

# GATHERING...

## 4

### We Love God and Others

“Shout joyfully to God, all you on earth;  
sing of his glorious name;  
give him glorious praise.”

(Psalm 66:1–2)

**+ Leader:** Let us now praise God in the words of a Church hymn from the fourth century, a great song of praise and thanksgiving to God.

**Group 1:** You are God: we praise you;  
You are the Lord: we acclaim you;  
You are the eternal Father:  
All creation worships you.

**Group 2:** To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,  
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise:  
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

**Group 1:** The glorious company of apostles praise you.  
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.  
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

**Group 2:** Throughout the world the holy Church acclaim you:  
Father, of majesty unbounded,  
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,  
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

**Group 1:** You, Christ, are the king of glory,  
the eternal Son of the Father.  
When you became man to set us free,  
you did not spurn the Virgin's womb.

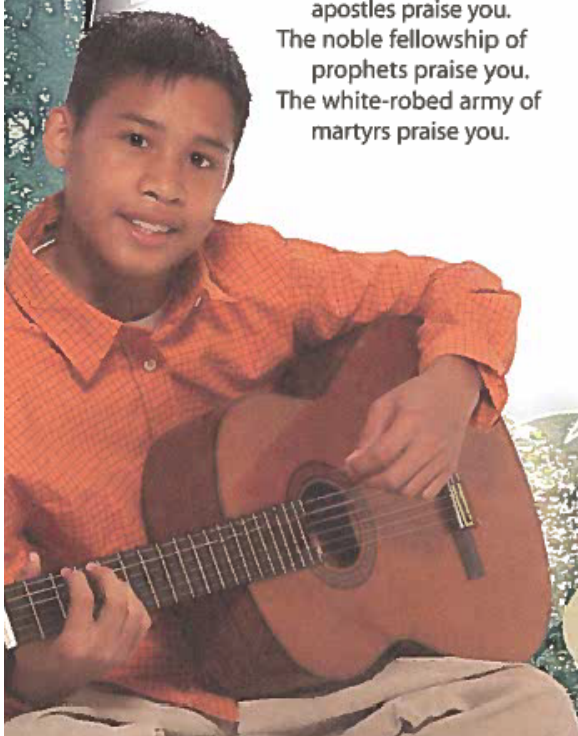
**Group 2:** You overcame the sting of death,  
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.  
You are seated at God's right hand in glory.  
We believe that you will come,  
and be our judge.

**All:** Come then, Lord, and help your people, bought with the price of your own blood,  
and bring us with your saints to glory everlasting. Amen.

(Te Deum)



Visit [www.weliveourfaith.com](http://www.weliveourfaith.com)  
to find appropriate music  
and songs.



# GATHERING...

## The Big Question:

How do I honor those I love?



**D**iscover the story behind your name. Have you ever wondered why your parents selected your name? Perhaps you were named to honor a saint, a family member, or a friend. Or perhaps your parents selected your name just because it seemed right for you!

Take a survey of your group. How many members know the story behind their own names?

### Most popular baby names in the United States in recent years

#### Girls

1. Emily
2. Emma
3. Madison
4. Olivia
5. Hannah
6. Abigail
7. Isabella
8. Ashley
9. Samantha
10. Elizabeth

#### Boys

1. Jacob
2. Michael
3. Joshua
4. Matthew
5. Ethan
6. Andrew
7. Daniel
8. William
9. Joseph
10. Christopher

If you had to choose your name today, what would it be? Why?

**HELLO**  
my name is

#### In this chapter

we learn about Jesus' Great Commandment and the first three commandments of the Ten Commandments. Through this chapter, we hope



to understand Jesus' Great Commandment and the first three of the Ten Commandments



to respect the obligations and challenges these commandments place on us



to respond to these commandments by following them in our everyday lives.

