

# Created To Love

**“As the image of God, man is created for love.”**  
The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality, Pontifical  
Council for the Family, 8.

**“Love is therefore the fundamental and innate vocation  
of every human being.”**  
Familiaris Consortio, 11.



**Adolescent Catechesis for Human Sexuality  
and Child Protection**

**Senior High Version**

Sponsored by the

**Office of Child and Youth Protection  
Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry**





OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

## ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

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Dear Friends in Christ,

As you know, the Archdiocese of Baltimore has a safe environment program for elementary school aged students in our Catholic schools and religious education programs called *Catechesis for Human Sexuality*. Now, as a result of a collaborative effort between the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and the Office of Child and Youth Protection, a similar program for adolescents has been developed. *Created to Love* was designed to echo the positive message expressed by Pope Benedict XVI in the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* and affirms that all love stems from the unconditional love of God, that human sexuality is a beautiful gift from God, and that the intrinsic dignity of all human beings must be respected.

*Created to Love* blends a child protection curriculum with the Church's teachings on human sexuality in an age appropriate way. The program was designed to provide a foundational curriculum for our Catholic High Schools and parish religious education and youth ministry programs. This program is meant to support, not to supplant, the efforts already being made to educate young people in understanding and appropriately expressing God's gift of human sexuality.

Thank you for your continued efforts, in collaboration with the parents of those we serve, to educate our young people about the many gifts God has bestowed upon them. I encourage you to contact the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry should you have any questions or concerns about this most important program.

In the Lord,

+ Edwin F. O'Brien  
Archbishop of Baltimore

# Preface

*Education for chastity is more than a call to abstinence. It requires:*

- a) an understanding for the need of a family environment of love, virtue, and respect for the gifts of God*
- b) learning the practice of decency, modesty, and self-control*
- c) guiding sexual instincts toward loving service to others*
- d) recognizing one's embodied existence as male or female as a gift from God*
- e) discerning one's vocation to marriage, to chaste single life, to celibate priesthood, or to consecrated virginity for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven*

*(Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living II,C,4)*

With these words, the United States Catholic Bishops guide American Catholics in navigating the challenges of educating young people about healthy sexuality. In response to this challenge and in union with the instruction of our Archbishop, the Archdiocese of Baltimore has issued a new catechetical program for human sexuality called *Created to Love*. Designed to supplement the curricular programs which are already in place in our Catholic High Schools and parish senior high religious education programs, *Created to Love* teaches young people about the dignity of human life, Catholic morality, healthy relationships, positive decision-making and the sacramentality of marriage. *Created to Love* also incorporates elements of child protection in an age-appropriate way. Its purpose is to support, not to supplant, the efforts already being made to educate young people in understanding and appropriately expressing God's gift of human sexuality.

It is important to note that instruction in sexuality, from a Catholic point of view, is not separate from other kinds of religious instruction. Just as we partner with parents to educate young people in the virtues and values of the Catholic faith, we also collaborate with them to teach their daughters and sons about the gift of human sexuality that God has given to each human person.

*Created to Love was co-authored by  
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**Created to Love is a co-sponsored program by the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and the Office of Child and Youth Protection.**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People Essential Norms “Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal” includes a concern for the amount of high school aged young people who have been trained in safe environment education. It is the goal of the DYYAM and OCYP to provide user friendly resources in regards to the topics of Human Sexuality and Safe Environment. It is our value to place these trainings within the larger context of Catechesis for Human Sexuality.

*Created to Love* is a compilation of lesson plans, prayer services and other resources to aid those who serve middle and high school students. Components of safe environment education for young people have been contextualized within theological and catechetical foundations of the Roman Catholic Church regarding Human Sexuality.

In November 2007, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a set of guidelines called “Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living,” which direct parishes and schools in their role as partner educators with parents in the instruction of young people in healthy human sexuality. Created to Love incorporates these guidelines, offers theological and practical guidance for educating young people in human sexuality from a Catholic point of view.

The final *Created to Love* program in its entirety will be provided to every parish and school in the Archdiocese of Baltimore for implementation. Each parish and high school is expected to offer the Created to Love program for all high school students.

Included within *Created to Love* is a stand-alone parent session which can be utilized for high school parents. This session provides both an introduction to the *Created to Love* program as well as an opportunity for the youth minister/ principal to reinforce and celebrate the church’s teaching that parents are the primary catechist in their child’s life.

## Suggestions for Implementing the High School Curriculum

The high school curriculum consists of the (optional) Parent Session and four curriculum sessions regarding: Healthy Relationships, Decision Making, Abstinence and the Sacramentality of Marriage. These additional sessions can be done within the parish setting with parents attending all of the sessions or with parents not attending all of the sessions. The decision regarding parental involvement should be determined on a site specific basis. If parents are not going to be in attendance with their young person, permission must be granted by the parent for their high school child to attend any of the presentations provided within *Created to Love*. A permission form and draft of an explanation letter regarding the program have been provided in this manual.

Options for implementation of the high school *Created to Love* Program are:

Option One - One Day Retreat (Offered every two years – not an option for schools)	(optional) Parent Meeting for all High School Parents Morning - Healthy Relationships and Decision Making Afternoon - Abstinence and Sacramentality of Marriage
Option Two – Two lessons – combining two grades (every two years)	(optional) Parent Meeting for all High School Parents 9th and 10th Grade Healthy Relationships and Decision Making 11th and 12th Grade Abstinence and Sacramentality of Marriage
Option Three – One lesson plan per grade per year	(optional) Parent Meeting for all High School Parents 9th Grade Healthy Relationships, 10th Grade Decision Making 11th Grade Abstinence 12th Grade Sacramentality of Marriage

This is not an exhaustive list of options. However, if you would like to utilize an alternative model for providing the curriculum for *Created to Love* to high school students, it is requested that you contact the DYYAM in regards to



adaptation of the program. Providing this training in its entirety only once every four years is not an option that will be considered viable.

If the decision is made within a parish or school that they will adapt and present their own lesson plans in regards to this topic, the Learning Objectives that will be provided for each lesson plan must be covered in order to comply with the standards that are being set by the Archdiocese of Baltimore within the *Created to Love* program.

## **Bibliography/References**

- CCC        The Catechism of the Catholic Church. English Translation. United States Catholic Conference (Washington, D.C. 1997 – Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- CFCL        Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living: Guidelines for Curriculum Design and Publication. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Washington, D.C. 2008)
- GDC        General Directory for Catechesis. Sacred Congregation for the Clergy (Rome, 1997).
- Hajduk, David. God's Plan for You. Pauline Books & Media (Boston, 1996).
- NDC        The National Directory for Catechesis. Department of Education, United States Catholic Conference (Washington D.C., 2005).
- Pope Paul VI. Humanae Vitae "Of Human Life". 1968
- TMHS        The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education within the Family. The Pontifical Council for the Family (Vatican City, 1995).

**Sample Parent Letter**  
Program Introduction-High School

(On school or parish letterhead)

Dear (Parent),

The Archdiocese of Baltimore is committed to providing young people and their parents with education about youth protection within the context of a holistic catechesis in human sexuality. This catechesis is to be offered as an important component of the curriculum of religious instruction and faith formation in the parish or school setting. The National Directory for Catechesis (NDC, Chapter 6, 178) calls for catechesis in human sexuality which “recognizes the duty of pastors and parish catechetical leaders to support and encourage parents as they carry out their role as educators of their children in human sexuality as well as to provide additional instructions regarding Catholic teaching and values that complement and complete the formation provided by parents.”

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has made a concentrated effort to protect our community from the devastating effects of sexual abuse. In fact, the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People requires that all arch/dioceses must establish, offer, and provide safe environment training for children and youth as a regular part of a school curriculum. With the support of Archbishop O’Brien and in concert with the Bishops’ Charter for Child Protection, the Archdiocese has undertaken a very comprehensive project toward this end.

The result is a new curriculum aimed specifically at middle and high school students called *Created to Love*. The *Created to Love* curriculum is designed to teach young people about the dignity of human life, Catholic morality, healthy relationships, positive decision-making and the sacramentality of marriage. The parent sessions, lesson plans, and prayer materials provided through *Created to Love* take into account our Catholic teachings, as well as best practice recommendations made by experts in the field of abuse prevention and treatment.

In order to present these topics in an age-appropriate manner, the curriculum is divided into separate sessions for middle school and high school age groups. The High School Program will begin with an optional parent meeting, during which we will provide additional details, as well as the opportunity to review lesson materials and ask questions. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops makes very clear that “the invitation to other educators to carry out their responsibilities in the name of the parents arises from the consent and authorization of the parents” (Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living). This consent is implied by your participation in the program in partnership with your son/daughter.

Although parental participation is not required, your permission is needed in order for your son/daughter to participate in the program. Permission forms will be available at the parent meeting. One is also included with this letter for your convenience.

**The optional parent meeting will be held on \_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_ (place) \_\_\_\_.** The remaining student sessions will be held on \_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_ (place) \_\_\_\_. We encourage all parents to take an active role in educating their young people about healthy self-image and sexuality. Please make every effort to attend the parent session, as well as ensuring that your son/daughter attends all student sessions.

