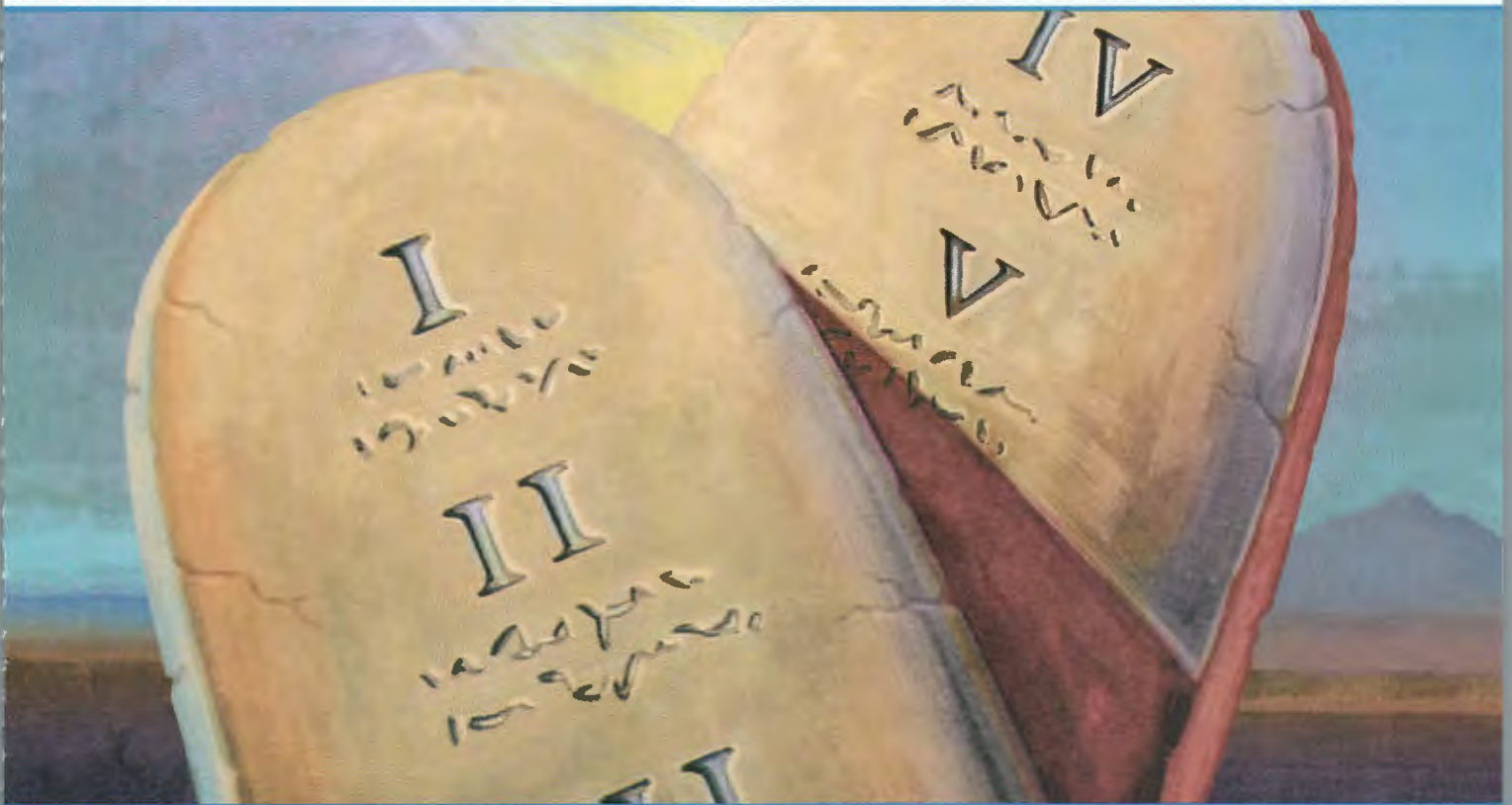


ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 4

The Moral Life

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OurSundayVisitor

Making Good Choices

Let Us Pray

Leader: O God, give us a faith strong enough to see what is right and just.

