

# We Are Meant to Moderate, not Indulge In, Our Desires

**PRO TIP**  
Download other grades for alternate activities!

## CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CCC 375  
CCC 398-400  
CCC 1718  
CCC 1765-1766  
CCC 1770

## MATERIALS

- ▶ [Munkacsy's Christ Before Pilate](#)
- ▶ Holy Bibles
- ▶ [The Suffering Servant](#)

## SUGGESTED TIME

45 minutes

## Teacher Background

Because of Original Sin, we tend to be imprudent in judgment and inclined to sin. Having lost the gifts bestowed upon our first parents which put them in a perfect "state of holiness and justice" (CCC 375) we now are charged with great responsibility in discernment and must guard not only our feelings but our thoughts, so that we do not choose against our own good. Since God alone satisfies, all acts contrary to Him bring pain and sorrow.



### HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

Contrary to the assertions of gender ideology, we are meant to moderate, not indulge in, our desires. Our wills are strengthened when we master our bodies and our bodies (our passions) are relegated to their proper places when we deprive them instead of indulging them. In the rightly-ordered soul, desires are evaluated and mastered by the will before being acted upon, bringing a person (especially through grace) to a place of virtue in life toward his or her ultimate end.

## Activity

- Distribute to your students a copy of [Munkacsy's Christ Before Pilate](#).
- Give the class a few moments to look at the image in silence. Then put them in pairs or small groups to discuss the conversation questions.
- Reconvene the class and have a discussion about the questions, using the Answer Key as a guide.
- Then have students take out their Bibles and read Job 1:1-22. Then compare the story of Job to Jesus' temptation in the desert (Matt 4:1-11). The text of both Scriptures are also available on [The Suffering Servant](#).

### Munkacsy's Christ Before Pilate

**Directions:** Look at the painting for a few moments, then discuss the conversation questions.



Christ Before Pilate, Munkacsy

1. What biblical scene does this painting depict?

### The Suffering Servant

**Directions:** Read the Scripture passages below, and discuss the conversation questions.

**Job 1:1-22 ESV**

1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. 2 There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. 3 He had seven thousand head of oxen, five thousand asses, and very many camels, so that the man was the greatest of all the people of the east. 4 His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. 5 And when the day of the least had run their course, Job would send and sacrifice them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. 6 For Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually. 7 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan [S] also came among them. 8 The Lord said to Satan, "Whence have you come?" Satan answered the Lord, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." 9 And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil?" 10 Then Satan answered the Lord, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 11 Hasten thou not to put a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? 12 Thus hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 13 But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse thee to thy face." 14 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only upon himself do not put forth your hand." So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.



Job on the dunghill, Giuseppe Cassese

- E.** Explain that Jesus, in the wilderness, is tempted by the devil in three primary ways.
- The devil offers food to sate His great hunger.
  - Tempts Him to exert His power.
  - And even claims to offer the riches of all the world, if only He will bow and worship him.

**F.** Continue to explain that Job is often called a "suffering servant" for he is a righteous man who suffers unjustly (like Jesus, the Most Righteous, led unto His death on the Cross; see Isaiah 53 for the prophecy of the suffering servant). But we can also see how Job typifies Christ in his suffering in another way, not simply for suffering, but for suffering in innocence and remaining righteous in his suffering. Job does not provoke or blame or curse God; rather, after losing all of his possessions and all of his sons and daughters, he explicitly blesses the Lord and remains in His good graces. In the full story of Job we see sorrow and anguish and loss heaped upon him; he is tested possibly more than any other of God's people, and is faithful. For his faithfulness, Job is restored to health and prosperity far greater than before, and lives to see his family to the fourth generation (Job 42:10-17).

**G.** Discuss the conversation questions, using the Answer Key as a guide. Lead the class to the conclusion that the Lord asks us to remain faithful, to resist temptation (for example, in an impulse to fulfill our personal desires), and to prefer to do God's holy will. Only in doing so is there everlasting reward. Job blessed the Lord and mortified himself in his sorrow, and was rewarded.

**H.** Emphasize that Jesus fortified His will by fasting for 40 days and forty nights - making an explicit correlation and example to us of the relation between our bodies and our souls; our wills are strengthened when we master our bodies and our bodies (our passions) are relegated to their proper places when we deprive them instead of indulging them. Hunger and weakness make us turn all the more fully to God for succor, for all that is needed to sustain us. And Jesus resists temptation and overcomes the wicked and ultimately empty offerings of the devil after fasting and prayer. The heroes of the Old and New Testaments and Jesus, our model, are more practical than any earthly advocates we can follow, since what they teach pertains to salvation. One great lesson is to moderate our desires in order to live in virtue and in strength to do God's will.

1. A "type" is a person or thing in the Old Testament that foreshadows a person or thing in the New Testament. How does Job serve as a type of Christ? Specifically, how does Job's faithfulness in the face of all loss foreshadow a sign of something to come? The great faithfulness of Jesus in the face of temptation by the devil in the desert?

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Job and his Friends, by Regis

2. What do Job and Jesus share in common in these Old Testament and New Testament passages?

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3. What is the lesson for us? Is it practical? Impractical? Why or why not?

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© SOPHIA INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS      WE ARE MEANT TO MODERATE, NOT RELEASE, IN OUR DESIRES

- I. Make sure students understand the difference between depriving and indulging our desires with a few examples:
  - Binge-watching our favorite show would be an example of indulging our desires. What would be an example of depriving the desire to watch this show? *Watching only one episode, or none at all.*
  - Eating a whole bag of chips / having only a small serving or none at all.
  - Scrolling social media for hours / staying off social media.
- J. As a final reflection, and as an aid to inspire a true spirit of moderation, have students memorize the following exhortation of St. Paul to the Philippians (**RSV Philippians 4:8**):

*"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."*

# Munkacsy's *Christ Before Pilate*

**Directions:** Look at the painting for a few moments, then discuss the conversation questions.



*Christ Before Pilate, Munkácsy*

1 What biblical scene does this painting depict?

**This painting depicts the scene in Scripture when Jesus is brought before Governor Pontius Pilate. Already wanting Him put to death, the high priests bring Jesus before the governor in the hopes that the governor will condemn Him.**

## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

- 2 What is Christ doing? How would you describe His posture and expression?  
**Christ stands erect, still, calm, though not proud but humble before the civil authority. He does not appear to resist or seek to escape. He looks grave, interested in Pilate's considerations, and not impudent.**
- 3 What about the figure of Pilate? What do his posture and expression show?  
**Pilate appears to be in a moment of deep consideration: the gesture of the fingers on his hand and the stern look on his brow indicate his mind's serious deliberation. He hesitates to judge the man brought before him.**
- 4 How would you describe the people in the crowd surrounding Jesus? Why are they so impassioned?  
**By contrast, the crowd is apparently driven in an impatient and impassioned craze: curious, scornful, whispering, pointing, peering, reaching, clamoring. They demand that a murderer be released and for Jesus to be put to death, after all.**
- 5 Who in the painting represents reason? Who represents emotion?  
**Christ, and even Pilate, may represent reason (one perfect; the other imperfect) while the crowd represents sheer emotion. Note that the will and passions are not necessarily opposed to each other, however they need to be properly formed and put into a proper relationship in a fallen state; moral perfection is being moved to the good by the will and the appetite (RSV Matt 26:39; 27:1-2; 11-14; 24-26; CCC 1770).**
- 6 We know from Scripture that Jesus makes no answer to the charges brought against Him, and Pilate is astounded. Why does Jesus not defend Himself? What might He be trying to teach us?  
**Jesus gives us a supreme example of restraint. He has every right to defend Himself, even to try to escape unjust arrest. He chooses, as He said He would in the Garden of Gethsemane ("not as I will, but as thou wilt"), to remain silent and to do His Father's will. Jesus teaches us that all must be directed to what our Heavenly Father desires and wills.**

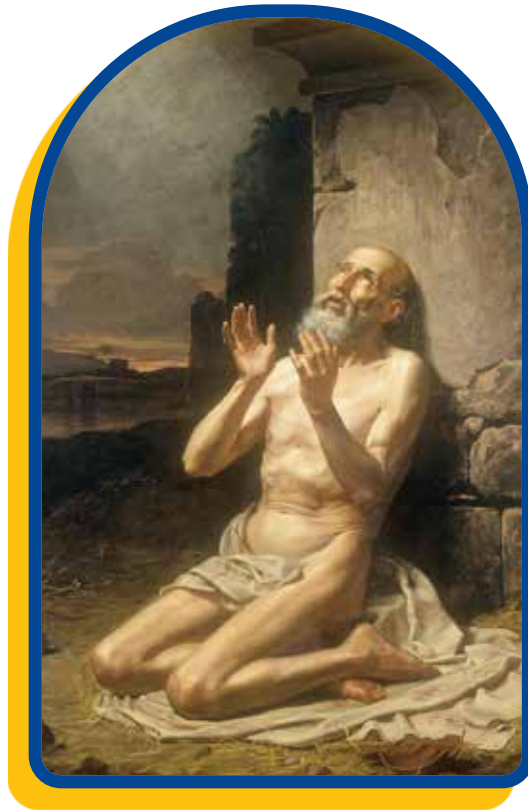
# The Suffering Servant

**Directions:** Read the Scripture passages below, and discuss the conversation questions.

## Job 1:1-22 RSV

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**6** Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan[a] also came among them. **7** The Lord said to Satan, "Whence have you come?" Satan answered the Lord, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." **8** And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" **9** Then Satan answered the Lord, "Does Job fear God for nought? **10** Hast thou not put a hedge about him and his



*Job on the Dunghill, Gonzalo Carrasco*

house and all that he has, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. **11** But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse thee to thy face." **12** And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only upon himself do not put forth your hand." So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

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**20** Then Job arose, and rent his robe, and shaved his head, and fell upon the ground, and worshiped. **21** And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

**22** In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

### Matthew 4:1-11 RSV

**1** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. **2** And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry. **3** And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." **4** But he answered, "It is written,

*'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'*

**5** Then the devil took him to the holy city, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, **6** and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

*'He will give his angels charge of you,'*  
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*'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'*

**7** Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

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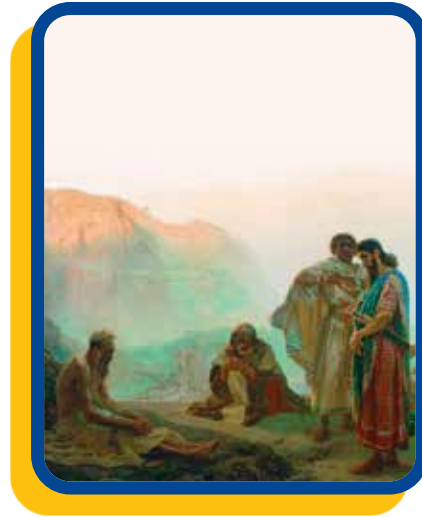
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## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

- 1 A “type” is a person or thing in the Old Testament that foreshadows a person or thing in the New Testament. How does Job serve as a type of Christ? Specifically, how does Job’s faithfulness in the face of all loss forerun (act a sign of something to come) the great fortitude of Jesus in the face of temptation by the devil in the desert?

**Job is a righteous man who suffers unjustly, like Jesus, the Most Righteous, led unto His death on the Cross.**



*Job and His Friends, Ilya Repin*

- 2 What do Job and Jesus share in common in these Old Testament and New Testament passages?

**Job blessed the Lord and mortified himself in his sorrow, and was rewarded. Jesus fortified His will by fasting for forty days and forty nights, and He resists temptation and overcomes the wicked and ultimately empty offerings of the devil after fasting and prayer.**

- 3 What is the lesson for us? Is it practical? Impractical? Why or why not?

**Our wills are strengthened when we master our bodies and our bodies (our passions) are relegated to their proper places when we deprive them instead of indulging them. The strength of Job, the strength of Our Lord, may seem impractical to us. Job is a special case and possibly aided by divine power, being a beloved of God. Our Lord, of course, is perfect in all that He does. But it is clear that good comes from denying one’s self and suffering for the sake of doing what God wants. The heroes of the Old and New Testaments and Jesus, our model, are more practical than any earthly advocates we can follow, since what they teach pertains to salvation. One great lesson is to moderate our desires in order to live in virtue and in strength to do God’s will.**