We believe that parents are and should be the primary educators of their children; nevertheless, the parish and school community also play a secondary but essential role in educating young people about healthy relationships. Thank you for your continued support as we strive to keep our young people safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Principal or Parish Catechetical Leader

**ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE**  
**DIVISION OF YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY**  
**PERMISSION FORM AND RELEASE**

Youth Name:\_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone:\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name:\_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone:\_\_\_\_\_

Other number where Parent can be reached: \_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth:\_\_\_\_\_ Male Female (please circle)

In consideration of the wholesome learning experience in which my son/daughter will participate, I as parent or guardian of my son/daughter, do hereby agree to allow my son/daughter to participate in the "Created to Love" program through the youth ministry/campus ministry group of their parish/school on: (event/date/time)

I/we acknowledge receipt of the attached information letter describing the planned activities.

In consideration of the opportunity for my son/daughter to participate in the program, I agree to RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY \_\_\_\_\_, (name of parish or school) the Division of Youth & Young Adult Ministry, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Baltimore and his successors, a Corporation Sole, and all their agents, servants and employees from any liability, claims, demands and causes of action arising out of or relating to any loss, damage or injury sustained in connection with or arising out of my son/daughter's participation in the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

Additional resources may be sent home. Please provide a PARENT email address below:

\_\_\_\_\_

**THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY**

***THE TRUTH AND MEANING  
OF HUMAN SEXUALITY***

***Excerpt from the Guidelines for Education within the Family***

***on Puberty and Adolescence***

**2. Puberty**

87. Puberty, which constitutes the initial phase of adolescence, is a time in which parents are called to be particularly attentive to the *Christian education of their children*. This is a time of self-discovery and "of one's own inner world, the time of generous plans, the time when the feeling of love awakens, with the biological impulses of sexuality, the time of the desire to be together, the time of particularly intense joy connected with the exhilarating discovery of life. But often it is also the age of deeper questioning, of anguished or even frustrating searching, of a certain mistrust of others and dangerous introspection, and the age sometimes of the first experiences of setbacks and of disappointments".

88. Parents should pay particular attention to their children's gradual development and to their physical and psychological changes, which are decisive in the maturing of the personality. Without showing anxiety, fear or obsessive concern, parents will not let cowardice or convenience hinder their work. This is naturally an important moment for teaching the value of chastity, which will also be expressed in the way sexual information is given. In this phase, educational needs also concern the genital aspects, hence requiring a presentation both on the level of values and the reality as a whole. Moreover, this implies an understanding of the context of procreation, marriage and the family, a context which must be kept present in an authentic task of sexual education.

89. Beginning with the changes which their sons and daughters experience in their bodies, parents are thus bound to give *more detailed explanations about sexuality* (in an on-going relationship of trust and friendship) each time girls confide in their mothers and boys in their fathers. This relationship of trust and friendship should have already started in the first years of life.

90. Another important task for parents is following the gradual physiological development of their daughters and helping them joyfully to accept *the development of their femininity* in a bodily, psychological and spiritual sense. Therefore, normally, one should discuss the cycles of fertility and their meaning. But it is still not necessary to give detailed explanations about sexual union, unless this is explicitly requested.

91. It is very important for adolescent boys to be helped to understand the stages of physical and physiological development of the genital organs before they get this information from their companions or from persons who are not well-intentioned. The physiological facts about male puberty should be presented in an atmosphere of serenity, positively and with reserve, in the

framework of marriage, family and fatherhood. Instructing both adolescent girls and boys should also include detailed and sufficient information about the bodily and psychological characteristics of the opposite sex, about whom their curiosity is growing.

In this area, the additional supportive information of a conscientious doctor or even a psychologist can help parents, without separating this information from what pertains to the faith and the educational work of the priest.

92. Through *a trusting and open dialogue*, parents can guide *their daughters* in facing any emotional perplexity, and support the value of Christian chastity out of consideration for the other sex. Instruction for both girls and boys should aim at pointing out the beauty of motherhood and the wonderful reality of procreation, as well as the deep meaning of virginity. In this way they will be helped to go against the hedonistic mentality which is very widespread today and particularly, at such a decisive stage, in preventing the "*contraceptive mentality*", which unfortunately is very common and which girls will have to face later in marriage.

93. During puberty, *the psychological and emotional development of boys* can make them vulnerable to erotic fantasies and they may be tempted to try sexual experiences. Parents should be close to their sons and correct the tendency to use sexuality in a hedonistic and materialistic way. Therefore, they should remind boys about God's gift, received in order to cooperate with him "to actualize in history the original blessing of the Creator — that of transmitting by procreation the divine image from person to person..."; and this will strengthen their awareness that, "Fecundity is the fruit and the sign of conjugal love, the living testimony of the full reciprocal self-giving of the spouses". In this way sons will also learn the respect due to women. The parents' task of informing and instructing is necessary, not because their sons would not know about sexual reality in other ways, but so that they will know about it in the right light.

94. In a *positive and prudent* way, parents will carry out what the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council requested: "It is important to give suitable and timely instruction to young people, above all in the heart of their own families, about the dignity of married love, its role and its exercise; in this way they will be able to engage in honourable courtship and enter upon marriage of their own".

Positive information about sexuality should always be part of a formation plan so as to create the Christian context in which all information about life, sexual activity, anatomy and hygiene is given. Therefore, the spiritual and moral dimensions must always be predominant so as to have two special purposes: presenting God's commandments as a way of life, and the formation of a right conscience.

To the young man who asked him what he had to do in order to attain eternal life, Jesus replied: "If you would enter life, keep the commandments" (*Matthew* 19:17). After listing the ones that concern love for one's neighbour, Jesus summed them up in this positive formulation: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (*Matthew* 19:19). In order to present the commandments as God's gift (written by his hand, cf. *Exodus* 31: 18), expressing the Covenant with him, confirmed by

Jesus' own example, it is very important for the adolescent not to separate the commandments from their relationship with a rich interior life, free from selfishness.

95. As its departure point, the formation of conscience requires being enlightened about: God's project of love for every single person, the positive and liberating value of the moral law, and awareness both of the weakness caused by sin and the means of grace which strengthen us on our path towards the good and towards salvation.

"Moral conscience, present at the heart of the person" — which is "man's most secret core and sanctuary", as the Second Vatican Council affirms, "enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil. It also judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil. It bears witness to the authority of truth in reference to the supreme Good to which the human person is drawn, and it welcomes the commandments".

In fact, "conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed". Therefore, the formation of conscience requires being enlightened about the truth and God's plan and must not be confused with a vague subjective feeling or with personal opinion.

96. In answering *children's questions*, parents should offer well-reasoned arguments about the great value of chastity and show the intellectual and human weakness of theories that inspire permissive and hedonistic behavior. They will answer clearly, without giving excessive importance to pathological sexual problems. Nor will they give the false impression that sex is something shameful or dirty, because it is a great gift of God who placed the ability to generate life in the human body, thereby sharing his creative power with us. Indeed, both in the Scriptures (cf. *Song of Songs* 1-8; *Hosea* 2; *Jeremiah* 3: 1-3; *Ezekiel* 23, etc.) and in the Christian mystical tradition, conjugal love has always been considered a symbol and image of God's love for us.

97. Since boys and girls at puberty are particularly vulnerable to *emotional influences*, through dialogue and the way they live, parents have the duty to help their children resist negative outside influences that may lead them to have little regard for Christian formation in love and chastity. Especially in societies overwhelmed by consumer pressures, parents should sometimes watch out for their children's relations with young people of the opposite sex — without making it too obvious. Even if they are socially acceptable, some habits of speech and conduct are not morally correct and represent a way of trivializing sexuality, reducing it to a consumer object. Parents should therefore teach their children the value of Christian modesty, moderate dress, and, when it comes to trends, the necessary autonomy characteristic of a man or woman with a mature personality.

### **3. Adolescence in One's Plan in Life**

98. In terms of personal development, adolescence represents the period of self- projection and therefore the discovery of one's vocation. Both for physiological, social and cultural reasons, this period tends to be longer today than in the past. Christian parents should "educate the children for life in such a way that each one may fully perform his or her role according to the *vocation*



*received from God*". This is an extremely important task which basically constitutes the culmination of the parents' mission. Although this task is always important, it becomes especially so in this period of their children's life: "Therefore, in the life of each member of the lay faithful there are *particularly significant and decisive moments* for discerning God's call...Among these are the periods of *adolescence* and *young adulthood*".

99. It is very important for young people not to find themselves alone in discerning their *personal vocation*. Parental advice is relevant, at times decisive, as well as the support of a priest or other properly formed persons (in parishes, associations or in the new fruitful ecclesial movements, etc.) who are capable of helping them discover the vocational meaning of life and the various forms of the universal call to holiness. "Christ's *'Follow me'* makes itself heard on the different paths taken by the disciples and confessors of the divine Redeemer".

100. For centuries, the concept of vocation was reserved exclusively for the priesthood and religious life. In recalling the Lord's teaching, "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (*Matthew 5:48*), the Second Vatican Council renewed the universal call to holiness. As Pope Paul VI wrote shortly after the Council: "This strong invitation to holiness could be regarded as the most characteristic element in the whole Magisterium of the Council, and so to say, its ultimate purpose". This was reiterated by Pope John Paul II: "The Second Vatican Council has significantly spoken on the universal call to holiness. It is possible to say that this call to holiness is precisely the basic charge entrusted to all the sons and daughters of the Church by a Council which intended to bring a renewal of Christian life based on the gospel. This charge is not a simple moral exhortation, but an *undeniable requirement arising from the mystery of the Church*".