“Teach me wisdom and knowledge,
for in your commandments
I trust.” **Psalm 119:66**

All: O God, give us the wisdom and knowledge to make choices that are true to that faith. Amen.

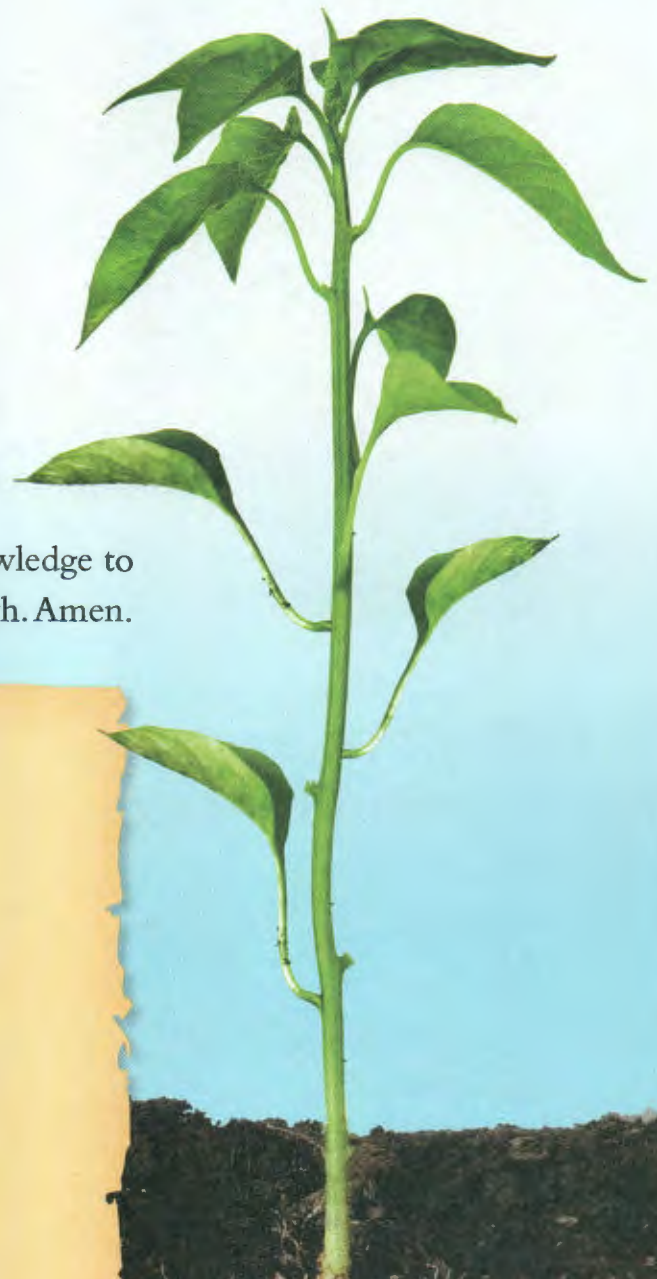
Scripture

A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse,
and from his roots a bud shall blossom.
The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him:
a spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
A spirit of counsel and of strength,
a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD,
and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD.
Not by appearance shall he judge,
nor by hearsay shall he decide,
But he shall judge the poor with justice,
and decide fairly for the land's afflicted.

Isaiah 11:1–4a

What Do You Wonder?

- Who or what helps you choose what is right and just?
- What are some ways you can form your conscience in order to choose what is right and just?





Choices and Consequences

What is the proper use of free will?

You have the freedom to make choices, but all choices have consequences. In this story, Julia learns a lesson from a choice she makes.

Julia Decides

“Come on, Julia!” said Monica. “I really want to see the new movie at the Crosstown Cinema. I thought you wanted to see it, too.”

“I do want to see it,” Julia replied. “Maybe we can see it next week.

My coach just called an extra soccer practice for this afternoon. I have to go.”

“Well, you can go to soccer practice if you want to,” said Monica. “I am going to the movie.”

After Monica left, Julia got ready for practice. “I can see that movie later with my sister Lila,” she thought as she tied her shoes. “Right now I have to work on my goal tending. The team is counting on me.”

When Julia finally saw the movie, she enjoyed it. However, not as much as she enjoyed winning the award for most improved player at the end of the season!

