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God's Gift of Self

Background

Therefore children and young people must be helped, with the aid of the latest advances in psychology and the arts and science of teaching, to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual endowments so that they may gradually acquire a mature sense of responsibility in striving endlessly to form their own lives properly and in pursuing true freedom as they surmount the vicissitudes of life with courage and constancy (Gravissimum Educationis 1).

WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD. IN THE FIRST LETTER

of John, our basic identity is revealed: We are children of God. God's own word to us is, "See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. . . . Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another" (1 John 3:1 and 4:11). God gave each person a loving heart with the capacity to show love to others. What comes with this gift is the call and responsibility to extend love to everyone. Awaken this capacity in your students and guide them to use their creativity to define loving words and loving actions. Encourage the generous use of such loving expressions as: "Let's share." "Please." "Thank you."

GOD CREATED US WITH ALL KINDS OF EMOTIONS.

Feelings are natural. The emotions we have and express should be affirmed. They can be used to help us express our love for others. Children are often overwhelmed by the strong emotions they feel. They may need guidance in how to properly express and act upon them.

Help your students understand how their emotions can serve to help them act virtuously. First, focus on helping them identify the emotion being felt, then guide them in making a moral decision on expressing how they feel. Use daily activities to help them practice

expressing their emotions in good ways, recognizing that they can be brave when it is difficult to choose the good.



WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR EXPRESSING OUR

feelings. While it is important that you affirm your students' emotions, it is also important to deliver, in an age-appropriate way, a clear message to the students that they are responsible for how they react to their emotions. Remember that our emotions are "passions," forces that motivate us to act. How we respond to these God-given passions is the issue. Our emotions incline us to good or evil actions.

Children can learn to handle their emotions. They can learn to express their feelings in good ways that are expressions of our love for God, for others and for one's self. Children can talk with adults or pray. Though children of kindergarten age will not be able to deal with the complexity of their emotions until they are much older, they can begin to name these emotions to learn age-appropriate ways to respond to them.

Helping the students to learn to respond to their feelings appropriately is part of the task of developing a correctly informed conscience. "The education of the conscience is a lifelong task. From the earliest years, it awakens the child to the knowledge and practice of the interior law recognized by conscience" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1784). Children can and need to learn to identify when to use their emotions to do or say what is good. The earlier children learn to recognize their feelings and take responsibility for them, the better decision-makers they become.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church:
§§ 1763–1764, 1767, 1769

SPENDING REFLECTIVE TIME WITH GOD IS ONE

way for us to recognize, sort out and respond to our emotions. Our emotions can get the best of us. When we react in wrong ways, causing hurt or pain, we are called to seek reconciliation with others, ourselves and God. Seek God's mercy in the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation at your parish. Find comfort in the grace received to share the merciful love of God with others, especially with your students.

For Reflection

Read and reflect on the following:

"Conscience is 'the most secret core and sanctuary' of the human person, speaking to the heart to love good and avoid evil" (Gaudium et Spes 16).

- ▶ How well do I and the other members of my family use our emotions to contribute to the health and holiness of both the whole family and each member of our family?
- ▶ How might I best express my feelings while I am with my students so that they will learn to use their feelings in appropriate ways?



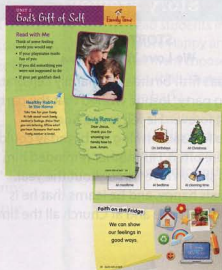
Child Safety

Children are most familiar with love through their families. Because every family expresses love in its own way, every child's understanding of love will be different. Help the students understand that love is always good and life giving, and should not make them feel shame or guilt. Help students also understand that it is okay to love someone and still feel hurt by them or angry toward them. In this unit students will learn how to appropriately express their feelings in safe and loving ways.

Family Time

Partnering with the Family

Encourage students to demonstrate ways to show love on a daily basis. You can establish little ways of showing love: smiling, handshakes, laughing and using polite words like, "Thank you." Remind parents to reinforce the concepts taught in this unit through the use of both the Family Time page and the *Parent Connection* magazine.



