

## GOLDEN MEMORIES

Gold-glass cups and bowls were a popular way to celebrate friendships and religious beliefs. They are beautiful objects that tell us what was important to their owners. They were given as presents by the early Christian Romans, on special occasions such as weddings or religious festivals.

Gold-glass images were made by engraving a picture, often with text, onto a sheet of gold leaf. This was then placed between two pieces of glass which were fused together by heating. Decorated pieces of glass were stuck onto plain glass vessels.

When the owner of a gold-glass bowl died, the vessel was smashed to show that they could not use it anymore, and the decorated base was stuck onto the wall of their tomb as a sign of their faith and to celebrate the friendships they used to have.

### Exercise 1:

Match these scenes from gold glass with their descriptions:



Eve is tempted to eat the fruit of the tree of life by a serpent



Abraham obeys God's command to sacrifice his Son.



A woman prays



A paralysed man who has been healed by Jesus gets up and walks

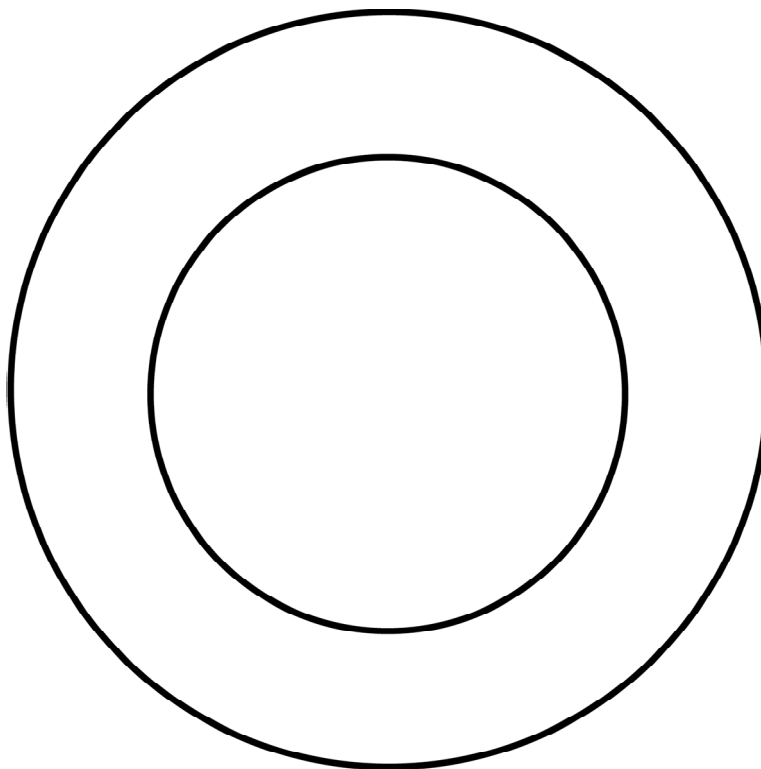
Think about how you were able to tell which picture was which. What clues helped you?

## Putting yourself in the picture

A popular kind of decoration on Roman gold glass was a circle with a portrait or portraits in the middle, surrounded with decoration. In ancient gold glass, people often pictured themselves with their spouses or friends, surrounded by stories from the bible or lives of the saints.

### Exercise 1:

Design your own Gold glass. Make a simple portrait of you and surround yourself with things that are important to you (friends, family, hobbies, pets etc.). Make the picture out of simple shapes so that you can cut them out, with the clear parts of the glass as the background and lines. Look at the ancient examples on the back of this worksheet if you are having problems drawing something to cut out.



To make your Gold Glass design more authentic, you can add a Latin inscription:

*DIGNITAS AMICORUM*: 'Worthiness of friends'

*PIE ZESES*: "Drink! May you live!"

Next: trace your design onto gold paper and carefully cut it out. Then arrange the gold paper inside a laminator wallet and pass the whole thing through the laminator. The heat will fuse the gold inside the laminator sheet in the same way ancient gold was fused between sheets of glass.