

LESSON 1 God Creates Us



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What the Church Says About

Our Call to Holiness

In Baptism, God calls the faithful to grow in love. This vocation to love, in imitation of God's infinite love, is also a vocation to grow in holiness, for greater participation in God's love necessarily entails a greater participation in God's holiness.

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

Called to Keep Our Promises

Most eighth-graders have not given much consideration to what their futures will look like, short of dreaming how great life will be once they are “grown up.” Too often, we think about our calling in terms of our work. A great place to begin conversation is to help your child understand that God's call is much deeper. Each of us is called to holiness. Fulfilling this call begins with how we relate to God and one another. God invites us into relationship with him, and through this closeness, we come to know God better and do his will. Guide your child to understand that this invitation comes every day of our lives, not just when we are grown up.

We answer God's call each time we make a commitment to share God's love and to be faithful to the promises we make to God and others.

Making and keeping promises is key to our call to holiness. By eighth grade, children are very invested in relationships. Encourage your child to reflect on promises or commitments he or she has made with family, friends, classmates, or teammates. Within this context, you can help your child recognize that each time he or she chooses to be loyal, faithful, truthful, and respectful to someone, he or she is answering God's call. Most importantly, you can teach your child that we do not answer God's call only once in our lives. Every interaction with another person is an opportunity to accept and honor our own personal call to holiness.





3minute
RETREAT

In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him.

1 John 4:9

Reflection

Being faithful to our promises strengthens the relationships we have with God and one another. Sometimes we may struggle to keep our commitments.

During these difficult moments, we can remember that God's promises are fulfilled through his Son, Jesus. From this gift of unconditional love, we receive the graces we need to honor the promises we make.

Questions

Where do I turn for strength when I struggle to keep a promise? In what ways am I modeling for my child how to honor a commitment?



Prayer

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

Thank you, Father, for your steadfast love and grace and for sending us Jesus as our Savior.

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

Spiritual Set aside time each week to select a story from the Gospels and read it aloud together. Invite family members to imagine themselves as part of the story. Take turns talking about what lesson you might learn or what part you might play in the events described. Use these discussions to talk about ways you can follow Jesus' teachings in your daily lives.

Social Whenever possible, eat meals together as a family. Use these times as opportunities to have family members share events from their day. Encourage reflection with questions, such as "How might that have made him or her feel? What could you have done differently? How did you keep your promise in that situation?" These discussions will help to nurture compassion and awareness in all family members.

Physical Find opportunities for your family to volunteer in your parish or local community. Together, make and keep commitments to help those in need.



Safe and Sacred at Home



Love Will Steer Me True (Loyola Press)

by Jane Knuth, Ellen Knuth

As my children become adults, my role is changing. It is transforming slowly into a pause to watch God work on my daughters' faith, instead of anxiously trying to shape it myself. This isn't obedience. It is another way to practice my religion. This feels something like that way of life Jesus hints at when he talks about the Holy Spirit.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 1, your child will:

- describe the kinds of vows a person might make when responding to his or her vocation.
- demonstrate an understanding of the importance of honoring promises and recognizing the consequences of being unfaithful to beliefs and commitments.
- explain the meaning of *vocation* and *vow*.

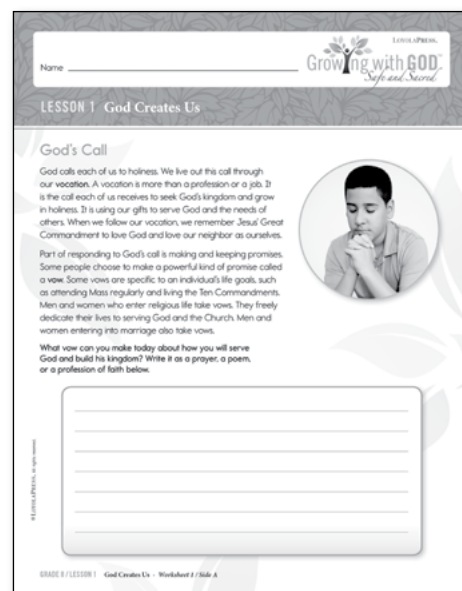
Words to Know

vocation • *The call each person receives to seek God's kingdom, grow in holiness, and be the person God wants one to be*

vow • *A powerful, deliberate, and free promise made to God*

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

Making and keeping promises is something you have likely talked with your child about many times. As he or she grows into adolescence, you can help your child see that acts of loyalty and faithfulness are key components to building and maintaining healthy relationships.

SAY: I am so proud of you and the person you are becoming. You are learning more about yourself every day. Recognize some of your child's special gifts and talents.

SAY: One day you will choose what vocation, or path in life, is right for you. While that may seem like a long way off, I want you to know that you are already following God's plan. You do this through your relationships with others, especially when you make and keep promises.

Use the blackline master as a springboard for discussion about the importance of keeping promises and commitments. Then review the worksheet together to discuss what your child learned about vows and the powerful kind of promise they represent.

Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

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

SAY: You might find that making promises is easy but keeping them is harder.

Talk with your child about a promise you made and some of the challenges you may have faced in keeping it. Share with your child what you do to find strength to honor the commitments that you make.

Listen as your child shares his or her responses from Side B of the worksheet.

SAY: Let's pray together now. Pray the prayer from the Pray Together feature or one of your own. Begin and end the prayer by praying the Sign of the Cross.

Growing with GOD

Keeping My Promises

When you were baptized into the Catholic Church, your godparents made promises for you, the promises of our Baptism affirm our belief in God and our desire to do good and avoid sin. When we are faithful and true to our promises, we spread the Gospel message and share Christ's love.

Think about the roles you have, such as son or daughter, sister or brother, student, or friend. In these roles, how can you fulfill the promises made for you at Baptism? Complete the statements.

Scripture

I have completed well.
I have finished the race.
I have kept the faith.
I testify, etc.

As a student, I promise _____

As a teammate, I promise _____

As a child of God, I promise _____

As a friend, I promise _____

As a family member, I promise _____

As a missionary disciple, I promise _____

Prayer

Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches because you have revealed them who are eternal truth and wisdom, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. In this faith, I intend to live and die. Amen.

GRADE 8 / LESSON 1 God Creates Us • Worksheet 1 / Side B

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Pray Together

Loving Father, give us the strength to be faithful and true to the promises we make, knowing that by honoring our commitments, we are answering your call to holiness.

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