LESSON 3 PLANNER

Goal: To discover that God gives us loving hearts and that we can show our love through welcoming people and sharing our gifts with them

Engage

Page 47

Objective

To describe ways to show love to family and friends

Family Time

Ensure that each student tears out their Family Time page to complete at home

Pray

Prayer to Jesus to help us use our loving hearts

Focus

Demonstrate kind words and kind actions

Discover

Reinforce using kind words and kind actions to show love

Teach

Page 48

Objective

To show ways in which the Church loves people

Focus

Catholics Believe: God gives each person a loving heart
Practice using kind words and kind actions with a puppet

Explore

Discover that the Church celebrates love

Connect

Practice using kind words and kind actions with others

Apply

Page 49

Objective

To reinforce with students that they are worthy of love

Focus

Discover that God created everyone out of love

Discover

Understand that showing love takes practice

Integrate

Design a self-portrait with a loving heart

Pray

Ask God's help in using our loving hearts

Story Preview

STORY THREE We Love You, Joshua

On Joshua's fifth birthday, his family celebrated with a big party. Joshua wished that the party could last forever. He felt loved. Soon, he started to feel sad wishing his birthday could come more often. His mother reminded him that he is shown love throughout the year. Joshua feels happy, and he learns that he is loved both at home and at Church all the time.

Materials Needed

- ▶ puppet
- ▶ pens, pencils
- ▶ writing paper
- ▶ art supplies
- ▶ the book, *The Kissing Hand*
- ▶ Lesson 3 Activity Masters

Call to Prayer

Lord, you taught us to love with our words and actions. Guide my words and actions today, as I teach this lesson to my students. Amen.

Families and Friends Show Love



Good for you!



I am sorry.



Let us share.



I love you.

I Am Loved 21

ENGAGE

Objective

To describe ways to show love to family and friends

Pray

Open the lesson asking the Holy Spirit to guide our words and actions so that they are loving.

Focus

Using a puppet, demonstrate how family and friends show love for each other: smiling, speaking kindly, gently patting one another on the shoulder, helping or sharing. Allow students to give similar examples of love.

Discover

- ▶ Invite students to look at the illustrations on the page. Read the title and captions. Encourage them to tell how the people are showing love.
- ▶ Inquire: When someone tells you, "I'm sorry," how do you feel? When you see someone happy, how do you feel?
- ▶ Have students show a "happy face" and a "sad face."
- ▶ Lead students in singing "If You're Happy and You Know It." Let them choose gestures to use. (clap, shake hands, pat on the back)
- ▶ Time permitting, read the book *The Kissing Hand*. Reinforce how the mother and child showed love to each other.

Teaching Tip

Good Manners: Explain to your students that good manners (common courtesies) are important. Reinforce that kind words and actions show good manners. Hold a short workshop to demonstrate good manners. Use kind words and actions to model small courtesies that they can use at home and in the classroom toward others. Model kind words and actions, such as: "Please," "Thank you," "Excuse me," "Let me help" and "We can share," to show love and respect for others. Suggest some scenes where using kind words and kind actions show people being happy.

Objective

To show ways
in which the Church
loves people

Focus

Allow students to use the puppet
to tell others that they love them.

Explore

- ▶ Review with students the kinds of family groups to which they belong (e.g., personal, school, parish, neighborhood, etc.).
- ▶ Read aloud to students the Catholics Believe box. Discuss how love is shown in the pictures: the Church family welcomes at Baptism. At Mass we greet our Church family with the Sign of Peace and we bring the gifts of bread and wine to the altar to share in the Eucharist.
- ▶ Read Story Three on page 105. Ask: How does Joshua's Church family show love?
(with celebrations like Baptism and the Mass)

Connect

- ▶ Help students to express their love for others. Have them partner with each other. Invite them to use kind words with each other to show love. Examples: "Your painting was pretty." "I am glad you sit next to me." "Thank you for sharing the crayons."
- ▶ Have students change partners to practice using kind words to others.

My Church Family Loves Me



Catholics Believe

God gives each person
a loving heart.



Welcome!



Let us share.



Peace be with you.