God calls everyone to holiness. He has very precise plans for each person, a *personal vocation* which each must recognize, accept and develop. To all Christians — priests, laity, married people or celibates — the words of the Apostle of the Nations apply: "*God's chosen ones, holy and beloved*" (*Colossians 3:12*).

101. Therefore, in catechesis and the formation given both within and outside of the family, the Church's teaching on the sublime value of virginity and celibacy must never be lacking, but also the vocational meaning of marriage, which a Christian can never regard as only a human venture. As St. Paul says "This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the church." (*Ephesians 5:32*). Giving young people this firm conviction is of supreme importance for the good both of the Church and humanity which "depend in great part on parents and on the family life that they build in their homes".

102. Parents should always strive to give *example and witness* with their own lives to fidelity to God and one another in the marriage covenant. Their example is especially decisive in adolescence, the phase when young people are looking for *lived and attractive behaviour models*. Since sexual problems become more evident at this time, parents should also help them to love the beauty and strength of chastity through prudent advice, highlighting the inestimable value of prayer and frequent fruitful recourse to the sacraments for a chaste life, especially personal confession. Furthermore, parents should be capable of giving their children, when necessary, a

positive and serene explanation of the solid points of Christian morality such as, for example, the indissolubility of marriage and the relationship between love and procreation, as well as the immorality of premarital relations, abortion, contraception and masturbation. With regard to these immoral situations that contradict the meaning of giving in marriage, it is also good to recall that: "*The two dimensions of conjugal union, the unitive and the procreative, cannot be artificially separated* without damaging the deepest truth of the conjugal act itself". In this regard, an in-depth and reflective knowledge of the documents of the Church dealing with these problems will be of valuable assistance to parents.

103. *Masturbation* particularly constitutes a very serious disorder that is illicit in itself and cannot be morally justified, although "the immaturity of adolescence (which can sometimes persist after that age), psychological imbalance or habit can influence behaviour, diminishing the deliberate character of the act and bringing about a situation whereby subjectively there may not always be serious fault". Therefore, adolescents should be helped to overcome manifestations of this disorder, which often express the inner conflicts of their age and, in many cases, a selfish vision of sexuality.

104. A particular problem that can appear during the process of sexual maturation is *homosexuality*, which is also spreading more and more in urbanized societies. This phenomenon must be presented with balanced judgement, in the light of the documents of the Church. Young people need to be helped to distinguish between the concepts of what is normal and abnormal, between subjective guilt and objective disorder, avoiding what would arouse hostility. On the other hand, the structural and complementary orientation of sexuality must be well clarified in relation to marriage, procreation and Christian chastity. "Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained". A distinction must be made between a tendency that can be innate and acts of homosexuality that "are intrinsically disordered" and contrary to Natural Law.

Especially when the practice of homosexual acts has not become a habit, many cases can benefit from appropriate therapy. In any case, persons in this situation must be accepted with respect, dignity and delicacy, and all forms of unjust discrimination must be avoided. If parents notice the appearance of this tendency or of related behaviour in their children, during childhood or adolescence, they should seek help from expert qualified persons in order to obtain all possible assistance.

For most homosexual persons, this condition constitutes a trial. "They must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition". "Homosexual persons are called to chastity".

105. Awareness of the positive significance of sexuality for personal harmony and development, as well as the person's vocation in the family, society and the Church, always represents the

educational horizon to be presented during the stages of adolescent growth. It must never be forgotten that the disordered use of sex tends progressively to destroy *the person's capacity to love* by making pleasure, instead of sincere self-giving, the end of sexuality and by reducing other persons to objects of one's own gratification. In this way the meaning of true love between a man and a woman (love always open to life) is weakened as well as the family itself. Moreover, this subsequently leads to disdain for the human life which could be conceived, which, in some situations, is then regarded as an evil that threatens personal pleasure. "The trivialization of sexuality is among the principal factors which have led to contempt for new life. Only a true love is able to protect life".

106. We must also remember how adolescents in industrialized societies are preoccupied and at times disturbed not only by the problems of *self-identity*, discovering their plan in life and difficulties in successfully integrating sexuality in a mature and well-oriented personality. They also have problems in accepting themselves and their bodies. In this regard, out-patient and specialized centres for adolescents have now sprung up, often characterized by purely hedonistic purposes. On the other hand, a healthy culture of the body leads to accepting oneself as a gift and as an incarnated spirit, called to be open to God and society. A healthy culture of the body should accompany formation in this very constructive period, which is also not without its risks.

In the face of what hedonistic groups propose, especially in affluent societies, it is very important to present young people with the ideals of human and Christian solidarity and concrete ways of being committed in Church associations, movements and voluntary Catholic and missionary activities.

107. *Friendships* are very important in this period. According to local social conditions and customs, adolescence is a time when young people enjoy more autonomy in their relations with others and in the hours they keep in family life. Without taking away their rightful autonomy, when necessary, parents should know how to say "no" to their children and, at the same time, they should know how to cultivate a taste in their children for what is beautiful, noble and true. Parents should also be sensitive to adolescents' self-esteem, which may pass through a confused phase when they are not clear about what personal dignity means and requires.

108. Through loving and patient advice, parents will help young people to avoid *an excessive closing in on themselves*. When necessary, they will also teach them to go against social trends that tend to stifle true love and an appreciation for spiritual realities: "Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you" (*1 Peter 5:8-10*).

**For complete text of this document, visit:**

**[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/family/documents/rc\\_pc\\_family\\_doc\\_08121995\\_human-sexuality\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_08121995_human-sexuality_en.html)**

**UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS**  
***CATECHETICAL FORMATION IN CHASTE LIVING***

***Excerpt from Guidelines for Curriculum Design and Instruction***

**Part I, A**

**Received Teaching of the Church**

24. Formation in the virtue of chastity includes:

- Education for authentic love
- Understanding one's sexuality as a gift
- Cultivation of all the virtues, especially charity
- The practice of prayer
- The virtue of temperance
- Respect for human dignity in oneself and in others
- The practice of decency and modesty in behavior, dress, and speech
- The respect for one's own body and for others as temples of the Holy Spirit
- Assistance in acquiring self-mastery and self-control

25. The benefits of chastity include:

- The integrity of life and love placed in the person
- The gift of authentic friendship
- Fidelity in marriage which leads to strong family life
- The ability to be "pure of heart"
- Development of authentic maturity
- Capacity to respect and foster the 'nuptial meaning' of the body
- A lifestyle that brings joy
- The discipline to renounce self, make sacrifices and wait
- A life that revolves around self-giving love
- Development of a harmonious personality
- Freedom from all forms of self-centeredness
- The capacity for compassion, tolerance, generosity and a spirit of sacrifice

**For complete text of this document, visit:**

**<http://www.usccb.org/education/chasteliving.pdf>**



# Created to Love

## Parents and their Role in Human Sexuality Education

### Theological Rationale



"Parents should be aware ... that sexual giving should also be lived out in respect for God and for his plan of love, with fidelity, honour and generosity towards one's spouse and toward the life which can arise from their act of love. Only in this way can their love be an expression of charity" *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*

"Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents". JP II

"... the educational service of parents must aim firmly at a training in the area of sex which is truly and fully personal: for sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person - body, emotions and soul - and it manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love. Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents. In this context *education for chastity* is absolutely essential, for it is a virtue that develops a person's authentic maturity and makes him or her capable of respecting and fostering the 'nuptial meaning' of the body. Indeed, Christian parents, discerning the signs of God's call, will devote special attention and care to education in virginity or celibacy as the supreme form of that self-giving that constitutes the very meaning of human sexuality. In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the person and his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of and respect for the moral norms as the necessary and highly valuable guarantee for responsible personal growth in human sexuality. For this reason the Church is firmly opposed to an often widespread form of imparting sex information dissociated from moral principles. That would merely be an

introduction to the experience of pleasure and a stimulus leading to the loss of serenity - while still in the years of innocence - by opening the way to vice" (*Familiaris consortio*, no. 37).

"In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the person and his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of and respect for the moral norms as the necessary and highly valuable guarantee for responsible personal growth in human sexuality". JP II

*Charter of the Rights of the Family*: "Since they have conferred life on their children, parents have the original, primary and inalienable right to educate them; hence they ...have the right to educate their children in conformity with their moral and religious convictions, taking into account the cultural traditions of the family which favour the good and the dignity of the child; they should also receive from society the necessary aid and assistance to perform their educational role properly".

"Parents/guardians are to be the first and foremost educators of their children. This God-given responsibility cannot legitimately be taken away by other powers or institutions." (CFCL, II, B, 2)

"Parents/guardians are obliged to ensure that their children's education in human sexuality occurs within the context of the moral principles and truths of the Catholic Church, whether is be done at home or in educational centers chosen by them." (CFCL, II, B, 4)



# Created to Love



## Parent Focus

## Theological Rationale

### Catechism of the Catholic Church

**CCC 2204** “The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason it can and should be called a *domestic church*.” It is a community of faith, hope, and charity; it assumes singular importance in the Church, as is evident in the New Testament.

**CCC 2205** The Christian family is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. In the procreation and education of children it reflects the Father's work of creation. It is called to partake of the prayer and sacrifice of Christ. Daily prayer and the reading of the Word of God strengthen it in charity. The Christian family has an evangelizing and missionary task.

**CCC 2206** The relationships within the family bring an affinity of feelings, affections and interests, arising above all from the members' respect for one another. The family is a *privileged community* called to achieve a "sharing of thought and common deliberation by the spouses as well as their eager cooperation as parents in the children's upbringing."

