

ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 8

The Church

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Our Sunday Visitor

Honoring the Family

Let Us Pray

Leader: Lord God, you give us the gift of family. Help us to be signs of God's love to one another.

“Come, children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.” **Psalm 34:12**

All: God, help us love our families like you do.

Scripture

“Children, listen to me, your father;
act accordingly, that you may be safe.

For the Lord sets a father in honor over his children
and confirms a mother's authority over her sons.

Those who honor their father atone for sins;
they store up riches who respect their mother.

Those who honor their father will have joy in their own children,
and when they pray they are heard.

Those who respect their father will live a long life;
those who obey the Lord honor their mother.”

The Wisdom of Ben Sira (Sirach) 3:1-6

Have you ever thought...

- What are our responsibilities toward our parents?
- What do our families teach us about life?

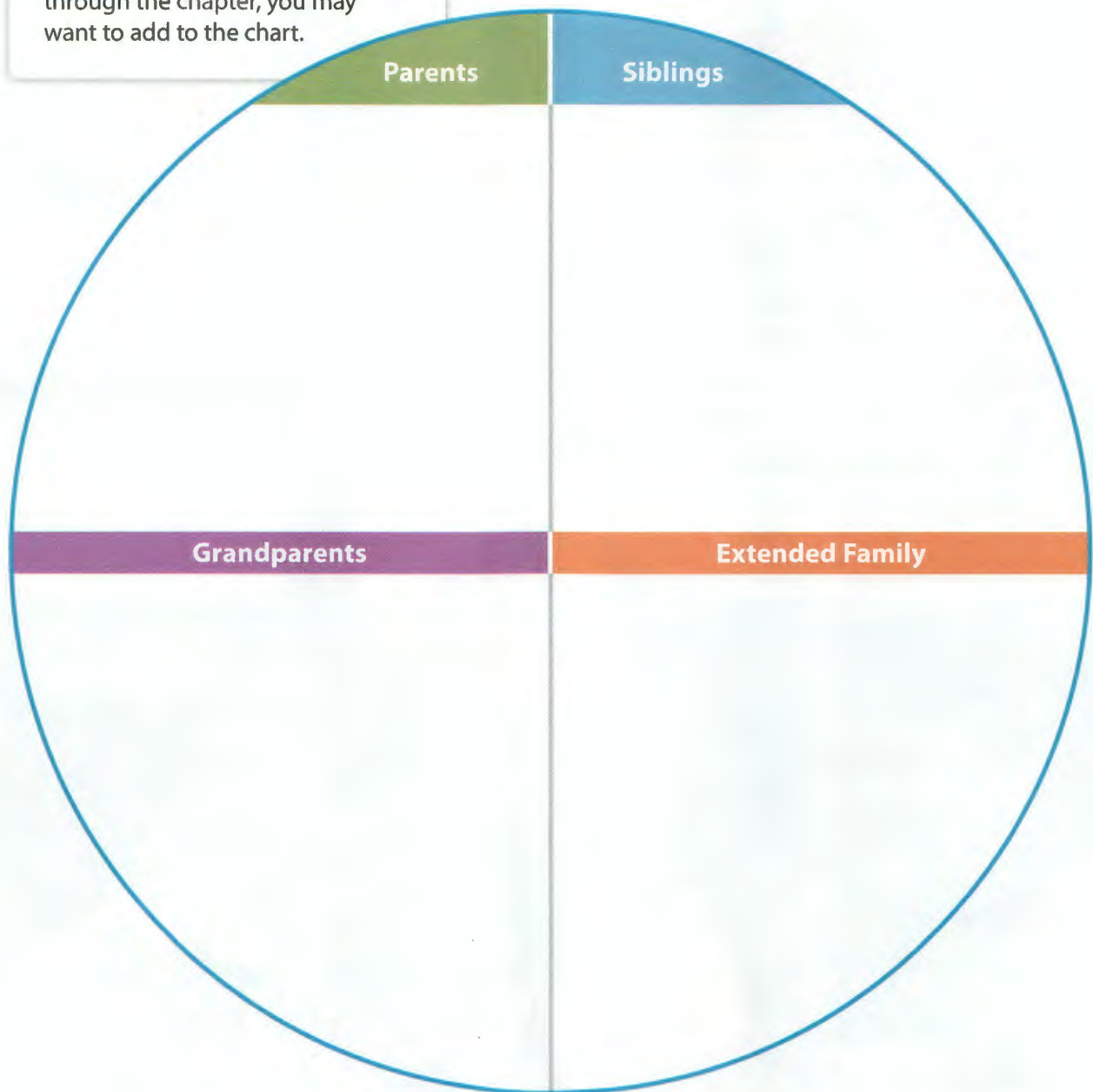
Getting Started

In this chapter, you will explore the responsibilities of family members, and identify the core ideals in our families that help us learn and grow. You will also see how the Holy Family is a model for respecting and caring among family members.

Catholic Faith Words

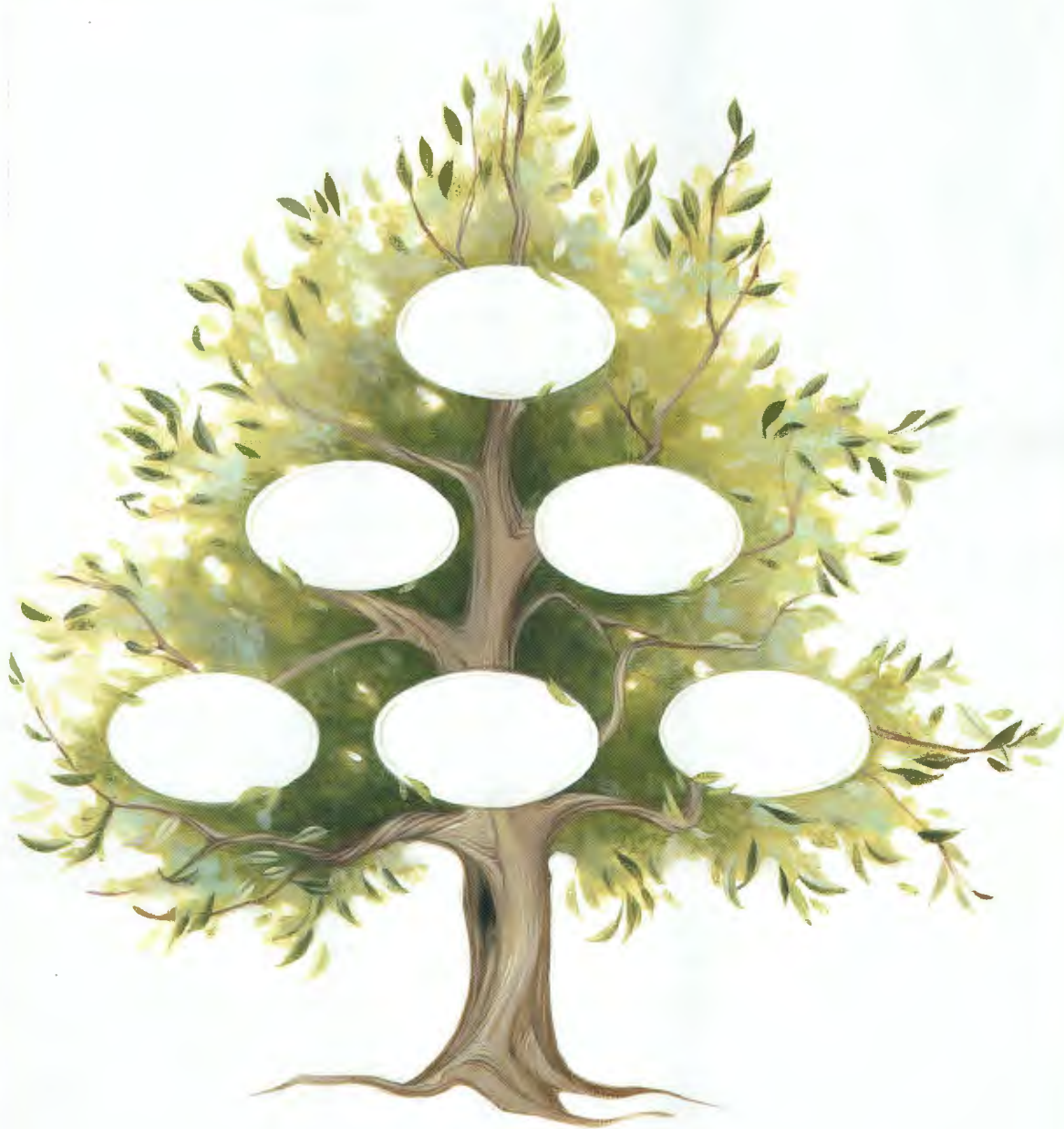
- filial respect
- Feast of the Holy Family
- conscience
- informed conscience

In the chart below, record the qualities of a good relationship. As you work through the chapter, you may want to add to the chart.