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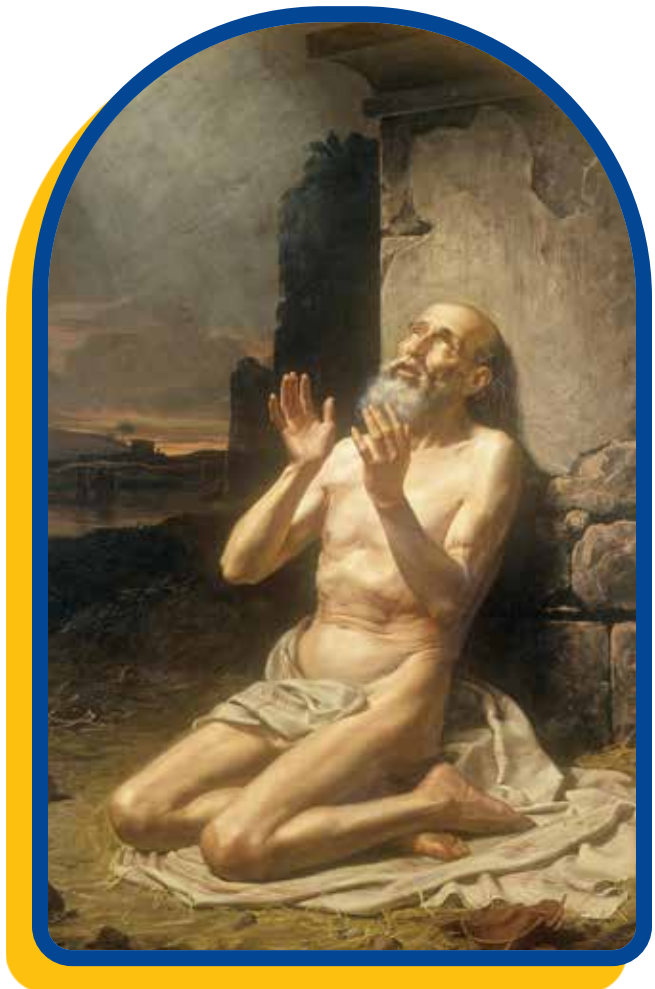
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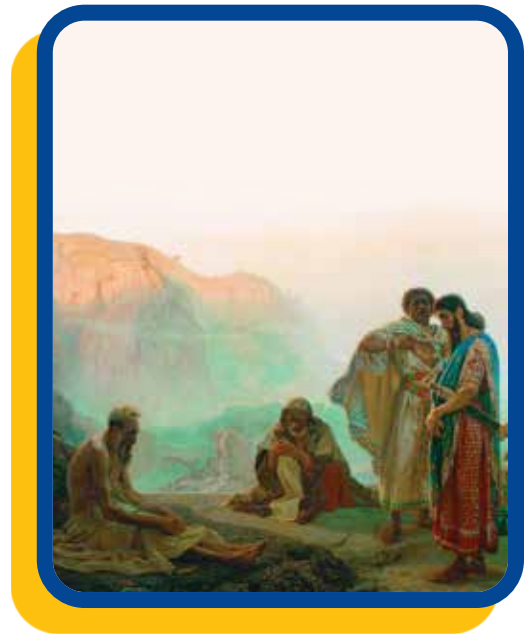
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*Job and His Friends, Ilya Repin*

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# Feelings and Identity

**PRO TIP**  
Download other grades for alternate activities!

## CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CCC 335  
CCC 364  
CCC 369  
CCC 371  
CCC 377  
CCC 1763  
CCC 1767-1768

## MATERIALS

- ▶ [Munch's \*The Scream\*](#)
- ▶ [What's In a Name?](#)

## SUGGESTED TIME

50 minutes



## Teacher Background

We are created in the image and likeness of God, made up of a unity of body and soul, endowed with an intellect and will. Our rational souls are what make us like God, and distinguish us from the rest of creation. The Sacrament of Baptism makes us His adopted sons and daughters, and this is our identity. We are sons and daughters of God, driven by this desire for Him, not to be directed by our feelings.

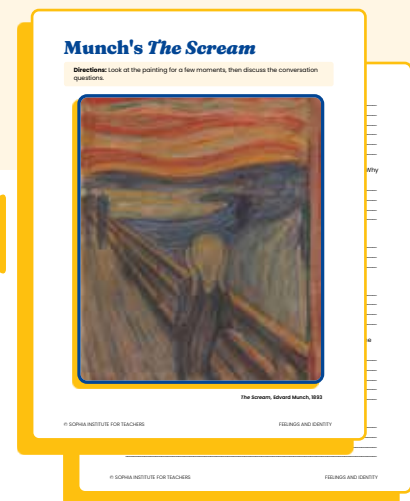


### HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

Contrary to the claims of gender ideology, our feelings or experiences do not define us. Our passions (emotions/feelings) are in themselves morally neutral; they become morally good when they contribute to a good action, and evil in the opposite case. Because our fallen nature tends to sin, our feelings must be directed by a properly-formed conscience and our will must be conformed to God's will. Our identity is beloved son or daughter of God, and this identity in Christ should guide our feelings.

## Activity

- Begin by explaining that we are made in the image and likeness of God, with an intellect and will. Make sure students understand that our intellect is our ability to think and reason, and our will makes decisions and acts on them. We also experience emotions, or feelings. Passions (emotions/feelings) are morally neutral. They incline us to act (or not to act) according to what we perceive as good or evil. In other words, how we feel can move us to do certain things or not do them. Because our fallen nature tends to sin, our feelings must be directed by a properly-formed conscience and our will conformed to God's will. To live as God wants us to love, our will (reason) must be in control of our passions (feelings). Simply following our feelings makes us slaves to them!
- Distribute the [Munch's The Scream](#) and have students look at the painting in silence for a few moments. Then have them discuss the questions in groups.
- After a few moments, reconvene the class and use the Answer Key to guide a large-group discussion.



D. Then distribute the [What's In A Name?](#), and read aloud from Scripture about Adam naming the animals. (from RSV Gen 2:18-23).

E. Note for the class that the naming of the creatures is tied to discovering who will be a suitable partner for Adam. Adam identifies (i.e. gives names to) all the creatures, but does not find one is fit to be joined to him. There must be something essential about what we are called and what is our nature. God proceeds to create Eve from Adam's rib, and she is "bone of [his] bones, flesh of [his] flesh." Man and woman cleave to each other, become one flesh, and together further cooperate in creation through procreation (having children).

F. Then read aloud the passage from Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* (Act II, Scene ii, ll. 38-49). Before reading, ask the class if they are familiar with this story. If needed, explain that in *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet laments that her true love Romeo is a member of the family to whom her own family is sworn enemy.

G. Explain that Juliet's personal desires reflect our fallen attempts to break free of bounds, even perhaps by renaming things, because we think it will help us to get what we want (happiness in the world). But changing something's name does not change what it is. We can call an apple an orange, but it's still an apple.

H. Finally, have students discuss the questions and use the Answer Key to guide the conversation.

I. Wrap up by explaining that we are created in the image and likeness of God, made up of a unity of body and soul. Our rational souls are what make us like God, and distinguish us from the rest of creation. Moreover, we are fulfilled, especially since the fall (whereby we lost grace, knowledge, perfected virtues), in our union with God in heaven for eternity. The sacrament of baptism makes us adopted children of God, saves us by grace and makes us capable of achieving our final end. In addition, our nature consists in the union of body and soul; the body is not merely a material, less important attachment to the soul or an invaluable aspect to our life in Christ. We are charged, indeed, to honor our bodies fully as temples of the holy spirit and as integral to our human dignity as male or female. Furthermore, we are sons and daughters of God, driven by this desire for Him, not to be directed by our feelings. Happiness, which God wants for us, is an end of the properly ordered soul drawn to its Maker; false happiness, which God does not want for us, is the end of the improperly ordered soul driven by the world.

