

# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

## THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

### STORY

Monica, a faithful Christian, was given through an arranged marriage to a pagan official in North Africa who was much older and violent-tempered. Through her faith-filled words and example, the power of the Holy Spirit converted both her husband and her mother-in-law to Christianity. Widowed at twenty-four, she prayed for her son, a brilliant scholar, to grow strong in the faith. She often prayed in tears, because her son had chosen a sinful life and refused the Church's teachings. Still, she continued in prayer for her son, never giving up hope.

When he got an appointment to teach in Italy, she followed him, praying as she went. She begged a priest to help, but he reminded her that only God could bring her son to faith. "It is not possible that the son of so many tears should perish," he comforted her. After many years, Monica finally saw God bring her son to the faith. He was baptized in 387; she died a year later.

Monica's son was Augustine, and he became one of the great Fathers of the Church. In *Confessions*, he wrote of his own grief and weeping for his mother, "Now gone from my sight, who for years had wept over me, that I might live in [God's] sight."

Discuss one-on-one or in small groups the following questions.

1. Can your parents "pass on" their faith to you? *No. Faith comes from the Holy Spirit.*
2. What can your family do to help build you in the faith? *They can bring to us the Means of Grace by taking us to be baptized, reading God's Word to us, and taking us to church and Sunday School, where God's Word is preached and taught. They can also set a good example and pray for us.*
3. What role does setting a good example play in sharing your faith? *Young people tend to model what they see around them. Parents and others in superior positions teach by both word and example.*