

# On the MOVE

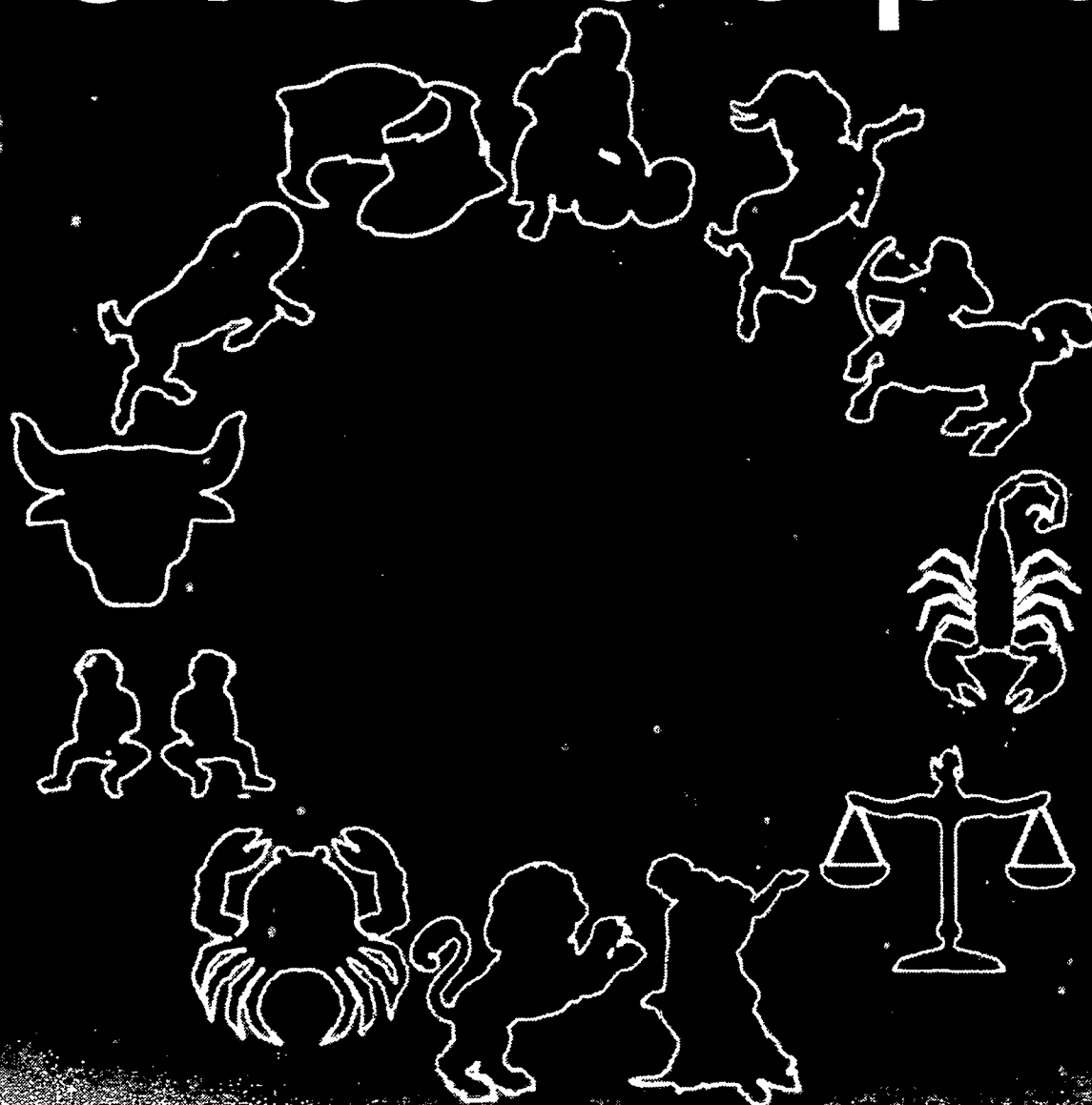
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## Kids' Answers

from page 12

1. g
2. a
3. b
4. d
5. f
6. e
7. h
8. c

# Horoscopes



## "Signs" of conflict with church teachings

**D**o you pay close attention to horoscopes in newspapers or magazines, or on the Internet?

The Catholic Church would rather you didn't pay horoscopes any mind at all.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2116, speaks out against trusting what horoscopes, astrology and palm reading present as cosmic influences. These practices, the catechism states, "conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings... they contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone."