### Additional Documents

Parents are the primary educators in the faith. Together with them, especially in certain cultures, all members of the family play an active part in the education of the younger members. It is thus necessary to determine more concretely the sense in which the Christian family community is a *locus* of catechesis. The family is defined as a "domestic Church," that is, in every Christian family the different aspects and functions of the life of the entire Church may be reflected: mission; catechesis; witness; prayer, etc. Indeed in the same way as the Church, the family "is a place in which the Gospel is transmitted and from which it extends." The family as a locus of catechesis has a unique privilege: transmitting the Gospel by rooting it in the context of profound human values. On this

human base, Christian initiation is more profound: the awakening of the sense of God; the first steps in prayer; education of the moral conscience; formation in the Christian sense of human love, understood as a reflection of the love of God the Father, the Creator. (*General Directory for Catechesis* #255)

The normal and fundamental method, (for human sexuality catechesis) . . . is *personal dialogue between parents and their children*, that is, *individual formation within the family circle*. In fact there is no substitute for a dialogue of trust and openness between parents and their children, a dialogue which respects not only their stages of development but also the young persons as individuals. (TMHS 129)

There are various ways of helping and supporting parents in fulfilling their fundamental right and duty to educate their children for love. Such assistance never means taking from parents or diminishing their formative right and duty, because they remain "original and primary", "irreplaceable and inalienable". Therefore, the role which others can carry out in helping parents is always (a) *subsidiary*, because the formative role of the family is always preferable, and (b) *subordinate*, that is, subject to the parents' attentive guidance and control. Everyone must observe the right order of cooperation and collaboration between parents and those who can help them in their task. It is clear that the assistance of others must be given first and foremost to parents rather than to their children. (TMHS 145)

The Holy Father John Paul II reaffirms in *Familiaris Consortio*: "The right and duty of parents to give education is *essential*, since it is connected with the transmission of human life; it is *original and primary* with regard to the educational role of others, on account of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents and children; and it is *irreplaceable and inalienable*, and therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others"





# Created to Love



## Parent Session

## Prayer Service

### Opening Prayer

Loving Father,  
You committed children to our loving care to raise for You and to prepare them for eternal life. Help us to fulfill this sacred duty. Teach us when to give and when to withhold, when to permit and when to reprove, make us gentle, yet firm, considerate and watchful. Grant that in what we say and how we live, we may lead them towards you through your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

### First Reading: Matthew 6:19-23

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### Antiphonal Psalm 34

**Side One: Come, children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.  
Who among you loves life, takes delight in prosperous days?**

**Side Two: Keep your tongue from evil, Your lips from speaking lies. Turn from evil  
and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.**

**Side One: The Lord has eyes for the just and ears for their cry. The Lord's face  
is against evildoers, To wipe out their memory from the earth.**

Side Two: When the just cry out, the Lord hears and rescues them from all distress. The Lord is close to the broken hearted, saves those whose spirit is crushed.

Side One: **Many are the troubles of the just, but the Lord delivers them all. God watches over all their bones; not a one shall be broken.**

**ALL: The Lord redeems loyal servants; No one is condemned whose refuge is God.**

### Second Reading Psalm 78:1-7

O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old - what we have heard and know, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

### Reflection: (To be shared in small groups of two or three)

“Parents are urged *to dare to ask for more and to propose more*. They cannot be satisfied with avoiding the worst — that their children do not take drugs or commit crimes. They will have to be committed to educating them in the true values of the person, renewed by the virtues of faith, hope and love: the values of freedom, responsibility, fatherhood and motherhood, service, professional work, solidarity, honesty, art, sport, the joy of knowing they are children of God, hence brothers and sisters of all human beings . . . “

*(Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality, 49)*

### Questions:

What are some of the messages you feel your child receives daily from their peers and society?

What are some of the most important messages you try to stress to your children?

### Closing Prayer

Loving God,

I commend my children to your care. May they grow in wisdom and compassion, honor and holiness. Grant them healthy relationships and the ability to make prayerful decisions. Strengthen them for the journey ahead through your grace, so that they may grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and may come to rejoice in your love forever.

Amen.





# Created to Love

## Parent Session Leader Guide



### The Point

As human beings we are created in the image and likeness of God.

### Learning Objectives

During this presentation it is essential to communicate the following points:

- Parents are the primary educators of their children but share in a partnership with the Church, which provides support, education and encouragement in this task.
- Human interaction is an opportunity for holiness.
- There are four characteristics that describe the fullness of love and the intention of marital love. Love is free, full, faithful, and fruitful.
- Human life is to be respected. We have a responsibility to speak out against violations of the dignity of the human person, to defend and to educate young people about such violations.

### Preparation Check List

- *Created to Love* outline and materials for review
- Paper, pens for personal responses
- Newsprint, markers, easel for consolidating group responses

### Memory Lane

**20 Minutes**

Participants will be asked to work through a Pastoral Circle remembrance of “their first **positive** and/or an early **significant** experience of physical affection within a love/ dating relationship.” It is vitally important to emphasize **positive**. The purpose of this activity is not to address experiences that were negative or forced.

Participants will be asked to recapture the memory. (It might be helpful to have participants imagine that someone was able to go back in time and capture a picture of that moment.)

**FACTS:** Without sharing the whole story, have each participant describe three facts that preceded that moment. (without going into the entire story... yet) Facilitator should share examples from their own story. ( Examples: She was a cheerleader from a public school. His parents were away. I had a big zit on my nose.)

After individual processing, have some sharing from the large group.

**FEELINGS:** Participants will be asked to share with the same neighbor (without going into the story... yet) three feeling words that they would use to describe their experience. How were they feeling during their encounter? Facilitator should share examples from their own story. Examples: I felt trusted. I was very nervous. I had a sense of accomplishment.

After individual processing, have some sharing from the large group.

**FOUNDINGS:** Participants will be asked to share with the same neighbor one or two things that they have learned or gained from that experience that they feel impacted them in the future (without going into the story... yet). Facilitator should share examples from their own story. (Examples: I learned what an honor it was to be allowed to kiss him. From that moment on, I wanted him to know my family and friends. I learned the importance of breath mints.)

After individual processing, have some sharing from the large group.

**STORY-TELLING;** Allow the participants, if they so choose, to share the full story of their memory “a first *positive* and or an early *significant* experience of physical affection within a love/ dating relationship.” Facilitator should share examples from their own story.

## **HEADLINES**

### **10 Minutes**

Facilitator should attempt to make a conscious shift in the agenda for the group - - - asking for a “reality check” or a “tone change” related to our young people.

Invite participants to write a headline for an article in a Catholic Newspaper (The Catholic Review) regarding what “you wish young people know about sexuality” Summarizing the critical few words for young people to know from their parents about sexuality. Rule: Headlines are short. (Note: Do not allow from group discussion but ask for immediate “gut” reactions.)

While some responses will reflect a positive message, many will lean towards caution.

Debrief this experience in contrast to the general good mood that was experienced with the previous “Memory Lane” activity. Invite participants to analyze why this occurs.

## CHURCH

10 Minutes

From an interview with Pope Benedict XVI on German Television- August 5, 2006

**Interviewer:** The issue of the family. A month ago you were in Valencia for the World Meeting of Families. Anyone who was listening carefully, as we tried to do at Radio Vatican, noticed how you never mentioned the words "homosexual marriage," you never spoke about abortion, or about contraception. Careful observers thought that was very interesting. Clearly your idea is to go around the world preaching the faith rather than as an "apostle of morality." What are your comments?

**Pope Benedict:** Obviously, yes. Actually I should say I had only two opportunities to speak for 20 minutes. And when you have so little time you can't say everything you want to say about "no." Firstly you have to know what we really want, right? *Christianity, Catholicism, isn't a collection of prohibitions: it's a positive option.* It's very important that we look at it again because this idea has almost completely disappeared today. We've heard so much about what is not allowed that now it's time to say: *we have a positive idea to offer*, that man and woman are made for each other, that the scale of sexuality, eros, agape, indicates the level of love and it's in this way that marriage develops, first of all, as a joyful and blessing-filled encounter between a man and a woman, and then the family, that guarantees continuity among generations and through which generations are reconciled to each other and even cultures can meet. So, firstly it's important to stress what we want. Secondly, we can also see why we don't want something. I believe we need to see and reflect on the fact that it's not a Catholic invention that man and woman are made for each other, so that humanity can go on living: all cultures know this. As far as abortion is concerned, it's part of the fifth, not the sixth, commandment: "Thou shalt not kill!" We have to presume this is obvious and always stress that the human person begins in the mother's womb and remains a human person until his or her last breath. *The human person must always be respected as a human person. But all this is clearer if you say it first in a positive way.*

Discuss.

Re-Do Headlines activity providing parents the opportunity to "positively state" a set of human sexuality headlines.

## THREE ESSENTIAL LESSONS (Lecture Portion)

10 Minutes

Lesson One: We are created in the image and likeness of God. Each human interaction is between one image and likeness of God and another. Therefore, each interaction is an opportunity for holiness and sacredness. Unfortunately, we are also flawed human beings

capable of disobedience to God's will. God's will for us, body and soul, is that we are created to love.

Lesson Two: There are four characteristics of love are found in Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Of Human Life*. ) These not only describe the fullness of love but also describe the intention of marital love as well.

