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# LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS

## Vocabulary

**incarnate:** God the Son assumed human nature; Jesus is both true God and true man.

**creed:** a formal statement of what we believe as Catholics

**mystery of faith:** a truth revealed by God that cannot be fully understood by the human mind

**faith:** the power that God gives us that helps us believe what He reveals

**person:** someone who has a mind and a will

**human person:** someone who is created in the image of God with a mind, a will, and a body

**consubstantial:** Each of the three Persons of the Most Blessed Trinity is God, whole and entire.

## Concepts of Faith

**What is the Most Blessed Trinity?**

*The mystery of the three Persons in one God.*

**Who are the members of the Blessed Trinity?**

*We call the first Person “God the Father”, the second Person “God the Son”, and the third Person “God the Holy Spirit”.*

**What is a communion of persons?**

*A loving union of two or more persons. The Blessed Trinity is the perfect communion of Persons.*

## Dig deeper with *YOUCAT*

Read more about the mystery of the Blessed Trinity by reading *YOUCAT* 36.

## The Nicene Creed

Each time we come together at Sunday Mass, we recite together the Nicene Creed, our “profession of faith”.

In this profession of our Faith, we openly declare or say what we believe about God and the things that are related to God—for example, that there is a resurrection of the dead.

# LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS



## The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, *(At the words that follow, up to and including “and became man”, all bow.)* and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

# LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS

When we say the Nicene Creed, we say that we believe in one God. We also say that we believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In other words, we say that we believe that in one God there are three Persons. This is the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity. This mystery is a mystery of faith. A mystery of faith is a truth revealed by God that we cannot fully understand because of the limits of our minds and the greatness of God. The mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity is one of the more difficult mysteries of our Catholic Faith.

## **The Most Blessed Trinity**

It is very difficult to understand the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, but we can use some examples from our own experience to help. Of course, these examples are not exactly the same as the Most Blessed Trinity, because there is nothing exactly like the Most Blessed Trinity.

The Most Blessed Trinity has been compared to a triangle. The triangle is one thing. But it has three sides. There are three sides in one triangle. There are three in one. We could also say that the triangle has three angles, but it is still one triangle.

Some of the great saints of the Church have compared the Blessed Trinity to a clover leaf. One clover leaf has three leaflets, but it is really only one clover leaf. There are three in one.

Another example that may help us understand the Blessed Trinity is an apple. One apple has its skin, its fruit, and its core. Still, it is only one apple. Every apple is three in one.

We should remember that none of these examples is the same as the Blessed Trinity. These examples only help us to see a small, small part of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. There is nothing in this world that can fully explain the three Persons in God. We need our faith to help us say, “I believe”, even when we must say, “I don’t fully understand.”

## **Communion of Persons**

Another way of describing the three Persons in one God is to say that they are a communion of Persons. A communion of persons is a loving union of two or more persons.

Each Divine Person gives Himself totally to the other two. The Persons of the Blessed Trinity love each other perfectly. When we love others and they love us, we form a communion of persons with them. There are three types of communions of persons that we form. The communion of persons of the family is established in marriage. A man and a woman accept the intimate communion of life and love and plan to share their love with their children. The communion of persons of the workplace, which for us is the school, is established when students and teachers work together to achieve a good learning environment for all. Finally, the communion of persons of the Church is founded on the Sacrament of Baptism and joins us to another family, God’s family.

# LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS

We are images of God, and so we should strive to act like God. Remember that God is a communion of Persons based on love. The way God loves is the example for us to follow in our own lives as we live in various communions of persons. We should live as images of God ready to work together and to love one another.

## Review Questions

**1. What are some things we need to do in order to form a communion of persons?**

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**2. Why should we love others as God loves them?**

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**3. How do we know how to love?**

