

DEALING WITH SELF-IMAGE

How do we live as Holy Families if one of us has a low self-image?

Growing up isn't always the easiest part of life. We all go through those awkward stages of development where we feel like we don't fit in, aren't good at anything, or feel just plain "weird." Dealing with the inconveniences of teenage acne, quick growth spurts, and changing voices is only for the moment, however. If we can hang on, soon we will outgrow our awkwardness and become the person God has created us to be. But how do we help one another navigate these self-conscious years and raise confident, loving, caring young adults?

Understanding the source of our true identity can help us in this matter:

"Then God said, 'Let us make (people) in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:26-27 ESV)

Each one of us on this planet has been created in the image and likeness of God. How should this make us feel? Well, for one thing, we can look at ourselves and each other and see the beauty within. If each of us is made in God's image, then each of us is important, valued, and a delight to our Creator. If we really stop to ponder this concept, it should help us to push through those feelings that crop up — the ones that keep us doubting ourselves, such as, "I'm no good," or "I'm ugly," or "I don't matter." This negative self talk is *NOT* from God! God loves us so much that he has been faithful to the human race for time immemorial. That has to tell us something of our worth!

Luther said it this way in the explanation to the First Article of the Apostles' Creed,

I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

"I believe that God has created me and all that exists, that he has given me and still preserves my body and soul, my eyes and ears, my reason and all my senses, together with food and clothing,

home and family, and all my property. Every day he provides abundantly for all the needs of my life. ... He does this purely out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy ..."
(Small Catechism)

As we remind one another of our value to God and to each other, we can rejoice using the words of the psalmist, "I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14a ESV).



Topical conversation starters to help parents stay on the same page with each other and their families.

Things to Pray and Talk About:

- Recall the times when you felt awkward. How did that change over time? What does it mean to be "comfortable in your own skin?"*
- How does it help you to have a positive self-image when you think about how God feels about you? Why is that what's really important?*
- What other scripture verses remind you of your true value?*
- How might you help others who struggle with a negative self-image?*

Asking for God's Blessing:

Loving God, you are the Creator of all that exists, and your works are too wonderful for us to comprehend. When we feel inadequate or are having a hard time being confident in ourselves, remind us that we have been created in your perfect image and that you are the source of our true identity. In Jesus' holy name we pray. Amen.