FILL IN

Your Family Tree On the branches, write the names of some of your family members (parents or grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts or uncles) who have served as positive role models for you.



Choose one and describe how he or she has influenced you.



Being A Family

What responsibilities do family members have toward one another?

We expect our family to be there for us. When they need us, they want us to be there for them, too. Every family is unique, and each family member has a different role. No family is perfect, and no human being is perfect.

Sometimes it's hard to respect what others in our family need or have to do when we're focused on what we need or want. But respect

Catholic Faith Words

filial respect the response children are called to have toward their parents, which includes obedience, respect, gratitude, and assistance

Feast of the Holy Family the day celebrating the special family relationship among Mary, Joseph, and Jesus

in a family is very important, especially during challenging or difficult times.

Because we are not born as adults, we need our families to teach us about life. As we grow physically and mentally and mature socially, we learn from our parents and teachers. We rely on our family members to take care of us, love us, laugh with us, and show us things by example.

The Fourth Commandment tells to honor our parents and guardians by giving them obedience, respect, gratitude, and assistance.

This fourfold response that children have toward their parents is called **filial respect**. Obeying, respecting, and helping our parents and guardians, and being genuinely grateful for all they do, helps children and families grow and interact in positive ways.

> **What is one way you have shown filial respect this week?**

The Holy Family

We know that Jesus obeys his heavenly Father. At the same time, Jesus was born into a family, as we all are. His mother is Mary. His foster father is Joseph. Sometimes it's hard to think of Jesus as a six-year-old, learning how to play a game, or as a teenager having fun with friends. But Jesus truly was a child, growing up in a real family.

Mary and Joseph did not always understand Jesus, just as our own parents can be confused by the things we say or do. You may be familiar with the story of Jesus in the Temple. Mary and Joseph are on their way home from Jerusalem. They attach themselves to a busy caravan, where it is entirely possible for each to think the other is watching the Child Jesus. When they realize their mistake, they search for him until he is found in the Temple.



Scripture

Jesus asks Mary and Joseph, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them ... and was obedient to them, and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man." **Luke 2:49-52**

Go to the Source

Read *Luke 2:41-52* to find out what Jesus was doing in the Temple and why it was so surprising to Mary and Joseph.

Jesus had, in effect, two homes: one in Nazareth and one in the Temple. His foster father, Joseph, headed the home in Nazareth. But his heavenly Father's home is symbolized by the Temple.

CATHOLICS TODAY

The Holy Family is a role model for us, showing us how to live in a domestic Church where family members learn and live out their faith. Because all human beings are called to holiness, we can find it in the daily routines and minor details of family life. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus spent a majority of their time living out the demands of family: cooking, cleaning, earning a living, and doing household chores. Holiness can also be doing ordinary things with heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. We celebrate the **Feast of the Holy Family** on the first Sunday after Christmas. This day celebrates the special family relationship among Mary, Joseph, and Jesus, and reminds us that they are our models.

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DISCUSS

Look back at the four attitudes that make up filial respect. Which of the four is easiest for you to practice?

Which is hardest?



Families and Relationships

How do families help us have friendships and relationships with others?

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph is certainly unique. There is no other family quite like it. No other family has a child who is the Son of God. Nevertheless, the Holy Family provides a model for all families.

What is the purpose of a family? What lessons can we learn from the Holy Family?

- Parents and guardians should nurture and support their children so that they can grow up in a safe, loving environment.
- A family ought to be where we learn about our faith and where all family members learn about and relate to God.
- Families should pray together.
- Families should seek to promote living by the virtues.

- Parents are the prime movers in a family. As adults, they are responsible for the physical and spiritual needs of their children so that younger members can grow.
- Families draw out the best in all the members—adults and children—when they grow and work together.
- Parents should support their children as they reflect and pray about their God-given vocation.

