



# Family Letter

## *Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life*

**A**s your son or daughter begins this year's program of the *Christ Our Life* series, we would like to acquaint you with its goals, content, and methodology. You are a vital part of this program. As you continue to respond to the challenge of parenting a young adolescent in Catholic Christian living, may you grow in faith and in love for your child and your God.

### Goals of This Year's Program

The title of this year's program is *Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. Through their books, the students will reflect on the person of Jesus and on their baptismal call to walk with him along the WAY to the Father. They will listen to the TRUTH of his teaching, and they will meditate on the gift of new LIFE that is theirs through the sacraments because of his dying and rising. They will be challenged to respond to Jesus by walking his WAY and encouraging others to follow him, by living according to the TRUTH he taught, and by sharing his LIFE and love with all whom they meet.

They will prayerfully ponder Jesus' words and deeds in order to know better what God is like. They will also look at their own life situation and prayerfully ask what they should say or do as followers of Jesus.

### Making It a Family Program

The *Christ Our Life* series recognizes that your faith makes a profound impact on your children, no matter what their age. Therefore, several features are provided that give you an opportunity to share the faith experience being lived within your family. These features aim at stimulating your own desire to grow in Christ and to live your daily life in fidelity to the Gospel message. At the same time, they are designed to assist you in communicating with your young adolescent in a way that will support him or her in following Jesus. The special features for family participation are the Family Letter you will receive as your son or daughter begins each unit of study, the Family Feature pages at the beginning of each unit in the student book, the sections in the book entitled Reach Out, and a suggested Parent-Youth Meeting.

### Family Letters

Family Letters accompany each of the units in the book *Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. Ideally you will receive a copy of them as your son or daughter begins a new unit. This will allow you to ponder the theme of the unit and to look at the example of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels.

The Family Letters also will suggest that you look to the example of Jesus for help in raising your adolescent. Jesus was the Master, leading people to develop a maturity of faith. You can learn from him how to aid your adolescent in his or her quest for the knowledge and freedom needed to be a faithful disciple. Suggestions are made for supporting his or her efforts to learn what it means to follow Jesus.

### Reach Out

In addition to using the Family Letters, you can help your young adolescent by becoming involved in the activities listed in each lesson under the section entitled Reach Out. These activities help the students carry the message of Jesus from the classroom to all facets of life. They involve prayer, family life, peer relationships, and projects that include the students in parish or civic activities. Many of the projects would be enriched by the assistance of a parent or another adult.

### Parent-Youth Meeting

The year's program includes a meeting for parents and students. At this meeting, parents and students are encouraged to see the importance of their mutual support on this journey we share with Christ to the Father. You will be notified of the date and time of the meeting.

Visit [www.christourlife.org/family](http://www.christourlife.org/family) for more family resources.



# Family Letter on Unit 1

## *Jesus Christ the Way*

Your young adolescent is beginning the study of Unit 1, *Jesus Christ the Way*. As the students look to Jesus, who called disciples to follow him, they will be reminded of their baptismal call to follow Jesus. Through prayer and study, they will come to know Jesus and the WAY he asks us to walk with him.

### Looking to Jesus

Jesus is the perfect model for any family. As you thoughtfully read the Gospels, be especially alert to the interaction between Jesus and his disciples. You will find that Jesus used many skills for helping people come to maturity. He himself led them along the WAY to the Father.

Let us look at one incident recorded in Luke 22:24–27. A dispute arose among the apostles about who was the greatest. Jesus listened, recognizing the apostles' attitude as the opposite of what he was seeking to teach. He did not get upset with them. Instead he gave them an example of how their non-believing neighbors viewed things and allowed them to see that they were reflecting the same attitudes. He restated his teaching that the greatest is the one who serves. Then he showed the authenticity of his words by reminding them that this was the WAY he lived. This was the WAY to the father.

Jesus listened. He confronted. He lived with what he taught. He invited the apostles to begin again to walk his WAY with him.

### Following His Way

Adolescence is a time of transition, a time of passing from one way of thinking to acting a new way. Think back to when your young adolescent was learning to walk. Remember holding your child securely, allowing his or her little legs to learn balance and movement. Recall how you gradually gave more and more freedom, but also total security so when the legs began to buckle, you held your child up. Soon you were able to let go, but you kept your support within easy reach. Finally, you knew it was time to move away and to encourage your child to walk alone. Remember the joy you shared with your child as he or she successfully crossed the room and collapsed in your arms.

These joys should be yours once more, for your children are striving to set out again. This time it is not legs and feet that are striving for independence; it is minds and wills.

