

# GEOGRAPHY SKILLS **3**

FOR YOUNG CATHOLICS

THE ANCIENT AND MODERN WORLD

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# What Is Geography and Why Is It Important?

*St. Gertrude of Nivelles, patron of gardeners, pray for us.*

## Words to Know

**Civilization:** a large group of people living together who share work and other parts of their daily lives.

**Geography:** the study of the Earth and everything on it: its people, plants, land, water, air, and animals.

**Geography** is the study of the Earth and everything on it: its people, plants, land, water, air, and animals. Geography helps us understand how the world works. It can also explain how different places are connected. Geography shows where things are and why they are there.



Geography is important for many reasons. It teaches how people and nature often work together. For example, rivers can give people water, and mountains can protect them from enemies. Geography also helps explain why some places have forests while other places have deserts. It explains how people live in places that are hot and places that are cold.

## Fill in the Blanks

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the study of the Earth and everything on it.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ can give people water, and \_\_\_\_\_ can protect them from enemies.

## Geography in Ancient History

Geography has been important since God created the world. Let's look at an example from ancient history. In ancient Egypt, the Nile River, one of the longest rivers in the world, helped the Egyptians build a great **civilization** (a large group of people living together who share work and other parts of their daily lives). The river brought fresh water to the dry desert land, so people could grow crops like wheat and barley. Without the Nile, Egypt would have been too dry for farming, and the civilization might not have existed.

The Nile also helped Egyptians travel and trade. With few roads, goods like gold, papyrus, and food were transported in boats. People used geography to learn how to follow the river and find new places to live and work. Flooding was very important because it made the soil rich and good for planting crops.

Ancient Egypt shows us that knowing about geography helped people not only survive but thrive. Geography helped them understand their environment. As a result, they could use it wisely.

### Why You Should Learn Geography

Learning geography is exciting because it teaches us about places all over the world. You can discover where mountains, rivers, oceans, cities, churches, and shrines are. You can learn why some places are rainy while others are sunny. Geography helps you understand how people live differently depending on where they are.

When you know geography, you can explore the world through maps, books, and traveling. You'll know why some foods come from distant places, and why animals like lions live in grasslands and penguins live on ice. Geography helps you see the amazing world that God created for us.

So are you ready to learn about geography? It will open your eyes to the wonders of the Earth and the stories of the people and places in it. Let's begin our journey!



Map of the Nile River, Egypt

## True or False?

Write true or false on the line next to each statement.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ The Nile is one of the longest rivers in the world.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ The Nile provided water for farmers in ancient Egypt.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Ancient Egyptians built roads next to the Nile River to use for transportation and trade.

# Continents and Oceans

*St. Kateri Tekakwitha, patroness of those who care for planet Earth, pray for us.*

## Words to Know

**Continent:** a large landmass surrounded by oceans.

**Ocean:** a continuous body of salt water.

Recall that the **ocean** is a continuous body of salt water. As people began to sail around the world, they gave parts of the global ocean different names. There are five oceans, each an enormous body of salt water that is home to amazing plants and animals. From biggest to smallest, they are the Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Southern, and Arctic Oceans. Each ocean is different and special in its own way.



The **Pacific Ocean** is the biggest and deepest ocean. It stretches from the west coast of the United States all the way to Asia and Australia. The **Atlantic Ocean** is between North America, South America, Europe, and Africa. Hundreds of years ago, explorers crossed the Atlantic Ocean to discover new lands and a New World. The **Indian Ocean** is near Africa, Asia, and Australia. It is a warm ocean filled with colorful fish and coral reefs. The **Southern Ocean** surrounds Antarctica and is very cold. Despite the cold, penguins and whales love to swim in the Southern Ocean. The **Arctic Ocean** is near the North Pole and is covered in ice for most of the year. Oceans are important because they help control Earth's weather, provide food, and give fish and other animals a place to live.

## Label the Map

Write the number of each ocean where it is located on the world map.

