

God Creates Us

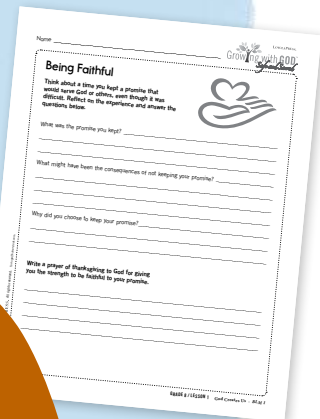
Your Child's Vocation

God calls us all to know, love, and serve him. Each of us lives out this call differently, depending on our vocation. Discuss with your child how we use our gifts to serve God and the needs of others. You might say: ***One day you will choose a vocation, or path in life, that is right for you. You are already following God's plan through your relationships, especially when you keep your promises to behave in positive ways.***



Honoring Promises

All vocations involve a desire to share God's love and to be faithful and loyal. Emphasize to your child the importance of keeping promises when they serve God and others. Review with your child the Being Faithful handout. Share what you do to honor the promises you make.



Ways to Strengthen Our Spirit

Talk with your child about his or her Baptism. You might share photos and stories from that special day. Remind your child how the promises made at our Baptism affirm our belief in God and our desire to do good and avoid sin. Discuss how prayer and celebrating the sacraments help us be faithful to our promises. Invite your child to share other ways to strengthen our spirit.



God's Plan for Our Future

Our relationships and moral choices impact the people we become. Remind your child that we answer God's call not once but every day and in all our relationships. Tell your child some of the things about him or her that make you proud. Then discuss what hopes and dreams you and your child have for his or her future. Pray together the Act of Faith or a prayer of your own.

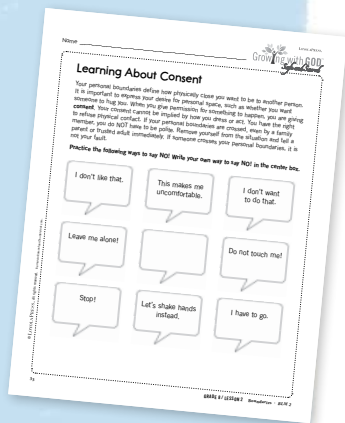
Boundaries

Truth-Telling Versus Tattling

Remind your child that we tell the truth to keep ourselves and others safe, to help others, and to solve problems. Emphasize that telling the truth about possible danger is never tattling. Reassure your child that he or she can always come to you with concerns, even when it is difficult, and you will do your best to listen and help.

Warning Signs

Discuss with your child grooming behaviors, such as unwanted or inappropriate physical contact, preferential treatment, and isolation from other relationships. These are warning signs that may indicate an adult is trying to get close to a child in order to harm or abuse him or her. You might say: **Trusted adults do not share personal information with young people, ask them to keep secrets, or treat them like another adult.** Explain that this applies to all adults, including family members and friends. Go over with your child the Learning About Consent handout and help him or her complete it.



The Value of Honesty

Discuss with your child how we can be an example of God's love when we are truthful. Take turns sharing ways that telling the truth helps strengthen and grow the relationships in your family. Remind your child that being truthful and doing what is right to protect ourselves and others is courageous.



Holy Spirit, Make Us Strong

Pray together to the Holy Spirit for the strength and courage to always tell the truth. Remind your child that if he or she is being harmed by someone, to tell a trusted adult or the police.

Friendship and Bullying

Called to Love and Care

We are called to love and care for one another. One way we can have a spirit of friendship is by being aware of how we use words. Emphasize the importance of choosing words carefully and treating others with respect. Tell your child that we can love like Jesus by having open hearts and choosing to treat everyone with kindness and care, even when it's difficult.