Young adolescents are beginning to think for themselves. This is a normal part of growth. As young people develop, they turn to every area of their lives, searching, questioning, and trying to make their own decision to respond positively to the faith of their Baptism.

As they struggle toward independence, young people need love, acceptance, and encouragement more than ever. They need these signs of love from their family when they are clumsy and bungling more than when they are successful. They want and need families who will set limits and only gradually widen the horizons.

Adolescents want and need mature adults who themselves are on the WAY to the Father. They want adults who will admit to the lifelong struggle of the journey, but who have found deep peace and happiness in walking the WAY of Christ with him and his people.



## Family Checklist

One of the important tasks of a family is to help children develop and maintain a good self-image. The following questions are meant to help you look at some of the ways you are doing this and some of the ways you may need to improve. Reflect on each question, asking yourself how well you are doing it. Thank God for helping you to do your best and ask Jesus to send you the grace to help you improve where needed.

Do I express appreciation to my young adolescent for his or her good qualities?

Does my child know that I love him or her in a deep and unique way?

Does my young adolescent experience God's forgiving love in my response to accidents, thoughtlessness or sinful behavior?

Do I express interest in what he or she considers important?

Do my words and actions help my young adolescent develop respect for the gift of sexuality and a sense of modesty?

Do I listen to my child and show that I care what he or she thinks?

Do I give my young adolescent an example of a person who is authentically striving to follow Jesus?

## Focusing on Family

Those who walk with Jesus will be able to say with him, "Here I am among you as one who serves."

Have each member of your family list ways he or she has seen the others giving service within the family. Share this good news. Thank one another for walking with Jesus, the WAY.

Encourage family members to do a special act of loving service for different family members each day. Try and set aside time each day for family prayer.

Visit [www.christourlife.org/family](http://www.christourlife.org/family) for more family resources.





# Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life

**Leader:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen. Father, we thank you for the privilege of sharing this time with you and with one another. Prepare our minds and hearts to accept your Word with joy. This we ask through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

**Reader:** A reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy. (Adapted from 2 Timothy 3:15–17)

Ever since you were a child, you have known the holy Scriptures. From these you can learn the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. All Scripture is inspired by God, and it has many uses. Scripture teaches us the faith, it corrects our mistakes, it helps change the direction of our lives, and it trains us in good living so that we can be perfect Christians.

*(Time for quiet reflection)*

**Leader:** Christ is present in his Word of Scripture, and he is present among those called together in his name. Today you receive a copy of the Bible [or a New Testament], the record of the Good News that has changed lives, brought joy and peace, strength and courage, and most of all, love. Today you receive your copy of the religion book for this year about Jesus, our way, our truth, and our life. May all you learn and experience bring you closer to Jesus.

*(The students come forward to receive their books. Music may be played.)*

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to John. (John 14:6–7)

Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

**Leader:** To the following petitions, please respond “Father, hear us.”

That we may learn of you through your Holy Word . . .

That we may learn of you through Jesus Christ, your Son . . .

That we may learn of you through your Holy Spirit . . .

That we may learn of you through the Gospels . . .

That we may learn of you through one another . . .

That we may meet you in your Word and in the Eucharist . . .

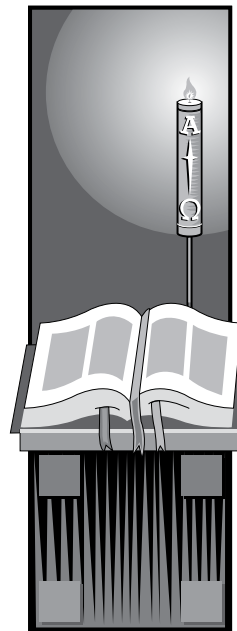
That we may meet you in others and every day of our lives . . .

Let us pray together the Lord’s Prayer.

