

LESSON 6 My Sacred Self

Growing with GOD™ *Safe and Sacred*

In This Lesson

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What the Church Says About

The Domestic Church

As the Church is a community of faith, hope and love, so the Christian family, as the domestic church, is called to be a community of faith, hope, and love.

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

The Gift of Family Life

Talking with your child about sexuality may bring up feelings of anxiety for both you and your child. Take heart—as a parent, you are the best person to help your child navigate this important time of life. Adolescents naturally have questions about the way their bodies work. Providing clear and accurate information is vital. Equally important is helping your child recognize that God creates each of us in his image and likeness.

Our bodies, and the way they function, are God’s gift to us. There is no better place for your child to learn these lessons than within the safety and security of your family.

In addition to teaching about the miracle of conception and birth, adolescents need parents to help them understand the lifelong commitment that comes with being a parent. Within the context of daily activities, discuss with your child not only the blessings of parenthood but also the responsibilities of loving and caring for a family. You can also use the instruction in this lesson to talk with your child more about what it means to choose family life as a vocation.





3minute
RETREAT

Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means “God is with us.”

Matthew 1:23

Reflection

Building a family takes courage and faith. With the joys and excitements come many unknowns. This Scripture passage reminds us that Mary and Joseph also faced an unknown future. The experience of the Holy Family is an example for us that by placing our trust in God, we, too, are blessed with his presence and love in every moment of our lives.

Questions

What are some unexpected events in my life that have turned into blessings? How can I help my child recognize God’s presence in his or her life, even during difficult times?



Prayer

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

Help me be aware, O Jesus, of your continuing presence in my life so I may be a sign to others of your grace.

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

Spiritual Establish prayer routines to strengthen relationships within your family. Make a habit of praying Grace Before Meals, praying the Rosary together at least once a week, or asking for God’s protection each time you set out for a family car trip.

Social Many adolescents are curious about sexuality and may ask general questions to check your reaction when bigger questions are really on their minds. Answer what is asked while paying attention to clues that your child needs more information or reassurance. For example, your child may linger or seem to be slowly processing your response. Let him or her know you are open to further discussion and willing to answer any questions he or she may have.

Physical Involve your child with the care and keeping of your home. Hold your child accountable for chores he or she is assigned and praise your child for his or her contributions.



Safe and Sacred at Home



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

The family is called the Church in miniature, “the domestic church,” a particular expression of the Church through the human experience of love and common life. Like the Church, the family ought to be a place where the gospel is transmitted and from which the gospel radiates to other families and to the whole of society.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 6, your child will:

- explain that God calls husbands and wives to be open to having children and to raise those children responsibly.
- identify the stages of pregnancy.
- demonstrate understanding that parenthood involves caring for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of children.
- identify the family as the domestic church.
- define *adoption*, *safe haven*, and *domestic church*.

Words to Know

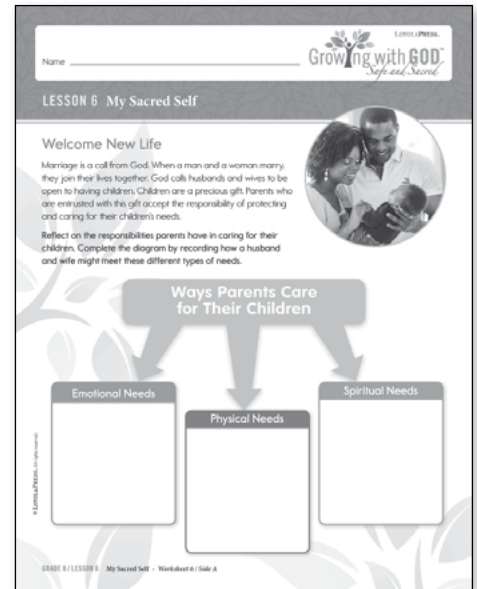
adoption • The act of legally relinquishing custody of one's child so that the child can be permanently placed with another family

safe haven • A law stating that parents can leave their newborn baby in a designated location without facing questions

domestic church • The Christian home, which is a community of grace and prayer

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

There is not just one right time to talk with your child about sexuality. Having many conversations over time will help both you and your child be more relaxed and at ease. Don't feel pressure to have all the answers at once; instead, open a dialogue with your child and continue building on that relationship of trust.



SAY: You are a blessing in my life and a gift from God. God entrusted you to this family and gave us the responsibility to care for and protect you. I take this responsibility very seriously. Use this opportunity to praise your child for some of the milestones and achievements he or she has accomplished. Express your support for him or her.

Invite your child to share his or her responses on the web on Side A of the worksheet. Validate his or her responses. Guide him or her to recognize that parenting can be a difficult job that requires a serious commitment.

SAY: I am very grateful to be your parent. I will always love you, and God will always love you.

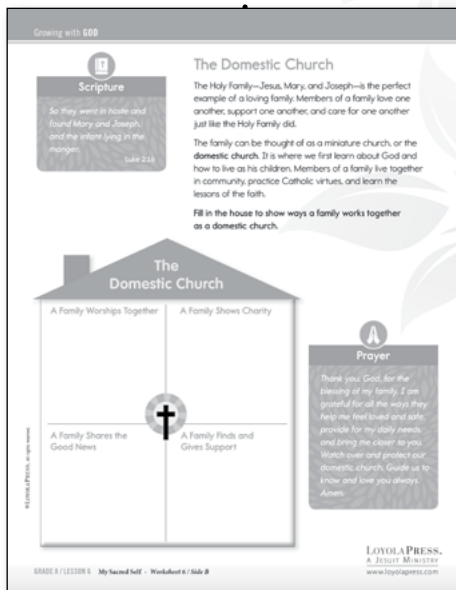
Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

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

SAY: Think of all the ways our family works together and shows one another love. God is present with us through these loving acts. God is also with us during difficult times, giving us strength and helping us forgive one another. Listen as your child shares ideas from Side B of the worksheet. Add thoughts of your own. Use the activity as a springboard for discussion about how your family lives out its call as a domestic church. Consider what else you might do together to share God's love and bring his Good News into the world.

SAY: Let us 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.



“What a Gift!”



Scan this code to view a video for Lesson 6 with your children.



Pray Together

Bless our family, Lord. Let us take the love we share with one another out into the world to love and serve others in your name.

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