**“T**his memorial is for those who have died, and for us to remember them.” (Maya Lin, architect of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial)

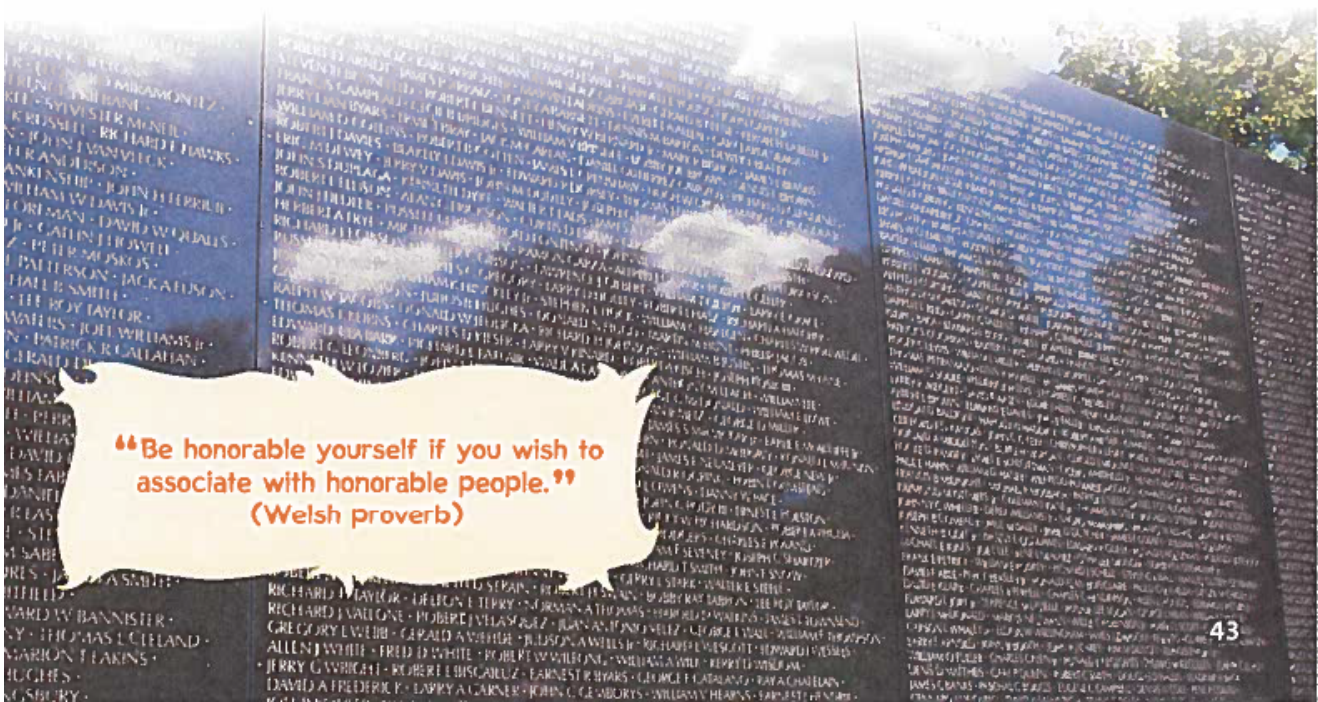
In 1982 the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in Washington, D.C., to honor veterans who served in the Vietnam War. The most famous part of this popular monument is “The Wall,” which is inscribed with the names of more than 58,000 men and women who died or went missing during the Vietnam War.

Visitors to the monument commonly use paper to take rubbings of the names of their loved ones. They also leave offerings of cards, poems, pictures, medals, and other mementos. Currently there are more than 64,000 offerings stored at the Museum Resource Center. The leaving of keepsakes serves to honor and actively remember loved ones. And honoring their names helps us to remember their sacrifices and their lives.



**Activity** What other memorials do you know of? Whom do they honor?

The Wall, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C.



**“Be honorable yourself if you wish to associate with honorable people.”**  
(Welsh proverb)



Reflections by Lee Teter

## BELIEVING...

### Jesus teaches us the Great Commandment.

As a young Jewish boy growing up in Nazareth, Jesus studied the teachings of the Old Testament. He studied about the covenant God made with his people and about the Ten Commandments. To celebrate religious holidays, he and his family sometimes went to the Temple, the holy place in Jerusalem where Jewish people gathered to worship God. There, as a young boy celebrating Passover with his family one year, Jesus listened to and questioned the teachers about the law and about Scripture. And "all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers" (Luke 2:47). Later in his public life, while teaching in the synagogue, Jesus again astonished people with his teaching, "for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes" (Mark 1:22).

