



Please do not send this newsletter back to Crossroads.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship."

– Romans 12:1 (NIV)

The Joy of Surrendering to God

Sometimes godly friends say really wise things. One day, I was talking with my good friend Paul. I told him that one of the hardest parts of following Jesus was fully giving my life to God. There are so many temptations and distractions in the world. They make it hard to feel like I've truly given everything to Him.

Paul paused for a moment and said, "I have always found that if I focus on absorbing as much of God's unconditional love, boundless grace, and limitless forgiveness as I possibly can, then surrender to Him seems the natural thing to do."

Wow! That one sentence changed the way I thought about surrendering to God.

Hebrews 4:16 says, "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

In his book *The Pursuit of God*, A.W. Tozer says that we should absorb God's love and reflect it back to Him. To do that, we need to be close to Him. Through Jesus, we can be in God's presence. God loves us and wants to be close to us.

But how often do we actually go to God's throne of grace? How can we come close to a holy God while living in a world full of sin?

The answer is the Holy Spirit!

In John 14:15–17, Jesus said,

"If you love me, keep my commands. I will ask the Father, and he will give you another helper to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth."

The world doesn't know the Holy Spirit, but you do. He lives with you and will be in you.

The Holy Spirit is like an usher who shows you to your seat in a theater. He guides you into God's presence.

Still, this can be hard to understand and even harder to experience. That's why my favorite Bible verse is Psalm 46:10: *"Be still and know that I am God."*

Friends, take time each day to be still. It could be in the early morning or in the evening. Picture yourself in God's presence. Be amazed that the God who made the world also loves you more than you can imagine.

I promise you, the Holy Spirit will fill you with such deep love that the only thing you'll want to do is give your whole life to God. You won't want to be anywhere else.

—Joe Pryor, Crossroads President

Spread the Word About Crossroads

"He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation'" (Mark 16:15).

Thank you for being a Crossroads student! We pray that our Bible studies and letters from caring mentors are helping you grow in your faith.

Now we're inviting you to put that faith into action by helping us reach more students. You have a special opportunity to encourage those around you who may need hope and truth in their lives.

Please share the enrollment cards and tell others how Crossroads has helped you in your journey with God. When you do, you're helping fulfill Jesus' call to share the Gospel with the world.

Thank you for partnering with us to reach more people for Christ!

The Fountain Writers

Notes of encouragement written by members of the Crossroads community to uplift and inspire you on your journey of faith.

Hi there!

I wanted to share a lyric that's encouraged me lately:

"I am blessed beyond compare to find my joy in things that last, finding peace in who I am rather than my circumstance."

(My Hope Is in the Lord by Sanctus Real)

Nothing in this world lasts—it changes, fades, or fails.

When life gets hard, it can't give us something solid to hold on to.

But God was, is, and always will be.

Everything that comes from Him lasts forever—His love, His truth, His goodness. All of it.

He offers real joy and steadfast peace, no matter what we're going through.

Place your trust and hope in Him.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

From, a small fountain of joy

Introducing the Creative Corner

Since 1999, Crossroads students have been sharing their art and poetry with us. Over the years, we've published several arts journals to celebrate your creativity and share it with others. In 2019, we launched the Crossroads Prison Art Project to shine a light on your God-given gifts. Since then, we've taken your artwork on the road—showing it in churches, galleries, and other spaces across the country.

Your creativity has inspired people inside and outside of prison. For those outside prison, your art helps them see the dignity, humanity, and faith of people behind bars. For fellow students, it brings hope and encouragement.

