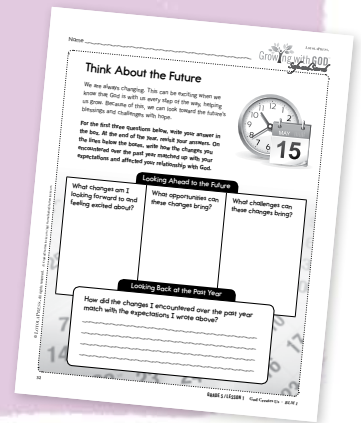


# God Creates Us



## Changes in Mind, Body, and Spirit

Invite your child to join you in looking at old photographs of him or her. Discuss some milestones in your child's life and reflect on his or her growth, then review the Think About the Future handout. Explain that God has a purpose for your child and will reveal it in his own time. Emphasize that God loves your child and that you do too.



## Embracing Changes

Your child can embrace changes as opportunities to grow closer to God. During a quiet moment, tell your child that you are proud of how he or she is growing and becoming more of the person God intends him or her to be. Let your child know that you are always available to answer questions about the changes he or she is noticing.



## Using Our Gifts to Show God's Love

Your child can use his or her gifts and characteristics to share God's love. At bedtime, affirm your child's unique, God-given gifts and strengths. Pray with your child, expressing gratitude for his or her gifts. Together, ask God to give your child the grace to use these gifts to reflect God's love toward others.



# Boundaries

## Body Boundaries

We have the ability to set our own guidelines about how people treat us. During a quiet moment, tell your child that he or she gets to decide how others are allowed to treat his or her body. Emphasize that your child does not have to touch others or be touched by them if the physical contact would make your child uncomfortable. Encourage your child to let you know immediately if someone violates his or her boundaries.



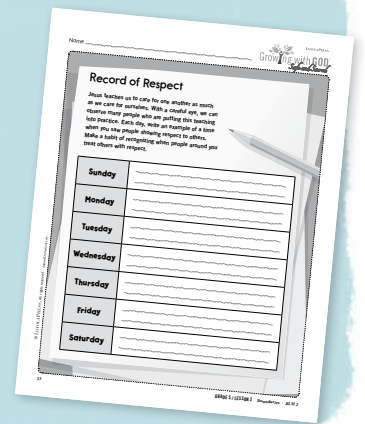
## Paying Attention

People communicate their wishes using words and body language. Help your child understand the importance of communicating his or her wishes to others and of recognizing how others are communicating their own wishes. Take turns talking about how words and body language can be used to say “no” or to express discomfort.



## Personal Conscience Reflections

The conscience is the inner voice that guides us to follow God. Explain that your child’s conscience can help him or her make good choices in difficult situations. Discuss the Record of Respect handout that your child will be filling out over the next week with examples of respectful acts he or she witnesses. Invite your child to pray with you, asking God for help as your child listens to his or her conscience and shows respect for others.



## Other Personal Boundaries

Remind your child that everyone has spiritual and emotional boundaries in addition to body boundaries. Share some of your own personal boundaries with your child.

# Friendship and Bullying



## Differences Between Friendship and Bullying

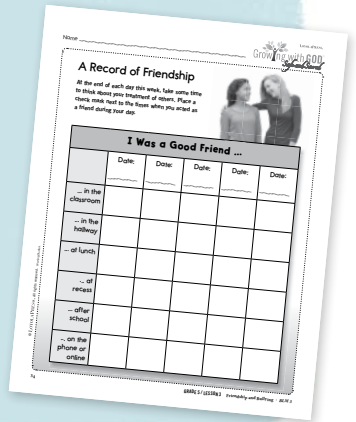
Talk about the differences between friendship and bullying behavior. Acknowledge and affirm the ways in which your child is a good friend to others. Give some examples of bullying behavior and ask your child how a friend would act instead.

## How to Respond to Bullying

Tell your child that you want him or her to be a good friend to everyone but that it is also important to stay safe during encounters with people who bully others. Discuss situations that might possibly arise for your child, and talk about when you would want him or her to seek help from a trusted adult in those situations.

## Jesus Is Our Guide to Being a Good Friend

Jesus treated his followers as his brothers and sisters and treated everyone with respect. Explain to your child that each person has been created by God and is equally valuable in his eyes. Point out that this is one reason why Jesus teaches us to be inclusive. Talk about how your child can be a respectful friend to all people. Discuss your child's responses to the A Record of Friendship handout as he or she fills it out over the course of a week.



## A Strong Friendship with Jesus

Each person can have a strong friendship with Jesus. Talk about how you strengthen your friendship with Jesus. Invite your child to share his or her ideas. Then pray the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis with your child.



# Digital Discipleship



## Qualities of a Friend

A good friend treats other people with love and compassion. Ask your child what some other characteristics of a good friend are. Encourage your child to nurture friendships with people who shine the love of Jesus into his or her life, whether they are online or offline.

## Positive Digital Footprints

Your child can leave a positive digital footprint in his or her online activity by keeping personal information private, using appropriate privacy settings, and following family rules. Talk with your child about your expectations for his or her online behavior and review your family internet safety rules.



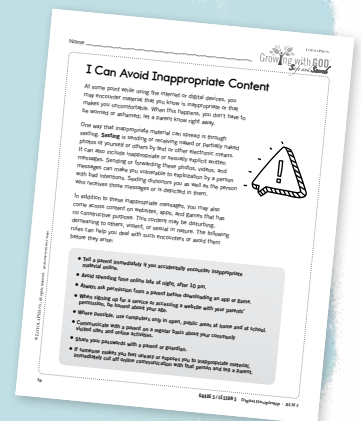
## Digital Citizenship

A good digital citizen shows honesty, respect, and compassion online. Point out to your child that we must not underestimate the power we have to affect another life with our words and actions. Imagine together what the world might be like if everyone were to follow the example of Jesus online as well as offline.



## Avoiding Inappropriate Content Online

Explain that some people put inappropriate images, videos, and text online. Review the I Can Avoid Inappropriate Content handout with your child and answer any questions he or she may have. Tell your child to alert you immediately if he or she receives inappropriate content from others in text messages or online interactions or if he or she encounters disturbing content on websites, apps, or games. Together, pray to God for discernment and protection as you navigate digital technology.





# My Sacred Self

## People Grow and Change at Different Rates

No two experiences with puberty are exactly the same. Let your child know that you are proud of all that he or she is learning to do. When it is appropriate for your child, you may wish to put together a hygiene kit with deodorant, face and body soap, shampoo, and other gender-specific hygiene products.



## The Outward Signs of Puberty in Boys and Girls

In private, sit with your child and gently let him or her know that you are open to answering any questions about puberty. If your child is uncomfortable asking you these questions directly, suggest that he or she write you a note.

## We Treat Others with Respect

It is important that your child honors peers' boundaries. Ask your child to name some ways that he or she can show respect to peers who are experiencing physical or emotional changes. Emphasize that your child deserves the same level of respect and support.



## God's Eternal Love

God invites us to grow in relationship with him. Talk about how you say yes to God's invitation to contribute to his kingdom. Pray aloud the *Suscipe* (Prayer of Saint Ignatius) while your child prays along silently.

## Responding to Puberty

Your child can respond to the challenges of puberty in positive, healthy ways. Review the Responding to Puberty handout with your child. Discuss his or her answers and offer your support in difficult situations.