Freedom and Responsibility

Julia's story shows that all choices have consequences. You are responsible for your choices, too.

When God created you in his image, he gave you **free will**. With your free will, you make choices. Sometimes your choices are between right and wrong. Sometimes, as in Julia's case, they are between better and best. Whenever you make a good choice, you use God's gift of free will properly and you grow closer to God.

God Helps You

God gives you many gifts to help you make good choices. God's most important gift is **grace**, which is God's free and loving gift to you of his own life and help. You received grace in a special way in the Sacrament of Baptism. You grow in God's grace through the Sacraments, prayer, and good moral choices.

In addition to his grace, God gives you the Ten Commandments and the Church to help you. God is always helping you develop a more loving relationship with him.

Catholic Faith Words

free will the God-given freedom and ability to make choices. God created us with free will so we can have the freedom to choose good.

grace God's free and loving gift to humans of his own life and help



Underline three ways God helps you make good choices.



Share Your Faith

Reflect What was most difficult about Julia's choice? What two words would you use to describe how she felt after she made her choice?

Share Design a ribbon for Julia's Most Improved Player award.

God's Gift of Conscience

What is a well-formed conscience?

Good choices help you grow as a moral person. They build good habits and strengthen your relationship with God and others. One day Jesus told this story about showing love, even toward people whom we do not know.

Catholic Faith Words

conscience the God-given ability that helps us judge whether actions are right or wrong. It is important for us to know God's laws so our conscience can help us make good decisions.

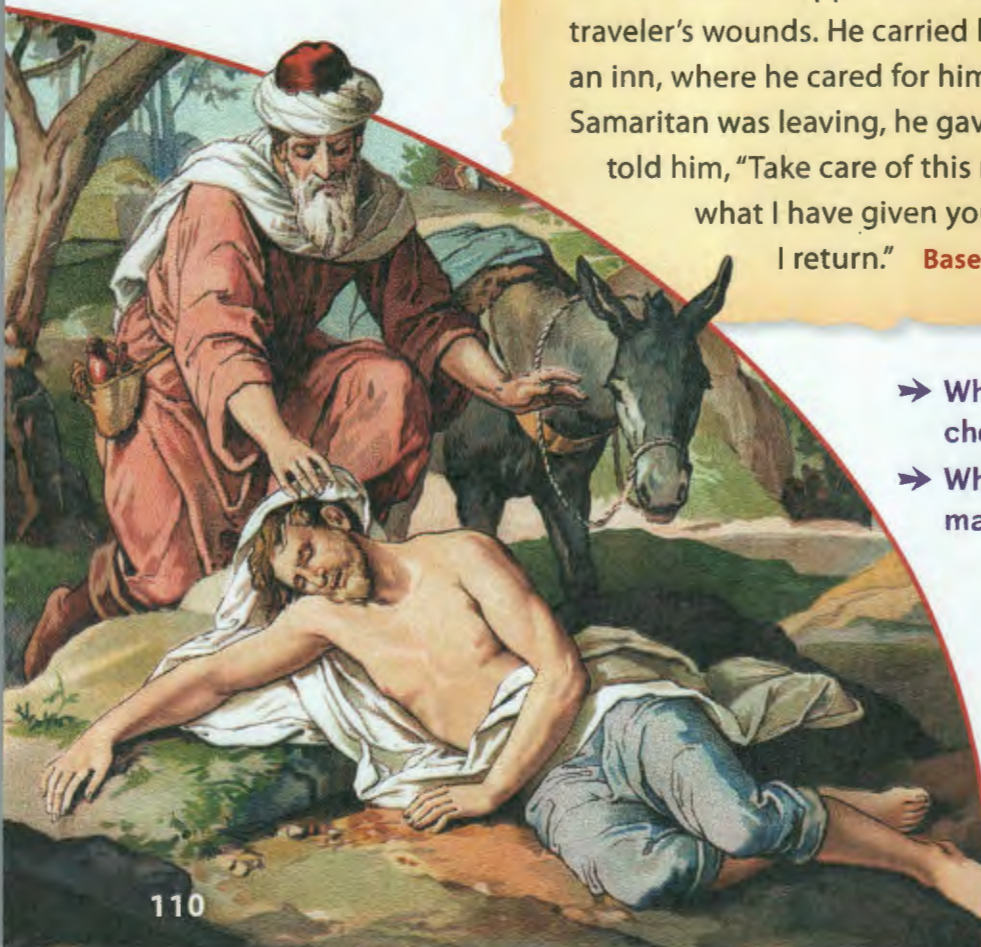
Scripture

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Jesus told the story of a Jewish traveler going from Jerusalem to Jericho who was attacked by robbers that beat, robbed, and left him on the side of the road.

