

# 10

## The Ten Commandments Guide Us

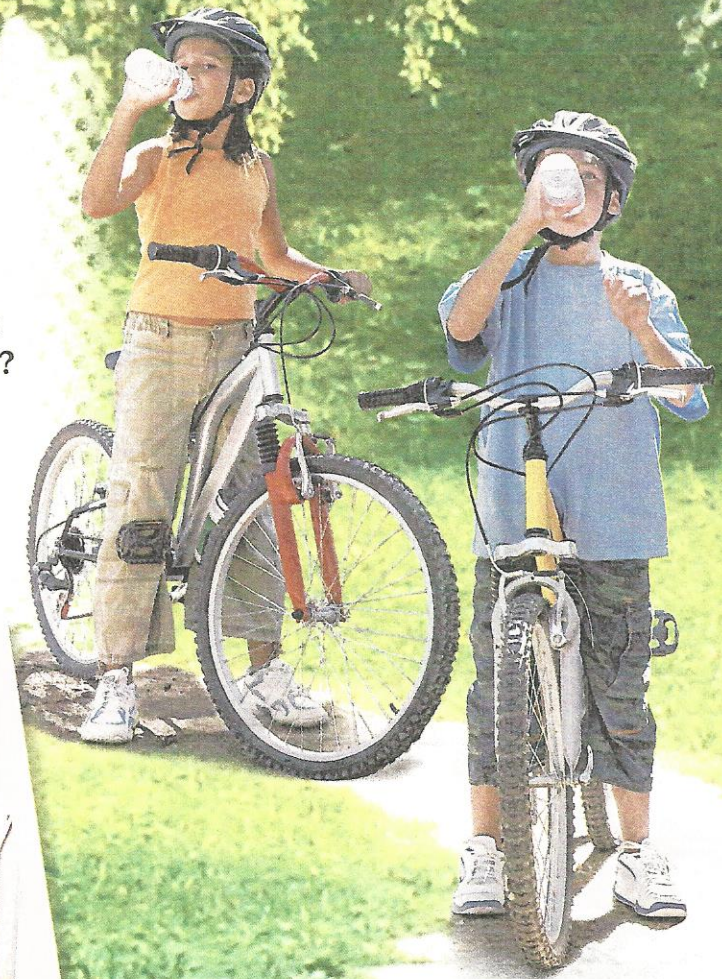
### Following Rules

What rules might the children in the photographs be following?

What are some rules that you follow at home? in school? in the neighborhood?

How do rules or laws help us?

In the space provided, write about or draw yourself following one of these rules.







## We Will Learn...

- 1 God gave us the Ten Commandments to help us to live in his love.
- 2 The first three commandments call us to love God.
- 3 The Fourth through the Tenth Commandments call us to love others and ourselves.

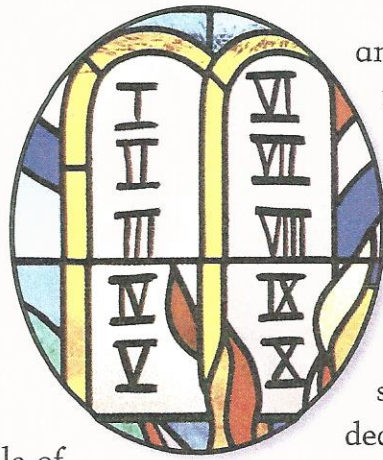


# 1 God gave us the Ten Commandments to help us to live in his love.

In the Bible we read that God gave the people of Israel the Ten Commandments, or laws, for their safety and freedom. This is the story of the Ten Commandments.

Thousands of years ago the people of Israel lived as slaves in Egypt. But God had chosen the Israelites to be his own people—the ones who would know and worship the one true God. This was hard for them because they were slaves of the Egyptians, who worshiped many false gods. To help the Israelites, God gave them a great leader named Moses.

Through Moses God helped the Israelites escape from Egypt. He led them to safety



and freedom in the desert. In return God asked the Israelites to join in a special agreement, or covenant. A **covenant** is a special agreement between God and his people. God said, “If you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my special possession, dearer to me than all other people”

(Exodus 19:5).

The people promised to obey God and keep the covenant. Then God gave Moses the laws of the covenant called the **Ten Commandments**. The Ten Commandments would help God’s people to remain faithful to the one true God and to be truly safe and free.

