

LET'S TALK: FAMILY CONVERSATION STARTERS ON GIFTS AND PSALMS

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Legend

Adults ask Children/Youth

Children/Youth ask Adults

For Everyone

Instructions:

Let's Talk: Family Conversation Starters on Gifts and Psalms are based on the *Gifts That Nurture Children* from the ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE Campaign.

For durability, download and print the document on cardstock if possible. Cut the cards apart on indicated dashes and place them in a jar or basket on a table. Choose a day of the week when family members take turns asking questions with each other. There are specific questions for adults to ask children/youth, children/youth to ask adults, and questions for everyone.

Easter Usage

Here is a suggested use of the *Let's Talk: Family Conversation Starters on Gifts and Psalms* over the six weeks of Eastertide.

There are three overarching *Gifts That Nurture Children* - Listening, Patience and Bond. There are six additional gifts, two for each of the overarching gifts which are Language, Music, Prayer, Nutrition, Playing with Peers and Play with Grownups. The nine gifts are organized in the following manner:

Listening

Language
Music

Patience

Prayer
Nutrition

Bond

Playing with Peers
Play with Grownups

Answers may change as people reflect on questions from the previous week, so repeat the overarching gift questions - Listening, Patience, and Bond when asking the subsequent questions so the resource continues to be engaging across the Easter season.

Evergreen Usage

Let's Talk: Family Conversation Starters on Gifts and Psalms may be facilitated any time of the year. Since there is a total of nine cards, they could be spread over nine weeks, as a family road trip resource, table talk cards for intergenerational formation sessions, or printed and mailed to the families in your congregations. The possibilities are endless!

They are composed to be open-ended, without a simple yes or no answer to create a time of storytelling. For instance, on the Nutrition card, children and youth ask adults about a food you disliked as a child. Instead of simply saying you hated lima beans (and still do), you could tell your children how you used to hide them in the paper napkins then flush them down the toilet after being excused from the dinner table. The second Nutrition question encourages wondering together about how patience is needed for healthy food.

Sometimes parents and grandparents feel that they must always have answers for children, but that's not true. A story that includes how you felt will connect you to your children much more than having a concrete answer. For instance, the Prayer card has children and youth ask adults how they can tell that God hears our prayers. Be honest, but hopeful, in answering this question. Do you have a story of a time when you did not feel your prayer was answered? How do you reconcile that in your faith? We all have stories of times it took years to understand how God had eventually given us exactly what we had asked for. Do you have stories like that you can share with your children?

All of these questions are designed to bring families together. Be prepared for answers that surprise, delight and even startle you. For instance, if your teen says they don't think you ever listen to them, take a breath and ask how they think you could be better at talking and listening to each other. If your youth is playing music with references to violence, don't just make them turn it off, ask open-ended questions about what they like about it, how it makes them feel, and why it concerns you, without judgement.



The scriptures provided are from *Psalms for Young Children* by Marie-Helene Delval. You can purchase this [beautifully illustrated book from the publisher](#) and [on Amazon](#).