

God Creates Us

Curiosity about God's World

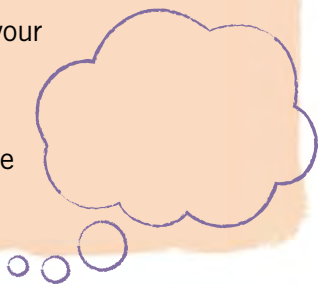
God makes himself known to us through his creation. Take a walk outside with your child and point out what you notice and enjoy about the natural world around you. Share how these aspects of God's creation make you feel. Ask your child what he or she appreciates most about our natural world and why.

Reason and Faith

Faith without reason can lead to superstition, which assumes that actions or objects can have a magical effect. Discuss with your child the importance of having a balance of both faith and reason in our lives. Emphasize that faith means putting our trust in God while at the same time using reason to make good choices and live how God wants us to live.

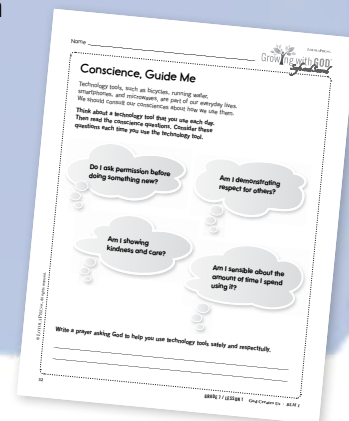
God's Gift of Reason

God gave us reason—the ability to think, solve problems, and form judgments. Discuss with your child something he or she might like to study or investigate and share some of your own interests.



Guided by Conscience

In our search for understanding, we are guided by our consciences. Talk with your child about how our consciences help us to do good and make choices that serve God and one another. Review the Conscience, Guide Me handout with your child. Discuss how we can rely on our Catholic faith, Tradition, and Scripture to determine right from wrong. Pray together in thanksgiving for God's beautiful world and our place in it.



Boundaries



Personal Boundaries

Setting physical and emotional boundaries is necessary to stay safe and have healthy relationships. Discuss with your child what he or she considers to be appropriate boundaries. You might share with your child some of your personal boundaries. Remind your child that he or she has the right to feel safe and respected.

Saying No

It is important for your child to communicate his or her boundaries clearly and to say **No** if these boundaries are ever crossed. Explain to your child that it is never okay for an adult or a peer to make your child feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Together discuss and practice ways your child might say and demonstrate a clear **No**. You might say: ***If a person's words or actions ever make you feel uncomfortable, please know that you can tell me or another trusted adult. I love you and I'm always here for you.***



Trusted Adults

Discuss with your child people you both know and consider to be trusted adults. Share reasons and qualities that make them trustworthy. Then together complete the Trusted Adult Contact List handout and, if applicable, have your child put the names and contact information into his or her cell phone or other device.

Trusted Adult Contact List

Knowing who to reach out to when you are having a problem or need to talk is important.

Use this form to list the trusted individuals in your family and keep it in a safe place.

When completing this form, identify people:

- you trust and feel comfortable talking to.
- who will listen to you.
- who are old enough to help you solve a problem.

Family/Closest Individual

Name _____

Phone Numbers _____

Home _____ Work _____

Cell _____ Text _____

Notes _____

Other Trusted Adults in My Life

Name _____ Phone _____

Why I Trust This Person _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Why I Trust This Person _____

Through God, We Are Strong

God's love empowers us and makes us stronger and more confident. Talk with your child about ways you experience God's love. Pray with your child to the Holy Spirit for help to grow in wisdom, confidence, and strength.

Friendship and Bullying

What It Means to Be a Friend

Being kind, respectful, compassionate, and considerate are necessary to grow strong and healthy relationships. Tell your child what you think it means to love as Jesus loves. Then describe specific times you have seen your child be a good friend to others. Acknowledge how proud you are of your child and that you trust he or she will continue to show love and concern for others.



Many Forms of Bullying

Remind your child that bullying is not just physical intimidation or teasing, but also leaving others out of groups and conversations and targeting people online. You might say: ***If you witness bullying or if you are being bullied, you can always come to me or another trusted adult for help.***

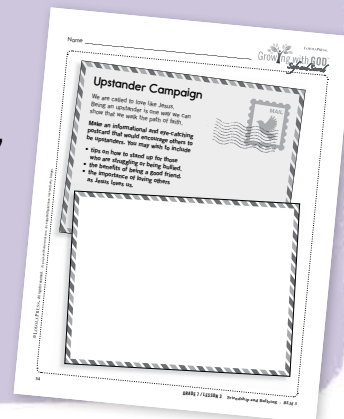


The New Commandment

Discuss with your child the New Commandment: to love one another as Jesus loves us. Remind him or her that we are disciples of Jesus when we support one another through our words and actions. Pray with your child for the guidance, courage, and strength to always live Jesus' message of love.

Stand Up for Others

Review with your child the Upstander Campaign handout. Discuss with him or her how loving others as Jesus loves us means standing up for those who are being bullied and struggling. Tell your child that if someone is being treated unjustly, we can be like Jesus and show that person that he or she is not alone. Invite your child to share ideas for ways to safely stand up for others. Add your own ideas.