**All:** Our Father . . .

**Leader:** Thank you, Lord, for coming to us today in the gift of your Holy Word.  
*(Song)*

**All:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.





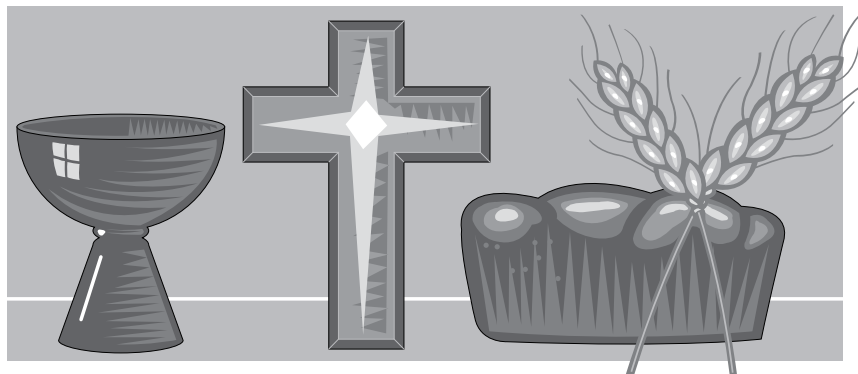
## PRE-TEST/POST-TEST

# Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life

**Multiple Choice** Choose the answer that BEST completes each statement.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The Incarnation means that a) God pretended to be human. b) Jesus always existed.  
c) God became as human as we are.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Scripture a) came from Tradition. b) was dictated word for word by God.  
c) came from the believing community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The Gospels are a) Matthew, Mark, James, and Peter. b) Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.  
c) Mark, Paul, Peter, and John.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The part of the Bible that tells about the life of the early Church is a) the Old Testament.  
b) the Acts of the Apostles. c) the Book of Revelation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Jesus lived in a) Arabia. b) Palestine. c) Phoenicia.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. During Jesus' time, his country was controlled by a) Greece. b) Rome. c) Egypt.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The southern region of the Holy Land is a) Judea. b) Samaria. c) Galilee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The 71 Jewish men who served as a supreme council were the  
a) Pharisees. b) Sadducees. c) Sanhedrin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The Jewish prayer prayed in the morning and the evening was  
a) the Shema. b) the Our Father. c) the mezuzah.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The greatest Christian feast is a) Christmas. b) Easter. c) Passion (Palm) Sunday.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. The Infancy Narratives a) are intended to be historically accurate. b) are not important parts of  
the Gospels. c) tell us that Jesus came to save us.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. *Christ* means a) "God." b) "Savior." c) "anointed one."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Jesus' mission was a) to condemn sinners. b) to work miracles. c) to proclaim the reign of God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. The Trinity was revealed a) at Jesus' baptism. b) at the Transfiguration. c) at Pentecost.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. The people expected a Messiah who would a) die for them. b) help them overthrow Rome.  
c) be gentle and peaceful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. The first and best disciple was a) Peter. b) John. c) Mary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Temptations a) are sins. b) were never experienced by Jesus.  
c) can be overcome by grace and self-control.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Most of the twelve apostles were a) town leaders. b) rabbis. c) simple fishermen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. A sacrament of initiation is a) the Eucharist. b) Matrimony. c) Holy Orders.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Someone preparing to become a Catholic is called a a) catechumen. b) sponsor. c) novice.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Adults in the RCIA program usually celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation  
a) on their birthday. b) on the feast of the Lord's baptism. c) at the Easter Vigil.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. The sacrament in which original sin and all personal sins are forgiven is  
a) Baptism. b) Reconciliation. c) Anointing of the Sick.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. A sign that Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders have in common is  
a) water. b) anointing with chrism. c) the paschal candle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. The Magisterium is a) the teaching authority of the Church. b) the mysteries of Jesus.  
c) the seven sacraments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. A comparison that leads to a new truth is a) a prophecy. b) a miracle. c) a parable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. A story about the growth of the kingdom is a) a Rich Fool. b) the Sower. c) the Yeast.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. Jesus worked miracles mainly a) to prove he was God. b) to overcome his enemies.  
c) out of compassion for those in need.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. In John's Gospel Jesus works his first miracle because of  
a) Peter's faith. b) Mary. c) a paralytic's friends.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. The Anointing of the Sick is for a) those who are dying. b) those who seriously ill and those  
who are elderly and notably weakened. c) both a and b.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. Viaticum is a) a prayer of reconciliation. b) Communion for those who are dying.  
c) oil used in sacraments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. Absolution is a) being full of faith. b) becoming a Christian.  
c) the pardoning of sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. Euthanasia, the act of causing people to die before they would naturally, a) is all right if it is done  
out of love. b) is all right if the person asks for it. c) is wrong.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. Sexism is a) having sex outside of marriage. b) treating members of a certain sex unfairly.  
c) not using the gift of sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. The Beatitudes are a) commandments. b) guidelines for happiness.  
c) Spiritual Works of Mercy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. Someone who made restitution for his injustice is a) Zacchaeus. b) Judas. c) Lazarus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. Social sin is a) a term for situations and institutions that harm people.  
b) crimes that occur during parties. c) sins committed in conversation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. The Eighth Commandment forbids a) stealing. b) lying. c) greed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. Having sex is a) a sin. b) all right between any two people who love each other.  
c) an expression of total surrender by a married couple.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. The Theological Virtues are a) faith, hope, and charity. b) prudence, justice, and temperance.  
c) life, liberty, and happiness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. Jesus spoke to Moses and Elijah at a) his baptism. b) the Transfiguration.  
c) the agony in the garden.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. Someone Jesus raised to life from death was a) Lazarus. b) Matthias. c) Peter's mother-in-law.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. At the Eucharist, bread and wine a) become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.  
b) only symbolize Jesus Christ. c) are shared by everyone who is not a sinner.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. In the Eucharist, a) we renew the Old Testament covenant. b) we offer ourselves with Jesus to  
the Father. c) we may omit the Liturgy of the Word.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. The coming of Jesus in glory at the end of time is a) the Parousia. b) judgment. c) purgatory.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples a) at the Last Supper. b) after a journey through the  
desert. c) after the Resurrection.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. Jesus a) only pretended to die. b) died to make up for our sins and to win eternal life for us.  
c) died because he was a criminal in the eyes of the Romans.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. Jesus' Resurrection a) is a proven fact. b) means that we will have eternal life.  
c) means that he is no longer human.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. The Holy Spirit came to the Church a) at the Transfiguration. b) at the Ascension.  
c) on Pentecost.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. On Pentecost, the apostles a) witnessed to Christ and baptized three thousand people.  
b) wrote the New Testament. c) had a vision of Jesus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. Religious priests, brothers, and sisters a) become so by the Sacrament of Holy Orders.  
b) usually make three vows. c) are holier than married people.





