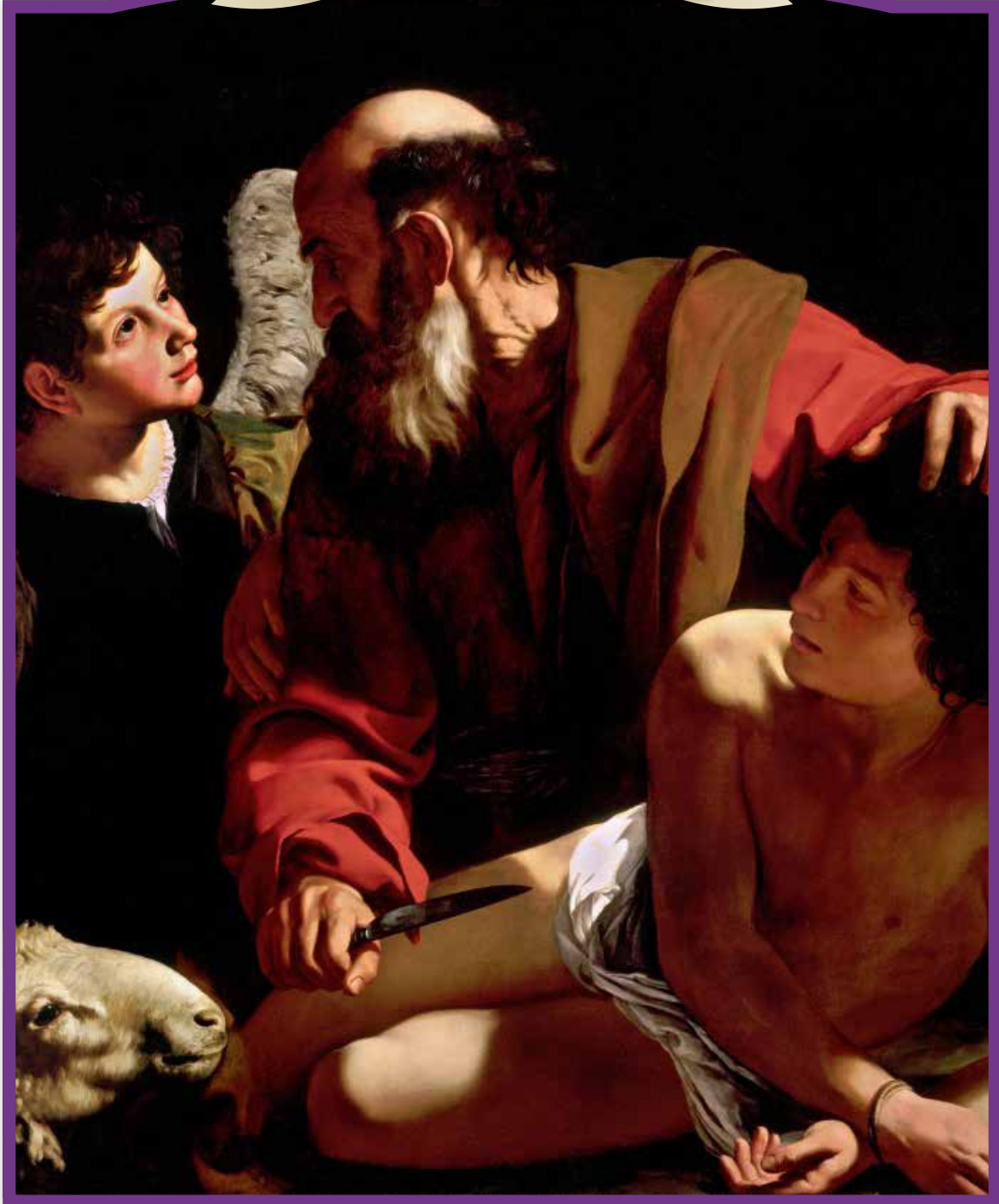
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let the perpetual light shine upon them. And may the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

MEMORIZE!

God made covenants with mankind. The major Old Testament covenants were with **Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David**.