Yet throughout Jesus' public life there was growing hostility toward him from some religious leaders. The chief priests, the scribes, or scholars of the law, and the elders wanted to know who gave Jesus the authority to speak and act the way he did. And as Jesus carried out his ministry, his teachings continued to astonish and alarm some leaders, for he taught about the righteousness, or moral conduct in agreement with God's will, that "surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees" (Matthew 5:20). Thus, people sometimes tried to entrap Jesus, hoping he would say something that they could use against him. This may have been the case one day in the Temple area, when one of the scribes posed this question to Jesus: "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" (Matthew 22:36).



Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39). Jesus' answer to the scribe is called the **Great Commandment**, and by his response Jesus demon-

strated his deep knowledge of Scripture. For the **Great Commandment** combined the **Shema**, a prayer from the Book of Deuteronomy, and a teaching from the Book of Leviticus. The **Shema** reminded the Jewish people to love God with all their heart, soul, and strength. And the teaching from Leviticus, which had been used since the beginning of the people's covenant with God, instructed God's people about loving their neighbors as themselves. So, the **Great**

**Commandment** encompasses all the demands of the **Ten Commandments**, the **Decalogue**. And the **Decalogue**, God's "ten words," "must be interpreted in light of this twofold yet single commandment of love, the fullness of the Law" (CCC, 2055).

This love, the fullness of the law, was evident in Jesus Christ. He lived the twofold message of the **Great Commandment**, loving God, and loving and serving others. And Jesus invites us to do the same.

#### Faith Words

Temple  
scribes  
Great Commandment  
Shema  
Decalogue

**Activity** Read and highlight the words of the **Great Commandment**. Take a moment to really think about what these words mean. Do you think people today try to live out the **Great Commandment**? Why or why not?

## We live out the first commandment.

Whether they are stated as directives or as restrictions, the commandments make God's will known to us. The commandments bring into a single focus the religious and social dimensions of our lives—the first three instruct us in loving God and the other seven instruct us in loving others. Yet if we disregard any one of the commandments, it affects the way we live out all of them. For we cannot love one another without loving God, who created us, and we cannot love God without loving all of his creatures!

When God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments, it was after freeing them from their slavery in Egypt. He brought them into the desert of Sinai and, calling Moses to the mountain, said, "I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery" (Exodus 20:2). After this reminder of his power, love, and gift of freedom, God stated the first commandment, "You shall not have other gods besides me" (Exodus 20:3). Through this commandment God reveals that he is the one and true God,

**"God has loved us first."**  
(CCC, 2083)

and they could be his people. Yet only a short time later, when Moses went back up Mount Sinai for more instruction from God, the people grew restless, melted down their gold, made an idol in the shape of a calf, and worshiped before it. In doing this they disobeyed the first commandment.

### Faith Words

idolatry  
atheism

They committed the sin of idolatry, giving worship to a creature or thing instead of God.

In our lives, when we make anything more important than God, it becomes an idol. Today we may



Moses receives tablets  
(Germany, 11th century)

not worship images of a calf, but there might be other things that we worship. We might make things like popularity or money far too important, maybe even more important than God. Some people even reject or deny God's existence, which is the sin of atheism. To live out the first commandment we must believe in God and put him first in our lives. The very reason that we are here and have been created in God's own image is that "God has loved us first" (CCC, 2083). In living out the first commandment, we recall God's love for us and respond to God with love. We honor God by believing in him, praying to him, worshiping him, and loving others because they are made in his image. We put God first, acting in God's image and likeness and living out our love for God so that others can see that God is among us.

**Activity** Complete a day planner for tomorrow. Slot in events that show that God is important in your life.

## Theological virtues

**F**aith, hope, and love are called *theological virtues, or habits of doing good*. In Greek, *theos* means "God." These virtues are gifts from God. They make it possible for us to have a relationship with God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The first commandment calls us to put God first by believing in him, hoping in him, and loving him above everything. We express our connection to God through faith, hope, and charity, or love.

The first commandment calls us not to doubt but to nourish and protect our faith, not to despair but to hope in God's goodness and justice, and not to be indifferent or ungrateful but to love God who is the source of all things.