- Free - There are no conditions placed on God's love. God has made an active choice to love and always continues to act upon that choice.
- Full – God's love is complete- God gives himself completely without reservation or qualification. God is invested in you.
- Faithful – God love is consistent and is not diminished by the unfaithfulness of the other. God keeps his commitments
- Fruitful - God's love is generous. It is a love that does not limit but generates more love. God's love is a love of abundance and is life-giving.

Lesson Three: Any attempt to exploit another image and likeness of God as an object is a violation of the respect and dignity of the human person. It is sinful and wrong. We must speak out about this and equip our young people to be aware of violations against the dignity of the person, especially when this abuse comes from adults or people in positions of power.

#### **REVIEW CREATED TO LOVE RESOURCE**

**10 Minutes**

An outline of the program, its purpose, and which model the parish will be utilizing will be covered. This is also the opportunity for the parents to ask questions regarding the program, content, etc.

#### **OUR LIVES AS WITNESS AND MODELS TO TRUE LOVE**

**10 Minutes**

Discipleship can not be taught from a book, neither can the richness of our church's understanding of the gift of human sexuality.

Ask parents to brainstorm and dialogue on concrete ways that they might better serve as witnesses and models of the church's teaching on sexuality.

#### **PRAYER**

Creator God, you have blessed us with the joy and opportunity to serve as parents. May we continue to be faithful guides to our young people. Send forth your Spirit to strengthen us to serve as models of love, fidelity, and joy for them.

We pray that we might have the will and the patience to encourage our children so that they too might follow your teaching and designs for their adult lives. We seek that your will is achieved in the lives of our family as we pray the prayer that Jesus taught.

Our Father. . . .



# Created to Love

## High School Session Healthy Relationships Theological Rationale



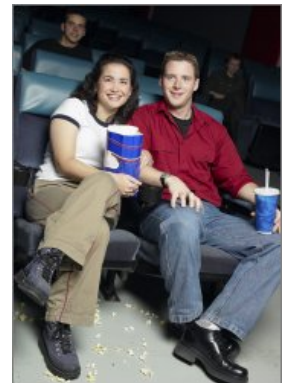
**CCC 2347** The virtue of chastity blossoms in *friendship*. It shows the disciple how to follow and imitate him who has chosen us as his friends, who has given himself totally to us and allows us to participate in his divine estate. Chastity is a promise of immortality.

Chastity is expressed notably in *friendship with one's neighbor*. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion.

**CCC 1878** All men are called to the same end: God himself. There is a certain resemblance between the unity of the divine persons and the fraternity that men are to establish among themselves in truth and love. Love of neighbor is inseparable from love for God.

**CCC 1879** The human person needs to live in society. Society is not for him an extraneous addition but a requirement of his nature. Through the exchange with others, mutual service and dialogue with his brethren, man develops his potential; he thus responds to his vocation.

*Friendships* are very important in this period. According to local social conditions and customs, adolescence is a time when young people enjoy more autonomy in their relations with others and in the hours they keep in family life. Without taking away their rightful autonomy, when necessary, parents should know how to say "no" to their children and, at the same time, they should know how to cultivate a taste in their children for what is beautiful, noble and true. (TMHS 107)







# Created to Love



## High School Session Healthy Relationships Prayer Service

### Opening Prayer

God of all love,

You gave us one another that we may know and share love. You have given us our friends and all those who love and trust us in our lives. Grant us the strength to build healthy friendships and relationships that are strongly rooted in You. **Amen.**

### First Reading Romans 13:8-10

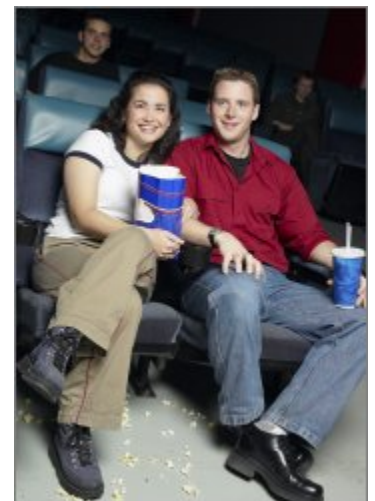
A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. For this, "You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

The Word of the Lord  
**All: Thanks be to God**

### Psalm 100

**Response: We are his people: the sheep of his flock.**





Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;  
Serve the Lord with gladness;  
Come before him with joyful song.

**Response: We are his people: the sheep of his flock.**

Know that the Lord is God;  
he made us, his we are;  
his people, the flock he tends.

**Response: We are his people: the sheep of his flock.**

The Lord is good:  
His kindness endures forever,  
And his faithfulness to all generations.

**Response: We are his people: the sheep of his flock.**

**Second Reading 1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the  
Corinthians

Love is patient, love is kind.  
It does not envy,  
it does not boast, it is not proud.  
It is not rude, it is not self-seeking,  
it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.  
Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.  
It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

**Reflection : (To be shared in small groups of two or three)**

Today's readings tell us about love, which is something that we often understand in our hearts but find difficult to put into words. If you were speaking to a small child, what simple explanations would you give for the following questions:

What is a healthy relationship?

How does God play a role in a healthy relationship? How have I seen God's presence in some of my closest relationships?



## Intercessions

Leader: Let us pray to our Father in heaven that our relationships may be healthy and strong. Our response is “Lord, hear our prayer.”

That we may learn to love one another as Christ loves us. Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

That, through the joys and sacrifices of our lives, we will bear witness to love in our relationships with family, friends, and all those we are blessed to meet. Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

That the relationship we have may be renewed, and redeemed from selfishness and indifference. Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

That all people who have experienced unhealthy relationships may grow to know the healing that Christ provides and find persons who will help to rebuild trust. Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: God, you are love itself, and you have created us to be in healthy relationship with one another. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

## Closing Prayer

Leader:

Lord God, You created us to be in loving relationship with one another. You called us to reflect your love in our relationships. Strengthen us to build upon the relationships in our lives that bring us closer to you. Guide us as we seek to create a strong network of people who will have our safety and protection as their concern. We ask this through Christ our Lord,

**Amen.**



# Created to Love

## High School Session

### Healthy Relationships

### Lesson Plan



**The Point:** God wants for us to have healthy relationships with one another. Our human relationships can and should be our best source of hints towards God's love for us.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

During this presentation, it is essential to communicate the following:

- All relationships are an opportunity to experience the love of God through that relationship
- There is a clear difference between a healthy relationship and an unhealthy relationship.
- Unhealthy relationships include relationships where there is an imbalance of the relationship in age, power, and/ or violence.
  - Relationships of a sexual nature that involve adults and teens are unhealthy as they exhibit the characteristics of an imbalanced relationship and are against social, developmental, moral, and legal mores.
- Healthy Relationships foster appropriate sharing of information, respect for boundaries, concern for safety, striving for equality, empathy, nurturing, and expression of feelings.
- The media often conditions us to understand that sex and violence are in the same category. Yet, sexuality is meant to connect us while violence violates and devalues the other.
- Participants will have a clear understanding of their right to say "No."

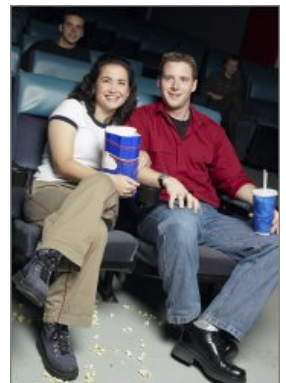
#### **Preparation Check List**

- Plastic cup
- Newsprint, markers, easel
- Send home "Parent Page" (email recommended)

#### **Ice-breaker/ Starting point**

10 minutes

Invite the participants to introduce themselves and to share a recent movie or television series that they feel exemplifies a "good" love relationship. Ask follow-up questions if their sense of love is unclear and/or was potentially said for "shock" value as it may seem unacceptable to what you



perceive to be correct Church teaching. Attempt not to seem judgmental, but to require that the participants “own” their statements. Ask the participants to identify some common characteristics to their understanding of love.

### **The Tricky Balance of Relationships**

10 minutes

Participants are asked to identify as many as possible different sorts of human relationships that they can. Example: boyfriend/girlfriend; mother/daughter. You may want to prompt them into considering relationships within these following categories: Family, School, Sports, After-School Activities, Church, Work Settings, etc.

Ask for one volunteer to come forward. Have them select any one of the preceding relationships. Identify for them that this relationship, as well as all the other named relationships, are exactly like a plastic/ styrofoam cup. Invite various theories from the participants as to how this could be so.

In a setting where all can see, have yourself and the volunteer each place a foot on the cup. (If you are elevated, assure the safety of the volunteer. You will each have half of your foot on the cup, while the other person’s foot is on the other half of the cup. You will need to balance most of your weight on your other leg.)

With the volunteer, debrief the experience:

1. It is not a difficult activity, but would become more difficult over time.
2. In a relationship, you give up a level of your own balance. It is now a shared activity.
3. The (cup) relationship, itself, is very fragile. Cracks and damage show up easily on the cup.

### **Love Gets Confusing:**

10 minutes

Participants should be asked to identify what constitutes an unhealthy relationship. Answers could include, but are not exclusive to secrecy, blurred boundaries, preoccupation, coercion, power imbalance, lack of freedom or consent, hurtful to others, lack of empathy, and/or causing isolation.