OLD TESTAMENT PATRIARCHS


SAINT OF THE MONTH






CAR

Conversations

— — — — —  — — — — —

God keeps His promises! Share a story about a time you saw God's hand working in your life.

— — — — —  — — — — —

What is your favorite part of each Old Testament story you read this month? Take turns naming a patriarch and sharing what you liked most about his story.









LESSON 3

MADE IN HIS IMAGE, BUT FALLEN FROM GRACE



Activities and Key Concepts

Activities you will do with your children	Key concepts the activity will teach	Recommended age and time
 Made in His Image Mirror activity	Humans reflect God with out intellect, free will, and capacity to love.	Ages: Ages 5-8 Time: 5 minutes
 I Reflect the Image of God Storybook activity	Review of what it means to be created in God's image.	Ages: All ages Time: 10 minutes
 Body and Soul Family discussion	Our bodies will die one day, but our souls live forever.	Ages: All ages Time: 5 minutes
 What Is Grace? Discussion and activity	Grace is the life of God in our soul.	Ages: All ages Time: 15 minutes
 Fall from Grace Scripture Reading and activity	There were great consequences to the Original Sin of Adam and Eve.	Ages: All ages Time: 10 minutes
 Fallen, But Loved by God Family discussion	God always loves us and always keeps His promises.	Ages: All ages Time: 5 minutes

LESSON 3

WORDS TO KNOW



The Words to Know are words that you and your children should know and understand at the end of this month. Use your best judgment about which words to expect each of your children to learn. For older children, you may want to have them create flashcards to help them remember what they have learned.

Immortal Soul The spiritual part of a human person that gives life to the body. It will live forever. It is what allows us to know, choose freely, and love.

Original Holiness The state of grace and friendship with God that Adam and Eve had before Original Sin.

Original Justice The harmony with God, each other, and all creation that Adam and Eve had before Original Sin.

Grace The life of God in our soul. It is a free gift from God.

Original Sin The sin of Adam and Eve. Because of Original Sin, we are born without grace in our souls.

Beatific Vision Seeing God face-to-face in Heaven.

Apostles' Creed The most important truths about our Catholic Faith written down together. These include many of the truths God wants us to have faith in.

Please choose from the activities for the month.

It is not necessary to complete every activity. We offer a wealth of activities to choose from because each child learns differently, so select the activities that best suit the learning needs of your family. Feel free to shorten or improvise on each activity as necessary. You know best what your family needs!



Made in His image

MIRROR ACTIVITY

Age Level: Ages 5-8

Recommended time: 15 minutes

What you will need: A hand mirror

What you need to know before you begin:

Human beings have a unique place in creation. When God created human beings, He said that His creation was *very good*. The *Catechism* teaches that man is the “summit” of the Creator’s work. Man is “the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake, and he alone is called to share, by knowledge and love, in God’s own life” (CCC 356).

“God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:27). We are created in the image of God, but what does that mean? It does not mean that we look like Him. Rather, it means that human persons are created with intellect, free will, and the capacity to love. This means that we can:

- › use our reason to know things
- › choose between right and wrong
- › love God and one another

These gifts that we have received from God allow us to enter into communion with other persons and, by grace, to enter into a relationship with God Himself. Of all the creatures on earth, only man can share in the divine life of God. This capacity is why we say that man is created in the image and likeness of God.

Activity

- A. Begin by asking your children, “How are people different from all the other things God created?” Have a family discussion about all the ways that we can see that human beings are different than the rest of creation. For example: people can talk, ask questions, build skyscrapers, explore the universe, and do other things that plants and animals cannot do.
- B. Hold a hand mirror in front of each child and have him or her make a silly face. Explain that what they see is their reflection. This reflection is called an image. Now turn your back to the child(ren), placing the mirror in such a way that they can see you in the mirror. Make different expressions (have fun!) and have the children tell you what they are doing.
- C. Let this lead into a discussion covering the following points:
 - Our image in the mirror tells something about us.
 - As images of God, we teach others about God and how He loves us.
 - Since we are created in His image, we should try to be like God. When we choose to act like God, we are like mirrors – we reflect God.
- D. With your older children, discuss with them what you read about what it means to be made in the image of God: that we are created with intellect, free will, and the capacity to love.