➤ **What role models or sources do members of your family use for advice about living together the way God intends?**

Our Families

Families come in all shapes and sizes, and each has its own way of communication, its own emphasis on what's important, and its own favorite activities. The most important ingredients in a family are the adults, who



provide a safe, loving environment for the children. When this happens, then the family itself can become a school of faith, with all its members learning from one another to live as God intends.

The purpose of a family will be helped or hurt by the quality of the relationships among all the members. To relate to another person means that we are connected in some way or that we are important to each other.

Keys to a Healthy Relationship

- **Time:** We need to make time for a person to be a significant part of our lives. Giving time does not just mean being in the same room or the same town.
- **Loyalty:** Every good relationship demands that the people involved in it be true to each other, trust each other, be there for each other, and depend on each other's support.
- **Truth:** A relationship built on lies will not go far. Only upfront, honest communication grows a healthy, strong relationship.
- **Flexibility:** Not everything can be planned in a relationship. Sometimes spontaneous things are the most surprising and life-giving. Those in authority should ensure that each person's needs are met.
- **Joy:** The bonds between people cannot be formed solely by grief or by mutually confronting a dangerous or difficult situation; every relationship requires some laughter, fun, and finding joy.

Rank the importance of these components of a healthy family relationship from 1 to 5, with 1 being most important and 5 least important. Compare your answers with a classmate.



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IDENTIFY

Think about your relationship with a member of your family. Identify some steps you can take to increase one or two of the elements in the chart above in that relationship.

I can strengthen my relationship with _____
 by _____





A Place to Grow

What are some things we can learn in our families?

We begin life within a family and from there we move into the larger world. We first form our core values within our family. Personal character is developed within a family first because it's there that we first form a sense of who we are and what we are capable of. We learn what's important, how to act and treat others, and what it means to be in a relationship.

It is within our families that we first learn to take responsibility for our own actions. We get a sense of what is acceptable and appropriate. Our **conscience**—the

Catholic Faith Words

conscience the God-given ability that helps individuals judge whether actions are right or wrong

informed conscience a conscience that is educated and developed through constant use and examination and learning about the teachings of the Church

God-given ability to judge actions as right or wrong, good or evil—begins to be formed and built up by the example of our parents, other adults, and siblings. A person has a moral obligation to follow his or her well-formed conscience when the person is sure about what it is judging to be right or wrong. We learn how to make decisions based upon the Word of God in Scripture and Tradition, the guidance of the Magisterium, what we judge to be right or wrong, discussions with people we trust, the example of Jesus, and prayer.

However, sometimes a conscience is not formed properly, perhaps because a person has not learned the example of Jesus, does not know Church teaching, does not get good advice, or hasn't been taught correctly. If that happens, the conscience can sometimes lead the person to make incorrect judgments, and this doesn't always free the person of guilt. That's why it's so important to have a **informed conscience**. But if a person acts out of fear, or ignorance, or because of pressure put on them by someone, the person's moral responsibility for the action could be lessened or removed. To find out

more about examining your conscience, go to page 371 in the Our Catholic Tradition section of your book.

➤ **What things have you learned from your family that are important to the way you act outside of the home?**

It Takes Work

All families struggle to build strong relationships among their members. Why? Because relationships take work. They don't just happen. It takes a lot of time and energy to keep a relationship going. With all the demands placed on you by school and friends, sometimes you forget to take care of those with whom you should be the closest!

There is life inside and outside the family, and sometimes there is a mix and blending of the two. The key is working for a balance and giving all of your relationships the attention they deserve.

Family contributes immensely to who we are later in life. This does not mean that when a family does not function well or when its members have hurt each other, members cannot ever get beyond their painful experiences or harmful memories.

Sometimes a family is so hurt it can't help itself. That is why it is important for your family to be part of a bigger family—the



Church. Is there something deeply damaging occurring to you within your family, something you can barely acknowledge to yourself, much less to someone else? The first step is the hardest but also the most important. Talk to a trusted teacher, guidance counselor, or a parish priest or other minister for help.

WRITE

What does your family need most in order to improve the relationships among your family members? Compose a prayer asking God to help you and your family grow.

IN SUMMARY Catholics Believe

Families are called to be schools of faith in which we learn how to love, act, and treat others.