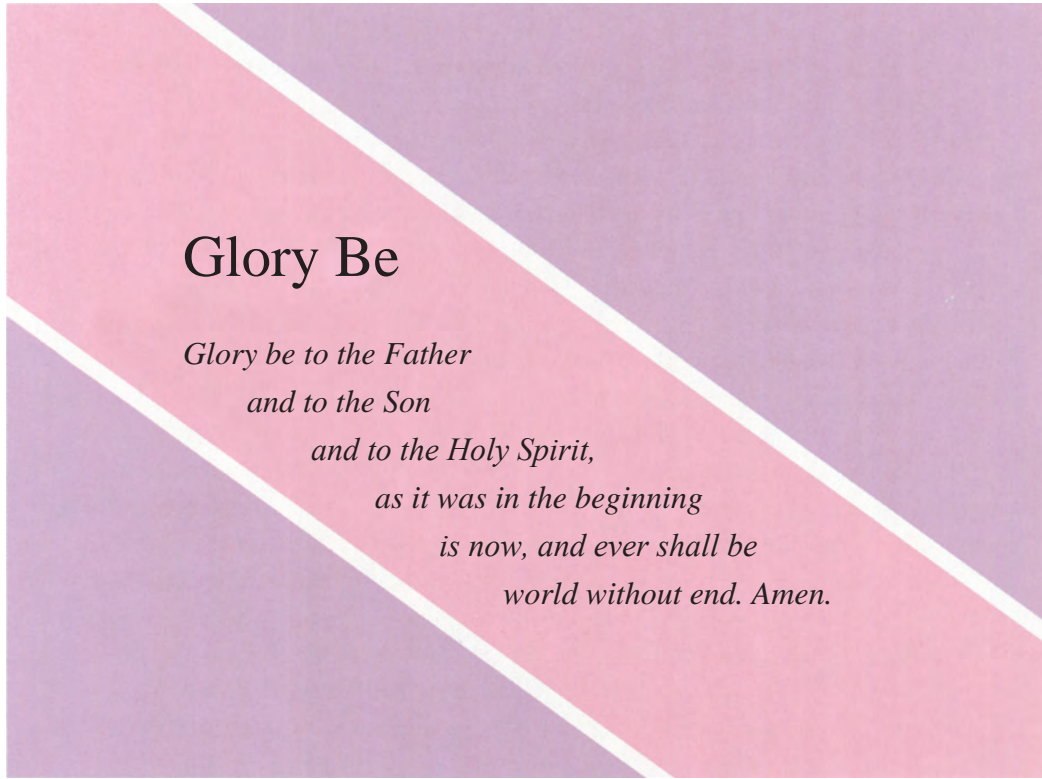
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# LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS



## Communion of Persons Activity

**Directions:** For each communion of persons below, write a specific example showing how you can be a good member.

Church \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Family \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# LESSON 2: CREATION

## Vocabulary

**Genesis:** the first book of the Bible. It begins with the story of creation.

**create:** to bring something into existence out of nothing

**physical world:** all that we can see or experience with our senses or scientific instruments

**spiritual world:** all that we cannot directly experience with our senses or scientific instruments; for example, God and angels

**steward:** someone who cares for the property of others

**infinite:** without any limit

**immortal:** living forever

## Dig deeper with *YOUCAT*

Read more about how we are to take care of animals and creatures of the earth by reading *YOUCAT 57*.

## The Bible Tells Us about Creation

We know that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are the perfect communion of Persons. The three Persons of the Blessed Trinity share love among themselves. To share His love and goodness, God created the angels, us, and the world we live in. In order to experience God's creation, all we have to do is look about us. We can see, hear, smell, taste, or touch God's various creations every day of our lives. An excellent place to read about God's creation is in the Bible.

First, let's review our knowledge of the Bible by answering these questions:

1. What are the two main divisions, or parts, of the Bible?
2. What is the name of the first book of the Bible?
3. This first book of the Bible begins by telling us about what great act of God?

## Creation

In the Bible we read how God created everything and everyone. To create means to bring something into existence out of nothing. Can any of us make something out of nothing? No! God alone has the power to create—to make something out of nothing. We are able to fashion and make things because God created us and gave us our talents. But in order to make things, we always start with something. God started with nothing and made everything.



## LESSON 2: CREATION

### We Are Unique

We are unique because we are part of the physical world and the spiritual world. Our bodies are physical and our souls are spiritual. The soul is the invisible, spiritual, and immortal gift from God that gives us life. We have minds and wills because they are powers of our souls. Because we have minds and wills, we can think and choose, and we are persons created in the image of God. No other physical creation of God is a person. In other words, nothing else in the physical (visible) world can think and choose, has a mind and a will, is an image of God. Only human beings belong to both the physical world and the spiritual world. No other creation of God is both physical and spiritual. But there are creations of God who are pure spirits. They belong only to the spiritual (invisible) world. We call them angels. They are persons; they have minds and wills. They are images of God; but they do not have bodies.



### God Is Perfect

Did God need to create things for Himself? No, God is perfect, and He does not need anything. God creates because He is good and wants to share His goodness. By His creating, God shows us He is powerful, wise, and loving.