22 I Am Loved

Extending the Lesson

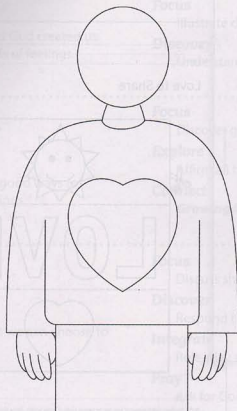
Using Activity Masters: Use the Activity Masters to further develop the concepts explored in this lesson. The "A Sign of Love" activity reminds students of the importance of showing love. The "Love to Share" activity invites students to share this message of love.

Our Church Family Celebrates: The Church has many celebrations throughout the year. Explain that both Christmas and Easter are celebrations of Jesus' life. The Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist) celebrate God's family. You may want to show a liturgical calendar, which helps us know when the Church celebrates special days and saints.

God Gave Me a Loving Heart



How will you show love?
Tell someone in your family.



I Am Loved 23

Objective

To reinforce with students that they are worthy of love

Focus

- Inform students that God loves us so much that he created everyone in the whole world. Each person looks different, and each one is special. Reinforce that you can never lose God's love.
- Inquire: What might happen if all people looked alike? How would you tell one person from another?

Discover

Direct students' attention to the drawing on the page. Point out the parts of the body: head, chest, arms and legs. Inform them that God also gave each person a loving heart, and they have to practice using it. Just like throwing a ball takes practice, showing love takes practice, too.

Integrate

Invite students to complete the drawing to look like themselves with the same color hair, same color shirt, etc. Allow them to share their drawing with the class, explaining why they chose that color for their heart.

Pray

End the lesson thanking God the Father for our loving hearts.


Teaching Tip

Showing Affection: Before children can show love, they must first feel loved and worthy of love. Explain that there are a variety of good ways to show love. "Showing love" should not be confused with unconditional obedience to those in authority. Parents may rationalize abuse to children by saying, "I'm doing this because I love you." Help children to know that love is positive and promotes growth. Acts of love should not leave them confused or hurt.

Activity Master 3A

Name _____

A Sign of Love



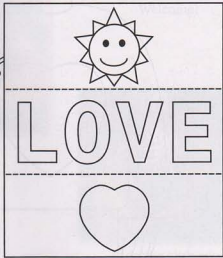
To the Teacher: A heart shape is always a sign of love. Let the students fill this one choice full of bright colors and designs that remind them of love. The students will need crayons.

Family Life Kindergarten

Activity Master 3B

Name _____

Love to Share



To the Teacher: This message of love can be passed along to many people. Invite the students to color it, cut it out, and fold it up in the dashed lines so it can be hidden under a pillow or in a pocket. Students will need crayons and scissors.

Family Life Kindergarten



How to Find It How to Use It

Step 1: Click & Select



Go to RCLBFamilyLife.com
Click on the link for activities.
Then select the activity master you need.

Step 2: Print & Copy



Print each activity master in advance.
Then copy enough for everyone in the class.

Step 3: Share & Discuss



Once students have completed the activity,
have them share and discuss their responses.

LESSON 4 PLANNER

Goal: To discover that we can control how we express our feelings and that we should express our feelings in good ways

Engage

Page 52

Objective

To show that God created us with all kinds of feelings

Pray

Thank God for the gift of feelings

Focus

Illustrate different types of feelings

Discover

Understand that feelings are a natural part of life

Teach

Page 53

Objective

To discover good ways to express feelings

Focus

Discover good ways to express feelings

Explore

Affirm all types of feelings

Connect

Growing in Virtue: I can show my feeling in good ways.

Apply

Page 54

Objective

To learn that we can choose to show love

Focus

Discuss showing love

Discover

Respond to a problem with kind words and kind actions

Integrate

Role-play solutions that show love

Pray

Ask for God's help to show love

Reviewing Unit 2

Summarize and review the content from both lessons

Story Preview

STORY FOUR

Albert and the Windy Night

One windy night when Albert went to bed, he felt scared being in a bedroom of his own. There were a lot of strange and scary noises that made him feel afraid. He yelled for his dad. Albert thought that he heard a monster scratching at his window. His father reassured him that it was only a tree branch. Albert felt relieved and wished he had been as brave as Dad. He prayed and then went right to sleep.

