

FATHER ALAN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Book of Genesis:

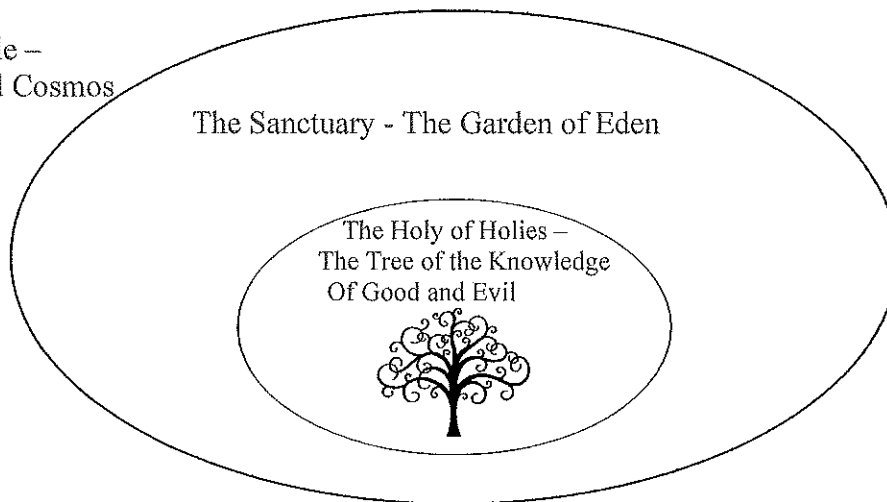
The word Genesis means “beginning”, and it is the first book of the Bible. The book of Genesis covers almost a 2,000-year time span – from the creation of the world until the death of Joseph. The book was most likely written during the time of the travels of the Israelites in the desert wilderness, after they escaped from Egypt; somewhere around the year 1450-1420 before the birth of Christ. Moses has traditionally been considered the author of Genesis, however there are many things in the book that point to several authors putting it all together. Genesis begins with what is called ‘Pre-history’ in chapters 1-11; these chapters are stories probably shared as people sat around campfires in the evening trying to figure out answers to question of where we came from and how things came to be. God revealed Himself to the people so they could better understand the world.

READ GENESIS CHAPTERS 1 and 2 BEFORE CONTINUING.

Think of the beginning of the Bible, chapter 1, as Gods constructing the first temple known to us today as the cosmos, our world and all it contains. We are told in this first chapter how this cosmic temple of God (God’s house) is built in six days of creation. Notice how the creation of the world happens in two series of three days each. In the first three days God brings form to what is formless, giving us time, space, and life. Then God gives order to chaos on days 4 to 6 as God creates ‘rulers’ to rule over the sky, water and land: the sun rules the sky, fish rule the sea, and beasts to rule the land. God then made Adam and Eve. Adam is created by God to be the High Priest and King over all creation, over all the beasts.

Genesis Chapter 2: God created the world to be His temple. Every temple needs a sanctuary, a holy place for sacrifices to take place. The sanctuary in our parishes is where the altar is located. In God’s cosmic temple, the Garden of Eden is the Sanctuary. In every sanctuary, there is a special place that houses God’s presence, this is called the ‘Holy of Holies’. The gold tabernacle in our parish churches is the holiest place in our churches, because it contains the Precious Body of Jesus in the Consecrated Hosts – therefore we genuflect to the tabernacle when we enter and leave church, to show respect to God’s presence. In the Garden of Eden, the holiest place is the where the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life grow.

God’s Temple –
the Earth and Cosmos



Divine Revelation

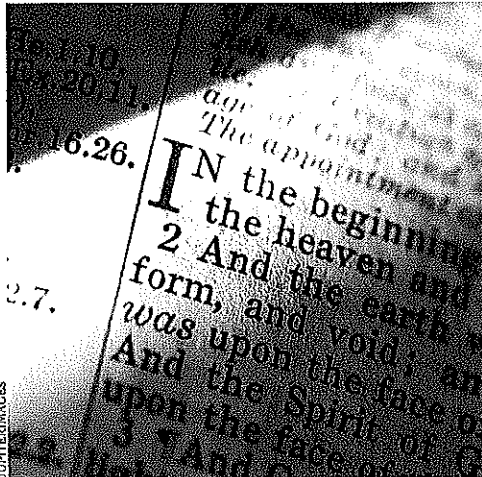
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ~ John 1:1-5

ALTHOUGH it is possible to come to knowledge of God by observing the beauty and order of the world around us, it is not possible to come into an intimate knowledge of him without further revelation. This is so for two reasons: first, the light of our natural reason is limited, and second, original and personal sin have darkened our minds, making it necessary for God to enlighten us.

We know from human experience that we all need communication to accomplish daily business, express ourselves, and establish relationships built on friendship and trust. Communication is

necessary because we do not have the power to read one another's minds. We communicate, or reveal, by word and action all that we want people to know about us. God's Revelation to Moses is described in just this way: *"Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend"* (Ex 33:11).

God knows us better than we know ourselves but, from our perspective, he is shrouded in mystery: *"As you do not know how the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything"* (Eccl 11:5). We stand in desperate need of revelation from God in order to know who he is and what he wants. By revealing himself, God draws near to us and makes us capable of responding to him, of knowing him, and of loving him far beyond our natural capabilities. This is called divine Revelation, and it unfolds for us the love of God and his plan for the whole human race (see Eph 3:3-5; 2 Pt 1:4). It reveals to us God's inner life in the Trinity (see Jn 14:9; 1 Cor 2:9-16) and the truths about the Son of God becoming man in or-



"Divine Revelation unfolds for us the love of God and his plan for the whole human race."

ated under God's personal inspiration. What God revealed by word of mouth has been transmitted through an oral Tradition begun with the People of Israel and continued in the Church. Certain aspects of this oral Tradition have been carefully recorded in what is called Sacred Scripture.