God is powerful. A powerful person has great strength and ability. God showed us His infinite power by creating everything out of nothing. For example, when God created the heavens and the earth, there was darkness everywhere. So He brought into existence light, by creating the sun, the moon, and the stars. He created something out of nothing.

God is wise. A wise person can organize things and put order into things. God showed us His infinite wisdom by establishing order in the world. Everything has its proper place in creation. For example, the planets stay in their orbits around the sun.

God is loving. Loving persons give themselves to others. God showed us His infinite love by sharing His life with human beings. For example, no one would be alive if it weren't for God.

### We Are Stewards

Because we are images of God, God made us stewards of His physical creation. This means we are responsible for taking care of the physical world God has created. The Old Testament tells us that God wants us to be stewards.

*Read Genesis 2:18–20.*



## Review Questions

**1. Into what two major groups are the things of creation divided?**

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**2. In addition to His infinite power, what else does God show us by creating the world?**

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**3. What part of a human being is physical?**

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**4. What part of a human being is spiritual?**

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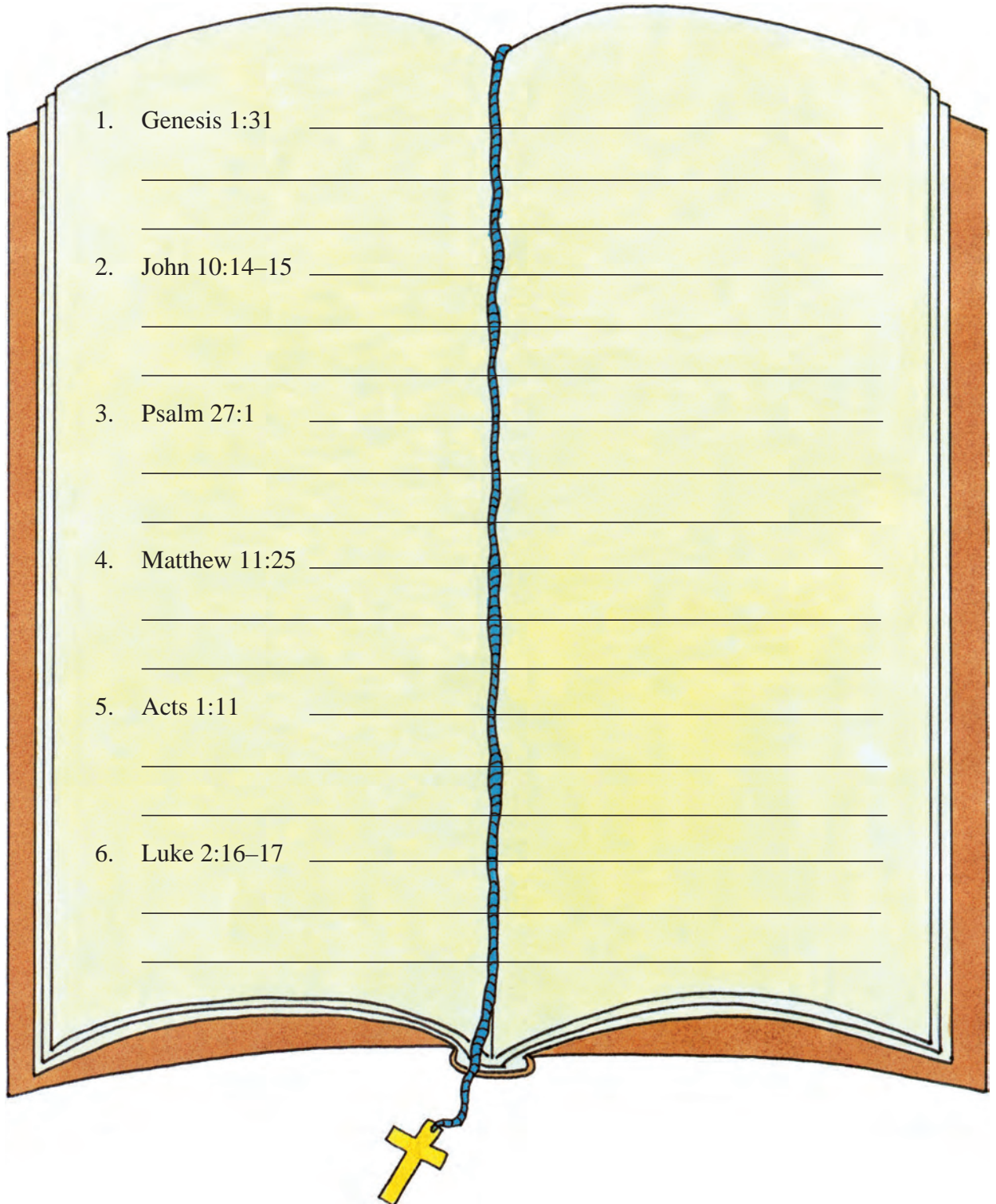
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# LESSON 2: CREATION