Connection to the Catechism

“God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. Man occupies a unique place in creation: he is “in the image of God”... (CCC 355)



ACTIVITY 2

I Reflect the Image of God

STORYBOOK ACTIVITY

Age Level: All ages

Recommended time: 10 minutes

What you need: Paper Figure Activity (**page 45** in the children's activity book), aluminum foil, markers and/or crayons

Activity

This activity is intended to help your children meditate on how each of us is an “image” or reflection of God.

- › You or your children should trace the figure on **Paper Figure Activity (page 45 in the children's activity book)** and cut it out, one for each family member.
- › On the figure have your children write ways in which they reflect God. Emphasize that God is love, and we reflect Him best when we love others unselfishly.
- › When they are finished, have them decorate the figure, glue a circle of tin foil or other shiny, reflective material over the face of the figure, and paste the figures in your Storybook.



Connection to the Catechism

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)



Body and Soul

FAMILY DISCUSSION

Age Level: All ages

Recommended time: 5 minutes

What you need to know before you begin:

“Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). As this verse from Scripture shows us, man is created with both a body and a spirit. We are part of the physical world (the things that we can see and touch) and part of the spiritual world (that which is invisible to man and immortal).

“The human body shares in the dignity of the ‘image of God’” (CCC 364). The entire human person is intended to become, in Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore we should not think of our bodies, as many do today, as “empty shells” that house our souls. We should honor and respect our bodies.

The soul brings life to the body. Man’s soul is “that which is of greatest value in him, that by which he is most especially in God’s image” (CCC 363). Our souls are where we find our capacity to know, to choose, and to love. Although parents share in God’s act of creation (called procreation) by producing children, each person’s soul is created immediately by God Himself. Parents do not produce their child’s soul.

When the body degenerates beyond a certain point, the body perishes, but the soul does not. A spiritual soul lives forever – either in Heaven or in hell. At the end of time God will reunite the body with the soul, and once again man will exist as God created him.

Discussion

Lead your family in a discussion on how every human being has both a body and a spirit (or soul). Both our bodies and souls share in the image of God, and even though our bodies will one day perish, our souls are eternal and will live forever. You may want to ask questions like:

- › Since our bodies reflect the image of God, how do you think we should treat our bodies? *We should honor and respect our bodies.*
- › What part of us – our bodies or our souls – reflect God’s image in a special way? (Hint: It is the part that lets us know, choose, and love.) *Our soul.*
- › Do you know who creates each person’s soul? *God does! In fact, the Bible tells us in Jeremiah that He knew you before you were even created by your parents. “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you” (Jeremiah 1:5).*

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Spiritual and Material Creation

Age Level: Ages 10 and up

Recommended time: 10 minutes

What you need: Spiritual Creation and Material Creation (**page 47** in the children’s activity book)

With your older children, go over the diagram on **Spiritual Creation and Material Creation (page 47 in the children’s activity book)**. Suggestions:

- › Trace the lines together.
- › Explain the differences between material (things we can see and touch) and spiritual (invisible) creation: Man is the only part of God’s creation that shares in both the material and spiritual order. Because of our immortal souls we stand above all the rest of material creation. Animals do not have immortal souls and cannot reason, choose freely, and love as we can. Angels, on the other hand, are pure created spirits. They have no bodies. In this way, human beings are a bridge between material and spiritual creation.
- › Remind your children of the Nicene Creed they say at Mass each week, that God is “the Creator of all things visible and invisible.”
- › Ask your children how the diagram shows the unique place of man in creation. Help them to understand that man is the only creature with a body and an immortal soul and is like a “bridge” between spiritual and material creation.



ACTIVITY 4

What Is Grace?

DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY

Age Level: All ages

Recommended time: 15 minutes

What you need: Our Life of Grace (**page 48** in the children's activity book), markers and/or crayons

What you need to know before you begin:

Man was uniquely created in a state of Original Holiness and Original Justice. God gave Adam and Eve all the knowledge that they would need, and their wills did not tend to sin. They were God's friends, and they shared in His divine life. In other words, they were filled with grace. Grace is the life of God in our soul. It is a free gift from God, and it is necessary for anyone to live eternally with Him in Heaven.

Grace first comes to a person when he or she is baptized. Before Baptism a person's soul is dark. There is no grace in it. But, in Baptism, the darkness turns to light as the life of God (grace) fills the person's soul. Grace continues to grow in our soul as we obey God, pray, and receive the Sacraments. But grace decreases in our souls when we sin, choosing ourselves over God and others.

Activity

- A. Share with your children any information about grace that you read above that you feel is appropriate.
- B. Tell your children that we can imagine that grace is the flame on a candle. When we are open to God and live as He wants us to, the flame on our candle (our life of grace) grows taller and brighter.

- C. Give your children different actions we can take and ask them to draw pictures showing how their candle might look. For each action, what happens to our life of grace?
- When we share with someone. *Flame grows taller.*
 - When we care for someone who is sick. *Flame grows taller.*
 - When we help the poor. *Flame grows taller.*
 - When we go to Mass. *Flame grows taller.*
 - If we say mean things to someone. *Flame grows smaller.*
 - If we disobey our parents. *Flame grows smaller.*
 - When we pray to God. *Flame grows taller.*



Connection to the Catechism

Grace is favor, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life. (CCC 1996)



ACTIVITY 5

Fall from Grace

SCRIPTURE READING AND ACTIVITY

Age Level: All ages, with one activity for children ages 5-8 and another for children ages 8 and up

Recommended time: 10 minutes

What you need: Bible, paper plate, Original Holiness & Justice and the Fall (**page 49** in the children's activity book)

What you need to know before you begin:

One of the gifts that God gave to Adam and Eve was the gift of free will. But Adam and Eve used their free will to rebel against God. Tempted by the devil, they ate the only thing God told them not to eat. The Church calls the sin of Adam and Eve Original Sin. It is called original because it happened at the origin of man and is passed on to each person at his origin.

Great consequences arose from Original Sin. Adam and Eve lost their state of Original Holiness. The grace that filled their souls was gone, and their wills tended toward sin. Without grace, the gates of Heaven were closed to them. They also lost the state of Original Justice: the harmony that had existed between them and all of nature. They had to leave paradise and live a life of ignorance, hard work, and suffering. They would experience sickness and death. They had no hope of seeing God face-to-face (called the Beatific Vision) and living forever with Him in Heaven.

Adam and Eve were real people. As the descendants of Adam and Eve, all people are born in the state of Original Sin – not Original Holiness and Original Justice.

Scripture Reading

Read aloud to your children the story of the Fall from grace of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. When you finish the reading, explain that we call this first sin of Adam and Eve Original Sin. Share with your children anything you learned in the information above that you think is appropriate for their age(s).

Activity for Children Ages 5-8

To help your younger children understand the consequences of Original Sin, have them draw a sad face on one side of a paper plate, and a happy face on the other side. Ask them to flip the plate over as you ask them how Adam and Eve would have felt after each of the following events before and after Original Sin. For younger children, it is important to emphasize that sin makes us unhappy, and obedience makes us happy.

- › When Adam first saw Eve. *Happy.*
- › When they would walk with God in the garden. *Happy.*
- › When they were safe with all the animals. *Happy.*
- › When there was no sickness or death. *Happy.*
- › When they disobeyed God. *Sad.*
- › When they were banished from the Garden of Eden. *Sad.*

Activity for Children Ages 8 and Up

Work with your older children to fill-in-the-blanks on the **Original Holiness & Justice and the Fall (page 49 in the children's activity book)**. Answers to the activity are as follows:

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Image, Likeness | 5. Reason, choose | 8. Beatific Vision |
| 2. Soul | freely, and love | 9. Original Sin |
| 3. Holiness, Justice | 6. Spiritual, material | 10. Love |
| 4. Immortal | 7. Grace | |