**What's In A Name?**

**Directions:** Read the two passages below and then discuss the questions that follow.

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field, but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

**GENESIS 2:18-23 (RSV)**

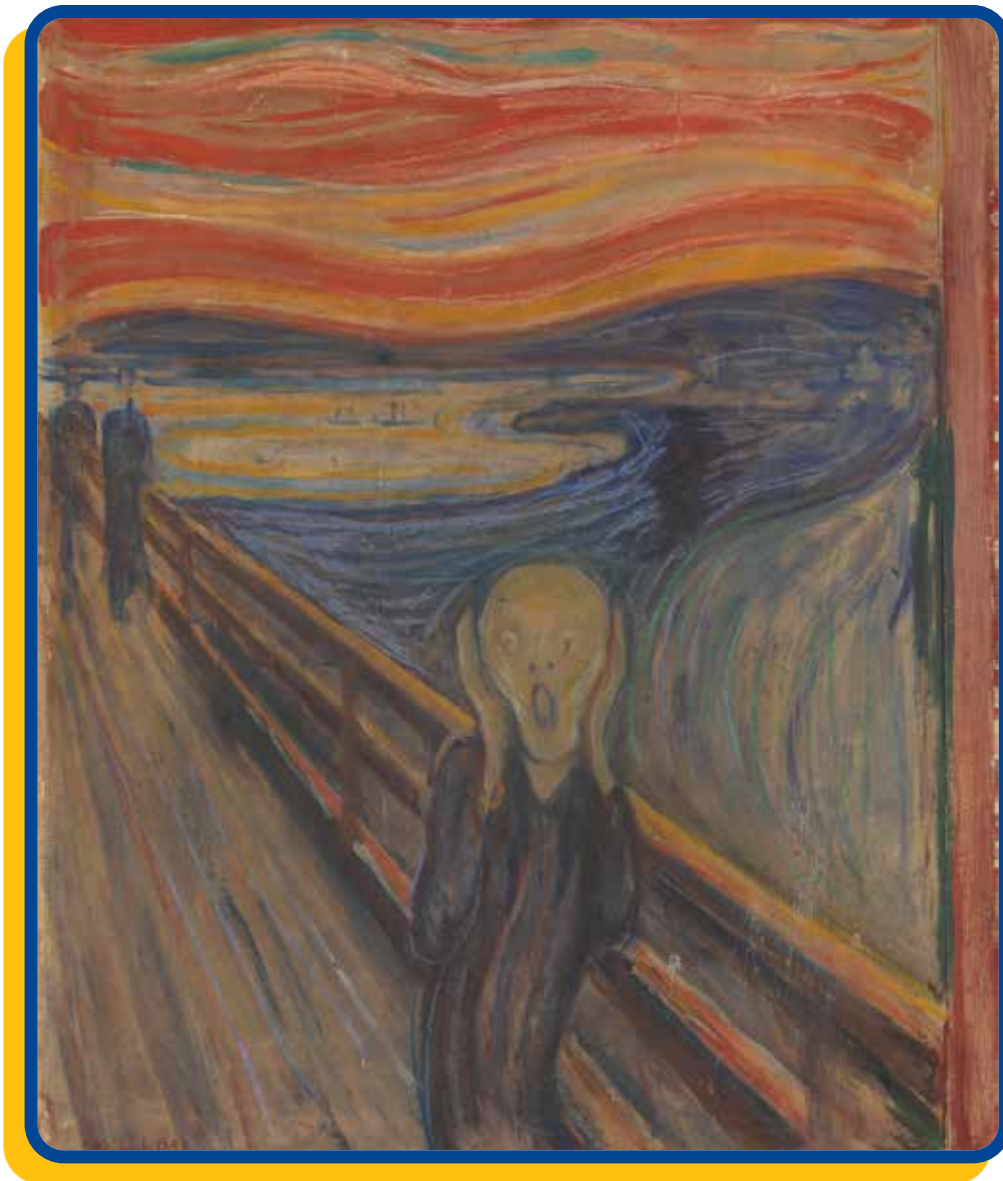
© SOPHIA INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS      FEELINGS AND IDENTITY

- J. As a final reflection, read aloud (or have students read) this passage from St. Paul, which enforces the fundamental idea that identity in Christ should guide our feelings – our feelings do not define our identity. We draw strength and meaning from God's revelation, from discerning His plan for us, from growth in virtue, from sacramental graces.

*I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! **(RSV Romans 7:15-25)***

## Munch's *The Scream*

**Directions:** Look at the painting for a few moments, then discuss the conversation questions.



*The Scream*, Edvard Munch, 1893

## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

- 1 How would you describe this art? What emotions does it evoke?

**This art could be described as impressionist, as it gives an impression of real things rather than depicts them in realistic detail. The paint strokes are thick and heavy and the hues are natural but both somber and stark, with wintry hues coloring the figures, bridge, and river, contrasted with a fiery sky in the background. The painting evokes a sense and has a theme of despair, loss, extreme sadness, or terror. The central figure is separated from others in a lonely looking scene, hands up against his or her face, with wide-open eyes and an aghast expression, appearing to scream. The figure's spectral appearance also lends a haunted aspect to the art.**

- 2 You have probably seen this image before. It has even become a popular emoji. Why might this be a popular piece of art?

**The painting may be popular because it is a style that breaks away from classical forms and appeals to modern self-expression.**

- 3 What do you think might cause the central figure to scream?

**People scream when they are scared or overwhelmed with emotion, unnerved with sadness, fear, or anger.**

- 4 Might we describe this painting as provocative? How so or how not?

**The painting may be described as provocative since it is meant to excite strong or base emotion in the audience, rather than art with more subtle themes or less disturbing imagery. It seems designed to shock or disturb, rather than edify or enlighten.**

- 5 What are the passions? What does this image say about the passions? What is the proper relationship between our feelings and our will, or rational appetite?

**The passions (emotions) incline us to act (or not to act) according to what we perceive as good or evil. "The Scream" reflects that passions are sometimes overwhelming and uncontrollable.**

- 6 What might the background figures represent?