There are many mixed messages in the media about relationships that can be confusing. Often, in our movies or song, we have representations of a love that seems to be

- Possessive - This is often evidenced by the language we use, “my” boy/girlfriend, “my” prom/wedding vs. “ours”. Jealousy is the clearest symptoms of this.
- Selective – This is a ‘pick and choose” mentality about a friendship/relationship. We choose to be in relationship for the good or easy times but avoid the difficult.
- Fragile - We always have to be very careful as to not offend or to do damage to the relationship.
- Limiting - It always seems that the relationship is more about getting than giving.

Acts of selfishness do not keep us open to the grace of the Lord's friendship. They will confuse us and others about God's purpose for the human body which is created to love and not to "use." Selfish acts are sinful but loving acts communicate gift, commitment, trust, affection, and respect.

For each of the above bullet points, guide the group to identify a song, television plot-line or movie that serves as an example. At times the media conditions us that sex and violence are the same. Help participants understand that there is a difference between sexuality and violence. Sexuality is meant to connect us while violence violates and devalues the other. Follow-up each category searching for the emotional implications of each. What are the implications of "love" which is possessive, selective, fragile and limiting?

### **God's Love is:**

10 minutes

Participants should be asked to identify what constitutes a healthy relationship. Answers could include, but are not exclusive to: appropriate sharing of information, understanding and respecting boundaries, concern for safety, striving for equality, empathy, nurturing, and/ or expressing feelings.

Because we are created in God's image and likeness:

- Free - There are no conditions placed on God's love. God has made an active choice to love and always continues to act upon that choice.
- Full – God's love is complete- God gives himself completely without reservation or qualification. God is invested in you.
- Faithful – God love is consistent and is not diminished by the unfaithfulness of the other. God keeps his commitments
- Fruitful - God's love is generous. It is a love that does not limit but generates more love. God's love is a love of abundance and is life-giving.

(the four characteristics of love are found in Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Of Human Life*.)

To love is to will the good of another. Human beings are created in God's own image and likeness for love: to receive God's love in order to love God, ourselves and our neighbor; and to receive love from others

Please review each bullet seeking how that might be best experienced in a "love"/ dating situation. Follow-up each category searching for the emotional implications of each. What are the implications of love that is free, full, faithful, and fruitful?

### **How to Crush a "Love" Relationship**

10 minutes

Selfishness will invariably help to crush a relationship. Participants should be asked to brainstorm the many different ways that relationships receive damage.

Participants should be made aware that there are some ways that will guarantee that the relationship and the participants of the relationship will inevitably become crushed.

- With a lack of balance in ages between those in the relationship. In teenage years, three or four years is an immense difference in experience, maturity, and opportunity.
- With a lack of balance in control of the relationship. If one party determines all the decisions or the “rules” of a relationship, the other party becomes more of a possession or an object in the relationship which could be easily dismissed or abused.
- With violence within a relationship. Physical, mental, or emotional violence disrespects the dignity of the other person.

Finally, any physical/ sexual relationship with an adult has a clear imbalance in ages, power and control, and is likely to have some form of violence involved. These relationships are bound to cause harm.

### **Avoid Being Crush-ed**

10 minutes

Return to the visual cue of the two people in relationship with their feet on the cup. If one or the other is exhibiting attitudes or behaviors likely to crush the relationship, it is responsible for the other, if possible, to speak up. Here are steps to avoid being crushed-ed within relationships, recognizing that in every relationship each person has the right to say NO or STOP!

- 1) Clearly indicate NO or STOP!
- 2) Clearly identify the behavior or attitude  
“When you . . . .”
- 3) Identify the implications  
“I feel . . . .”
- 4) Identify the desired change that would bring more balance to the relationship.  
“So, please, would you . . . “

But, most often, these “guaranteed” crushers are repeated through a pattern or a cycle within a person’s relationships. Therefore, the above four step need to be repeated but with a trusted adult. The final step should be a request for assistance and help.

***In an unbalanced relationship, it may be inappropriate and potentially dangerous to address these conditions with the other person in the relationship. For this reason, be sure to make the point that a young person in such a relationship should work through these steps with a trusted adult who can guide them to the help they need to be safe and healthy.***

Have participants role play sides of this conversation—How would they speak up for themselves and communicate with the other person in the relationship? How would they ask for help from a trusted adult?

**Wrap Up**

Close the session by asking participants to respond to the following questions about today's lesson.

I learned \_\_\_\_\_.

I remembered \_\_\_\_\_.

I was surprised by \_\_\_\_\_.

**Prayer**

We praise you, Lord,  
For your gentle love for us.

We who are made in your own image  
Are created to love as you have loved us,  
Freely and faithfully.

Strengthen our hearts so that  
We will be witnesses of your love with one another  
And that we, body and soul, may be fully in service of your will.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord,

AMEN

# Created to Love

## Parent Pages

### High School Session Healthy Relationships

#### The Point

God wants for us to have healthy relationships with one another. Our human relationships can and should be our best source of hints towards God's love for us.

#### Learning Objectives

During this presentation, we discussed the following:

- All relationships are an opportunity to experience the love of God through that relationship
- There is a clear difference between a healthy relationship and an unhealthy relationship.
- Unhealthy relationships include relationships where there is an imbalance of the relationship in age, power, and/ or violence.
  - Relationships of a sexual nature that involve adults and teens are unhealthy as they exhibit the characteristics of an imbalanced relationship and are against social, developmental, moral, and legal mores.
- Healthy Relationships foster appropriate sharing of information, respect for boundaries, concern for safety, striving for equality, empathy, nurturing, and expression of feelings
- The media often conditions us to understand that sex and violence are in the same category. Yet, sexuality is meant to connect us while violence violates and devalues the other.
- Participants will have a clear understanding of their right to say "No."



#### Family Discussion Questions

- I understand relationships were compared to paper cups. What did that mean?
- What makes for an unhealthy relationship?
- How and why is love meant to be free, full, fruitful and faithful?
- How can people get crushed in a love relationship? How can I help you avoid such a thing?





# Created to Love

## High School Session

### Decision Making

### Theological Research



**CCC 2343** Chastity has *laws of growth* which progress through stages marked by imperfection and too often by sin. "Man . . . day by day builds himself up through his many free decisions; and so he knows, loves, and accomplishes moral good by stages of growth."

**CCC 407** The doctrine of original sin, closely connected with that of redemption by Christ, provides lucid discernment of man's situation and activity in the world. By our first parents' sin, the devil has acquired a certain domination over man, even though man remains free. Original sin entails "captivity under the power of him who thenceforth had the power of death, that is, the devil". Ignorance of the fact that man has a wounded nature inclined to evil gives rise to serious errors in the areas of education, politics, social action and morals.

**CCC 2847** The Holy Spirit makes us *discern* between trials, which are necessary for the growth of the inner man, and temptation, which leads to sin and death.<sup>153</sup> We must also discern between being tempted and consenting to temptation. Finally, discernment unmasks the lie of temptation, whose object appears to be good, a "delight to the eyes" and desirable, when in reality its fruit is death.

**CCC 2848** "Lead us not into temptation" implies a *decision of the heart*: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. . . . No one can serve two masters." "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." In this assent to the Holy Spirit the Father gives us strength. "No testing has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, so that you may be able to endure it."

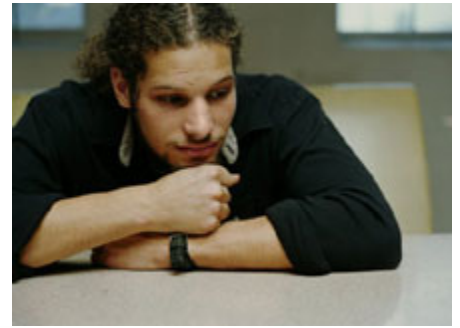
Lord, look upon our troubled times, which need preachers of the Gospel, witnesses to you, persons who can point the way towards 'life in abundance'! Look upon our world and feel pity once more! Look upon our world and send us labourers! With this petition we knock on God's door; but with the same petition the Lord is also knocking on the doors of our own heart. Lord do you want me? Is it not perhaps too big for me? Am I too small for this? "Do not be afraid", the Angel said to Mary. "Do not fear: I have called you by name", God says through the Prophet Isaiah (43:1) to us - to each of us.

**Pope Benedict XVI**  
**Monday, September 11, 2006,**  
**Vespers at Altötting's Basilika St. Anna**



# Created to Love

## High School Decision Making Prayer Service



### Opening Prayer

Loving God,

We are abundantly blessed with the ability to make decisions in our lives. Help us to make decisions that are consistent with your love for us and our love for others. Help us to develop our critical thinking skills, set aside precious time for reflection, and continue to grow our relationship with you in prayer. **AMEN.**

### First Reading Sirach 15:14-20

A Reading from the Book of Sirach

When God, in the beginning, created man, he made him subject to his own free choice. If you choose you can keep the commandments; it is loyalty to do his will. There are set before you fire and water; to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand. Before man are life and death, whichever he chooses shall be given him. Immense is the wisdom of the LORD; he is mighty in power, and all-seeing. The eyes of God see all he has made; he understands man's every deed. No man does he command to sin, to none does he give strength for lies.

The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

### Psalm 26: 1-3, 11-12

Side One: Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity,

Side Two: **And I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.**

Side One: Examine me, O Lord, and try me;

Side Two: **Test my mind and my heart.**

Side One: For Your loving kindness is before my eyes,

Side Two: **And I have walked in Your truth.**

Side One: I do not sit with deceitful men,  
Side Two: **Nor will I go with pretenders.**

Side One: But as for me, I shall walk in my integrity;  
Side Two: **Redeem me, and be gracious to me.**

Side One: My foot stands on a level place;  
Side Two: **In the congregations I shall bless the Lord.**

**Second Reading** Ephesians 5:7-17

A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians,

Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.

