



Reading biblical stories to children will help them realize that they have been made in the image of God.

Called to Live as a Child of God

Greetings!

Throughout history, people have wondered about big questions: Who am I? Where did I come from? What is the purpose of my life? These questions are not particular to Christians or Catholics. Because they are universal queries, they tell us about what it is to be human. Each person wonders about things bigger than him- or herself because each person contains the spark that can ignite a great fire: the desire for God.

We are our truest selves when we seek to live in the light.

Children awaken to these mysteries early in their development. Babies drop a toy, over and over again, to verify that it will always fall, exploring the laws of nature. Preschoolers notice the tiniest details of the world around them, meditating on those things we easily miss: dewdrops, dandelions gone to seed, a ladybug crawling. In early elementary school, the flood of questions can make a parent driving to the grocery store feel as though under fire from a top notch reporter. As children grow older, their interest in cosmic questions only grows. When we share the Bible and the liturgy of the Church with children, we give them language to express their questions and to meditate on the answers.

We might choose to read the creation stories in Genesis together. In them we hear about God's creation of human beings, including that pivotal moment when God breathes the Spirit into the man created from the clay of the earth. We hear that the man and the woman were created in the image and likeness of God. This is the source of our inherent dignity and the sanctity of human life, an immeasurable gift. Yet God wanted to give us more. God wanted us to share in the life of God, to be immersed totally in Perfect Love. We have no more fundamental identity than this one: beloved child.

Find pictures from your child's baptism to share. Explain that at baptism, we are brought into the Body of Christ. We become part of him and he lives in us. His life in us transforms us, making us new creations, clothing us in light. It is in this moment that we become children of God. You might choose to celebrate your child's baptismal anniversary as a way to acknowledge this new life.

If your child is over the age of reason, usually about seven, you might choose to explore the moral dimension of what this can mean. Because of who we are and whose we are, our lives look different from those of people around us. Called from the darkness to come into the light, we live as children of the light. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. We are our truest selves when we seek to live in the light. Jesus taught us to call on our Father, that we might ask and receive what we need to live out this call.