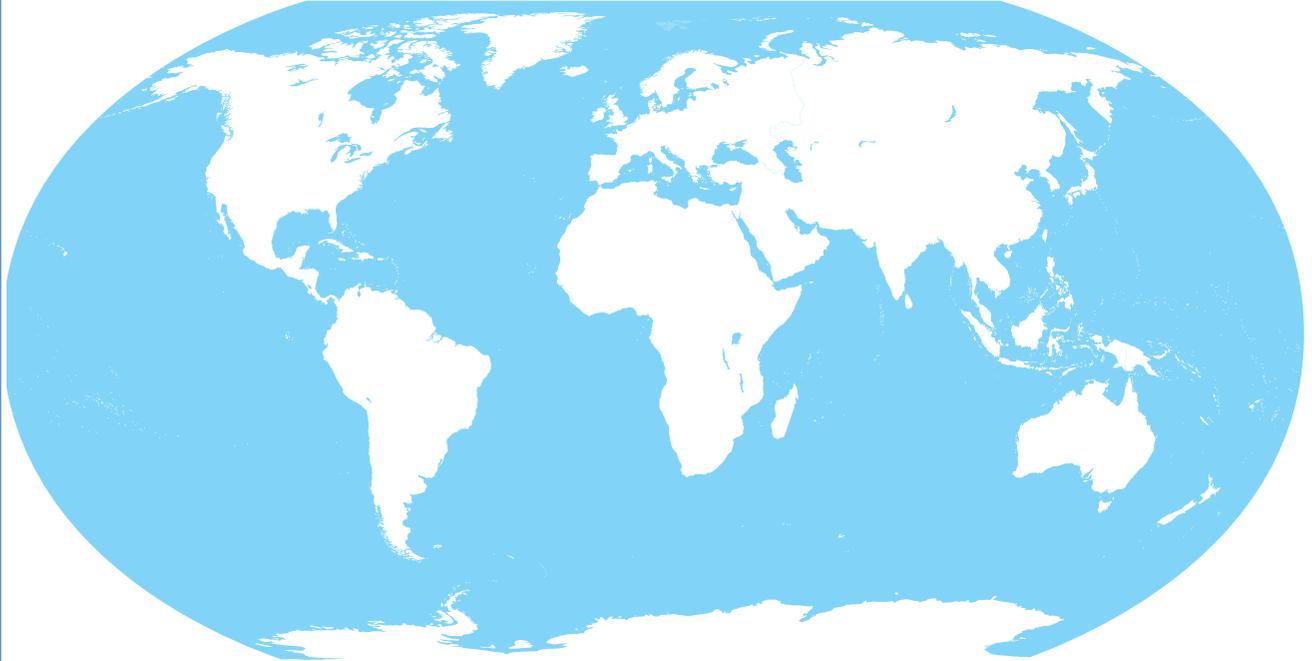
1. Pacific Ocean

2. Atlantic Ocean

3. Southern Ocean

4. Indian Ocean

5. Arctic Ocean



Shore of the Pacific Ocean



Tropical Fish in the Indian Ocean



Cinque Terre, Italy, Europe

The Earth has seven **continents** (large landmasses surrounded by oceans). The continents are the areas of land where people, animals, and plants live. The continents are North America, South America, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, and Antarctica. Like the oceans, each continent is special.

**North America** has big cities, mountains, and many forests. The United States, Canada, and Mexico are in North America. **South America** has the Amazon Rainforest and the Amazon River—the second longest river in the world. The **Andes Mountains** in South America form the longest mountain range in the world. They stretch across South America and have snowy peaks, volcanoes, and llamas. Much of South America

is filled with interesting wildlife and amazing places. **Africa** is home to lions, elephants, deserts, and rainforests! It also has the Nile River, the longest river in the world. **Europe** is full of castles, churches, cathedrals, basilicas, and beautiful old cities. The pope lives in Rome, an important city in Europe. Europe is smaller than some continents but packed with history. **Asia** is the biggest continent. It has tall mountains, big rivers, and large countries like China and India. **Australia** is the smallest continent and is home to kangaroos and koalas. **Antarctica** is the coldest continent; it is covered in ice. It has seals, seabirds, and penguins. The only humans on Antarctica are scientists who live there temporarily to do research, along with others who support them.

## Label the Map

Make your own map key by coloring each shape below. Use this key to color the continents on the map on the previous page. Then label them.

- North America
- South America
- Europe
- Asia
- Africa
- Australia
- Antarctic

# Seas, Gulfs, and Bays: The Exodus from Egypt

Lesson

11

*Our Lady, Star of the Sea, pray for us.*

## Words to Know

**Gulf:** a part of a sea that extends into land. **Political map:** shows the locations of countries or other government regions.  
**Isthmus:** a narrow strip of land that connects two larger areas of land.



