

A Family Together

A Group Activity for
the Family at Home
or Your Class Family

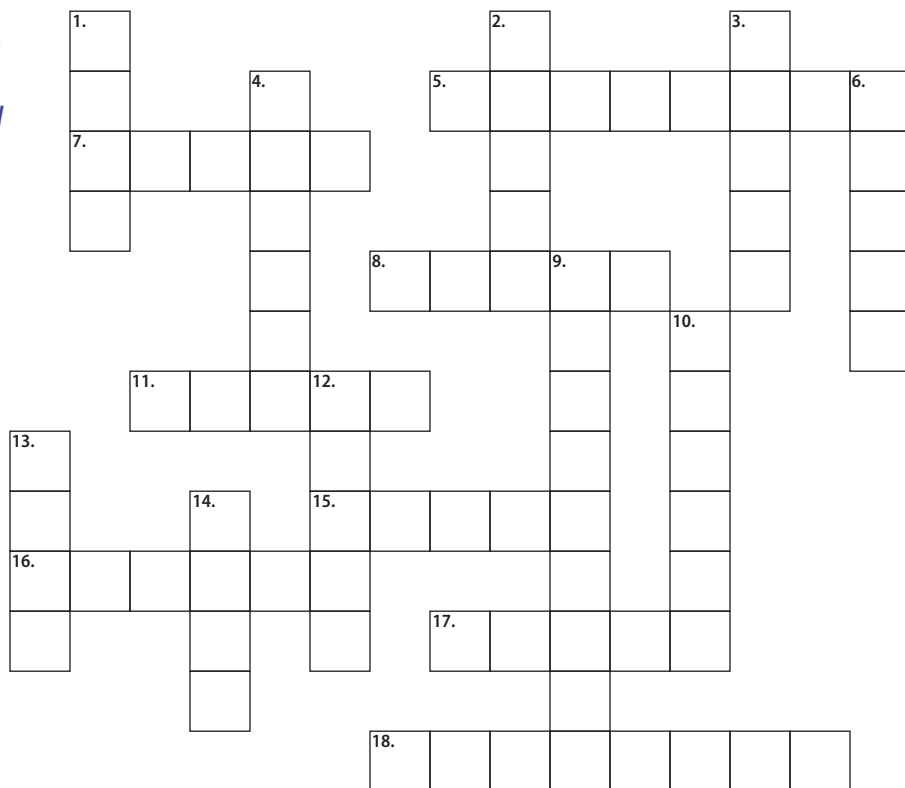
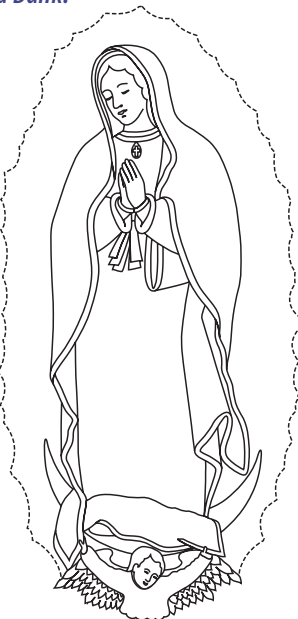
Jean Larkin

Surprised by Grace

Grace comes at unexpected times. This story of being surprised by grace happened more than 500 years ago. Complete the crossword while you read the story. If you need help, use the Word Bank.

Word Bank

Aztec
church
cloak
December
Diego
grace
Guadalupe
Jesus
Mary
Mass
Mexico
princess
roses
saint
shrine
sign
tilma
truth



My name is Juan (**8 Across**). I lived in a country that is now called (**4 Down**). I was an (**12 Down**) Indian man. One cold (**18 Across**) morning, I was on my way to (**13 Down**). Suddenly, a beautiful lady appeared to me! She was dressed like an Aztec (**5 Across**).

She told me to tell my bishop to have a (**10 Down**) built on Tepeyac Hill, right where the lady and I were standing.

I was nervous when I went to see the bishop. He did not believe what I told him. He said he needed a (**14 Down**) to prove that I was telling the (**17 Across**).

Three days later, I saw the lady again. I told her what the bishop had said. She said, "Climb up the hill and pick the (**7 Across**) growing there." I knew that it was too cold for flowers to bloom, but I did what the lady asked. To my surprise, I found beautiful flowers, just as she said I would.

I picked them and the lady helped me arrange them in my *tilma*, which is a kind of (**11 Across**). I returned to the bishop and opened my *tilma*. All the flowers fell out, but then we had an even greater surprise. The image of the beautiful lady now appeared on the inside of my (**15 Across**).

Then the bishop believed. He built the church the lady wanted. For the rest of my life, I lived in a small hut near the chapel where the image was kept.

Today the (**16 Across**) is one of the most visited in the world. Through the intercession of the beautiful lady, pilgrims are filled with the grace of God. They are strengthened to live good lives, each day drawing nearer to (**3 Down**), the Son of God and the son of (**1 Down**), who was and is Our Lady of (**9 Down**). Her feast day is December 12.

Through the grace of God that filled me by surprise, I was declared a (**6 Down**) in 2002. My feast day is December 9. My message to you and my wish for you is this: At all times, in every place, stay open to being surprised by (**2 Down**).

Jean Larkin has worked in Catholic publishing for over 30 years. She is a contributing editor to the Pflaum Publishing Group, Peter Li., Inc.

12. Aztec; 13. Mass; 14. sign
Down: 1. Mary; 2. grace; 3. Jesus; 4. Mexico; 5. Aztec; 6. Mexico; 7. princess; 8. Diego; 9. saint; 10. church; 11. tilma; 12. Indian; 13. December; 14. Down; 15. sign; 16. church; 17. truth; 18. Across

Permission is granted to copy this exercise for use with your students and their families.