



Growing with GOD™
Safe and Sacred

LESSON 5
Digital Discipleship

In This Lesson

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What the Church Says About

Shared Family Time

The family is called to join in daily prayer, to read the word of God and to share in Eucharistic communion, and thus to grow in love and become ever more fully a temple in which the Spirit dwells.

Pope Francis,
Amoris Laetitia, 29 (2016)

Interactions with Intention

For many of us, social media has become a primary source of connection. How many times have you looked around a room to see all eyes on a device? How often do you feel the pull to check your own? Both you and your child may benefit from assessing the role technology plays in your daily lives, especially how it affects your relationships.

The desire to be connected to others, share interests, be entertained, and discover new ideas spans all age groups. You may find yourself drawn to your devices for some of the same reasons as your child. Perhaps, like many young people, you have also felt the pressure to be liked, accepted, and validated by others online. While there are positive ways social media can fit into our lives, it is easy to become overly attached, and as a result, detached from God and one another.

Developing a healthy balance of online and offline time is a habit you and your child can develop and maintain together.

Establish device-free times for your family. Be intentional with the time you spend together, talking and listening to one another. Make a point of having conversations about what it feels like to be “device-free.” These moments of authentic connection help form stronger bonds between you and your child. The time away from distractions allows your family to feel the love of God who brings true peace, connection, and acceptance.





3minute
RETREAT

Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

2 Corinthians 6:2

Reflection

In the busyness of everyday life, we may find ourselves caught up in an endless to-do list. Our attention is focused on what is next and what is to come. We lose sight of the here and now. Saint Paul reminds us in this Scripture passage that God is bestowing favor and salvation on us in this very moment. There is no need to wait or anticipate. We only need to be present in order to receive God's love and blessings.

Questions

What is one thing I can do during my day to practice being present with God? How can I be present to my family members each day?



Prayer

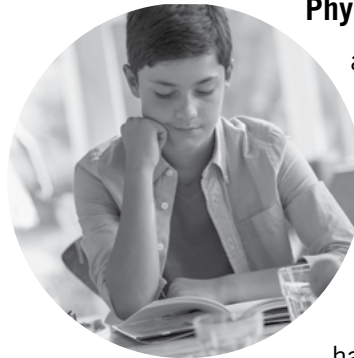
Speak to Jesus, using this prayer or one of your own.

Jesus, my Savior, help me to treasure this time of grace you have given to me for my benefit and for the benefit of all.

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

Spiritual Set the expectation that family members will speak about themselves and one another with kindness and respect. Pray together Psalm 139:14, "I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works!"

Social Find opportunities to help your child practice empathy. If he or she is having a difficult time with a sibling or friend, first allow your child to fully express his or her feelings. Then ask if he or she can imagine what the other person might be thinking or feeling. Help your child gain perspective by considering if there may be more going on in the situation than first realized.



Physical As a family, make a list of alternative activities to replace the tendency to pick up a device and check social media. For example, pray a decade of the Rosary, get up and walk around, take some deep breaths, read a chapter of a book, or recall a happy memory.

Safe and Sacred at Home



Walking with Jesus (Loyola Press)
by Pope Francis

In a world such as this one, media can help us feel closer to one another, creating a sense of unity of the human family, which can in turn inspire solidarity and serious efforts to ensure a more dignified life for all. Good communication helps us grow closer, to know one another better and, ultimately, to grow in unity. The walls that divide us can be broken down only if we are prepared to listen and learn from one another. We need to resolve our differences through forms of dialogue that help us grow in understanding and mutual respect. A culture of encounter demands that we be ready not only to give but also to receive.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 5, your child will:

- describe the positive and negative impacts social media can have on relationships.
- identify how to practice moderation in his or her social media habits.
- inventory online and offline behaviors and commit to making balanced, healthy choices when using devices.
- define *social media* and *moderation*.

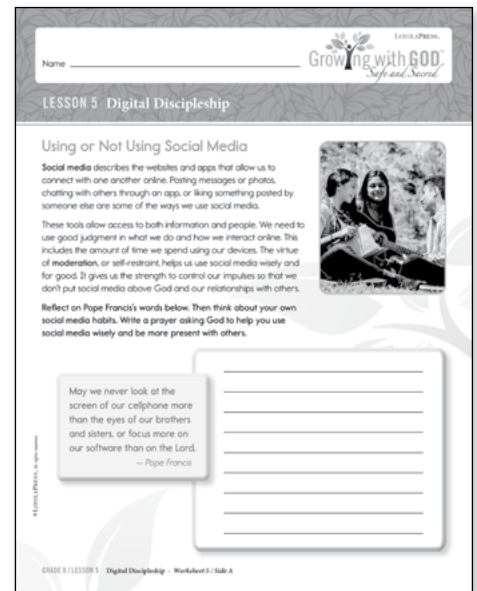
Words to Know

social media · The websites and software applications (apps) by which people can post content and interact with one another electronically

moderation · The virtue of controlling one's impulses in order to maintain balance and enjoy life

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 may find that while trying to monitor and assess your child's social media habits, you become more aware of your own. Sharing your experiences with your child while working to model good online behaviors can invite a beneficial dialogue between the two of you.

SAY: Sometimes checking your phone or using your device may seem more interesting than being involved with the people and activities around you. Share with your child times when you have felt the need to check something online even when you were in the midst of doing something else. Listen as your child shares his or her experiences about wanting to engage with social media or other technology apps and games. Guide your child to understand that when we are drawn to our devices, we can be pulled away from God and one another.

Use Side A of the worksheet as a springboard for discussion. Reflect together on the words of Pope Francis. Then share your thoughts.

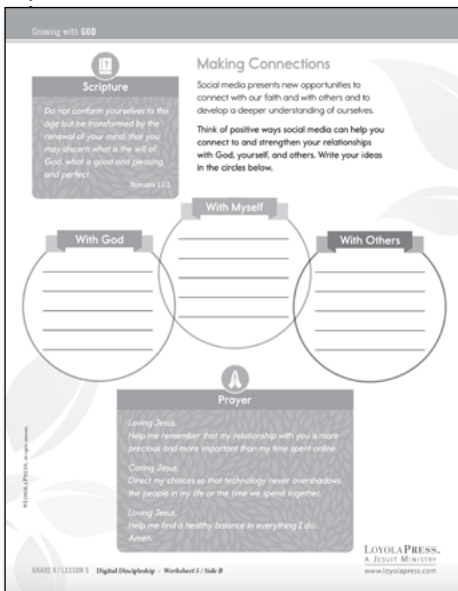


Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

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

SAY: Social media can be used in meaningful ways that bring us closer to God and one another. Listen to your child's ideas about positive uses for social media.



Validate these responses and add some of your own. Consider posting a list of these ideas in a common space, such as on the refrigerator door. During family time, encourage members to discuss those ideas they have tried and share their experiences. Social media can also be troubling. Your child may feel jealous, sad,

or unpopular after viewing certain social media posts. Encourage your child to talk to you about these feelings.

Consider using the blackline master as a prayerful way to end the day with your child. You may wish to each complete the responses privately or share some of your reflections with one another.

SAY: Let's pray together. Pray 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

Loving God, we are grateful for the gift of our family and ask that you help us be intentional with our time together showing one another love and attention.