Pray the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love. (See page 308.)

**CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

## BELIEVING...

### We live out the second commandment.

*How do you feel when someone disrespects your name?*

Showing a deep respect for God's holy name is an outcome of putting God at the center of our lives. So, the second commandment, "You shall not take the name of the LORD, your God, in vain" (Exodus 20:7), follows from the first. **Through the second commandment God reveals that his name is sacred, or holy.**

When God called Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses asked, "When I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' if they ask me, 'What is his name?' what am I to tell them?" God replied, "I am who am" (Exodus 3:13–14). The Hebrew letters of God's response form the name **Yahweh**. The Israelites knew that God was holy and understood that his name was holy, too. So, out of respect for God's holiness they did not say the name Yahweh aloud. Instead **they called upon God as Lord and used God's name only when absolutely necessary and with great reverence, or honor, love, and respect.**

Yet, we hear of many abuses of God's name. There are many sins by which people disregard the second commandment. There is **blasphemy, a thought, word, or act that makes fun of or shows contempt or hatred for God, the Church and the saints, or sacred objects.** There is also **perjury, or the act of making a false oath.** In an oath, often in a courtroom, people swear, with God as their witness, that what they are about to say is true. But perjury calls on God to be a witness to a lie and thus violates the sacredness of God's name. **Cursing, which means calling on God to do harm to someone, also violates the second commandment.**

As people who believe in God, we are called to obey the second commandment. **We are called to always show reverence for God's name, never using it in a disrespectful or unnecessary way, but always speaking it with a sense of awe that acknowledges**



### Faith Words

sacred  
reverence  
blasphemy  
perjury  
cursing

**God's power and love for us. We are called to hold God's name in our minds and hearts in a silent, loving way and only speak it to bless, praise, or glorify God.**

As Catholics, we are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit—in the name of the Blessed Trinity. And as we live out the second commandment, we revere the many titles used to call upon God the Father, God the Son—Jesus Christ—and God the Holy Spirit. We respect the names of Mary and the saints. Each of our names is sacred, too, for we are called as God's children. Thus, as a sign of our human dignity, we use our names and the names of others with respect. As God himself has told us,

"I have called you by name: you are mine" (Isaiah 43:1).

**Activity** Think about your day. Did you use God's name? Was it with reverence?

## We live out the third commandment.

In the story of creation, in six days God created the heavens, the earth, and all that is in them, and "God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation" (Genesis 2:3). Thus, the Israelites set apart the seventh day to rest and honor God. They kept this day as their **Sabbath**. And this day became a memorial of their freedom from slavery in Egypt and was set aside as a sign of the covenant they had made with God when they accepted the Ten Commandments. For in the third commandment God said to the people, "Remember to keep holy the sabbath day" (Exodus 20:8). God added, "Six days you may labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD, your God" (Exodus 20:9-10).

God revealed in the third commandment that we must keep a day holy for the Lord, a day of praising him, resting from our work, and doing good things for ourselves and others. As Catholics we celebrate this holy day of rest on Sunday, the first day of the week. For it was on this day that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. We call this day the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day is the first day of the new creation, begun by Christ's Resurrection, which brings us the hope of life forever with God in heaven.

In living out the third commandment, we, as members of the Church, must gather for Mass every Sunday—or the evening before—with our parish community. This celebration of the Eucharist is the very center of our life and worship as Catholics. It is the most important way to keep the Lord's Day holy. In this celebration,

we give God thanks and praise, listen to God's word, and remember and celebrate Jesus' **Paschal Mystery**, his suffering, death, Resurrection, and Ascension. We celebrate Jesus' gift of himself in the Eucharist, receive Jesus in Holy Communion, and go out to share his love, serve others, and build a better community.

“God replied,  
‘I am who am.’”  
(Exodus 3:14)

As Catholics we must also participate in Mass on the *holy days of obligation*. And on Sundays and these special holy days we must recognize and honor God through worship, remember that we depend on God for everything, take rest for our bodies and spirits, and renew our efforts to live as disciples of Jesus, refocusing on what matters most, the Lord our God!

### Faith Words

**Sabbath**  
**Paschal Mystery**

**Activity** Use some form of the words *recognize, remember, rest, renew, and refocus* in a paragraph that describes ways to keep the third commandment.