Materials Needed

- ▶ writing paper
- ▶ pens, pencils
- ▶ paper plates
- ▶ Lesson 4 Activity Masters
- ▶ art supplies

Call to Prayer

Holy Spirit, you gave us the gift of our feelings to enrich our lives. Help us to control our emotions and deal with them well. Amen.

Objective

To show that God created us with all kinds of feelings

Pray

Open the lesson thanking God for giving us all of our feelings.

Focus

- ▶ Make paper plates with faces showing feelings (e.g., silly, serious, glad and sad). Show the plates to the students.
- ▶ Use this exercise to help students express feelings. Invite them to imitate the facial expression for each feeling plate. Then have them make one feeling plate, act out that feeling and tell why they feel this way.
- ▶ Note: Children who are abused by people they know experience confusing feelings at the same time, such as love, sadness, or anger. Tell them to talk to a trusted adult about these feelings.

Discover

- ▶ Read the image captions. Ask: Why do you think they are feeling this way? Explain that it is good to have feelings because they can let us know how to handle a situation.
- ▶ Explain that sometimes a person can have more than one feeling at a time and this is okay. Add that feelings may last a short time or a long time, too.
- ▶ Inquire: When do you feel silly, serious, glad or sad?
- ▶ Sing "If You're Happy and You Know It," adding these words: If you're sad, dry your tears; if you're angry, cross your arms; if you're scared, stand up tall. Let the children suggest other feelings and actions.

All Kinds of Feelings



Silly



Serious



Glad



Sad

24 Feelings

Teaching Tip

Acting on Feelings: Cause and effect is often a hard concept for young children. Feelings occur as the effect, or response, to events or causes beyond their control. Learning that we have all kinds of feelings to help us respond to situations is important. Children need to know they are responsible for their feelings and can make good decisions about them. Knowing that they can learn to show their feelings in good ways as well as talk about them helps children to become comfortable with their emotions. When their feelings are affirmed by others, children can learn to respond with self-control and love.

Taking Care of My Feelings



It is good to share your feelings.



Tell God about your feelings.



Talk about your feelings.

Growing in Virtue

I can show my feelings in good ways.

Feelings 25

Objective

To discover good ways to express feelings

Focus

Remind students of some different types of feelings. Explain that there are no bad feelings. There are only bad ways of expressing feelings. Ask: What are some bad ways of expressing our feelings? (*hitting, blaming, hiding feelings*)

Explore

- ▶ Review the pictures on the page and talk about how each shows ways to deal with feelings.
- ▶ Read Story Four on page 106. Ask: What scared Albert? (*a noise outside*) What did he do first? (*hid under the blanket*) What happened next? (*He talked to his father.*)
- ▶ Inform students that they should tell their parents about how they feel. Practice saying, "I feel (name it) because (give reason)." They can also tell other trusted adults about their feelings. Provide examples of trusted adults.

Connect

- ▶ Read aloud with the students the Growing in Virtue.
- ▶ Have students act out Story Four. Let them decide how to imitate the scary noises. Have them include what they think Albert said to God. End the play by having Albert say that his scary feelings are gone.

Extending the Lesson

Using Activity Masters: Use the Activity Masters to further develop the concepts explored in this lesson. The "Make a Clown" activity helps students imagine and practice ways of expressing feelings. The "Don't Hide Your Feelings" activity encourages students to express feelings of joy and happiness.

Showing Kindness: Role-play a scenario in which students should not hit back if someone hits them. Start as if they had already been hit. Explain that they are in charge of expressing their feelings. Encourage using kind words and kind actions to resolve problems. Start over acting out a scene in which no one has been hit, but some emotions are out of control. Reinforce that this is when they can practice using good ways to express feelings.

APPLY

Objective

To learn that we can choose to show love

Focus

Write on the board: "I can show love." Read it with the students. Discuss times when it is easy to show love and times it is not easy to show love.

Discover

- ▶ Have students look at the illustration at the top of the page. Explain that these children are playing with blocks. Ask students to describe how they look. (*upset, mad or angry*) Allow time to discuss what might have happened.
- ▶ Review the four illustrations at the bottom of the page. Discuss each as possible ways to respond to the problem.