**How do you think the Ten Commandments help us to be safe and free?**

The Ten Commandments	What the Commandments Mean for Us
1. I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.	God must come first in our lives. No person and no thing can be more important to us than God.
2. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.	We must respect God’s name, the name of Jesus, and holy places.
3. Remember to keep holy the LORD’S Day.	We must worship God on Sundays and holy days, and must rest from work.
4. Honor your father and your mother.	We must love, honor, and obey our parents and guardians.
5. You shall not kill.	We must respect and care for the gift of life.
6. You shall not commit adultery.	We must respect our own bodies and the bodies of others in thought, word, and deed.
7. You shall not steal.	We must not take or destroy what belongs to others.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.	We must respect the truth.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife.	We must protect the holiness of marriage and the sacredness of human sexuality.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.	We must respect the rights and property of others.



## 2 The first three commandments call us to love God.

The First Commandment states that God must come before everyone and everything else in our lives. The Second Commandment reminds us that God's name is holy and must be used with love and respect.

The Third Commandment states that we are to keep holy the Lord's Day. For Catholics, Sunday is the Lord's Day because it was on a Sunday that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. On Sundays we gather with our parish community to celebrate the Mass. Participating in the Mass is the most important way of keeping the Lord's Day holy because the Sacrament of the Eucharist is at the very center of the Christian life. Catholics must participate in Mass on Sunday or Saturday evening and on Holy Days of Obligation. (See list on page 58.)

On Sunday we must also rest from work or other activities so that we can keep the Lord's Day holy.

**How does keeping the first three commandments show that you love God?**

### Do You Know?



When Jesus was growing up in Nazareth, he studied the teachings of the Old Testament. He treasured the covenant God made with his people. He studied the Ten Commandments and obeyed them.

When Jesus was older, his followers saw that Jesus lived according to the covenant. One day as Jesus was teaching, he explained, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17).





### **3** The Fourth through the Tenth Commandments call us to love others and ourselves.

The Fourth Commandment states that we are to honor our parents. Our parents have given us life. We owe them love, respect, and care. We should also show respect for our guardians, our teachers, older members of the community, and all those in positions of authority.

The Fifth Commandment reminds us that all life is a gift from God, from the moment of conception until natural death. Thus, the Fifth Commandment forbids abortion, suicide, and murder, which includes euthanasia. We must not do anything that would harm others or harm our own bodies and minds.

The Sixth and Ninth Commandments remind us that our human sexuality is something sacred. We must respect our bodies and the bodies of others in thought, word, and deed.

The Seventh Commandment forbids destroying or stealing what belongs to others. We must return items or repay others if we have taken their property. The Tenth Commandment forbids envy, or jealousy of what others own.

The Eighth Commandment requires us to tell the truth. It forbids lying and gossip that hurts others. If we have hurt the good name of others we must try to repair it.

The Ten Commandments show us how to remain faithful to God in this life and to attain eternal life. The commandments help us to live together in peace and love. God has given us these laws for our safety and our freedom.

**How does keeping the Fourth through the Tenth Commandments show that you love God and others?**



## Review

Write *True* or *False* for the following sentences. On a separate piece of paper, change the false sentences to make them true.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Through Jesus, God led the Egyptians out of slavery.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Catholics keep Sunday as the Lord's Day.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ When we keep the first three commandments, we are showing love for God.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ God gave us the Ten Commandments for our safety and our freedom.

Discuss the following.

5. How did the Israelites keep their covenant with God?
6. What are ways we can keep the Lord's Day holy?
7. What are some ways we show love for ourselves and others by keeping the Fourth through the Tenth Commandments?

## Faith Words

**covenant** (page 70)

**Ten Commandments** (page 70)

# With My Family

## Sharing Our Faith

- 1 God gave us the Ten Commandments to help us to live in his love.
- 2 The first three commandments call us to love God.
- 3 The Fourth through the Tenth Commandments call us to love others and ourselves.

## PRAYING TOGETHER



Pray these words to ask for God's help in obeying God's law.

**"Lord, teach me the way of your laws;  
I shall observe them with care.  
Give me insight to observe your teaching,  
to keep it with all my heart.  
Lead me in the path of your commands,  
for that is my delight."**

Psalm 119: 33–35

## Living Our Faith

Discuss how God's laws are meant to free us to live in peace and harmony with God and one another. Choose two of the commandments, and write ways of keeping each of these commandments at home, in school, at work, and in the neighborhood.

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Talk together about following these ways, and how they can promote peace and harmony in your lives.