A priest saw the injured traveler and moved to the other side of the road. Later, a Jewish leader came to the same place, and when he saw the traveler, he too moved to the other side of the road. Finally, a Samaritan came to the place where the traveler lay dying. Unlike the others, the Samaritan stopped. He treated and bandaged the traveler's wounds. He carried him on his own animal to an inn, where he cared for him. The next day, when the Samaritan was leaving, he gave the innkeeper money and told him, "Take care of this man. If you spend more than what I have given you, I will repay you when I return." **Based on Luke 10:30-35**

- ➔ What was difficult about the choice the Samaritan made?
- ➔ When is it difficult for you to make good choices?



Know the Difference

Good choices strengthen your relationship with God and others. Sin weakens or destroys that relationship. Sin is always a failure to love God and others. When you use your free will to sin, you always become less free.

You probably know when you have done something wrong, even if no one has seen you. You know that you have acted against God's plan. Your **conscience** is a gift from God that helps you to know the difference between right and wrong. Conscience is your free will and your reason working together. They direct you to choose what is good and avoid what is wrong. It is your job to strengthen, or form, your own conscience. You cannot do this alone.



1. Place a check mark next to one thing you want to know more about.
2. Draw a star next to one way you will form your conscience this week.

Forming Your Conscience

The Holy Spirit	strengthens you to make good choices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prayer and study	help you think things through	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scripture and Church teaching	guide your decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents, teachers, and wise people	give you good advice	<input type="checkbox"/>

Connect Your Faith

The Right Choice

For each scenario, what advice would you give to help a friend use God's gift of conscience to make the right choice? Take turns sharing with a partner.



Our Catholic Life

How do you make decisions?

Making good moral decisions takes practice. Remember the words *stop*, *think*, *pray*, and *choose*. They are steps to help you make decisions. These words will remind you what to do when you are faced with a moral choice.

These four steps may not help you make the easiest choice or the most popular choice, but they will help you make the best choice. This choice will strengthen your relationship with God and others.

Making Good Decisions

STOP

Take your time Do not make a snap decision or act on your first idea.

- Important choices can affect you, others, and your relationship with God.
- Give yourself time, and you are more likely to make a good decision.

THINK

Consider your choices Think about what might happen if you make each choice.

- Say a prayer to the Holy Spirit for guidance.
- Listen to your conscience.
- Consider what the Bible and the Church teach you.
- Consult with your family and teachers.

PRAY

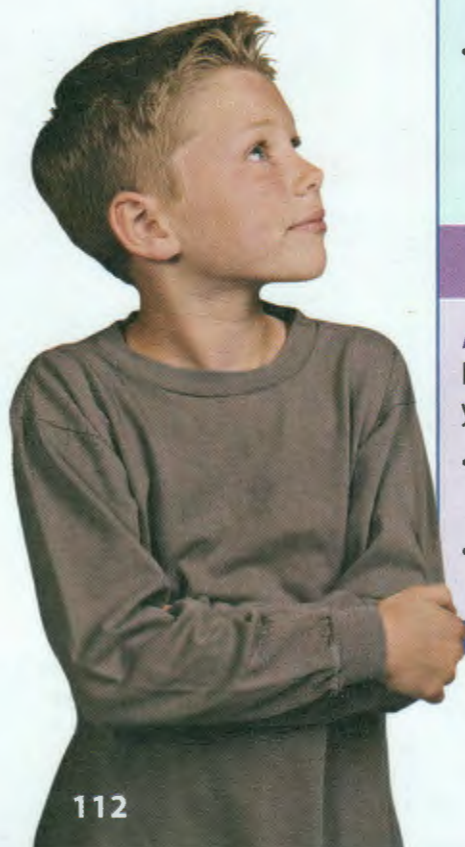
Ask for help in choosing Reflect on what God is calling you to do.

