

Getting Ready for Chapter 5

Take Home



We Can Choose What is Good

Saint Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican priest and great theologian, proclaimed that humans always tended toward the good. But how do we figure out what the good is? It may feel good to finish the last of a box of candy, but others in our family might not see it as good. We try to form a good conscience to help us identify what is good and then try to conform our behavior to our conscience. Being Catholic helps us understand that God gives us free choice, and yet he is always ready to forgive us when we choose to sin.

ACTIVITY

Pick-up Sticks Did you ever play pick-up sticks? If so, you know that the sticks fall and you have to pick them up moving only the stick you are taking away. Play pick-up sticks with your child. Discuss how the game is like making moral choices. You need to choose carefully in order to succeed.

WEEKLY PLANNER

On Sunday

During the Penitential Rite, reflect on the choices you made during the week. Thank God for his guidance.

On the Web

www.blestarewe.com



Visit our Web site for the saint of the day and the reflection question of the week.

Saint of the Week



Saint Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur
(1619–1667)

Peter lived as a shepherd. He moved to the city to become a Third Order Franciscan. In 2002, San Pedro de San Jose Betancur became the first canonized native of Guatemala.

Patron Saint of: Guatemala
Feast Day: April 18



A Prayer for the Week

Lord, thank you for giving us the freedom to choose. Help us to use this gift to make right choices. Help us to be caring like Saint Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur. Amen.



Scripture Background

In the Time of Jesus

Inheritance Israelite tradition held that the eldest son would inherit the property and holdings of the father. The primary aim was to preserve the territory within each clan. Further biblical legislation also established the right of the firstborn to inherit twice as much as his brothers. In the Parable of the Forgiving Father, the younger son has already taken his share. So when the elder son is told that all that the father has is his, it literally means everything.

You can read this parable in Luke 15:11–32.

OUR CATHOLIC TRADITION in Art

Return of the Prodigal Son The Rembrandt painting titled *Return of the Prodigal Son* depicts the story Jesus told of the young man who left his family and squandered his fortune. Thinking he would be better off as a servant on his father's farm than living as he was—poor, hungry, and alone—he returned home. This painting shows that his father welcomed him back as a son, not as a servant.

Henri Nouwen based his book, *The Return of the Prodigal Son* on Rembrandt's painting.