

**Pre –K and Kindergarten:** In the Book of Genesis, Adam and Eve were the first man and woman created by God. They lived in a beautiful garden paradise that God made for them called the Garden of Eden. Draw a picture of what you think the Garden of Eden looked like.

**Grades 1 and 2:** In the Book of Genesis, God told Noah that there would be a great flood and that he should build an ark, take his family, and collect two of each animal, one male and one female. Noah did as he was told. Draw a picture of Noah’s ark with all the animals, then write 2 to 4 sentences on how Noah’s family kept the faith and prayed to God during the flood.

**Grades 3 and 4:** The 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment says: “Honor your father and your mother...” (Exodus 20:12). Write 50 to 75 words on why you think God made a point of reminding us that we need to honor our mothers and fathers and how we as Orthodox Christians show our faith by honoring our fathers and mothers.

**Grades 5 and 6:** In the book Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament it says “It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay” (5:4-6). Write 75 to 125 words on how this verse affects how you live your faith and interact with those around you every day.

**Grades 7 and 8:** The 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment says: “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in Vain...” (Exodus 20:7). When we send text messages and emails, we constantly use the phrase “OMG”. Do you think this is taking the name of the Lord in vain, why or why not? Write 100 to 150 words defending your position.

**Grades 9 and 10:** The last verse in the Book of Ecclesiastes says, “Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole man. For God will bring every work into judgement, including everything that has been overlooked, whether it be good or evil.” (12:14) Write 175 to 225 on how you walk the Orthodox faith and include God in every action throughout the day.

**Grades 11 and 12:** The 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment says: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” (Exodus 20:16). Write 250 to 300 words on why it is so easy for us to forget and break this commandment in today’s technology driven world.

**Adults 18 and over:** In the book Ecclesiastes it says, “For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven...” (3:1), “a time to kill and a time to heal” (3:3), “a time to love and a time to hate...a time for war and a time for peace” (3:8). In today’s society, where we see what we believe to be atrocities against man and God, many ask “How can a benevolent God allow this to happen?” Write 400 or more words explaining how you would answer this question. Remember to use your Bible to defend your answer.

**Dear parents with students that have academic disabilities:** Please have your child write the essay in the category that best matches their academic ability. At award time only the category of A through G will be mentioned, not the grade level.