

LESSON 1 God Creates Us



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What the Church Says About *The Family as Teacher*

In the family, we learn closeness, care and respect for others. We break out of our fatal self-absorption and come to realize that we are living with and alongside others who are worthy of our concern, our kindness and our affection.

Pope Francis,
Amoris Laetitia, 276 (2016)

Discovering God's Gifts

As a third-grader, your child has well-established likes and dislikes, has had some time to explore his or her own gifts and limitations, and is acquiring the ability to engage in critical thinking. A more grownup version of your child is emerging each day, and as exciting as this is to see, you may wonder how best to guide him or her to become a willing servant in God's kingdom.

Now is the time to stress that we should never stop learning—about God, others, and ourselves. Your child needs you to provide a safe and loving family environment that promotes exploring new skills, encourages caring for others, and offers creative modes for self-expression. In so doing, you will help your child discover gifts that can be used to serve God's kingdom.

Teach your child that God has gifted all his children in different ways so that we may see our need for one another and work together to serve him.

Discuss with your child the many different kinds of gifts God has given us. For example, the ability to empathize with others, comfort them, and make them laugh has immeasurable value, as do academic, athletic, and artistic abilities. Exploring one's gifts is a lifelong journey. As you support your child along the way and provide opportunities for him or her to use these gifts, you will be present for the precious moments in which God reveals himself to your child and to your family.





3minute
RETREAT

As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace.

1 Peter 4:10

Reflection

Through God's love and grace, we have been given the gifts of Baptism and the Eucharist. God has also given us unique gifts to carry out our calling as servants in God's kingdom. We are good stewards of his gifts when we use them for the good of others.

Questions

What are some ways I can share my gifts with others? What is one gift I hope to share with my child?



Prayer

Pray to God, using this prayer or one of your own.

Loving God, help me to treasure the gifts you have given me so I may use them in service of those I love.

Lead Your Child to Grow with God: Spiritually, Socially, and Physically

Spiritual

Make a mealtime ritual

of asking a question that requires some introspection.

For example, you might ask,

"If you could carry one item with you forever, what would it

be and why?" Keep it lighthearted, but

draw your faith into the conversation as appropriate and encourage others to do the same. Give everyone a chance to contribute.



Social Encourage your child to befriend children from all walks of life as opportunity allows. Cultivating friendships with those who have different customs, talents, and ways of thinking helps us develop attitudes of admiration and compassion. When we celebrate our diversity, we begin to see one another through the eyes of Jesus.

Physical Your third-grader still craves time with you. Set aside time each day to do something active with your child, and let him or her set the pace. The exercise will be beneficial, and the shared time will offer valuable bonding experiences.

Safe and Sacred at Home



Embracing the Way of Jesus (Loyola Press)

by Pope Francis

Children are in and of themselves a treasure for humanity and also for the Church, for they constantly evoke that necessary condition for entering the Kingdom of God: that of not considering ourselves self-sufficient but in need of help, love, and forgiveness. . . . Children remind us of another beautiful thing: . . . we are always sons and daughters. Even if one becomes an adult, or an elder, even if one becomes a parent, if one occupies a position of responsibility—underneath all of this is still the identity of a child.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 1, your child will:

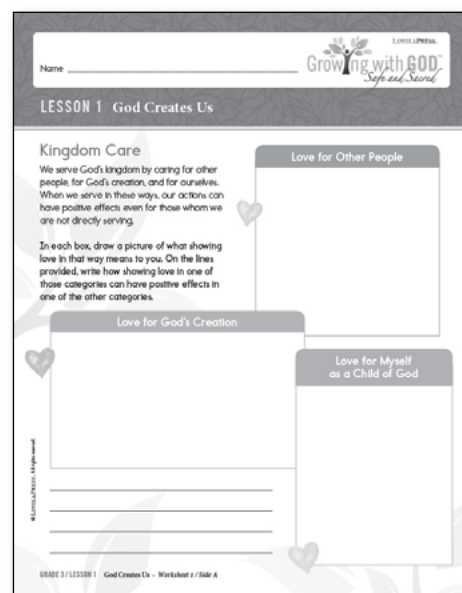
- demonstrate understanding of what it means to serve God's kingdom.
- discuss how God reveals himself through the gifts he gives and the people around us.
- identify ways to use God-given gifts to care for oneself, others, and the world around us.
- define *generosity*.

Word to Know

generosity • *The quality expressed by giving one's time, talents, and other resources to those in need without thinking of oneself*

Bringing the Lesson Home

Determine ahead of time when and where you and your child will engage with the lesson content. Read or complete Side A of the worksheet with your child.



STEP 1 ENGAGE & EXPLORE

You have been watching your child develop his or her gifts, habits, and interpersonal skills over time. Review your child's work on Side A of the worksheet and offer a specific observation



about your child's responses. For example, "I see you drew a picture of your guitar under Love for Myself as a Child of God. I know playing your guitar gives you a very peaceful feeling and helps you feel closer to God."

SAY: Showing love can be done in so many ways. It does not matter if our acts are small and unplanned or big and elaborate. When we use our gifts and act out of consideration for others, we spread the love of God.

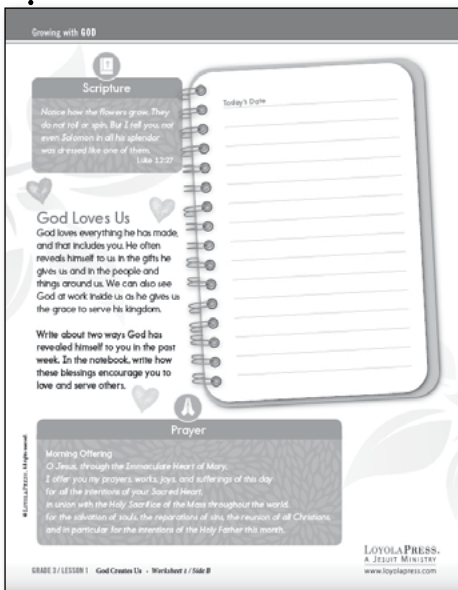
Invite your child to talk about the work completed on Side A of the worksheet. Use this as an opportunity to talk about ways we can help reveal God's love through our actions. You may wish to ask your child about moments when he or she has felt especially close to God. Discuss what happened that made your child feel that way and express your gratefulness to God for revealing himself.

Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

Read or complete Side B of the worksheet with your child.

SAY: God reveals himself to us through the world around us, through the actions of others, and through his Word. The more we look for God in our daily lives, the more we will find him.



Talk with your child about times when you saw God in the face or actions of a person or in a beautiful work of art or nature scene. Discuss what happened and how you felt. **ASK:** When do you feel especially close to God? Everyday discussions about faith will help fuel your child's passion for developing a deep

relationship with God. Use the blackline master to spark a discussion about how God is calling your child to serve him. Offer your own thoughts and opinions about how God is calling you.

SAY: Let us pray together. Pray the prayer from the Pray Together feature or a prayer of your own. Begin and end the prayer with the Sign of the Cross.



Pray Together

Heavenly Father, thank you for the unique gifts you have given us to serve your kingdom and for the ways you reveal yourself to us. Help us open our eyes to look for the signs of your loving hands in our lives each day.

