



MARRIAGE

“We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”
- ROMANS 8:28

ACTIVITY

FAMILY PORTRAIT

Use your talents to create a picture of everyone in your family helping and loving each other.



READING

THE GRUMPY FAMILY

Once there was a little girl who often put her hands over her eyes, pretending to make glasses. She did this hoping to make her family look different. What she saw without her glasses was yucky. Her mom was always impatient and rarely smiled. Her little brother was always pouting. Her older brother and sister kept arguing. Her dad grumbled around the house. The little girl with the pretend glasses was not like the rest of her family—she wanted them to be happy! Try as she might, however, she just could not make her family any better.

Then one day, Grandma and Grandpa came to visit. They brought a bag of juicy oranges for the kids to enjoy. Grandma and Grandpa were calm and laughed easily. They cheerfully helped around the house, baking cookies, washing dishes, and playing games with the kids. They didn't seem to notice that the family was always so grumpy. But the most interesting thing about the girl's grandparents was the peaceful look in their eyes as they worked together. They were so nice to each other—even though the house was too cold, the bed was too hard, and the TV was broken.

One afternoon, after her grandparents had stayed for a week, the little girl climbed up on her grandma's lap and asked, “Grandma, what is your secret? Why are you and Grandpa so happy? Why are you both so kind, even when everyone is grumpy?”

Grandma smiled at the little girl and pointed at a golden crucifix necklace she was wearing. “This is why, dear. Oh, your grandpa and I have had plenty of grumpy times, just like your family. But one day your grandpa was kneeling at Mass, and an idea came to him. He realized that family is supposed to be about helping each other! He realized the most important part of being a family is helping each other toward God.”

Grandma explained that as Grandpa looked at Jesus on the cross, he prayed to be a better father and husband. He asked God to give him the grace to be patient with his wife and children and to serve them. But he didn't tell anyone about this special prayer.





READING *continued*



STEP IN THEIR SHOES

- What was the worst thing about the family?
- What do you think would have happened if the grandparents never came to visit?
- Why do you think the girl's family looked a little better?
- Who do you think is most like you in the story?
- What would you do if your family acted the way the girl's did?

Grandma continued, “At first, our family was still squabbling and grumpy, but Grandpa was always patient and joyful. Slowly, his attitude started to affect the rest of the family. One Christmas, he gave me this necklace and told me about his special prayer that day in Mass. I’ve worn it every day since. Every morning when I put it around my neck, I pray and ask God to help me love and serve my family.”

Then Grandma surprised the girl, saying, “But now, I’m going to give it to you.” Grandma unclasped the simple crucifix necklace and put it on the girl’s neck. The little girl solemnly touched the cross. “Thank you, Grandma,” she whispered.

The next day, Grandma and Grandpa went back to their home. As the girl put on her new cross, she said a little prayer. “Thank you, God, for my family. Please help me love them.” Then the girl put her pretend glasses on and looked around at her family. She was surprised to find that they looked a little better—even when she took her glasses off!

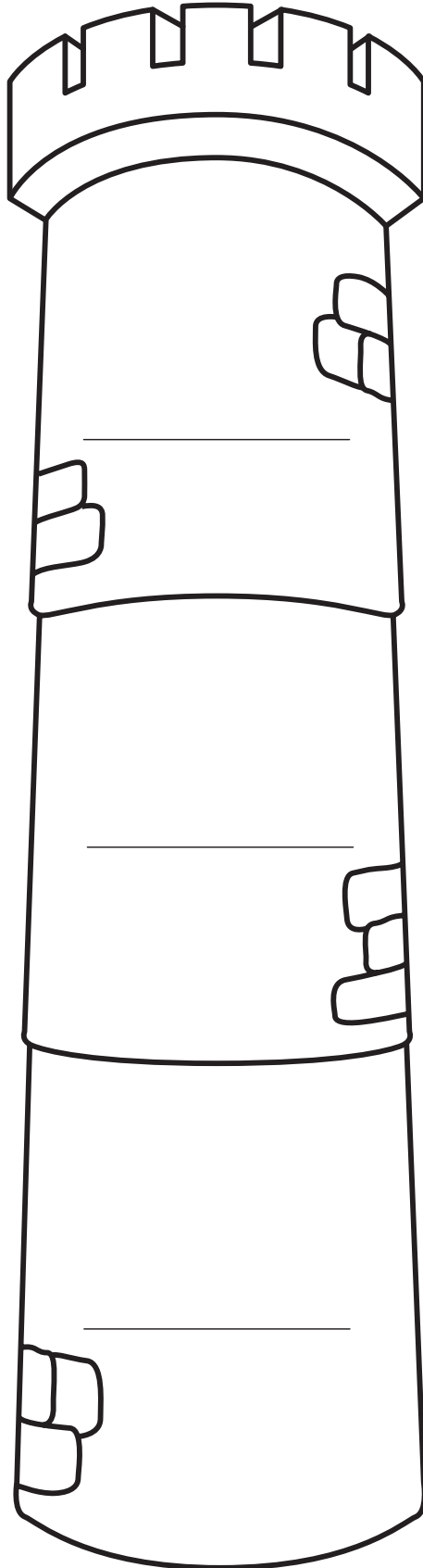
**SORTING THE FAMILY
JEWELS**

Being part of a family can be fun, boring, and frustrating. But did you know that God can use *everything* in your family to make you a stronger person?

Instructions:

1. Draw a tower made of three large stones. Then draw yourself standing on the top.
2. Write “enjoyable” in the bottom stone, and list a few things you enjoy with your family. For each thing you list, move a “jewel” into the stone.
3. Write “frustrating” in the middle stone, and list a few things that frustrate you about your family. For each thing you list, move a “jewel” into the stone.
4. Write “normal” in the top stone, and list a few things that are a normal part of your family’s day. For each thing you list, move a “jewel” into the stone.
5. Optional: glue the jewels to your paper tower.

God can use everything in your family to make you a stronger person!





VISUAL ART



“A Converted British Family Sheltering a Christian Priest from the Persecution of the Druids”
by William Holman Hunt

PRAY TOGETHER

Vocation Prayer

I glorify You, God,
In all that I do.
Mind, body and spirit,
My best is for You.

For us to be close, Lord,
Is what you desire.

I trust that your good love
For me will not tire.

I say, “yes” like Mary,
And give you my heart.
To follow you Jesus,
I will do my part.

Help me follow your will
No matter the call.
Whatever vocation,
I promise my all.

AMEN.