

LESSON 1 God Creates Us



In This Lesson

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What the Church Says About

Following God's Plan

To the family is entrusted the task of striving, first and foremost, to unleash the forces of good, the source of which is found in Christ the Redeemer of man.

Pope John Paul II,
Gratissimam Sane, 23 (1994)

Our Role in God's Plan

We learn from a young age that God has a purpose for each of us, and as we grow we also learn that following him requires an abundance of faith and fortitude. Sometimes we struggle to understand God's plan, or we have to overcome great obstacles to realize at least a part of God's plan. Humans are capable of so many things because of God. We can be courageous, gentle, kind, and determined because of the strength we draw from a close relationship with him. God has given us everything that we need to live purposeful lives and follow his will for our lives. It is up to parents to help their children realize and nurture their gifts for the ultimate purpose of serving others.

**What a joy it is to watch children uncover
the purpose God has laid out for them!**

Children benefit from contact with extended family members as well as with classmates, teammates, members of the parish community, and others to discover the unique gifts God has given them.





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

Within each person lies a unique blend of gifts. Each gift we have been given is from God, and it is not given to benefit us alone. God's plan is for us to use those gifts to serve one another.

Questions

How can I help my child discover his or her own special gifts? How can I best celebrate the gifts my child has been given?



Prayer

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

*Gracious God, thank you for the
gifts I have received. Help me
share them where they are
most needed.*

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

Spiritual Your fourth-grader probably still exclaims, "Look at me!" from time to time and then proceeds to showcase some newly acquired skill. Children seek validation from their parents because humans thrive when we feel loved and supported. Nurture your child's spirit by paying full attention, expressing your gratitude for his or her God-given gifts, and guiding your child to see how these gifts can be used for God's greater glory.

Social At this age, children's friends start to become more influential in how children see themselves and others. Have a conversation with your child about how important it is to have friends who encourage us to make choices that would please God.

Physical Children may start to notice the different growth rates of their friends in fourth grade and judge their own bodies accordingly.

Help your child develop a positive self-image about his or her physical appearance. Remind your child that God made each of us unique, and he prepares us to fulfill our distinctive roles in his kingdom in different ways.



Safe and Sacred at Home



Go in Peace (Loyola Press)
by Pope John Paul II

Be bearers of peace and joy within the family. Grace elevates and perfects love, and, with it, grants us the indispensable family virtues of humility, the spirit of service and sacrifice, parental and filial affection, respect, and mutual understanding.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 1, your child will:

- identify his or her unique skills and gifts.
- discuss how the Fruits of the Holy Spirit show God's love in our lives.
- define *role* and *Fruits of the Holy Spirit*.

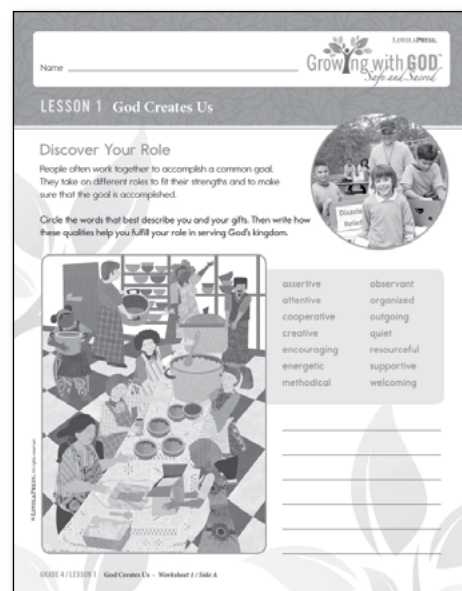
Words to Know

role • A position, job, or function

Fruits of the Holy Spirit • The ways in which one acts because he or she is filled with the Holy Spirit

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 God work in your child's life from the beginning, and you know his or her gifts and strengths better than anyone. Take every opportunity to help your child explore them.



SAY: You are at a wonderful time of your life right now. You are learning new things about yourself every day—what your gifts are, what you enjoy, and even what you don't like to do.

Take the time to validate your child's response and talk about the qualities your child chose to describe himself or herself on the worksheet. Discuss with your child how those gifts can help him or her serve God's kingdom.

SAY: Never stop trying new things. You might discover gifts you didn't know you had.



Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

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

SAY: The Fruits of the Holy Spirit help us show God's love. **ASK:** Which Fruits do you feel are strong within you?



Listen to your child respond, and validate those observations by thinking of times your child's actions exhibited that particular Fruit of the Holy Spirit. You may wish to recall specific ways you have seen your child exhibit Fruits of the Holy Spirit to let him or her know the positive impact that behavior has on others.

Discuss how others have exhibited the Fruits of the Holy Spirit toward your child or your whole family.

SAY: My hope for you is that you explore all the wonderful gifts God gave you. Let's pray together now. 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.



Pray Together

Heavenly Father, help us to see your will in the gifts you have given us so that we may discover our roles in your plan and serve your kingdom faithfully.