Connection to the Catechism

Revelation makes known to us the state of original holiness and justice of man and woman before sin: from their friendship with God flowed the happiness of their existence in paradise. (CCC 384)



Fallen, but Loved by God

FAMILY DISCUSSION

Age Level: All ages

Recommended time: 5 minutes

What you need to know before you begin:

The story of the Christian Faith is a love story, and the main characters are God and His people. Like any epic love story, the story of our Faith is filled with discovery, generosity, tenderness, intimacy, drama, pain, guilt, mercy, and forgiveness. But unlike any other story of love, God, the pursuer, is unfailingly faithful to His beloved, His Chosen People, us, despite His beloved's persistent unfaithfulness.

We encounter this love story first and foremost in Scripture. The Bible is the written record of the story of our salvation. We call this salvation history because God made Himself known in specific ways, to prepare His people for the gift of salvation.

God chose for Himself a people to whom He would reveal His plan for salvation. These people – the Israelites (the Jews) – were the ones through whom the Savior would come.

Discussion

- A. Ask your children: “Adam and Eve sinned when they chose themselves over God. But God continued to love them. How can we tell that God never stopped loving them?” Ask older children to write their answer(s) on a separate sheet of paper before you continue.
- B. Have a family discussion about all the ways we see God continue to love Adam and Eve even right after they disobey Him. For example:

- › Good and loving parents teach their children right from wrong. No loving parent would have no consequences for bad behavior.
 - › God punishes the serpent, because he had influenced them to sin.
 - › He gives Adam and Eve clothes, which shows He will continue to provide for their needs.
 - › Most of all, we know God loves humanity because He sent His Son to be with us, and make it possible for us to go to Heaven!
- C. Explain that right after Adam and Eve’s fall from grace, God began a plan to reconcile humanity with Himself. The story of his love for us is recorded in Scripture. We call this salvation history because God made Himself known in specific ways, to prepare His people for the gift of salvation. He did this by entering into covenants with mankind. A covenant is a solemn promise that creates family bonds. God promised to love and protect His people. In return they promised to be obedient and loyal to God – though beginning with Adam, they broke those promises over and over. But one thing that we can learn from the story of salvation history is that God was always faithful. As we will see in coming lessons, God is a promise keeper!



Connection to the Catechism




Beyond the witness to himself that God gives in created things, he manifested himself to our first parents, spoke to them and, after the fall, promised them salvation (cf. Gen 3:15) and offered them his covenant. (CCC 70)

LESSON 4

CALLED TO BE HIS PEOPLE, PROMISED A SAVIOR



Activities and Key Concepts

Activities you will do with your children	Key concepts the activity will teach	Recommended age and time
 Covenants in Scripture Reading and activity	God entered into covenants with humanity through Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.	Ages: All ages Time: 20 minutes
 God Is a Promise Keeper Storybook activity	Review of God's promises.	Ages: All ages Time: 10 minutes
 Bible Promises Stars Advent preparation activity	Scripture tells us how God wants to care for us.	Ages: All ages Time: 10 minutes

LESSON 4

WORDS TO KNOW



The Words to Know are words that you and your children should know and understand at the end of this month. Use your best judgment about which words to expect each of your children to learn. For older children, you may want to have them create flashcards to help them remember what they have learned.

Salvation History The story of how God prepared the world for the coming of the Redeemer and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the way Jesus accomplished His salvation for all people.

Covenant A solemn agreement made between two parties.

Advent A season in the Church year leading up to Christmas, during which we wait and prepare for Christ's coming.

Prophet A person chosen by God to speak for Him.



Covenants in Scripture

SCRIPTURE READING AND ACTIVITY

Age Level: All ages, with one activity for children ages 5-11 and another for children 11 and up

Recommended time: 20 minutes, you may wish to break up this Scripture Reading over the course of several days, perhaps reading one story each night at bedtime

What you need: Bible, Coloring and Activity Pages: Noah, Moses, and Joseph (**page 51** in the children's activity book), God's Mercy and Covenants Study Sheet (**page 55** in the children's activity book)

Scripture Reading

Read the following chapters of the Bible together with your children and, if needed, provide a summary for each one along the lines below.