But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you." Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

The Word of the Lord  
**All: Thanks be to God**

**Reflection**: (To be shared in small groups of two or three)

Our reading from Sirach tells us: "When God, in the beginning, created man, he made him subject to his own free choice." But our ability to choose does not come without responsibility.

- How do we know if we are making a responsible decision?
- How can God be part of our decision-making process?

**Intercession**

Leader: Let us pray to our Lord for wisdom and guidance.

That our hearts may be open to God's guidance in the decisions that we face, we pray.  
**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

That we may grow to understand the impact that our decisions have, both on our own lives and on others around us, we pray.  
**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

That we may have the courage to ask for help when we need it and to know that God is with us in prayer and through the actions of trusted adults and friends, we pray.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

That those who have experienced pain and suffering as the result of a decision, may come to know the healing and peace of Christ, we pray.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

Leader: God, your wisdom guides us through life. Hear our prayers offered here and be with us as we face the challenges ahead. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen**

### Closing Prayer

Generous God,

We thank you for the opportunity to be together as a community. Guide us as we daily “walk as children of the Light” among our families, with our friends and with all of your people. Help us to be people of holiness who make thoughtful, prayerful decisions throughout our lives. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



# Created to Love

## High School Session

### Decision Making

### Lesson Plan



**The Point:** God has given us the gift to freely choose.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

During this presentation, it is essential to communicate the following:

- All decisions have consequences. Sometimes these are positive and other times they are negative.
- Decisions that we make impact others around us, not just ourselves.
- We can turn to God for guidance in making decisions. Parents and/or other trusted adults can also help us.
- Participants will work through a process of consulting others, adults, and God along with their own personal discernment devices.
- Participants will develop accountability partnerships.

#### **Preparation Check List**

- Newsprint, markers, easel
- Copies of “Accountability Partner Worksheet”
- Send home “Parent Page” (email recommended)

#### **Ice-breaker/ Starting point**

10 minutes

Play “The Telephone Game.” Develop a message that has a set of details and have each participant pass it along secretly person-by-person. Compare and contrast the beginning message and the message that had been passed along.

*EXAMPLE MESSAGE: “For the Lord gives wisdom, from his mouth come wisdom and understanding; He has counsel in store for the upright, he is the shield of those who walk honestly. (Proverbs 2: 6-7)”*

Develop a second, slightly more complicated message and play the game again with the participants going in reverse order. Instead of conducting the game in secret, have the message presented out loud between the participants.

Develop a third, even slightly more complicated message and play the game one more time. This time, allow all the participants to prompt, correct, and/or clarify during the transaction of the message.

### **The Nature of Decisions**

10 minutes

Decisions are personal. They involve the individual and most often will result in either negative or positive individual consequences after the decision has been made.

Give the participants three examples of decisions and ask them to come up with examples of positive and negative consequences for each decision. Make sure to give equal emphasis between positive consequences and negative consequences. \*\*At this point, avoid getting into a discussion about really heavy decisions. Stick with lighter fare.

*EXAMPLES: The decision to run for student council.  
The decision to copy my homework from the internet.*

What is not often considered is that decisions will still impact others around us

Ask participants for examples of positive and negative consequences for others from individual decisions made by them.

### **Involving Others in Your Decision Making**

10 minutes

Consider every decision-making process you have ever learned in school.

- Where does the role of involving others fit into those designs?
- Where does the role of involving parents and/or other trusted adults fit into those designs?
- Where does the role of involving God fit into those designs?

### **Seeking Long-Term Happiness**

10 minutes

Consider your long range goals in many of the following areas: (Worksheet)

- Employment
- Relationship/ Marriage
- Your own family relationships
- Relationship with the church
- Personal Success
- Financial Success
- Independence

## Accountability Partnerships

10 minutes

Read Luke 1: 39- 56

During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

As with the Telephone Game we played at the start, we can communicate with greater clarity from beginning to end if we make our commitments more public and less private.

What is an accountability partner? A person you can trust who can help to hold you accountable to your plans for the future. Using the worksheet provided, begin to plan for a meeting with an accountability partner.

Distribute "Accountability Partner Worksheet" and an envelope to each participant. Participants should complete the worksheet privately, then seal the completed worksheet inside the envelope.

Participants should discuss how they might plan to share these with an accountability partner. They should brainstorm the qualities that will make a good accountability partner.

When the discussion is finished, they should write on the outside of the envelope a name or two of possible accountability partners and a time-frame during which they will pursue this relationship.

Finally, the facilitator should call the participants' attention to the gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, in which they can prayerfully have this same dialogue.



**Wrap Up**

Close the session by asking participants to respond to the following questions about today's lesson.

I learned \_\_\_\_\_.

I remembered \_\_\_\_\_.

I was surprised by \_\_\_\_\_.

**Prayer**

We praise you, Lord,  
For your gentle love for us.

We who are made in your own image  
Are created to love as you have loved us,  
Freely and faithfully.

Strengthen our hearts so that  
We will be witnesses of your love with one another  
And that we, body and soul, may be fully in service of your will.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord,

AMEN

# Accountability Partner Worksheet

Mary and Elizabeth had a special relationship with one another in which they seemed to seek out the best for each other. Do you have a relationship with someone who can help to hold you accountable to your plans for the future? Use this worksheet as a guide for setting life goals and sharing them with an accountability partner.

“Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do.”  
-- 1 Thessalonians 5:11

## FUTURE PLANS:

- How do you envision your life of faith with God?
- What are your hopes and dreams for yourself?
- How do you envision your life of love with others?

## PRAYER:

- How will you pray for your accountability partner?
- How will you pray for others with whom you will be in relationships, including boy/girlfriends and future spouses?
- How will you ask for prayers from others when you need their support?

## JUDGEMENT:

- How will you share with another your concerns about making right choices?
- Are your actions consistent with your plans for the future?
- Are your actions consistent with your faith?

## ENCOURAGEMENT:

- In what elements of your life do you live with integrity and wholeness in your choices as well as in your faith and plans for the future?
- In what areas of your life have you potentially placed yourself at risk? What changes might you need to make?
- In what areas might you continue to grow?

“Two are better than one . . . If one falls, the other will lift up his companion. Woe to the solitary man! For if he should fall, he has no one to lift him up.”  
-- Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

# Created to Love

## Parent Pages

### High School Session Decision Making

#### **The Point**

God has given us the gift to freely choose.

#### **Learning Objectives**

During this presentation, we discussed the following:

- All decisions have consequences. Sometimes these are positive and other times they are negative.
- Decisions that we make impact others around us, not just ourselves.
- We can turn to God for guidance in making decisions. Parents and/or other trusted adults can also help us.
- Participants will work through a process of consulting others, adults, and God along with their own personal discernment devices.
- Participants will develop accountability partnerships.

#### **Family Discussion Questions**

- You discussed some long-term consequences of decisions. What are some examples you heard?
- Can decisions made today have longer term positive or negative consequences? How?
- What was discussed regarding the concept of accountability partners?





# Created to Love

## High School Session

### Abstinence

### Theological Rationale



**CCC 332** *Sexuality* affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of his body and soul. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to love and to procreate, and in a more general way the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others.

**CCC 2338** The chaste person maintains the integrity of the powers of life and love placed in him. This integrity ensures the unity of the person; it is opposed to any behavior that would impair it. It tolerates neither a double life nor duplicity in speech.

**CCC 2339** Chastity includes an *apprenticeship in self-mastery* which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy. "Man's dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint. Man gains such dignity when, ridding himself of all slavery to the passions, he presses forward to his goal by freely choosing what is good and, by his diligence and skill, effectively secures for himself the means suited to this end."

**CCC 2341** The virtue of chastity comes under the cardinal virtue of *temperance*, which seeks to permeate the passions and appetites of the senses with reason.

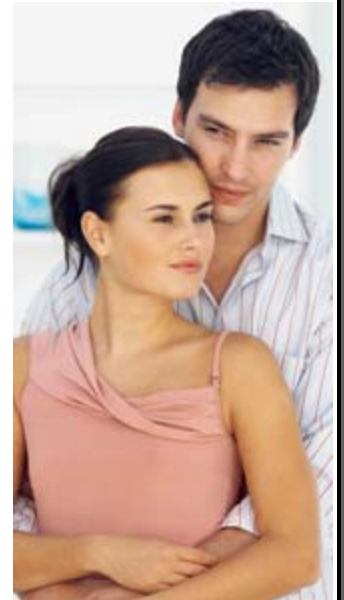
"Chastity promotes the full integration of sexuality within the person, in accord with their state of life—married, single, professed religion, or consecrated celibate. Chastity promotes abstention from immoral sexual activity" (CFCL I, A, 21)

"Chastity flows from the moral virtue of temperance that helps us direct our sexuality and sexual desires toward authentic love and away from using persons as objects for sexual pleasure. Chastity is not a matter of repression of sexual feelings and temptations but the successful integration of the gift of sexuality within the whole person. To integrate the gift of sexuality means to make it subordinate to love and respect through the practice of chastity" (CFCL I, A, 23).

# Created to Love



## High School Abstinence Prayer Service



"Chastity includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery ... either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy."