## Bible Verses Activity

*Directions: Bible verses to look up:*



# LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS

## Vocabulary

**uniqueness:** being in some way different from others of the same kind

**dignity:** having worth or value

## Concepts of Faith

**What are the two ways in which we are unique?**

*We are the only persons with bodies; and each of us has unique talents and gifts.*

## Dig deeper with *YOUCAT*

Discover more about what it means when we say we are Images of God by reading *YOUCAT* 58.

## We Are Images of God

We have learned that the universe was created by God because He wanted to share His goodness and love. Through creation God showed us His infinite power, wisdom, and love. We know that the list of God's creations is almost endless. Human persons are unique among all God's earthly creation because they are the only persons with bodies. In other words, human persons are the only earthly images of God and the only images of God with bodies.

We were created to be like God. The story of creation tells us, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27).

Not only are we unique because we are persons (images of God) with bodies, but we are also unique because we have individual differences. God made each of us unique in many different ways. Our height, weight, hair, and eye color are some of the things that make each of us unique. In addition, we all have our own talents and gifts.

We have unique likes and dislikes. Based on our likes and dislikes, each of us makes choices. These choices show that we are unique. Our choice of foods is different. When we grow up, we will choose different jobs. There are no two people who are exactly alike, and there never will be.

Even though we are all different from one another, we all have value, worth, and dignity, because we are images of God. We should respect each other's dignity. We respect each other's dignity when we love others as God loves them.

## LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS

We see how special every human being is to God by looking at the way Jesus, God the Son, treated people on earth. An example of Jesus' love for us is found in the Bible story in which Jesus cures a sick man.

Jesus had gone to Jerusalem to celebrate one of the Jewish feast days. In the temple area was a large pool of water. By the pool there were a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled people. They came to the pool because they believed that when the water began to bubble it had healing power. When Jesus was walking by the pool, He saw a man who had been ill for a very long time. Jesus asked the man, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled [stirred up] and when I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet [mat], and walk." Immediately the man got up and walked. (Based on John 5:1–9.)

In this story, we see Jesus sharing His love. Jesus loved the sick man and all people. He showed us that each one of us has dignity and value. As images of God we should respect each other's dignity.

### **We Are Special**

We feel good about ourselves when we are well liked, when we do well in school, or when we help our team. But even on those days when we don't feel good about ourselves, we are special and unique. God loves us. Because He created us, He knows who we are and everything about us. He calls us by name, and we are His. Psalm 139 tells us that God is all-knowing.

O LORD, you have searched me and known me!  
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.  
You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.  
Even before a word is on my tongue,  
behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. . . .

For you formed my inward parts,  
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you, for I am wondrously made.  
Wonderful are your works!  
You know me right well;  
my frame was not hidden from you,  
when I was being made in secret,  
intricately wrought in the depths of the earth.

Psalm 139:1–4, 13–15



# LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS



# LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS

We have great value. We are important and worthwhile. We can see how special we are to God by what Jesus said to the children in the following Bible story.

People were bringing children to Jesus so He would touch them. When the disciples saw this, they tried to tell the people to leave Jesus alone. But Jesus called the disciples to Him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God.” (Based on Luke 18:15–16.)

## Review Questions

**1. Why are human beings unique among all of God’s creations?**

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**2. What did God show us by creating everything from nothing?**

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**3. What are some of the ways we, as individuals, are unique?**

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**4. What does it mean that a person has dignity?**

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**5. What can we do to show love and respect toward others?**

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## LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS

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### “I Am Unique” Activity

We are unique in many ways. No two people have the same fingerprints. To demonstrate this, make a set of your thumbprints by following these directions:

1. *Run a pencil over the ball of your right thumb.*
2. *Place a piece of clear tape on the graphite smudge.*
3. *Carefully remove the tape and place it on a piece of paper.*

Repeat the process with your left thumb. Compare your thumbprints with those of your classmates.