**Allow discussion, and if students do not mention it, suggest to them that the figures in the painting taken together may represent the human soul with intellect, will, and passions. The figures in the background may represent the will, or reason, as they seem calm or in control in contrast with the central figure. A main idea to reflect upon is the relationship between the passions and the will. (See CCC 377; CCC 1763; CCC 1767).**

# What's In A Name?

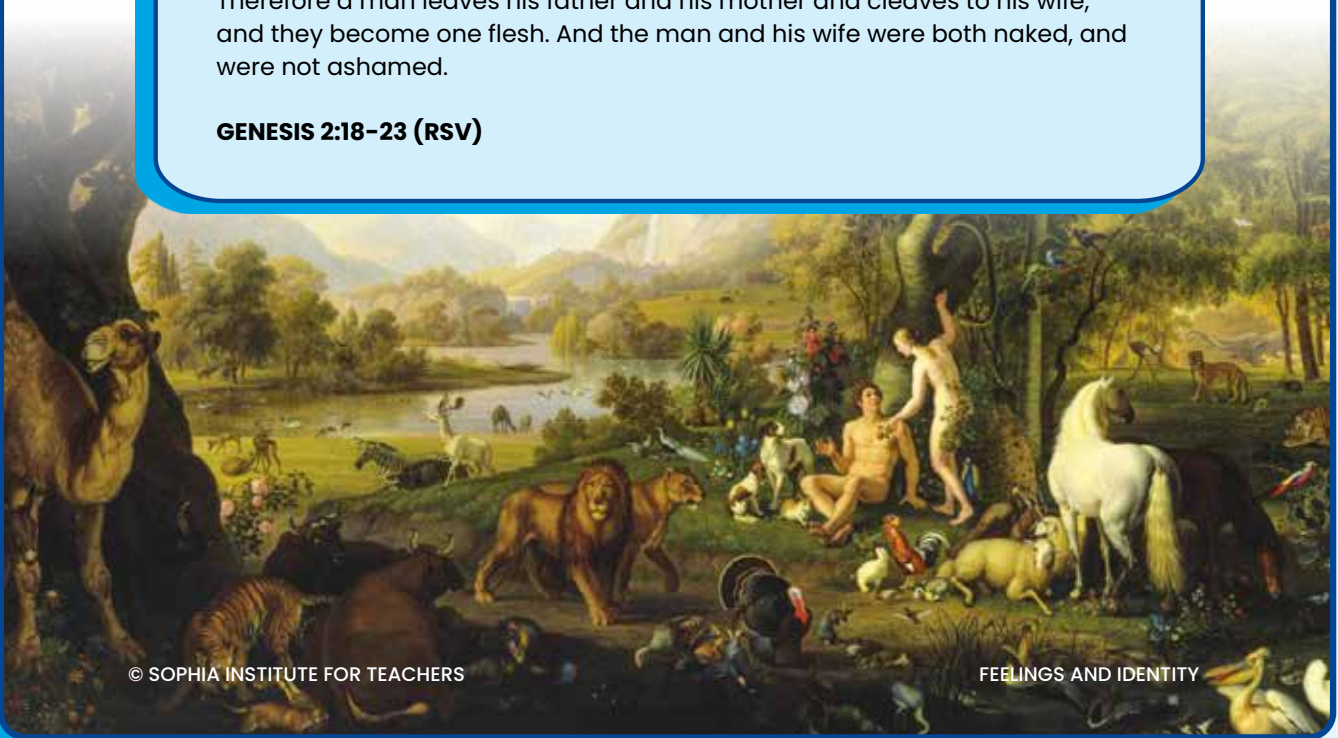
**Directions:** Read the two passages below and then discuss the questions that follow.

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
because she was taken out of Man."

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

**GENESIS 2:18-23 (RSV)**



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FEELINGS AND IDENTITY

## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY



**Juliet:** 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.  
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.  
What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,  
Nor arm, nor face. O, be some other name  
Belonging to a man.  
What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other word would smell as sweet.  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;  
And for thy name, which is no part of thee,  
Take all myself.

**SHAKESPEARE'S ROMEO & JULIET**  
**(Act II, Scene ii, ll. 38-49)**

- 1 What is the significance of a name? Are the names of things supposed to correlate to what or who they are? What would happen if the names of things could change at any time?

**A name is what we call something or someone for identification. A name is more significant and helpful if it reflects essence or character, lends meaning and identity. Naming things is a way humanity stays rooted, and allows us to grasp, even if only implicitly, the idea of objective truth. Arbitrary names and changeable definitions cause confusion.**

- 2 Why does God have Adam give names to His creatures?

**God directs Adam to name the animals of His creation and to subdue all things in the garden (participate in the good of creation as steward). Note that the naming of the creatures is inherently tied to who will be a suitable partner for Adam; he identifies all the creatures but not one is fit to be joined to him. There must be something essential about what we are called and what is our nature. God proceeds to create Eve from Adam's rib, and she is "bone of [his] bones, flesh of [his] flesh." Man and woman cleave to each other, become one flesh, and together further cooperate in creation through procreation (having children).**

## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

- 3 Does changing the name of a thing change what it is?

No.

- 4 What do you know about Romeo and Juliet? How would you put Juliet's lament in your own words? Why is what she wants impossible?

Juliet wonders, what is the importance of a name? Can't he be called something else, and still be as good, and then their problems would be solved? But names are not, or are not meant to be, so superficial, and Romeo cannot rightly forfeit his family identity, even though in his own passion he says to Juliet: "Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized" ... (II, ii, 50). Moreover, even if we can appreciate Juliet's feelings, we can see how her motives are not entirely rational. Adam's naming of the animals reflects the positive and essential purpose of the name (to identify creatures in the proper order, with mankind intimately linked to God's image, reflecting the proper relationship between creation and Creator); Juliet's personal desires reflect our fallen attempts to break free of bounds, even perhaps by renaming things, to get what we want (happiness in the world).

- 5 Are books always justly judged by their covers? As Catholics, do we believe that the past, or one's background, defines us or sets our fate? How so and how not? On the other hand, should our feelings dictate our actions? Should we let them define who we are?