Covenant with Noah (Genesis 6:5-9:17)

People had become so wicked that God was sorry He had made man. He decided to flood the earth. He told Noah, a righteous man, to build an ark to hold pairs of animals, and Noah's family. After the flood God promised Noah he would never flood the earth again, and the sign of this promise was the rainbow.

Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15:1-21; Genesis 17:1-27; Genesis 22:1-18)

God made Abraham many promises: a land (or nation), a name (or dynasty), and a worldwide blessing. God promised Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars. Eventually God gave him and his wife a son, Isaac. God put Abraham to the test and told him to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham obeyed God because he had faith (he trusted God), and God spared Isaac and rewarded Abraham's faith. Through Abraham, God began to unfold his promise to provide a Savior.

Covenant with Moses (Exodus 3-12:32; Exodus 19)

God told Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. God performed many miracles to make this deliverance happen. God gave His people the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are not only for the Israelites: they are also for us. They are God's Law.

Covenant with David (2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17:11-14)

God promised that the Messiah would come from David's line, and He would establish an everlasting throne with His Son.

Activity for Children Ages 5-11

Have your children turn to **Coloring and Activity Pages: Noah, Moses, and Joseph (page 51 in the children's activity book)**. Read the information aloud to your younger children or retell the Bible stories that you read and have them color the pictures and do the activities. For the activity "Joseph's Predicament," read the story of Joseph in Genesis 37:3-36 aloud to your children and help them unscramble the words.

Answers to Joseph's Predicament:

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Joseph | 5. Kill |
| 2. Dream | 6. Cistern |
| 3. Flocks | 7. Egypt |
| 4. Dreamer | 8. Sackcloth |
| | Revealed word: Promises |

Activity for Children Ages 11 and Up

Have your older children review the key components of all the covenants we have studied by reading the essay on **God's Mercy and Covenants Study Sheet (page 55 in the children's activity book)**. Then work together to complete the fill-in-the-blank activity that follows.

Answers:

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Eden | 4. Egypt |
| 2. Flood, flood | 5. Messiah or Savior |
| 3. Three | 6. Believe |



God Is a Promise Keeper

STORYBOOK ACTIVITY

Age Level: All ages

Recommended time: 10 minutes

Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross and pray together Psalm 105:1-9:

Give thanks to the LORD, invoke His name;
 make known among the peoples His deeds!
 Sing praise to Him, play music;
 proclaim all His wondrous deeds!
 Glory in His holy name;
 let hearts that seek the LORD rejoice!
 Seek out the LORD and His might;
 constantly seek His face.
 Recall the wondrous deeds He has done,
 His wonders and words of judgment,
 You descendants of Abraham His servant,
 offspring of Jacob the chosen one!
 He the LORD, is our God
 whose judgments reach through all the earth.
 He remembers forever His covenant,
 the word He commanded for a thousand generations,
 Which He made with Abraham,
 and swore to Isaac ...

Activity

In this activity, you will recall the stories in salvation history that you have learned this month and record them in your family's storybook.

- A. On a blank page, write across the top "God is a Promise Keeper."
- B. For each of the promises God made with His people, have your children draw and color a symbol to help you remember the story. Some suggested symbols are:
 - › **Noah:** A rainbow, which represents God's promise never to flood the earth again.
 - › **Abraham:** A star or a baby, which represent the promise that God made that Abraham's descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky.
 - › **Joseph:** A coat of many colors.
 - › **Moses:** A burning bush or the Ten Commandments.
 - › **David:** A tree, which represents a family tree because God promised that the Messiah would come from the family of David.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

God Keeps His Promises: Isaac and Christ

Age Level: Ages 8 and up

Recommended time: 15-20 minutes

What you need: God Keeps His Promises (**page 58** in the children's activity book)

A *type* is a person or thing in the Old Testament that foreshadows someone or something in the New Testament. The story of the sacrifice of Isaac is one that foreshadows the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

- A. Have your older children turn to **God Keeps His Promises (page 58 in the children's activity book)**. Look over the chart together to understand ways that Abraham's son Isaac is a type of Christ.
- B. After a few minutes, cut out the strips, shuffle them, and match up the strips together. Then have older children answer the questions.