Name \_\_\_\_\_

# An I-Opener

Do your personality traits match those of others with your same birth order? First, circle your birth order. Then go down each column and check the characteristics you feel best describe you. When you are finished, see if you mostly checked the characteristics of people with your birth order. How do you explain the similarities or differences?

**I am . . .**

**an oldest**



**a middle**



**a youngest**



**an only**



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overly serious and mature</li> <li>• Need a lot of approval</li> <li>• Get things done</li> <li>• Can manage people</li> <li>• Am a conformist and not very spontaneous</li> <li>• Have trouble accepting help</li> <li>• Am assertive and opinionated</li> <li>• Am a sympathetic listener</li> <li>• Worry too much</li> <li>• Am super-organized</li> <li>• Talk a lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to negotiate</li> <li>• Like to daydream</li> <li>• Am a conformist outside the family and a maverick within</li> <li>• Care too much what people think</li> <li>• Am easily hurt, but don't show it</li> <li>• Am uneasy about expressing anger or fear</li> <li>• Assume people aren't really interested in me</li> <li>• Am flexible and open to new ideas</li> <li>• Achieve anything I decide to achieve</li> <li>• Don't talk a lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Am an alibi artist</li> <li>• Enjoy most people</li> <li>• Seesaw between overconfidence and discouragement</li> <li>• Overreact to criticism</li> <li>• Am ambitious and determined to be taken seriously</li> <li>• Am spontaneous and creative</li> <li>• Have a strong sense of justice</li> <li>• Waste too much time</li> <li>• Cry easily</li> <li>• Talk a lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often crave solitude</li> <li>• Am self-centered</li> <li>• Am tidy and organized</li> <li>• Can amuse myself easily</li> <li>• Really hate competing with others</li> <li>• Feel uncomfortable in a position of authority</li> <li>• Sometimes wonder if I'm too attached to material things</li> <li>• Sometimes try to manipulate others</li> <li>• Am good at following directions</li> <li>• Don't talk a lot</li> </ul>
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# One Solitary Life: A Choral Reading

## Definitions

**obscure:** hidden, unknown

**itinerant:** traveling

**credentials:** papers proving that one has authority

**Group 1:** He was born in an obscure village.

**Group 2:** He worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30.

He then became an itinerant preacher.

**Group 1:** He never held an office.

**Group 2:** He never had a family

**Group 1:** or owned a house.

**Group 2:** He didn't go to college.

**All:** He had no credentials but himself.

**Group 1:** He was only 33 when the public turned against him.

**Solo 1:** His friends ran away.

**Solo 2:** He was turned over to his enemies

**Solo 3:** and went through the mockery of a trial.

**Solo 1:** He was nailed to a cross

**Solo 3:** between two thieves.

**Solo 2:** While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing,

**Solo 3:** the only property he had on earth.

**Solo 1:** He was laid in a borrowed grave.

**Group 1:** Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today

**All:** he is the central figure of the human race.

**Group 2:** All the armies that every marched,

**Group 1:** all the navies that ever sailed,

**Group 2:** all the parliaments that ever sat,

**Group 1:** and all the kings that ever reigned,

**All:** have not affected life on earth as much as that

**Solo 3:** ONE SOLITARY LIFE.





# Chapter 1 Quiz

**Matching** Match the description with the correct term. Some will be used more than once. One description will have two terms.

