



Growing with GOD™
Safe and Sacred

LESSON 1
God Creates Us

In This Lesson

For You **Pages 1–2**

- Social Justice
- 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
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What the Church Says About

Families in Society

A truly sovereign and spiritually vigorous nation is always made up of strong families who are aware of their vocation and mission in history.

Pope John Paul II,
Letter to Families (1994)

Social Justice

For young children, issues of justice and fairness tend to center on their own wants and needs. Something is fair if it affects them in a positive way. By grade six, children's social circles begin to widen and children become more aware of the broader community. Young people come to recognize that others do not have the same opportunities or circumstances they do. This awareness often sparks a desire to question inequality and injustice and wonder how the world could become more equal and just.

Use your child's personal experiences and interactions to provide a springboard for lessons about social justice.



Look for opportunities to begin these lessons in your home. Encourage family members to divide household work fairly and show respect for one another's space and privacy. Present situations in which decision-making can be shared, such as choosing from a pre-approved list of several recreation activities to do or meals to make. Be sure all family members have an equal voice in these decisions to allow for fairness regardless of age. When conflicts arise, seek resolutions in which everyone feels heard and fairly treated. Making your home a place where fairness and justice are the norm will help your child be fair and just in his or her experiences with the outside world.



3minute
RETREAT

Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8

Reflection

It's easy to focus our attention on what we don't have, especially when we compare ourselves to others or to an ideal. Such thinking leaves us feeling dissatisfied with our lives and always wanting more. This Scripture passage reminds us to turn our attention from our wants to our needs and to notice how God has provided for us. Focusing on gratitude for our many blessings, we find value in God's gifts to us and joy in sharing these gifts with others.

Questions

What gifts has God given me that I can share with others? How can I model acts of gratitude in my daily interactions with my child?



Prayer

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

God of abundant grace, help me become more aware of my opportunities to share the gifts that you have given me.

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

Spiritual As a family, read a Scripture passage that focuses on justice, fairness, and the dignity of work, such as Matthew 20:1–16, Luke 3:10–14, or 1 Thessalonians 5:12–18. Invite family members to share their reflections and discuss how the passage relates to situations happening in the world today.

Social Join a ministry or community group that celebrates family involvement. If possible look for a group that combines both service and fellowship. Through your family's participation, discuss how you both share and receive the benefits of being part of a community that works together and cares for one another.

Physical Find opportunities for your family to help those who are in need. Volunteer at a local food pantry or clothing donation center. Connect with senior citizens needing assistance with household chores or yard work. Make the labor fun as a reminder that sharing our gifts to benefit others is joyful work.

Safe and Sacred at Home



Embracing the Way of Jesus (Loyola Press)
by Pope Francis

Dear brothers and sisters, let us be lights of hope! Let us maintain a positive outlook on reality. Let us encourage the generosity that is typical of the young and help them work actively in building a better world. Young people are a powerful engine for the Church and for society. They do not need material things alone; also and above all, they need to have held up to them those nonmaterial values that are the spiritual heart of a people, the memory of a people.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 1, your child will:

- demonstrate understanding that God creates us to live in community and to serve him and one another through our work.
- discuss ways people depend on one another and contribute to the community.
- explain that we work to participate in God's creation.
- explain the need for justice in our economy so that the basic rights of all workers are respected.
- define *dignity*, *justice*, and *Catholic social teaching*.

Words to Know

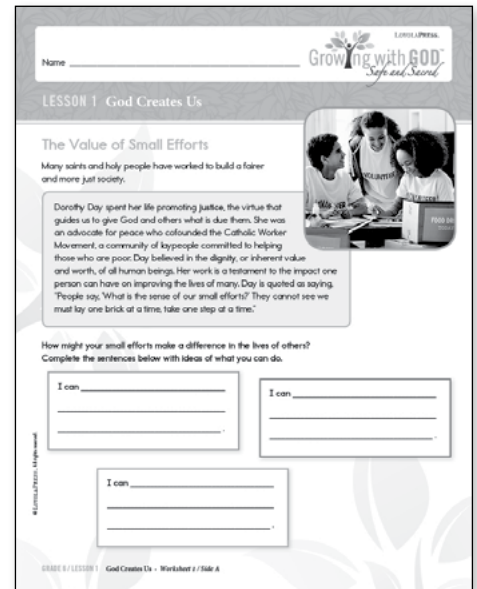
dignity • *The inherent, God-given quality of being valuable and worthy of respect*

justice • *The virtue of giving God and others what is due them*

Catholic social teaching • *The Catholic doctrine on matters of human dignity and the common good in society*

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

Helping your child recognize signs of injustice is an important life lesson. Before discussing this topic, take a moment to consider your own experiences and how they have impacted your understanding of these issues.

SAY: Every person has the right to be treated with respect and dignity. We have the right to work and earn a fair wage for the work we do. Unfortunately, not everyone in the world experiences justice and fairness.

Use Side A of the worksheet as a springboard for discussion regarding the Catholic social teaching on the dignity and rights of workers. If you feel comfortable doing so, share with your child any personal experiences you have had with issues of injustice.

SAY: We have a responsibility to do our part in making the world more fair and more just. We can ask God to help guide us in doing his work in the world.

Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

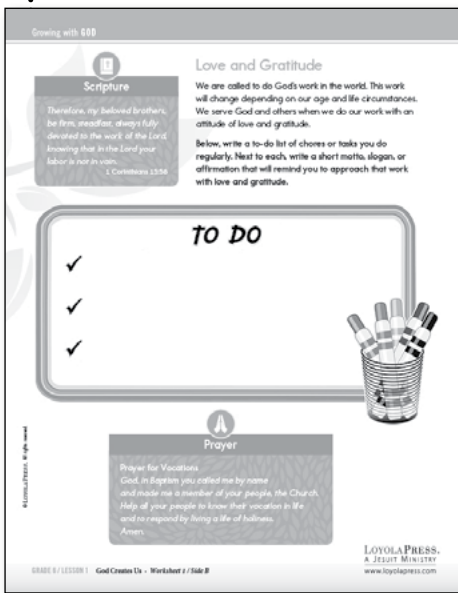
Read or complete Side B of the worksheet with your child.

SAY: I am proud of the person you are becoming. While you are still figuring out what your life's work will be, you are already answering God's call in many

ways. Guide your child to see that he or she is doing God's work as a student, a son or daughter, a brother or sister, and a friend. Point out that the way we attend to these roles and interact with others matters. Invite your child to share responses from Side B of the worksheet. Consider inviting other family

members to help you create household mottos for the work you do together in your home. Use the blackline master to spark a discussion about vocations, how we are called to serve, and our response to that call.

SAY: Let us pray together. Pray the prayer from the Pray Together feature or the Prayer for Vocations found on the blackline master. Begin and end the prayer by praying the Sign of the Cross.



Pray Together

Bless us, Lord, and the work we do. Help us always serve you and others with a joyful heart and an attitude of love and gratitude.