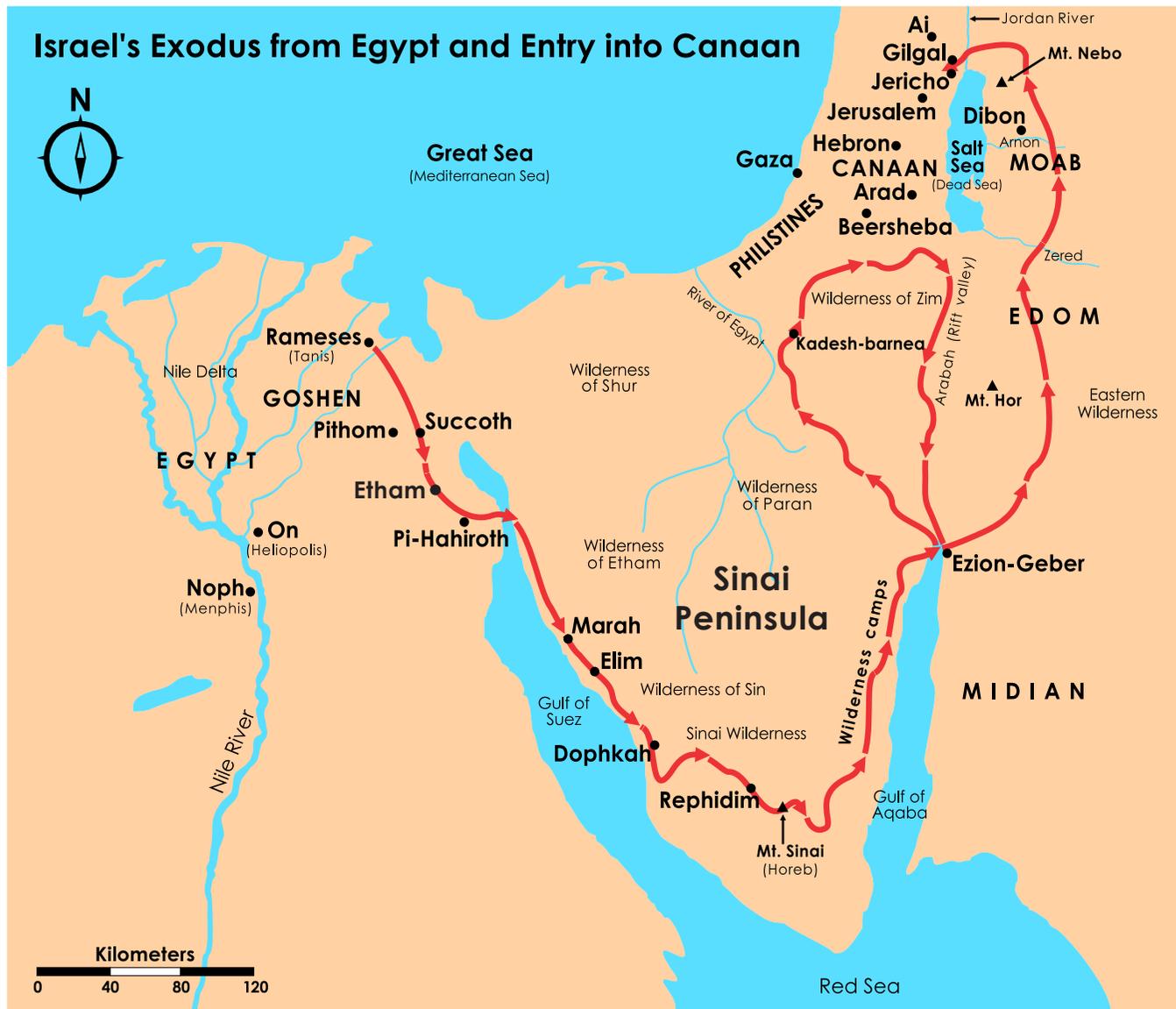
This is a **political map** of the region around the Sinai Peninsula as it is today. It shows the location of nearby countries. The Sinai Peninsula is part of the country of Egypt, and it connects the continents of Africa and Asia. Although the rest of Egypt is in Africa, the Sinai Peninsula is part of Asia.

Like all peninsulas, the Sinai Peninsula is surrounded on three sides by water. The Red Sea is south of the peninsula. The Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba are on its western and eastern sides. A **gulf** is a part of a sea that extends into land. You can see a narrow land bridge at the top of the Gulf of Suez connecting the Sinai Peninsula to the rest of Egypt. A narrow strip of land that connects two larger areas of land is called an **isthmus**.

## Working with Maps

Study the map on the previous page and enter the name of the body of water to complete each statement below.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ Sea is north of the Sinai Peninsula.
2. The Gulf of \_\_\_\_\_ is between the Sinai Peninsula and Saudi Arabia.
3. The Gulf of \_\_\_\_\_ is on the western side of the Sinai Peninsula, between the peninsula and Egypt.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ Sea is the body of water off the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula.



You have learned that a *route* is a path or way from one place to another. One of the most famous routes in the history of the world is the one taken by Moses and the Israelite people when they left Egypt to travel to the Promised Land.



Moses

## Working with Maps

Study the map on the previous page. Then follow the directions below.

5. In Egypt, the Israelite people lived in the “Land of Goshen” near the Nile River delta. Circle Goshen on the map.
6. Holy Scripture tells us that the first part of the journey was from Rameses to Succoth, where the people encamped. Write the number 1 near Succoth.
7. The second night, they camped near Etham. Write the number 2 near Etham. During the first two days, the Israelites traveled in a \_\_\_\_\_ direction.

**southeastern**

**southwestern**

**northern**

8. On the map, find Pi-Hahiroth, where the Israelites crossed the part of the Red Sea known as the Gulf of Suez. In what direction did the Israelites travel as they crossed this body of water?

**north**

**west**

**east**

9. After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, to which place did they travel next?

**Pithom**

**Marah**

**Midian**

10. God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses at Mt. \_\_\_\_\_, also known as Horeb.

**Hor**

**Nebo**

**Sinai**

11. Next, the Israelites traveled to Ezion-Geber. What general direction did they travel to get to Ezion-Geber?

**north**

**south**

**west**