- |       |  |                    |
|-------|--|--------------------|
| _____ | 1. When we proclaim and celebrate the Paschal Mystery of Jesus | a. Jesus           |
| _____ | 2. Word that means "God with us."                              | b. Incarnation     |
| _____ | 3. The mystery of God becoming a human being                   | c. Trinity         |
| _____ | 4. Word that means "God saves"                                 | d. Emmanuel        |
| _____ | 5. Person who sent God the Son to save us                      | e. Paschal Mystery |
| _____ | 6. The mystery of one God in three persons                     | f. Eucharist       |
| _____ | 7. The Second Person of the Trinity, who became man            | g. God the Son     |
| _____ | 8. The passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus    | h. God the Father  |
| _____ | 9. The perfect way God reveals himself to us                   |                    |
| _____ | 10. A community of love  |                    |

**True or False** Write *T* if the statement is true or *F* if it is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Jesus lived over 2,000 years ago.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Today, and for almost 2,000 years, people have believed that Jesus was God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. God the Holy Spirit has more power than God the Son.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Jesus is not really human like us.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Jesus shows and tells us what God is like.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Jesus saved us from sin and death.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Jesus died for you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Christians believe in three gods.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Because of Jesus, we can live forever in eternal happiness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Jesus came to show Jewish people, not us, how to live.

## Bonus

Explain in a paragraph what makes you the unique and special person you are. Write your answer on the other side of this paper. (5 points)



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Temperament Indicator

Read the description and then rate it as it relates to you.

**4 always    3 usually    2 sometimes    1 seldom    0 never**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| _____ 1. Love a good time                                  | _____ 23. Work doesn't seem enjoyable.                      |
| _____ 2. Seek to be a leader in games and class activities | _____ 24. Try to get even when hurt by others               |
| _____ 3. Finish what I start                               | _____ 25. Put off things until tomorrow                     |
| _____ 4. Daydream at various times                         | _____ 26. Obstacles make me work harder.                    |
| _____ 5. Don't find studying too hard                      | _____ 27. Am very concerned about my clothes                |
| _____ 6. Get upset easily and stay upset                   | _____ 28. Friends are few but close.                        |
| _____ 7. Am easily frightened by others                    | _____ 29. Make friends easily                               |
| _____ 8. Like to be busy                                   | _____ 30. Don't repeat secrets                              |
| _____ 9. Resting on a couch appeals to me.                 | _____ 31. Enjoy praying                                     |
| _____ 10. Regularly see the bright side even when it rains | _____ 32. Fear any kind of pain                             |
| _____ 11. Think often of food                              | _____ 33. Like physical work with no thought involved       |
| _____ 12. Hold no grudges                                  | _____ 34. Hold grudges for a long time                      |
| _____ 13. Easily feel hurt when wronged                    | _____ 35. Little bothers me.                                |
| _____ 14. Find it hard to study                            | _____ 36. Enjoy thinking about deep things                  |
| _____ 15. Pass quickly from tears to laughter              | _____ 37. Interests change often and easily.                |
| _____ 16. Don't mind being alone                           | _____ 38. Fear readily causes me to give up.                |
| _____ 17. Work hard to succeed                             | _____ 39. Win or lose, I couldn't care less.                |
| _____ 18. Lack courage to go on trying                     | _____ 40. When I want something, I will sacrifice anything. |
| _____ 19. Find it hard to be just                          | _____ 41. Don't finish what I start                         |
| _____ 20. Remain quiet and pout when hurt                  | _____ 42. Feel calm even in exciting circumstances          |
| _____ 21. Believe my ideas are the best ones               |   |
| _____ 22. Feel shy and awkward in front of a group         |   |

Now put your rating of each description next to the corresponding number.

	<b>Choleric</b>	<b>Sanguine</b>	<b>Melancholic</b>	<b>Phlegmatic</b>
2.	_____	1. _____	3. _____	4. _____
3.	_____	4. _____	6. _____	9. _____
5.	_____	10. _____	7. _____	11. _____
6.	_____	12. _____	13. _____	14. _____
8.	_____	15. _____	16. _____	23. _____
13.	_____	19. _____	18. _____	25. _____
17.	_____	20. _____	20. _____	33. _____
20.	_____	27. _____	22. _____	35. _____
21.	_____	29. _____	25. _____	37. _____
24.	_____	32. _____	28. _____	38. _____
26.	_____	36. _____	31. _____	39. _____
30.	_____	37. _____	26. _____	41. _____
34.	_____	38. _____	40. _____	42. _____
<b>Totals:</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____

Add the columns. Your highest score indicates your basic temperament.