- The obedience, love, and respect found in the Holy Family serves as a model for our own families.
- The relationships within a family demand as much care, concern, and energy on our part as with any of our other relationships.
- Within the family, we develop personal character, grow in our understanding of right and wrong, and learn what's truly important.

Our Catholic Life

Make a commitment to spend time with your family and **examine your relationship** with each member. How does your family show care and concern for each person? Has it become hard to communicate with some members? Have you been patient enough with younger siblings or older people in your extended family? Have you shown filial respect to your parents? Sometimes, there are broken relationships within our families that we alone cannot fix. Trust in God and offer him your prayers for your family, and ask Mary and the Saints for their intercession as well. You may also pray the Lord's Prayer to help you in forgiving others as you seek forgiveness.



➤ What would you say to God in a prayer for your family's happiness or well-being?

People of Faith

Saint Helena, c. 248–330

Helena was the mother of Constantine the Great, who sent her to the Holy Land to try to find where Jesus lived and died, to build churches, and bring back relics. Tradition says that while Helena was at the site of Jesus' tomb, she found three crosses. She had a dying woman touch each one in turn. When the woman touched the third cross, she was healed. Helena took this to be the True Cross of Christ. Constantine had the Church of the Holy Sepulchre built on the site of the discovery. Helena is the patron of archaeologists because of her work in the Holy Land. The Church celebrates her feast day on **August 18**.



For more, go to aliveinchrist.osv.com

PLAN

Take time now to make a plan to improve yourself as a member of your family. You may have to repair damage done to a relationship within the family, or spend more time on one particular relationship that is weaker than others. Be specific as you make yourself a plan.

Three things I can do this week . . .

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



Celebration of the Word

Leader: Glory be to the Father
and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,

All: as it was in the beginning
is now, and ever shall be
world without end. Amen.

Leader: Let us quietly reflect on our families
and how we can better be signs of God's
love to one another.

Reflect in silence.

Reader: A reading from the letter of Paul to
the Colossians.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones,
holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion,
kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience,
bearing with one another and forgiving
one another. ... Let the peace of Christ
control your hearts; the peace into which
you were called into one body. ... And
whatever you do, in word or in deed, do
everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through
him. (**Colossians 3:12-13, 15, 17**)

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: We each belong to some type of
family, and all families are called to be loving,
respecting, caring, and responsible for one
another.

Let us thank God for those who love and
care for us, and ask him to bless our families
today and always.

Silently offer your prayers for your family.

Loving Father,
You know the love of a parent for a child.
We ask you to strengthen our families so
that we model that love.

We ask you to bless us with patience,
courage, and hope, so that we can become
the people you call us to be.

We ask this through your Son, Jesus.

All: Amen.

 *Sing or play "We Are One Body"*

 Go to aliveinchrist.osv.com for an interactive review.

A Work with Words Circle the letter of the choice that best completes the sentence.

1. An informed ___ is educated and developed through constant use and examination and learning about the teachings of the Church.

a. friendship	c. family
b. conscience	d. judgment

2. The fourfold response children have toward their parents that is addressed in the Fourth Commandment is called ____.

a. adoration	c. filial respect
b. conscience	d. compassion

3. Every good relationship demands ____.

a. trust	c. loyalty
b. respect	d. all of the above

4. Our ___ enables us to judge whether something is right or wrong.

a. free will	c. obedience
b. conscience	d. none of the above

5. The obedience, love, and respect found in the ___ serves as a model for our own families.

a. Holy Fathers	c. Apostles
b. Church	d. Holy Family

B Check Understanding Indicate whether the following statements are true or false. Then rewrite false statements to make them true.

6. The Church is where we first learn about faith and how to relate to God. **True/False**

7. Family bonds must be formed based on a range of emotions and experiences, including grief, joy, and fun. **True/False**

8. Communication and faith are essential parts of healthy family relationships. **True/False**

9. If a person acts out of fear, or ignorance, or because of pressure put on him or her by someone, the person's moral responsibility for the action is always removed. **True/False**

10. The purpose of the religious life is to nurture and support children so that they can grow up in a safe, loving environment. **True/False**

C Make Connections Write a short response to the following: Write your prescription for a healthy family that models what we know about the Holy Family.

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