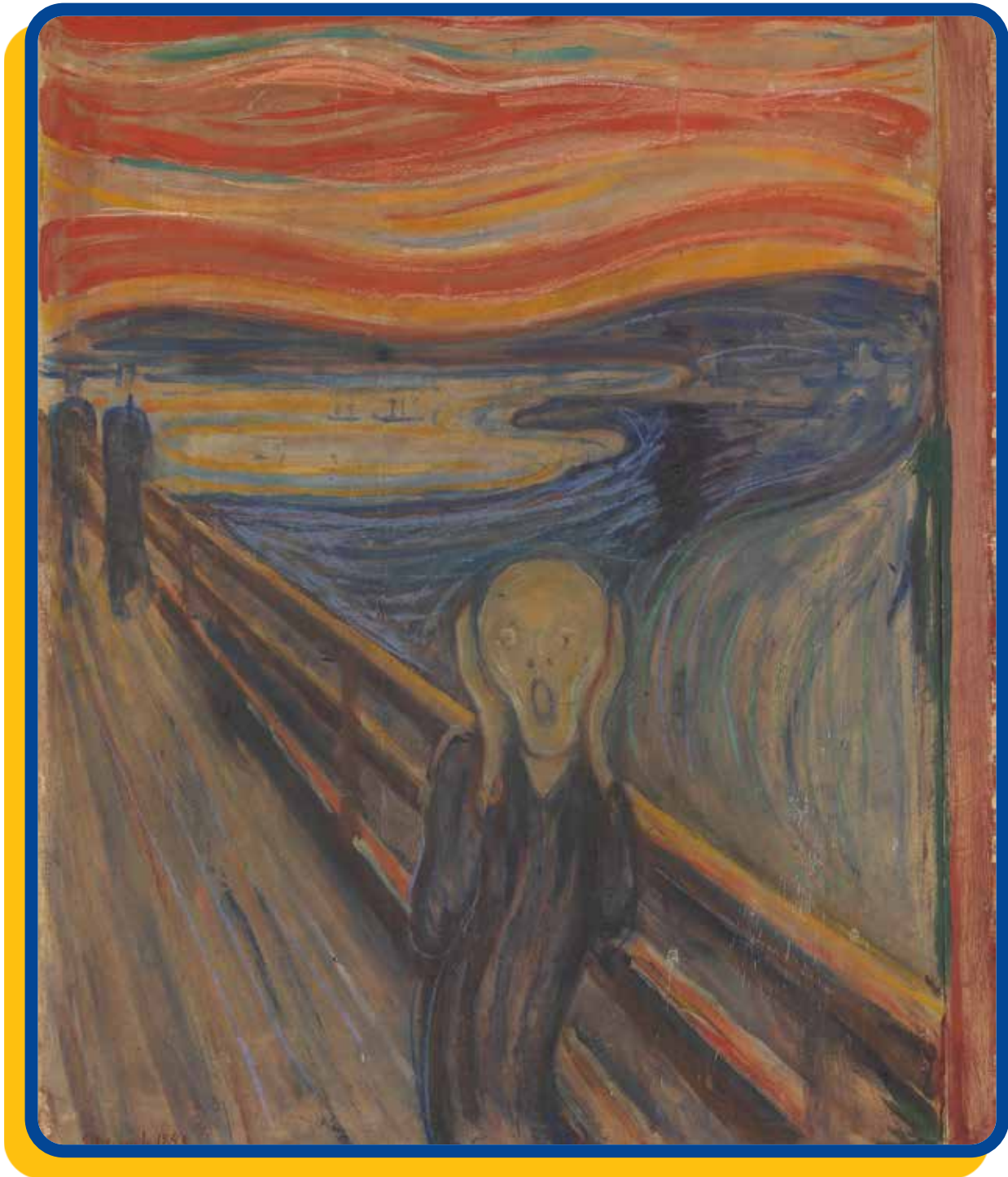
We *are* taught not to be superficial, not to "judge a book by its cover," however names are not merely superficial, changeable "covers." It is certain that the appearance of a person or thing does not tell all, however it is also certain that outward appearance, the signs and symbols of things, do matter and can (and should) carry great weight. As Catholics, we know the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance wash away sins and allow us to be free to be good (thus we are not bound or doomed by sin, neither Original Sin nor personal sin, granted we receive grace through the Sacraments). That said, feelings, though they can inspire, reflect, and flesh out the motivations and ends of our actions, should be reigned in by reason, bound by law, and directed according to God's will, so that what we do and how we are is not simply a manifestation of how we feel.



# Feelings and Identity

# Munch's *The Scream*

**Directions:** Look at the painting for a few moments, then discuss the conversation questions.



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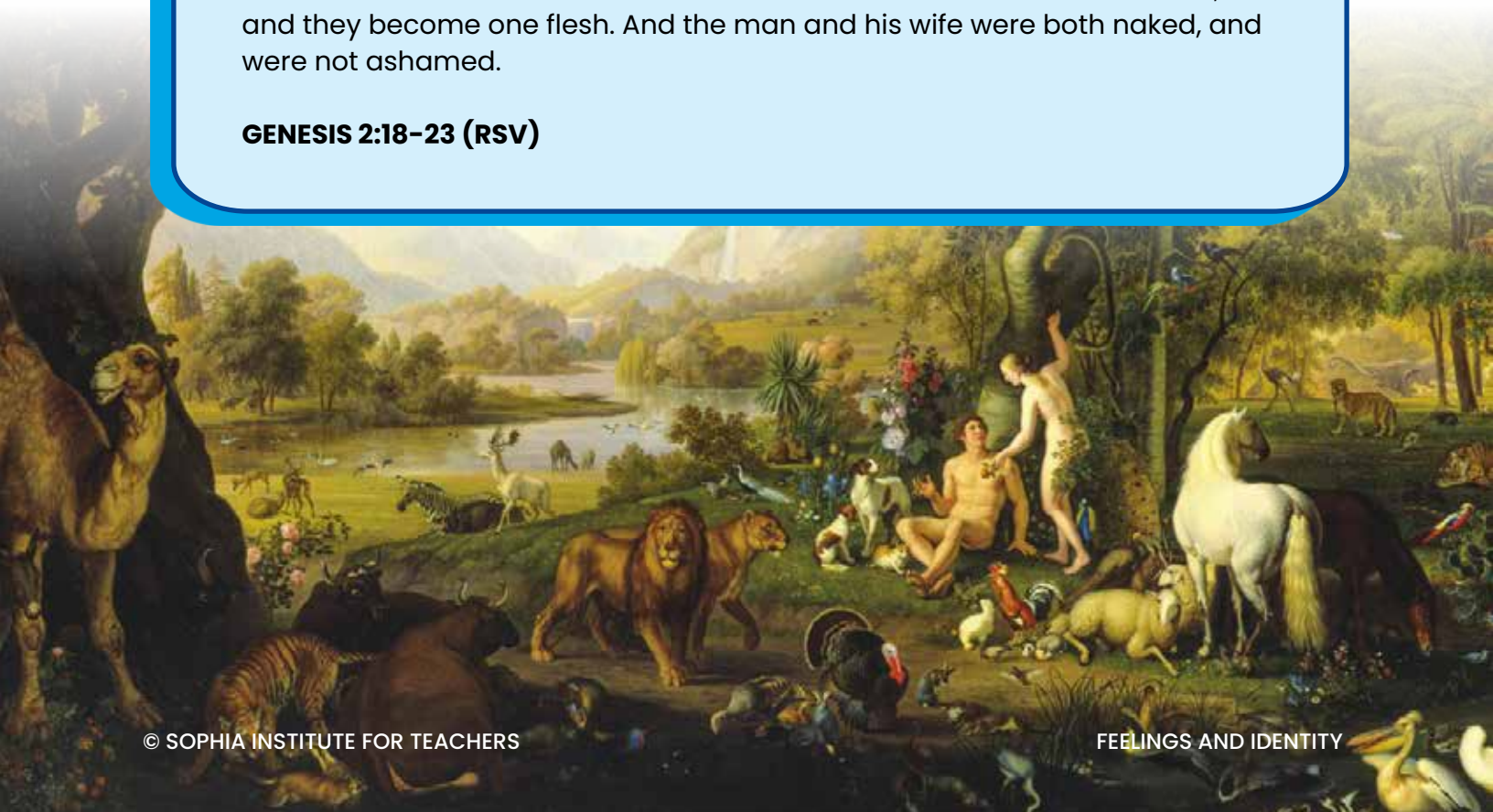
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**GENESIS 2:18-23 (RSV)**





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# What Is the Nature of the Human Person?

