

## LESSON 3 Friendship and Bullying

### In This Lesson

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### What the Church Says About

#### *How We Are to Treat One Another*

The differences among persons belong to God's plan, who wills that we should need one another. These differences should encourage charity.

*Catechism of the  
Catholic Church, 1946*

# Growing with GOD™

## *Safe and Sacred*

### Building Healthy Relationships

Jesus calls us to welcome all people and treat them with gentleness, civility, and respect. The desire to belong can be particularly intense during eighth grade. Navigating the often complex world of eighth grade social groups can be daunting and disheartening.

**You can support your child in developing and maintaining healthy social interactions and building healthy relationships by modeling kindness, inclusivity, and solidarity in your own relationships.**

Remind your child often of how he or she is loved—as your child and as a child of God. Internalizing these messages will help your child have a brave heart and a gentle, loving presence in the world. You can also use the instruction in this session to talk with your child about the choices he or she can make to be a true friend to all.





3minute  
RETREAT

*And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

Matthew 3:17

### Reflection

It's not difficult to imagine how Jesus felt when he heard these words. Jesus had just been baptized by John. Now, filled with the Holy Spirit and convinced of the love of his Abba, his Father, Jesus was ready to begin his ministry. The heart of Jesus' mission was to reveal the intimate and unconditional love of God. It is through Jesus that we come to know the Father's love for us. As followers of Jesus, we can be sure that we, too, are God's beloved children.

### Questions

How do I feel about being God's beloved child? What is my response to God's unconditional love for me?



### Prayer

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

*Loving God, thank you for sending Jesus to show us your love. Help me remember that I am your beloved child in whom you are well pleased. Amen.*

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

**Spiritual** Invite your child to take part in family prayer and encourage your child to talk about his or her spiritual development and questions with you, a priest or deacon, or religious sister.

**Social** Let your child know that you are interested in hearing about his or her friendships and social interactions at school. Model sharing by telling about your day, including about the people with whom you interact. Encourage your child to consider ways to be welcoming to other children, especially children who tend to be left out. Because young people may misinterpret social cues, encourage your child to consider how others may be feeling, using his or her own experiences as a guide, and to assume the best of people. Let your child know that you love him or her unconditionally and that learning about relationships is a process.

**Physical** Let your child know that feeling self-conscious about his or her body is a natural part of this time in life and that nearly all people feel this way at some point in their lives.



### Safe and Sacred at Home



*Raising Kids Who Will Make a Difference* (Loyola Press)

By Susan V. Vogt

We can't make our kids care. We can't pour into them a social conscience. But we can put prompts and possibilities before them that will increase their odds. Our efforts won't be perfect, and they won't always work, but we will have tried, and that's all we can do. The rest is up to them.

## Big Ideas

### In Lesson 3, your child will:

- demonstrate an understanding that we are called to love and care for one another.
- identify forms of bullying.
- use empathy to identify how others may be feeling in certain situations.
- identify specific ways to stand up for people being bullied.
- define *exclusion*, *cliques*, and *implicit bias*.

### Words to Know

**exclusion** · *The act of intentionally leaving others out [of social groups, events, or conversations]*

**cliques** · *Social groups that intentionally exclude others*

**implicit bias** · *A judgment about others without awareness that it is based on an oversimplified notion or unconscious preference*

## 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.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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*Safe and Sound*

LESSON 3 Friendship and Bullying

Words That Help and Words That Harm

Words can be used to express care, and they can be used as weapons. Sometimes, words that are complimentary in one situation are insulting in another situation. It is important to consider when words are used and the context of how they are said.

Read the scenario on the right. Notice how the word *great* is used.

Next, think about a word that could have more than one meaning. Write an example of how that word could be used to hurt people. Then write how that word could be used to be welcoming and kind.

Word: \_\_\_\_\_

Unkind Use of Word: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind Use of Word: \_\_\_\_\_

Taylor giggled as Dante sang slightly off-key. "You have a great voice!" she snickered.

Nadia heard what Taylor said. "You're doing great, Dante," she whispered. "I wish I were brave enough to even try singing a solo."

GRADE 8 / LESSON 3 Friendship and Bullying · Worksheet 3 / Side A

## STEP 1 ENGAGE & EXPLORE

**SAY:** Sometimes when we're feeling frustrated, angry, or sad about ourselves, it can be tempting to speak in hurtful ways.

With your child, discuss how words can be used to welcome people ... or shut people out. Share with your child your experiences with words used as weapons and words used to show care. Invite your child to share his or her experiences.

# Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

## STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

Read or complete Side B of the worksheet with your child. Share with your child behaviors and qualities that you appreciate about him or her. Encourage your child to look for positive qualities in others.

**SAY:** Jesus showed people on the margins of society that they were treasured members of God's family. People didn't have to prove themselves worthy of his love. We can love like Jesus by having brave, open hearts and choosing to do the right thing, even when it's difficult. In the Serenity Prayer, we ask God to help us know when to act and when to accept life as it is. Bullying behavior is something we can change. We can ask God to help us be welcoming and kind and to give us the strength and courage to speak up when others are being bullied. Pray aloud the Serenity Prayer found in the Pray Together feature. Begin and end the prayer with the Sign of the Cross.



### Pray Together

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

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**Speak Up!**  
It takes courage to speak up for others. Complete the sentences below by writing what you could do or say if you see bullying behavior. Remember that the goal is to stop the bullying behavior, not to make the situation worse or more intense.

To STOP the bullying behavior, I could \_\_\_\_\_

To SHOW the person doing the bullying that the behavior is wrong, I could \_\_\_\_\_

To be a FRIEND to the person being bullied, I could \_\_\_\_\_

To ENCOURAGE a kinder environment around me, I could \_\_\_\_\_

**Scripture**  
The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23

**Prayer**  
Serenity Prayer  
Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.  
Grant that I may not so much seek to be comforted as to comfort;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

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