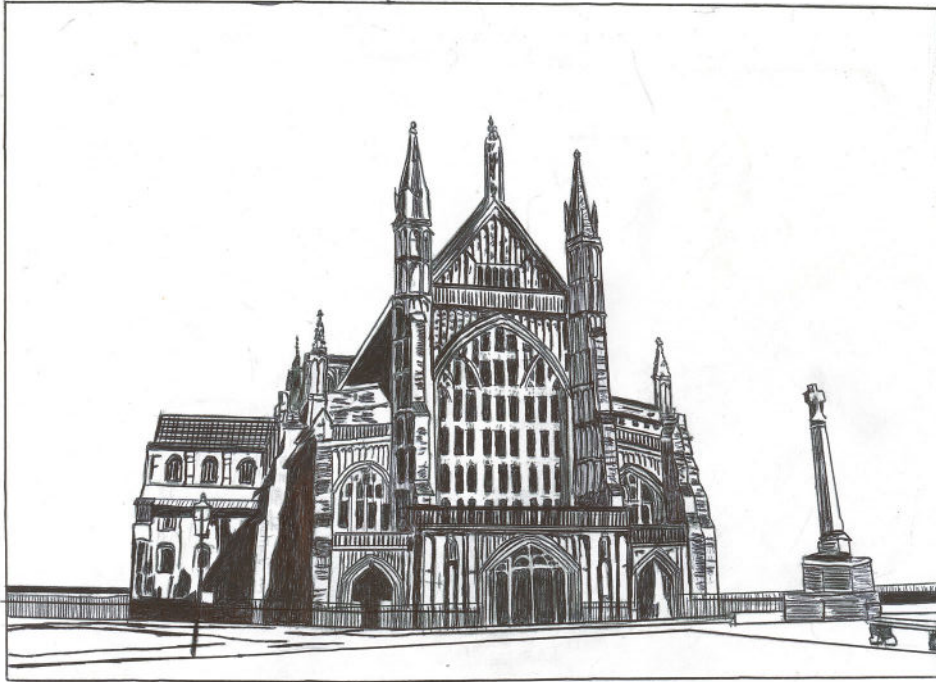
While we are not publishing an arts journal this year, we are finding new ways to feature student art. That's why we're creating a space right here in *Just for Students* to share your drawings, paintings, poetry, and other creative work. We also share student art with Crossroads supporters in our newsletters and on social media to continue telling your stories.

Art can break through walls. It helps you connect with others, share your journey, and reflect God's beauty and truth. Even in the darkest places, God's light shines through the gifts He has placed in you.

We can't wait to see what you create.

The Creative Corner

Artwork and poetry shared by Crossroads students, using their God-given gifts to glorify Him.



Winchester Cathedral by Terrence H.

A Sacred Place by John R.

Let me tell you about
This game that I play
Where I close my eyes
And just fade away

To a sacred place
Beyond time and space
No bars to hold
Or to separate

A place where I am
Happy and free
Like the stars in the sky
Or the fish in the sea

A place where I'm with You
And we're face to face
I'll hug You so tight
And live in Your grace

Above the Storm by Terry H.

Author's statement: People everywhere are searching for peace. They need power to cope with the storms in their lives. *Above the Storm* is an uplifting poem to the problems people are facing today.

Above the storm the sun is ever shining
While sunbeams vie to make the heavens glow,
The eagle soars aloft on wings reclining
While tempest rages violently below.

She knows her place of rest above the thunder
For eagles' wings are taught of God to rise
Above the storm to feel the glorious wonder
Of everlasting calm amid the skies.

So may it be with you in every sorrow
As storms of grief and trial weave their shrouds,
There is a place of refuge for the morrow—
You'll find it as you rise above the clouds.

Above the storm—I mean of earth's repining
The child of God may rise on eagles' wings,
To find the Son of righteousness ever shining
And peace transcending all these earthly things.

SHARE YOUR ARTWORK

Crossroads students are invited to submit artwork and poetry to Crossroads for display and publication. You can submit artwork or poetry by mailing it to the Crossroads office at the address below. Include your name, ID number, address, the title of your work, and an artist's statement (optional). Entries must be original, and no copyrighted images or works will be published.

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Art by Alan O.

Verses to Read and Remember

Here are twelve Bible verses to help you focus on the Holy Spirit. Try memorizing one each week. Think about it and pray over it every day.

1. John 14:26	"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."
2. Acts 1:8	"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
3. Romans 8:14	"For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God."
4. 1 Corinthians 6:19	"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own."
5. Galatians 5:22-23	"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."
6. Romans 8:26	"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."
7. Ephesians 1:13	"And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit."
8. 2 Corinthians 3:17	"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."
9. John 16:13	"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."
10. Titus 3:5	"He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."
11. Isaiah 11:2	"The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord."
12. Luke 11:13	"If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

From the Operations Department

Here are a few reminders about your lessons and mail:

- **Send back all pages of your lesson.** This helps us process it faster and send your next lesson sooner.
- **Moving or going home?** If you're transferring to a new facility or getting released and want to keep doing lessons, let us know. If you're going home, wait until you get there to send us your new address.
- **Lesson ID number:** You might see a six-digit number on the back of your lesson. It helps us process your work. You don't need to do anything with it.

Thank you for your dedication to growing in God's Word. If you enjoy doing Crossroads lessons, please tell a friend in your facility about us.