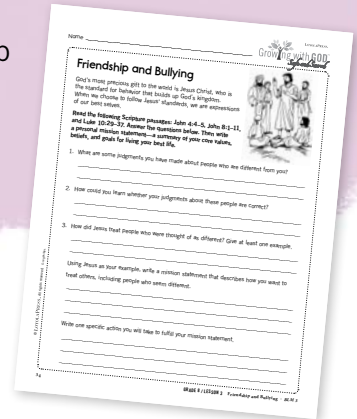


Empathy

We can use empathy to identify how others may be feeling. The next time your child is having trouble with a friend or sibling, invite your child to share his or her thoughts and feelings. Then ask your child to imagine what his or her friend or sibling might be thinking or feeling.

Forms of Bullying

Making snap judgments about people based on how they look or act is a form of bullying. Discuss with your child how our first impressions of people can be wrong. Give an example of a time when you changed your mind about someone after getting to know him or her. Furthermore, being unwelcoming or intentionally leaving others out is also a form of bullying. Talk about why it is important to include others, even those we may not feel close to. The Friendship and Bullying handout further explores this topic.



Stand Up for Others

Ask your child if he or she has ever witnessed bullying behavior. Discuss with your child how it takes courage to stand up for someone who is being bullied. Share ideas for ways to stop bullying behavior. Pray together the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis or a prayer of your own.



Digital Discipleship

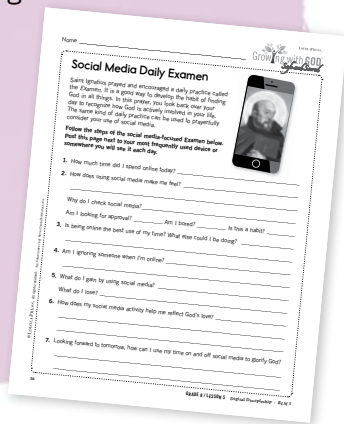
Social Media and Relationships

Social media can have various effects on relationships. Discuss positive uses for social media, such as keeping in touch with friends, and invite your child to share his or her ideas. Encourage your child to talk about any troubling effects of social media, such as feeling sad, jealous, or unpopular after reading certain posts. Help your child understand that most people share only the highlights of their life online and that all people have struggles, no matter how perfect their lives may seem.



Social Media Daily Examen

Discuss with your child the importance of having healthy online and offline habits and making good choices when using devices. Share ideas for healthy habits, including setting a timer or making plans to do offline activities. Review the Social Media Daily Examen handout with your child and invite all family members to make a social-media focused Examen.



Practicing Moderation

The virtue of moderation, or self-restraint, helps us use social media wisely, safely, and positively. Tell your child about time you felt the need to check something online while you were doing something else. Ask your child to share his or her experiences. Guide him or her to understand that when we are drawn to our devices, we can be pulled away from God and one another. Make a plan for device-free family time.



Finding and Maintaining Balance

Remind your child to put nothing before our relationship with God, to always be present with one another, and to maintain an appropriate balance between the time we spend online and offline. Pray together asking God for his help and guidance.



My Sacred Self

A Call from God

God calls husbands and wives to be open to having children and to raise them responsibly. Tell your child how he or she is a blessing in your life. Give examples of positive aspects of his or her behavior and personality. You might say: ***You are a precious gift from God. I take the responsibility to care for you very seriously.***



The Stages of Pregnancy

Set aside some quiet time to gently broach this topic with your child, perhaps introducing it by asking a question such as, “Do you know how new life begins?” Don’t feel pressured to have all the answers at once; instead, open a dialogue with your child and continue building on that relationship of trust.



The Domestic Church

The family can be thought of as the domestic church. It is where we first learn about God and how to live as his children. Talk with your child about ways your family lives out this call, such as by loving and caring for one another, helping those in need, and practicing the faith. Remind your child that God is always present and gives us strength during difficult times. Pray together and thank God for the blessing of your family.

The Responsibilities of Parenthood

Being a parent includes caring for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of children. Discuss with your child different ways parents care for their children. Guide him or her to recognize that parenting is both a blessing and a difficult job that requires serious commitment. Review with your child the Safe Haven Law handout.

