

LESSON 3 Friendship and Bullying

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What the Church Says About

Catholic Families as Beacons of Faith

As the first Christian families were islands of faith in their time, so Catholic families today are called to be beacons of faith, “centers of living, radiant faith.”

U.S. Council of
Catholic Bishops,
Pastoral Letter on
Marriage (2009)

Growing with GOD™

Safe and Sacred

The Important Work of Friendship

As children grow and mature, the adults in their lives begin to raise levels of expectations for their conduct and achievement. At school and church, fourth-graders are expected to work cooperatively in groups, demonstrate a fair amount of self-regulation, and navigate personal relationships that are taking on new complexities. At this age, children learn through experience that their personal conduct affects their relationships with parents, teachers, friends, and acquaintances. At times the learning may come with frustration, anger, hurt feelings, or heartache.



**Reassure your child that friendship takes work,
but if we have Jesus in our hearts, this
important work can be easier.**

Remind children that Jesus is their friend, and that he loves them unconditionally. He forgives our sins and comforts our hearts. He offers grace when we make mistakes. He calls us to reflect his light and love into the lives of others. Model this kind of love for your child so he or she experiences firsthand that we can apply the generosity we learn from Jesus to our friendships. He or she will be able to navigate relationships with much more compassion and maturity.



3minute
RETREAT

They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

Mark 15:21

Reflection

Simon of Cyrene took up the burden of Jesus' cross. He did not volunteer to do this, but it transformed his life, and his children became well-known members of the early Church. We are called to be like Simon—to do what is difficult and to let it shape our lives into something beautiful that glorifies God and his kingdom.

Questions

What acts of kindness can I do today for my child? Do I avoid undertaking difficult work that I know would benefit my child or my family?



Prayer

Speak to Jesus, using this prayer or one of your own.

Jesus, you call me to help you share the burdens of others in any way I can. Help me respond generously to that call.

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

Spiritual Introduce your child to the concept of paying forward kindnesses that are done for them. Explain that we often feel compelled to return kindnesses, but if we pay forward the kindness to someone else in need, we are serving God's kingdom. We honor the first good deed, and we can also potentially set off a chain reaction of good works and kindness.



Social Help your child recognize that personal conduct affects our relationships with others. When you are reading or watching a story together, talk about the characters, their actions, and the effects their actions have on the other characters

in the story. Remind your child that to have friends, he or she must first be a friend.

Physical Your child may have an abundance of energy and may be involved in several sports or extracurricular activities. Be sure to build time for rest in your child's schedule. Growing bodies need a lot of sleep, but they also need quiet time for self-reflection and creativity to thrive.

Safe and Sacred at Home



Raising Faith-Filled Kids (Loyola Press)
by Tom McGrath

Exercise hope as you can. The more you practice hope, the stronger it grows within you. Let your language, attitude, and actions reflect an underlying attitude of hope. And if you don't feel hope, it's OK to act as if you do feel it. In a sense, you're borrowing future hope to get you through the present moment.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 3, your child will:

- identify ways to share God's love and contribute to a group.
- identify characteristics of a true friend.
- give examples of empathetic behavior.
- define *empathy*.



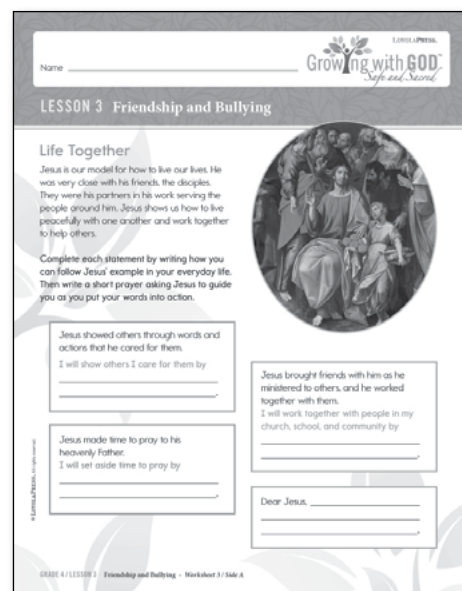
Word to Know

empathy · *The ability to understand and share the feelings of another person*



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

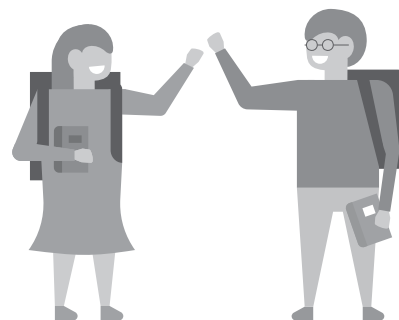
As a fourth-grader, your child is beginning to interact with others in new and meaningful ways. Take a moment to think about your child's interpersonal skills and how best to support his or her growth.

SAY: People who care about others show it through what they say and do in all circumstances. That can be difficult when we disagree with people on subjects we feel strongly about. **ASK:**

How do you handle it when you disagree with someone?

Allow time for your child to respond. Help him or her think of ways to live peacefully with one another and work together.

SAY: Don't forget that God always calls us to show our love for others, even when it is difficult. That is the perfect opportunity to share the light of God's love—through simple kindness.



Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

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

SAY: Empathy is powerful. When we are feeling bad and someone lifts us up or shows genuine concern for us, we can see the Holy Spirit working within that person.

Share a specific instance with your child in which someone showed you empathy. Share how it made you feel. Encourage your child to think of times when someone did that for him or her.

SAY: My hope for you is that you show others empathy so that they may see the Holy Spirit alive in you, and I hope others do the same for you. Let's pray. Pray aloud the prayer from the Pray Together feature or one of your own. Begin and end the prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

Growing with GOD

Think About Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. We can show empathy by treating others with kindness. In other words, we treat other people the way we would like to be treated ourselves.

Read each situation below. Consider how the person in that situation might be feeling, then write how you could show empathy to him or her.

Situation	How can I show empathy?
A friend is having a bad day at school.	
A child is being bullied or left out.	
A group member is not participating in a group activity.	
A young neighbor is sick or injured.	

Scripture

Whoever says he is in the light yet hates his brother, is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother remains in the light, and there is nothing in him to cause a fall. 1 John 2:9-10

Prayer

Prayer for Generosity
Eternal Word, only begotten Son of God,
Teach me true generosity.
Teach me to serve as you deserve.
To give without counting the cost.
To fight heedless of wounds.
To labor without seeking rest.
To sacrifice myself without thought of any reward.
Save the knowledge that I have done your will.
Amen.

GRADE 4 / LESSON 3 Friendship and Bullying • Worksheet B / Side B

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A JUSTUS MAXIMUS
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Pray Together

Almighty God, thank you for your unconditional love and forgiveness. Please help us follow the example of Jesus and be compassionate to one another in every circumstance.



Scan this code and guide your child through a simple review of the lesson.

