

LESSON 5 Digital Discipleship



In This Lesson

For You Pages 1–2

- Guided by the Holy Spirit
- 3-Minute Retreat
- Lead Your Child to Grow with God
- Safe and Sacred at Home

For You and Your Child Pages 3–4

- With Your Child: Bringing the Lesson Home
- Pray Together



What the Church Says About

Technology

In our own day, dominated by stress and rapid technological advances, one of the most important tasks of families is to provide an education in hope. This does not mean preventing children from playing with electronic devices, but rather finding ways to help them develop their critical abilities. . . .

Pope Francis,
Amoris Laetitia, 275 (2016)

Guided by the Holy Spirit

Digital technology has the power to inform, entertain, and bring people together. Your third-grader is likely a skilled and enthusiastic user of technology. However, your child still needs your support in using technology wisely and communicating safely online. Giving your child boundaries for online activity, such as limiting screen time and the sites your child can visit, is necessary and appropriate. Remind your child never to share personal information and to let you know immediately if an unknown person tries to make contact.

When our use of technology is guided by the Holy Spirit, our online behavior will reflect our love of God and others and be a means of helping to advance God's kingdom here on earth.

You can also support your child in using technology wisely by reminding him or her that the Holy Spirit guides us to make good choices. Teach your child to ask the Holy Spirit to help him or her use technology with wisdom and forethought. Encourage your child to consider his or her purpose before going online and to think about the motive carefully. Questions like “What do I want to accomplish?” or “How will I (or someone else) feel afterward?” or “Is there something else I should be doing right now?” will help your child learn to think carefully about the effects of his or her choices.



3minute
RETREAT

“But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.”

John 16:13

Reflection

In the Gospel of John, Jesus promises us that we will receive the “Spirit of truth.” When we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us, we can follow Jesus’ commandment to love God and one another. Every aspect of our lives, including our online interactions, reflects our commitment to live as loving, joyous, and faithful disciples of Christ.

Questions

How can I slow down and quiet myself so that I can hear the Holy Spirit speaking in me? How can I support my child in listening to and obeying the Holy Spirit?



Prayer

Pray to the Holy Spirit, using this prayer or one of your own.

Holy Spirit, help me be aware of your presence in me so that I may shape my life according to the Father’s will. Give me the grace to follow Jesus’ commandment to love my neighbor as myself.

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

Spiritual Engage in activities with your child that offer rich opportunities to be led by the Holy Spirit. Volunteer with your child at a soup kitchen, food pantry, or other charitable organization. Let your child see firsthand how a generous spirit affects the lives of others.

Social Use an age-appropriate story with complex characters as a springboard for a discussion with your child about overcoming challenges and being a good influence on others. Read the story together and talk about the challenges the characters face, how they overcome them, and how others are affected by their choices. Invite your child to share how he or she might have responded to similar challenges.



Physical Encourage your child to explore physical ways to thank and praise God. Some third-graders love to move. Sing songs of praise with your child or dance together. If your child prefers to be more still and quiet, you might sit together in silence, using long, deep breaths to quiet the mind and focus on God’s loving presence.

Safe and Sacred at Home



Love Will Steer Me True (Loyola Press)
by Jane Knuth, Ellen Knuth

Prayer and worry are not the same thing at all. I am beginning to understand that they are opposites.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 5, your child will:

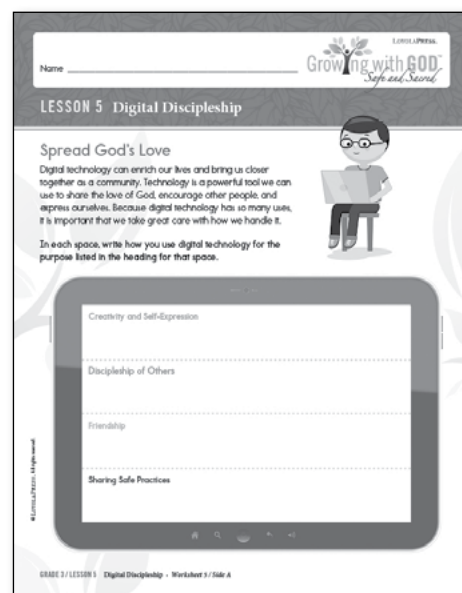
- identify rules set by parents to keep safe in an online environment.
- demonstrate understanding of how to communicate safely and respectfully online.
- define *conscience*.

Word to Know

conscience • *The inner voice that helps one know the law that God has placed in one's heart*

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



Consider how digital technology is used in your home for discipleship, creativity, friendship, and safety. Think about anything you would like to share with your child about any of those categories.

SAY: Technology makes our lives easier in so many ways, but it can also be a distraction and lead us away from one another when we become preoccupied with it. Let us show our love for our family and friends by making good choices about the time we spend online.

Use the blackline master to spark a discussion about the family technology rules. Work collaboratively with your child to establish rules and consequences for breaking them.

SAY: I want you to enjoy the time you spend online, but I also want you to be safe. Please follow all the safety rules I have taught you when you are using a digital device and always communicate respectfully by being mindful of the feelings of others.

Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

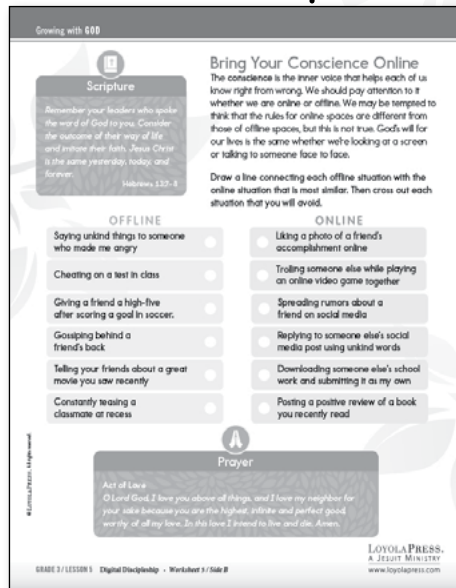
STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

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

SAY: The Holy Spirit is always with us and helps us form our consciences. When we choose to let the Holy Spirit guide our behavior, we can make good, moral, and loving choices.

Have a conversation with your child about what it means to have a conscience. Talk about times your conscience guided your behavior and ask your child to share examples.

SAY: Nobody is perfect. Sometimes we might ignore our conscience and make a bad choice. Then we feel bad. When that happens, it's important to apologize for our wrongdoing, ask God for forgiveness, and commit to making a good choice in the future. 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

Holy Spirit, we make so many little decisions each day that affect our own behavior and feelings, and those of the people around us. Please act in us and guide us so that all our words and actions may be holy.