Integrate

- ▶ Have students circle the ways that show love. (*Talk, Pray*)
- ▶ Invite students to pair up and role-play the solutions that show love for the other two situations. Encourage them to use kind words and actions as they talk. Affirm when they use kind words and kind actions.

Pray

End the lesson asking God to help us to choose kind words and kind actions that show our feelings in good ways.

Choose to Show Love



When I am mad, what will I do?



Talk



Yell



Hit



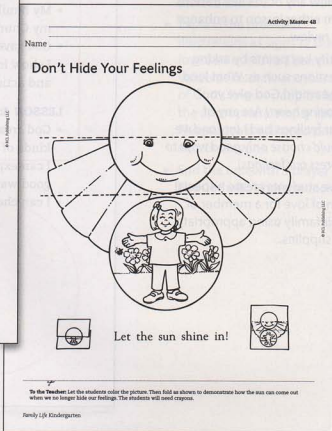
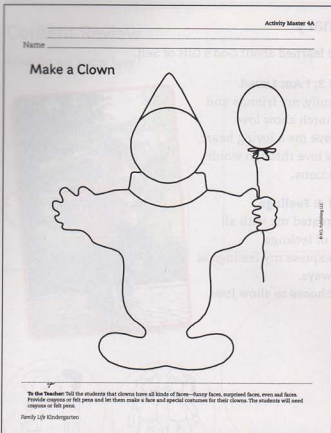
Pray

26 Feelings

Teaching Tip

Coping Skills: Some children live in a difficult environment at home. In difficult circumstances, they may have learned that hitting and hurting are ways to resolve conflict. The coping skills taught in class can have a positive effect on their lives. However, it may take a long time before wrong actions are replaced with virtuous acts. Repetition is an important factor in reinforcing virtuous behavior. Continue to reinforce good ways of expressing our feelings, especially in the moment of need. Be careful not to verbalize judgments of any family, especially those of the students.

ONLINE ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 4



How to Find It How to Use It

Step 1: Click & Select



Go to RCLBFamilyLife.com
Click on the link for activities.
Then select the activity master you need.

Step 2: Print & Copy



Print each activity master in advance.
Then copy enough for everyone in the class.

Step 3: Share & Discuss



Once students have completed the activity,
have them share and discuss their responses.

REVIEWING UNIT 2

Summary

- ▶ Read each lesson's summary bullets and address any questions students may have for clarification.
- ▶ Review any of the illustrations from either lesson to enhance the review.
- ▶ Clarify key points by asking questions such as: What kind of heart did God give you? (a loving heart) Are any of your feelings bad? (no, and we should choose only good ways to express our feelings)
- ▶ Have students create a special sign of love for a member of their family using appropriate art supplies.

REVIEWING UNIT 2

Name _____

Summary

We have learned about God's Gift of Self.

LESSON 3: I Am Loved

- My family, my friends and my Church show love.
- God gave me a loving heart.
- I show love through words and actions.

LESSON 4: Feelings

- God created me with all kinds of feelings.
- I can express my feelings in good ways.
- I can choose to show love.



Unit 2 Review 27

REVIEWING UNIT 2

Name _____

Content Review

How do we show love?

Signs of God's Love.



Signs of People's Love.



28 Unit 2 Review

Content Review

- ▶ What the students should know: We are loved by God and by our families and friends; we can see signs of love if we are alert to them.
- ▶ Explain the provided illustrations as signs of God's love and our love. Then ask students to draw another sign of God's love or people's love in the appropriate empty space. The students will need pencils and/or crayons.
- ▶ End the unit with a prayer from The Catholic Home section.

Teaching Tip

Discovery in Differences: Pictures of certain daily activities of traditional ideal family situations can be upsetting for some children if their family situations are different. Be attentive to how they react as the class discusses daily and holiday ways of love. Be aware that some stereotypes might exclude some students from the discussion, so find ways of bringing each of them into the conversation. Focus on how they do show love, instead of how they do not, like other families. The diversity in ways to show love can help others discover new ways to love.