## Shabbat

The Jewish people celebrate the Sabbath, or *Shabbat* (meaning "to rest") in Hebrew, in specific ways. *Shabbat*:

- is celebrated from sundown on Fridays until sunset on Saturdays
- was a new concept. In ancient times days of rest were usually for the

wealthy and the elite. The working class, which included the majority of people, worked every day.

- includes a brief religious service on Friday evenings, and a longer service on Saturdays
- frequently involves a precooked meal (since cooking for most Jews is prohibited during *Shabbat*)
- incorporates a prayer before the meal and grace after the meal

- officially ends at nightfall, when three stars are visible, approximately 40–60 minutes after sunset
- concludes with a blessing called *Havdalah* that symbolically marks the separation between the Sabbath and the rest of the week.

In what ways is *Shabbat* the same as or different from the Lord's Day for Christians?



## RESPONDING...

### Recognizing Our Faith

Recall the question at the beginning of this chapter: *How do I honor those I love?* Think of someone you love. Write an inscription on this plaque honoring that person.

Think of your love for God. How will you honor him this week?



### Living Our Faith

Look back at the day planner you made on page 45. Did you take time for God? Explain your answer.

### Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati



Pier Giorgio Frassati was born April 6, 1901, in Turin, Italy. Known among his friends as a practical joker and a natural leader, Pier Giorgio lived an adventurous life while developing a deep spiritual life. As a student, he

joined the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and other organizations, such as Catholic Action, dedicating much of his spare time to serving those in need.

### Partners in FAITH

At age twenty-four, Pier Giorgio became sick with polio, a disabling disease, which caused his death. When he died, more than 1,000 people honored Pier Giorgio's life and works by attending

his funeral! He had helped many people and had given so much of his time and resources to help the poor families he met.

Pope John Paul II honored Pier Giorgio's life and works on May 20, 1990. Pier Giorgio was *beatified*, recognized by the Church for having lived an outstanding Christian life. Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati may someday be *canonized*, or named a saint.

Pier Giorgio honored God and all the people in his life. How can you do the same?

@\* For additional ideas and activities, visit [www.weliveourfaith.com](http://www.weliveourfaith.com).

### Putting Faith to Work

Talk about what you have learned in this chapter:



**We understand** Jesus' Great Commandment and the first three of the Ten Commandments.



**We respect** the obligations and challenges these commandments place on us.



**We respond** to these commandments by following them in our everyday lives.

Decide on ways to live out what you have learned.



### ENCOUNTERING GOD'S WORD



Jesus explained that honoring God meant keeping God's law in both great and small ways:

**"You . . . have neglected the weightier things of the law: judgment and mercy and fidelity. [But] these you should have done, without neglecting the others"**  
(Matthew 23:23).

- ➔ **READ** the quotation from Scripture.
- ➔ **REFLECT** on the following:  
Think of what we can do to honor God in our daily lives in both great and small ways.
- ➔ **SHARE** your reflections with a partner.
- ➔ **DECIDE** on two ways to honor God this week.

Write the letter that best defines each term.

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. <u>  E  </u> Temple    | a. honor, love, and respect  |
| 2. <u>  C  </u> sacred    | b. giving worship to a creature or thing instead of God                    |
| 3. <u>  D  </u> Sabbath   | c. holy  |
| 4. <u>  A  </u> reverence | d. a day set apart to rest and honor God                                   |
|                           | e. the holy place in Jerusalem where Jewish people gathered to worship God |

Complete the following.

5. Through the first commandment, God reveals that \_\_\_\_\_  
He is the one and true God, who brought his people freedom so that He could be their God and they could be his people.
6. Through the second commandment, God reveals that \_\_\_\_\_ His name is sacred, or holy.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Through the third commandment, God reveals that \_\_\_\_\_ we must keep a day holy for the Lord.  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. The Paschal Mystery refers to Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ suffering, death, Resurrection, and Ascension.  
\_\_\_\_\_

9–10. **ESSAY:** Explain the twofold message of Jesus' Great Commandment.

The twofold message of Jesus' Great commandment is "loving God, and loving and serving others" (p.44).