**PRO TIP**  
Download other grades for alternate activities!

## CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CCC 355-357  
CCC 362-366

## MATERIALS

- ▶ Apple seeds, and/or a picture of a kitten
- ▶ [Who Are We?](#)
- ▶ [Levels of Being Chart](#)
- ▶ Bibles

## SUGGESTED TIME

40 minutes

# Teacher Background

The image and likeness of God imprinted on each human person are those two attributes that separate us from all other material creation: the intellect and free will. This is the source of our uniquely human powers and dignity.



## HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

Gender ideology considers the body a shell, or a tool for self-expression, that is ours to manipulate and control. But the truth is that we are a unity of body and soul..

## Activity

- Begin by showing your students an apple seed, and/or a picture of a kitten. Ask them what powers the apple seed has. What will it become? Will it produce oranges one day? Why not?
- Do the same demonstration with the picture of the kitten. What will this creature become as it grows? How do you know?
- Hold a quick discussion drawing out for students how they recognize that things grow according to their nature.
- Then read aloud the class from the essay on [Who Are We?](#) while students follow along.
- Next, distribute the [Levels of Being Chart](#). As a class, discuss the four levels as they ascend and become more complex the higher they get, pointing out the distinct breaks between the four levels.

### Who Are We?

As long as people have lived, we have asked the question, "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?"

Another way of asking this is "What is my nature?" or "What is human nature?" This is an important question to ask, because if things or persons can only grow in certain ways depending on its nature. For example, an apple seed can sprout in the ground and grow into an apple tree. By the power of its nature, it produces apples. It cannot produce oranges because it is limited by its nature. Similarly, a kitten can grow into a cat, and a human being, but it can never become a bird and fly.

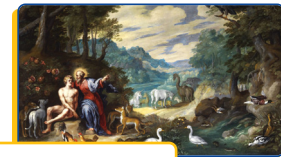
In the end, what a thing or person can do or become is determined and limited by its nature.

### What is the nature of the human person?

Although all persons are unique, we all share a universal human nature. Humans are animals, but human nature is different from animal nature.

Human nature is a unity of body and soul, made in God's image and likeness, and deeply loved by Him. This nature, out of all creation, is something only human beings possess.

There is an order to creation. There is what could be called a hierarchy of being. There is a divide that separates each category in the hierarchy. Inanimate inanimate like rocks and minerals are at the lowest level of being. Then we have animals, or being, material. The lowest of these is plant life. There is



### Levels of Being

Directions: As a class, discuss E.F. Schumacher's four levels of being represented in the chart below. Then answer the questions that follow.

Human Person material + life + consciousness + self-consciousness	Animal + Person
Animals material + life + consciousness	
Plants material + life	
Inanimate material	

- What do you notice about the relationship between each successive level?
- What do the yellow lines represent?



- F.** Discuss how this chart does not mean all plants are the same, or all animals are the same, or all people are the same! But the differences among one type of creation are never as great as the difference between types. For example: two rocks, no matter how dissimilar they are, are more like each other than they are like a plant. Even if you somehow found the two people in the world who were most different from each other, those two human beings would still be more similar to each other than they are to an animal.
- G.** Have students answer the questions on the handout, using their Bibles to record what they find in the Genesis verses. (You could have them do this part for homework if they do not have Bibles with them.)
- H.** See the Answer Key for ideas to prompt discussion.
- I.** Conclude by emphasizing that the human person's nature is the soul manifest in his or her body. If we are a unity of body and immortal soul, then we are our bodies. Our sexual identity cannot be separated from our bodies. Our bodies are an integral part of who we are, including our sexual identity.

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## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

another divide, and higher up we have animal life. Finally, beyond the next divide, we have the highest life form: human life.

### The Powers of the Soul

The soul is what animates, or gives life, to material creation. Rocks and minerals (inanimate) do not have souls. But all living things (animate objects) have a soul. Plants have vegetative souls, animal souls, or rational, immortal (human) souls. All three kinds of souls have the basic powers of plants: to eat, grow, and reproduce.

Here the powers of the plant end; its nature is limited to these three activities.

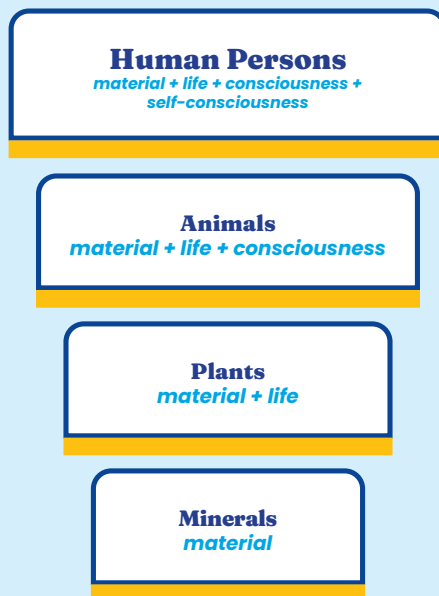
Animals and humans share many more powers in common, including the ability to move freely. (Plants cannot move freely, because they are rooted to the ground.)

There are two powers belonging to humans alone and those are intellect and free will: the very image of God imprinted on us all. The soul and the body are not two separate things, but two aspects of a single composite substance we know as the human person.

Our body is, as ancient philosophers have put it, our soul made manifest. That means our body makes our soul real in a way we can see and touch.