Christine Gardner was surprised to hear that the church is so critical of such practices. She believes they're harmless as long as you don't "obsess over them, or go out of your way to try and make them come true."

"I guess it kind of bothers me that the church frowns on people who read horoscopes, especially if it's just for fun," remarked Christine, 15, a parishioner at St. Dominic's Church in Shortsville. "There are so many other things the church should be worried about. I don't think there's anything terribly wrong with reading a horoscope as long as you don't take it real seriously."

Reading horoscopes in the newspaper may indeed seem harmless enough to lots of us. So perhaps some historical perspective on why the church feels this way would help to clarify.

Astrology, as defined in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, is the practice of determining or learning the future by measuring the movement and position of the stars and other heavenly bodies.

In the book *Catholic Life in a New Century*, author Father John Dietzen explained that astrology was a legitimate science up until about 200 years ago. Even popes, Father Dietzen noted, based their schedules on the horoscopes devised by astrologers. This was due to man's limited scientific knowledge of the heavens.

However, as the science of astronomy developed, the discovery of thousands of other stars in our solar system disproved the astrological "system." The Catholic Church, during this time, stated that God, not the stars, should govern man's actions. According to Father Dietzen, the church also began linking astrology with Satanism because astrology "can involve sinful superstition."

This thinking still holds true today, said Father John Colacino, a professor at St. Bernard's Institute, the Rochester Diocese's graduate school for theology.

"To consult the stars implies that human destiny is somehow in the hands of impersonal forces rather than the living God who guides the course of human events," Father Colacino remarked.

Although he doesn't endorse reading horoscopes for fun, Father Colacino did say that "there is a difference, morally speaking, between checking a horoscope in the daily paper and superstitiously consulting an astrologer for one's future, which one then takes as a sure indication of

how to direct or "chart the course" of one's life."

Despite the church's warnings, astrology remains a big money-maker today, causing people to pay big bucks for the advice of astrologers, palm readers and other psychics.

Karen Barg, on the other hand, said she routinely reads her horoscope over breakfast, but doesn't worry about cosmic powers dictating her destiny.

"I don't think there's a force or anything, this power where people can look into the future. It's mostly entertainment," said Karen, 18, from St. Patrick's Church in Macedon.

Frederika Eilers and Kayte Malik, also, take a light view of horoscopes when they read them — especially when an outlandish occurrence is predicted by one.

"It (once) said I was going to marry five times, and I didn't think I was that kind of person," laughed Frederika, 15, from Church of the Good Shepherd in Henrietta.

And Kayte came across a horoscope that said her husband was going to bring her flowers that night — a rather unlikely event since Kayte, 18, has never been married.

By the same token, Kayte said, she has seen her horoscope come true from time to time — like the day she read that she would do well on a test.

"I got the highest score in the room," said Kayte, from St. Jerome's Church in East Rochester.

Horoscopes are hard to resist, Kayte added, when they predict joyful occurrences such as acing tests and falling in love.

"It just gives you hope that something good is going to happen," she said.

On the other hand, when Tom Kane viewed his horoscope at the end of one day last week, he was sorry to find out it had come true.

"It wasn't supposed to be a good day for romance, and I hadn't had a good day with my girlfriend," said Tom, 18, from St. Rose Church in Lima.

His reaction? "I just laughed."

Tom explained that he doesn't take horoscopes seriously, and regarded this occurrence as a coincidence.

Frederika added that while your horoscope may indeed come true, she has found that predictions for Zodiac signs other than hers (she's a Gemini) could apply to her life as well.

"It could be true for a lot of people," Frederika said.

But even though Frederika doesn't believe strongly in the validity of horoscopes, she admitted that it's possible to obsess over them. For this reason, she said, she avoids reading horoscopes at the beginning of the day.

"I don't want to base my life on it," Frederika said.

**COMING NEXT WEEK**  
Irish dancers