Safety Awareness

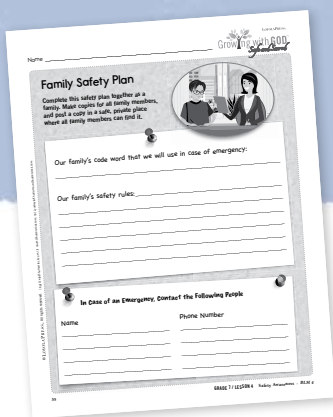


Fortitude, a Gift of the Holy Spirit

Fortitude helps us make good moral choices, even during challenging times. Share with your child times your family has met challenges and difficulties with fortitude and courage. Pray together to the Holy Spirit for the guidance to make good choices and grow in faith, hope, and love.

Family Safety Plan

As a family, discuss or review your family safety plan. If you choose, complete the Family Safety Plan handout and put it on your fridge or bulletin board.



Feeling and Staying Safe

Having personal safety allows us to live, grow, and freely serve God. But we all need help and support sometimes. Discuss with your child the people and things can help him or her feel protected and strong. Talk about some of the choices and temptations your child may face as he or she is growing and gaining more independence and what he or she can do to make good choices and stay safe.



Dangerous Situations and Escape Strategies

Protecting our personal safety means identifying potentially unsafe situations and knowing how to respond or escape. Your child can use his or her body and voice as tools to escape something harmful. Discuss with your child scenarios in which a stranger may try to get close to him or her with the intent to harm and ways to be prepared and act if faced with a difficult situation. Practice these strategies together so that your child will feel secure should the need to use them ever arise.

Digital Discipleship

Be an Online Witness

Discuss with your child appropriate and inappropriate online behavior. Remind him or her that we are called to share God's love in our words and actions—both in person and online. Invite your child to share examples of social media activity that would and would not show a person living by the Gospel.



Cyberbullying

Bullying that takes place online by posting harmful or intimidating messages is called *cyberbullying*. Remind your child that it is never okay to participate in cyberbullying and to tell you immediately if he or she or another child is being bullied online.

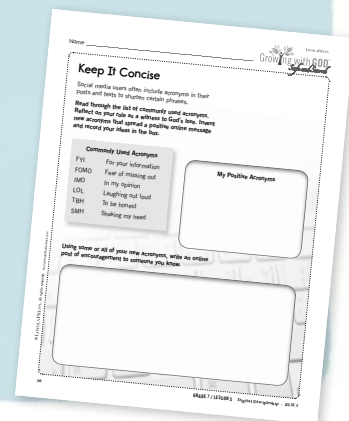


Jesus Is Our Teacher

Jesus is a sign of God's love for us. Through his teachings and example, we come to know who God is and who he is calling us to be. Jesus also taught us the Lord's Prayer to grow closer to the Father. Pray together the Lord's Prayer or a prayer of your own.

What We Do and Say Affects Others

Remind your child that how we act online impacts others. Tell your child that you expect him or her to stop and think before posting anything online, especially if he or she is upset. Discuss ways to make a positive impact by supporting and encouraging others and by posting responsibly. Review with your child the Keep It Concise handout.



Inappropriate Content

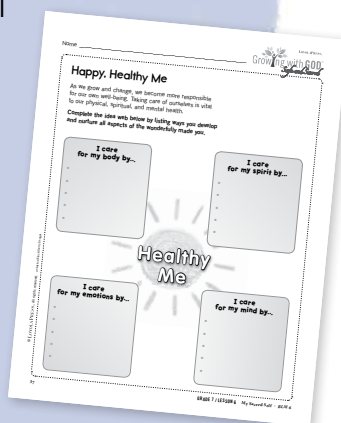
Discuss with your child the possibility of encountering inappropriate online content. You might say: ***If you see something online that makes you uncomfortable, don't feel ashamed or worried. Turn it off immediately and tell me or another trusted adult right away.*** Listen to your child's responses and add suggestions if appropriate.



My Sacred Self

At Peace

Caring for our bodies, minds, emotions, and spirits honors God and allows us to have peaceful relationships with him and with others. Review with your child the Happy, Healthy Me handout. Tell him or her that it is normal to feel confused or have questions about the physical and emotional changes we go through during puberty. You might say: ***I want you to know that you can ask me anything that is on your mind. I love you and want what is best for you.***



A Moral Life

Modesty is a purity of spirit that does not seek to attract unwholesome attention to oneself. Chastity helps us understand how to interact with one another respectfully and how to develop self-discipline. Discuss with your child the importance of having control over our drives and emotions. Remind him or her that we show our love for God when we respect our bodies and the bodies of others.



God's Plan for Our Future

Our current relationships and moral choices impact the person we become. Tell your child some of the things about him or her that make you proud. Then share what hopes and dreams you have for your child's future. Pray together for the grace and wisdom to rightly order our desires and live peacefully as children of God.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

We honor the bodies God has given us by caring for them. You may wish to put together a hygiene kit for your child that includes deodorant, face and body soap, shampoo, and other hygiene products and discuss with your child how to use them.