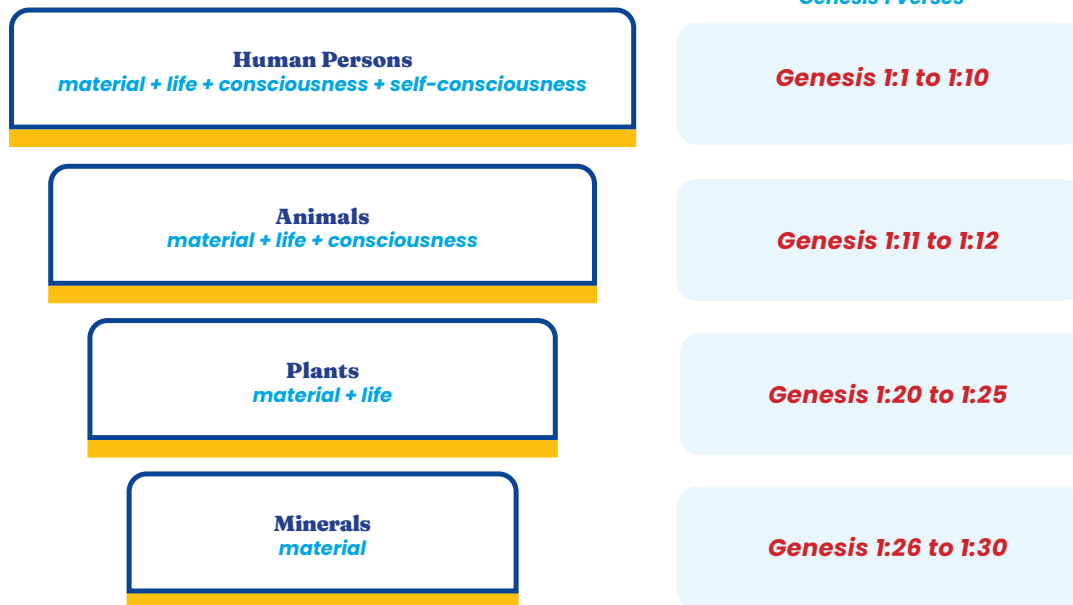
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### E.F. Schumacher's Four "Levels of Being"



# Levels of Being

**Directions:** As a class, discuss E.F. Schumacher's four 'levels of being' represented in the chart below. Then answer the questions that follow.



- 1 What do you notice about the relationship between each successive level?

**Each successive level gets more complex as it ascends. Plants are more complex than minerals because they are alive. Animals are more complex than plants because they can move freely, and have consciousness. Humans are more complex than animals because we are self-conscious on top of every other similarity.**
- 2 What do the yellow lines represent?

**They represent an ontological divide across which no species can ascend, however, they can be crossed by descent. When a plant dies it becomes merely material, as do animals and humans. But can animals become plants? Can humans become animals? Not in the proper sense of those words. A plant can never become an animal and animals can never become human.**

## STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

- 3 How does the first creation account confirm this ascending hierarchical structure of being?

**God first formed the earth, heavens, and the seas. Then He said, "Let there be light." Then God formed the plants. For the well-being of the plants He made day, night, and the seasons, then the four rivers of water so that the plants might grow. Then He made the animals. Finally, God made man in His image and likeness and gave him dominion over all things, including naming the animals. On the seventh day, He rested. In this theological account of Genesis, we learn much about the hierarchical structure of God's creation.**

- 4 If our body is "our soul made manifest," then our bodies and souls are a unity. What does that mean for how we must regard our bodies, as part of God's creation? Is our sex (whether we are male or female) something we can control or change? If our sexual identity is a gift from God, how must we regard it?

**If we are a unity of body and immortal soul, then we are our bodies. Our sexual identity cannot be separated from our bodies. Our bodies are an integral part of who we are, including our sexual identity. As a gift, we must lovingly accept our body and care for it, as we are to loving care for all of creation.**

- 5 On the chart above, write the verse numbers from Genesis 1 next to the hierarchical level it describes.

**Minerals, Genesis 1:1 to 1:10**

**Plants, Genesis 1:11 to 1:12**

**Animals, Genesis 1:20 to 1:25**

**Humans, Genesis 1:26 to 1:3**

# **What Is the Nature of the Human Person?**

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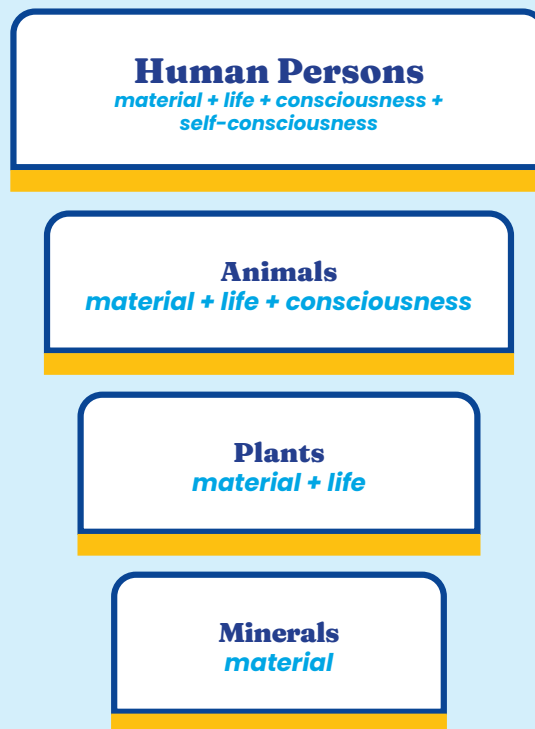
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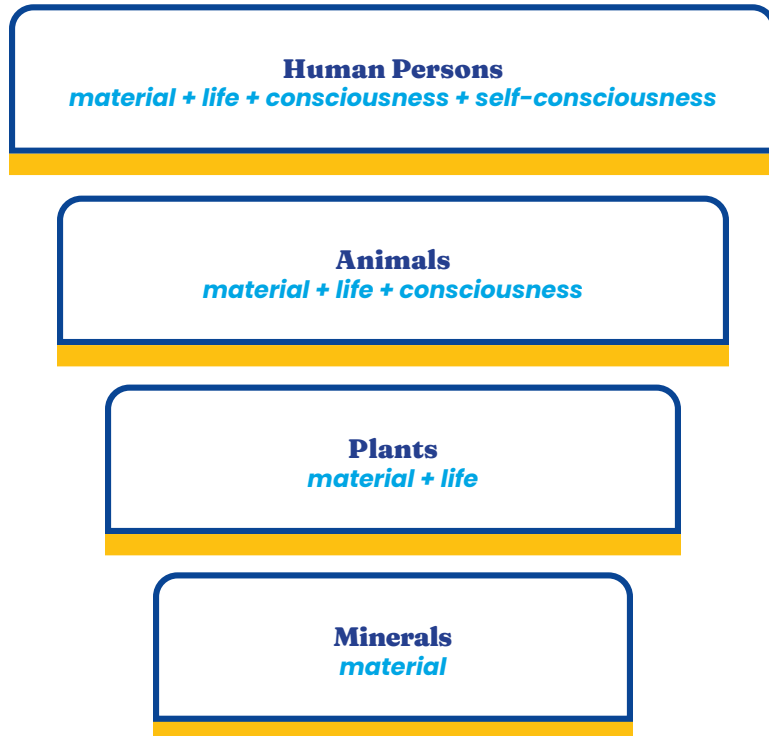
## E.F. Schumacher's Four "Levels of Being"





# Levels of Being

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## Genesis 1 Verses

Four light blue rounded rectangular boxes for writing answers.

1 What do you notice about the relationship between each successive level?

Five horizontal lines for writing an answer.

2 What do the yellow lines represent?

Five horizontal lines for writing an answer.

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