

Chapter 14 **The Good Shepherd**

I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. *John 10:11*

To the Parents:

In chapter 14, your child learned the following:

- God gives each person free will and conscience.
- Jesus Christ teaches with the authority of the Father and passes moral authority to his Apostles and their successors.
- The Holy Spirit guides the Church.

How does one determine what is right and what is wrong? The Ten Commandments are simple, clear, and easily understood, but they provide only the barest outline. The Beatitudes of Jesus are much more demanding since they force Christians to think about perfection. Jesus asks that those who seek to be peacemakers, poor in spirit, humble, merciful, or clean of heart do so because of love, not laws.

Those who follow Jesus know that forming a moral conscience is not a simple matter. It is often easy to justify or to rationalize a behavior or attitude that does not follow Jesus' law of love. Forming a moral conscience requires clear thinking, honesty, and knowledge of the faith tradition. Only then can Christians begin the tasks of doing good and avoiding evil.

With Your Child:

1. Read the Good Shepherd parable in the Bible (*John 10:1-15*) and talk about its meaning.
2. In your own words, define the words moral, free will, and conscience, and how they relate to each other.
3. Identify family members and friends who help you make good, moral decisions and try to be as helpful to others. Why is it good to seek their advice?
4. Read about Saint Thomas More on the Review and Explore page.