Bible Promises Stars

ADVENT PREPARATION ACTIVITY

Age Level: All ages

Recommended time: 10 minutes

What you need: Scissors, a hole punch, blank paper or card stock, yarn or ribbon, Bible Promises Star (**page 60** in the children's activity book)

Advent Discussion

Talk with your children about the season of Advent:

God in His great wisdom gave us the Church. The Church gives us a special season of the year to focus on waiting and preparing: the season of Advent. In Advent we focus on making our hearts and our families ready to receive Christ at Christmas, as well as to prepare to receive Him at the end of time.

One of the ways we can ready ourselves for Christ's coming is to spend time reflecting on how God keeps His promises. As we studied the lives of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, and David, we saw how faithful God was to them. But God's faithfulness is not only for those people we read about in the Bible: it is for us as well! There are many, many Scriptures that tell us of how God wants to care for us, of the great plans He has for our lives, and of the way He turns all things to good if we put our faith in Him.

Activity

- A. Have your children turn to **Bible Promises Star (page 60 in the children's activity book)**. Draw or trace some stars, and write one of the Bible Promises Verses below on the front of each star.
- B. Then, on the back of each star, write a prayer request that goes with the Scripture; for example, "Lord, help me to trust You more."
- C. Finally, punch a hole in one of the points so that it can be strung with yarn or ribbon for hanging.
- D. Have each child complete two or three stars. Save these stars to hang in your home on the first Sunday of Advent as a reminder, during this time of waiting and preparing, that God is a promise keeper!

Bible Promises Verses

"I will not leave you nor forsake you."

JOSHUA 1:5

"The LORD's acts of mercy are not exhausted, His compassion is not spent; They are renewed each morning."

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23

"Now, go! I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

JEREMIAH 29:11

"He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain."

REVELATION 21:4

"We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose."

ROMANS 8:28

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

MATTHEW 7:7

"They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength, they will soar on wings like eagles."

ISAIAH 40:31

"Do not fear: I am with you; do not be anxious: I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you."

ISAIAH 41:10

"All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, buy grain and eat!"

ISAIAH 55:1

"Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."

MATTHEW 10:30-31

Think about Advent!

The season of Advent is fast approaching. It is a season of preparation and waiting, and it is a wonderful time to focus on ways you can be faithful to God as a family. Take time to think about what activities your family may want to do to observe the season of Advent. Some ideas may be:

- ▶ Extend your knowledge of salvation history and establish a habit of daily Bible reading by doing a Jesse Tree
- ▶ Do a sacrifice activity, where family members' sacrifices prepare for the coming of Christ in some way
- ▶ Adopt an Advent prayer calendar
- ▶ Read Advent stories or stories of December saints to your children

Reach out to the other families in your parish and to your *Family of Faith* leader for more ideas!



November in Review

THIS MONTH YOU EXPLORED AS A FAMILY THE QUESTIONS:

What does it mean to be made in God's image and likeness?

How do we know God loves us?

How has God revealed Himself to us throughout salvation history?

In Lesson 3 your children learned that:

- › All people are made in the image and likeness of God, which means we have intellect, free will, and the capacity to love.
- › People have immortal souls.
- › Grace is God's own life within us.
- › Adam and Eve's sin, called Original Sin, means we are born without grace in our souls.

In Lesson 4 your children learned that:

- › God did not abandon humanity after the Fall.
- › He entered into covenants with mankind.
- › God always keeps His promises.
- › Advent is a season of waiting and preparing for Jesus.

In this space below, write some reflections about the past month. What was your favorite activity? What didn't go as well? Will you adjust anything about what you're doing? What special intentions do you have for next month?