- Pray again for help and guidance from the Holy Spirit.
- Ask for wisdom and courage to make the best choice.

CHOOSE

Make up your mind Decide what you will do.

- Be confident that if you think and pray about your decision, you will make the right choice.
- Act on your choice.



People of Faith

June 3

Saint Charles Lwanga, d. 1886

Saint Charles Lwanga was a young servant in the king's court in Uganda. The king hated Christians. He commanded his servants to join in immoral activities. Charles refused, choosing to follow his conscience and obey God, not the king. Charles and twenty-one other Christians were tortured before they were executed in an effort to get them to do what the king wanted. As Charles was dying, he prayed aloud and said that he knew he was going to Heaven. Charles and his companions are known as the African Martyrs.



Discuss: Tell about a time when you followed your conscience.



Learn more about Saint Charles at aliveinchrist.osv.com

Live Your Faith

Think about a time when your conscience helped you to make a good moral decision. Then draw the steps you took to make that decision.

- 1
- 2
- 3

 Let Us Pray

Prayer of Reflection

Gather and begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Leader: In prayer, you listen for God's voice to guide you. Close your eyes and think about a time when you were afraid and didn't know what to do. Listen to this story about a man named Elijah, who heard God's voice in a very surprising way when he was afraid.

Reader: Read 1 Kings 19:9–14

Leader: Sit quietly and notice whether you can hear God whispering to you inside your heart. What is God saying to you? What do you want to say to God?

Leader: God of the whispering sound, help us be still and listen for your voice to guide us.

All: Amen.



YOUR CHILD LEARNED >>>

This chapter explains that it is necessary to develop a well-formed conscience in order to choose good over evil.

Scripture



Read **Isaiah 11:1–4a** to find out about the Savior God promised to send.

Catholics Believe

- God's grace helps us use our reason and free will to make good choices.
- Conscience is our God-given ability that helps us judge right from wrong.

To learn more, go to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1776–1782 at usccb.org.

People of Faith

This week, your child learned about Saint Charles Lwanga, an African martyr who was known for following his conscience.

CHILDREN AT THIS AGE >>>

How They Understand Free Will and Conscience Fourth grade children understand well that adults do not always see what they say and do. They also know that there are limits to the ability of authority figures in their life to enforce their will. Being a moral person, then, becomes a series of choices. They need to understand that these choices are given to us so that we can have the freedom to choose the good. This is also the beginning of the understanding of conscience. As children become more aware of their inner thoughts, they can form and listen to their conscience to help them make good choices.



CONSIDER THIS >>>

Have you ever considered the difference between a well-formed conscience and your opinion?

It can be all too easy to seemingly speak with authority even when we may not be well informed. There is a distinction between opinion and our conscience. As Catholics, we know that “a good conscience makes judgments that conform to reason and the good that is willed by the Wisdom of God. A good conscience requires lifelong formation. Each baptized follower of Christ is obliged to form his or her conscience according to objective moral standards” (*USCCA, p. 314*).

LET'S TALK >>>

- Ask your child to explain how all choices have consequences.
- Talk about a time when someone in the family had to make an important decision. How did the family help him or her?

LET'S PRAY >>>



Saint Charles, pray for us that we may follow our consciences, even when it hard to do so. Amen.



For a multimedia glossary of Catholic Faith Words, Sunday readings, seasonal and Saint resources, and chapter activities go to aliveinchrist.osv.com.

Chapter 6 Review

A Work with Words Complete each sentence with the correct term from the Word Bank.

1. _____ is the God-given freedom and ability to make choices.
2. Your _____ is the God-given ability that helps us judge actions as right or wrong.
3. Good choices help you grow as a _____ person.
4. Sin weakens or destroys your relationship with _____ and with others.
5. God's gift of his own life and help is _____.

Word Bank

moral
free will
conscience
God
grace

B Make Connections Write responses on the lines below.

6. What is the lesson of the Parable of the Good Samaritan?

7. How do prayer and study help you?

8. What can help you make good decisions?

9. What happens when you choose to sin?

10. To whom can you go when you need advice?