God has delivered his Revelation gradually in a series of relationships (also called covenants): first, with Adam and Eve, and then with the whole of humanity through Noah, then Abraham, Moses, and the prophets. In the fullness of time, God has revealed himself in his Son, Jesus Christ. In Jesus, the whole of divine Revelation — everything God wants to say to his people — is summed up and personified. As the Scriptures say: *"In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son"* (Heb 1:1-2). Jesus Christ is God's final Word to his people. He is God's definitive Word made flesh, and there will be no further public revelation after him.

(CCC 35-38, 50-67, 74)

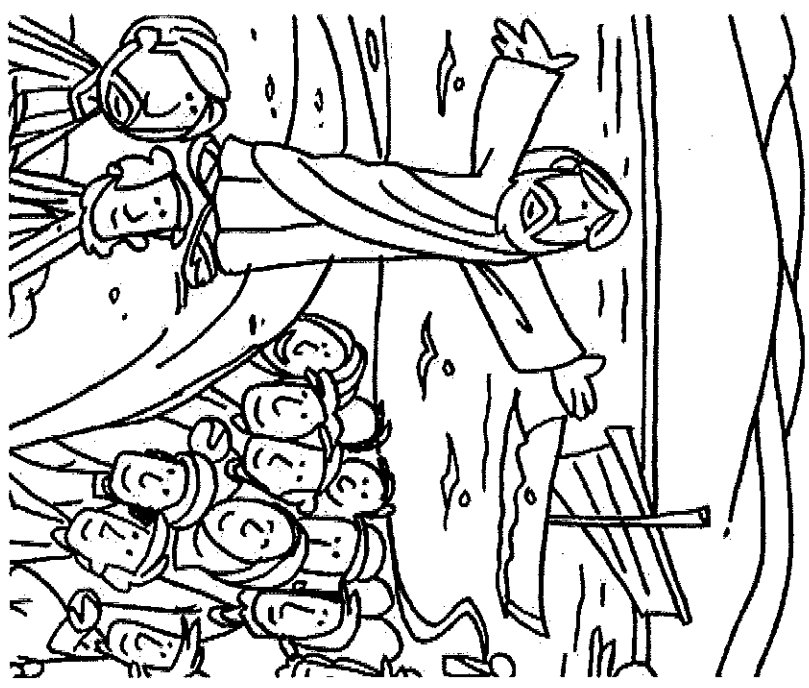
der to save us (see Gal 4:4-5). Divine Revelation also makes clear the means by which we must work out our salvation by explaining the graces we receive in the Church through the celebration of the sacraments (see 1 Cor 10:16; Ti 3:4-7) and living a life of Christian charity (see Eph 5:2). Revelation also reminds us that we are now God's sons and daughters (see Rom 8:15-17). We could never have arrived at these truths on our own.

Divine Revelation is synonymous with God's Word. All that God has revealed to us is his Word and this Word has been transmitted to us in oral and written form through human authors who oper-

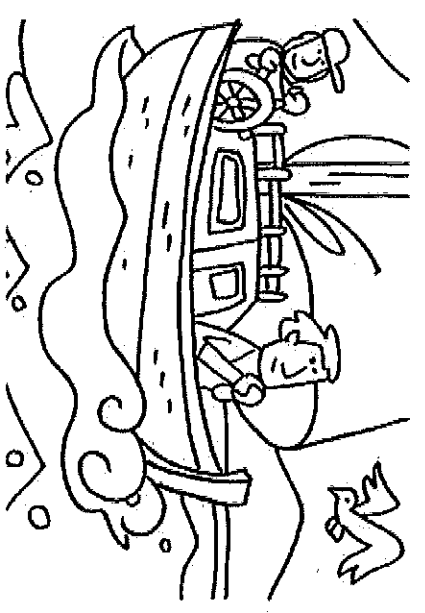
GROWING + WITH THE Gospel CYCLE B

COLOR

Read the Gospel of the week and color the image.



16th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Mark 6:30-34



+ GOSPEL

Have you ever wanted to be alone for a while? Jesus and his disciples knew what that felt like. They wanted to be alone to talk and rest, but crowds of people were surrounding them. Even when Jesus and his disciples tried to slip away unnoticed, people followed them anyway. They arrived only to find more crowds of people. This was certainly not the quiet time they had planned on. Being patient and kind, Jesus gave up what he wanted, and he began to teach the crowds.

A PRAYER

Dear God, thank you that Jesus gave up what he wanted, just so he could help other people. Help me to follow his example. Amen.

1P1 BECAUSE YOUR
CHURCHES MATTER



DRAW

Draw a picture of Jesus surrounded by large crowds of people.



PUZZLE

Find and circle these words from today's Gospel:

- | | | |
|----------|-------|----------|
| PLACE | GOING | SHEPHERD |
| APOSTLES | BOAT | PEOPLE |
| ALONE | CROWD | TEACHING |

F T G E R T H A O S P
 E A L O N E L R T U E
 R P N D I T O J S H O
 B O A T O N L D I M P
 E S V R T I G T H Y L
 P T H A D O N G A C E
 N L U G T B U T S R M
 T E A C H I N G Y O A
 P S O C L W C O I W N
 G A S H E P H E R D T

+ MISSION

Spend some alone time with Jesus tonight. If you get interrupted because someone else needs help, that's okay. Go help, and then come back to your alone time with Jesus again.



BECAUSE VIBRANT
CHURCHES MATTER