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

### Opening Prayer

Loving God, you breathed life into each one of us—body, mind, and soul. Guide us to recognize your gift of life that we may dedicate our whole selves to your will. Amen.

### First Reading Romans 12:1-4

A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans,

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

Psalm 119:129-133, 135

Leader: Lord, let your face shine on me.

**Response: Lord, let your face shine on me.**

Wonderful are your decrees; therefore I observe them.

**Response: Lord, let your face shine on me.**

The revelation of your words sheds light, gives understanding to the simple.

**Response: Lord, let your face shine on me.**

I gasp with open mouth in my yearning for your commands.

**Response: Lord, let your face shine on me.**

Turn to me in pity as you turn to those who love your name.

**Response: Lord, let your face shine on me.**

Steady my footsteps according to your promise, and let no iniquity rule over me.

**Response: Lord, let your face shine on me.**

Let your countenance shine upon your servant, and teach me your statutes.

**Response: Lord, let your face shine on me.**



Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 4: 1-5a, 7

A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians,

Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more. For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion . . . For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.

The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

Reflection : (To be shared in small groups of two or three)

In our scripture reading, St. Paul tells us “Do not be conformed to this world.”

- What does it mean to be “conformed to this world”?
- Why does St. Paul warn us about this?

Closing Prayer

God of wisdom,

Through your goodness, you created each one of us to reflect your love in the world.

Keep us ever mindful of that love, which calls us to dedicate ourselves to a higher purpose. Guide us to treat others with respect and to know ourselves as deserving of respect in return, that we may use our gifts in your service. Amen.



# Created to Love

## High School Session

### Abstinence

### Lesson Plan



**The Point:** God calls each of us to direct our sexuality toward authentic love and away from using persons as objects merely for sexual pleasure.

#### Learning Objectives

During this presentation it is essential to communicate the following:

- Sexuality is more than just sexual behaviors; it is part of who we are from birth.
- Chastity promotes the full integration of sexuality within the person, in accord with their lifestyle—married, single, professed religious, or consecrated celibate.
- Chastity promotes abstention from immoral sexual activity.
- Although it is tempting to reduce sex to a series of behaviors made for pleasure, God intended it to be much more—an act of intimacy, love, and trust between husband and wife for the purpose of union and procreation.

#### Preparation

- Newsprint, markers, easel
- Designate sides of the room for “voting with feet” icebreaker.
- Send home “Parent Page” (email recommended).

#### Ice-breaker/ Starting point

10 minutes

This is a standard “voting with your feet” activity. Designate two sides of the room as either “want” or “need.” If a participant is unsure, they can move towards the middle. Have them identify, if the following is a want or a need:

- |             |             |                  |                  |
|-------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| > Car       | > Computer  | > Roof Over Head | > Drinking Water |
| > Latest CD | > Food      | > School         | > Parents        |
| > Church    | > Telephone | > Friends        | > The Sun        |
| > A Pet     | > Computer  | > God            | > Sex            |

Have the participants identify the difference between a want and a need.

#### Understanding the Gift of Self

15 minutes



Invite the participants to retell the story of Creation to you and the rest of the participants.

If they start to wander into Adam and Eve, remind them that this is Genesis Chapter 1 and ask them to focus on the first story of creation.

Make sure the participants are able to emphasize the following points:

- God had a plan for creation.
- At the end of each day, God declared his creation “good.”
- On the sixth day: (Genesis 1:27) God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them.
- At the end of that day, God declared his creation of humanity to be “very Good”

Discussion:

1. What does it mean to be created in God’s image and likeness? How does that work? Where is the image and likeness of God in you?
2. What does it mean that all of creation was evaluated as “good” but that humanity is “very good?” Are we (each individually) God’s very best creation, God’s masterpiece?
3. Why did God make us in God’s own image—male and female? What does that mean and what are the implications for us in that?

**Implication of Creation Get Personal:**

10 minutes

Discuss the following:

- If we each are God best creation, made in the image and likeness of the Creator, how should we treat one another?
- Should there be a sense of equality in humanity as “in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them?”
- If we are created “in the divine image” does not every encounter with each other the opportunity of a hint of the goodness of the Lord? How does that play out, then:
  - When we sin by harming in some manner another person?
  - When we are playing an intense game against a rival?
  - When we do a random act of kindness for another?
  - When we are in a fight?
  - When we kiss a boy/girlfriend?

## **Worth the Wait**

10 minutes

The act of physical intimacy communicates spiritual realities, whether or not they are conscious or intended. It gives great pleasure and comfort. It is a wonderful act of intimacy that conveys so much- Gift, Commitment, Trust, and Affection. Any “intimate act” (hand holding, hugging, kissing, or anything else including “making love”) that does not communicate these things is not really an act of intimacy. It is an act of selfishness. It is important not to confuse intimacy and selfishness.

We should always take care to protect the gift we have within us. When others selfishly attempt to misuse the gift of our sexuality, we must recognize that it is their selfishness and not ours. From these experiences, we must find ways to protect ourselves and our gift in the future.

## **Self Control:**

5 minutes

Because we are created in God’s image and likeness:

- Free - There are no conditions placed on God’s love. God has made an active choice to love and always continues to act upon that choice.
- Full – God’s love is complete- God gives himself completely without reservation or qualification. God is invested in you.
- Faithful – God’s love is consistent and is not diminished by the unfaithfulness of the other. God keeps his commitments
- Fruitful - God’s love is generous. It is a love that does not limit but generates more love. God’s love is a love of abundance and is life-giving.

(the four characteristics of love are found in Pope Paul VI’s encyclical *Of Human Life*. )

Please review each bullet seeking how that might be best experienced in a “love”/ dating situation. Follow-up each category searching for the emotional implications of each.

## **Wrap Up**

Close the session by asking participants to respond to the following questions about today’s lesson.

I learned \_\_\_\_\_.

I remembered \_\_\_\_\_.

I was surprised by \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Prayer**

We praise you, Lord,  
For your gentle love for us.

We who are made in your own image  
Are created to love as you have loved us,  
Freely and faithfully.

Strengthen our hearts so that  
We will be witnesses of your love with one another  
And we, body and soul, may be fully in service of your will.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord,

AMEN

# Created to Love

## Parent Pages

### High School Session Abstinence

#### The Point

God calls each of us to direct our sexuality toward authentic love and away from using persons as objects merely for sexual pleasure.

#### Learning Objectives

During this presentation we discussed the following:

- Sexuality is more than just sexual behaviors; it is part of who we are from birth.
- Chastity promotes the full integration of sexuality within the person, in accord with their lifestyle—married, single, professed religious, or consecrated celibate.
- Chastity promotes abstention from immoral sexual activity.
- Although it is tempting to reduce sex to a series of behaviors made for pleasure, God intended it to be much more—an act of intimacy, love, and trust between husband and wife for the purpose of union and procreation.

#### Family Discussion Questions

- What does it mean to be created in God's own image and likeness?
- If we are God's best creation, what does that tell us about how we should treat one another?
- Tell me about intimacy. What kinds of things are communicated through physical intimacy within the context of a truly loving relationship? (Remember the definition of God's love . . . it is free, full, faithful and fruitful.)

**Marriage is an act of will that signifies and involves a mutual gift, which unites the spouses and binds them to their eventual souls, with whom they make up a sole family - a domestic church.**

**-- Pope John Paul II**



# Created to Love

## High School Session

### Sacramentality of Marriage

### Theological Rationale



**CCC 2333** Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual *identity*. Physical, moral, and spiritual *difference* and *complementarity* are oriented toward the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life. The harmony of the couple and of society depends in part on the way in which the complementarity, needs, and mutual support between the sexes are lived out.

**CCC 2334** "In creating men 'male and female,' God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity." "Man is a person, man and woman equally so, since both were created in the image and likeness of the personal God."

**CCC 2335** Each of the two sexes is an image of the power and tenderness of God, with equal dignity though in a different way. The *union of man and woman* in marriage is a way of imitating in the flesh the Creator's generosity and fecundity: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." All human generations proceed from this union.

**CCC 1660** The marriage covenant, by which a man and a woman form with each other an intimate communion of life and love, has been founded and endowed with its own special laws by the Creator. By its very nature it is ordered to the good of the couple, as well as to the generation and education of children. Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of a sacrament.

**CCC 1661** The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1799).

**CCC 1662** Marriage is based on the consent of the contracting parties, that is, on their will to give themselves, each to the other, mutually and definitively, in order to live a covenant of faithful and fruitful love.

**2360** Sexuality is ordered to the conjugal love of man and woman. In marriage the physical intimacy of the spouses becomes a sign and pledge of spiritual communion. Marriage bonds between baptized persons are sanctified by the sacrament.

**2361** "Sexuality, by means of which man and woman give themselves to one another through the acts which are proper and exclusive to spouses, is not something simply biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such. It is realized in a truly human way only if it is an integral part of the love by which a man and woman commit themselves totally to one another until death."

"Conjugal love between husband and wife is part of God's plan for humanity. Marriage is a life-long communion of a man and woman constituted by a mutual gift of self which is called to image the inner life of the Trinity. When conjugal love is faithful, exclusive and open to life, it is a blessing to the couple, and through them to the Church and to the world" (CFCL I, A, 29).



"Married people are called to love in conjugal chastity, while those unmarried live a chastity of continence" (CFCL I, A, 30).



# Created to Love

## High School Session

### Sacramentality of Marriage

#### Prayer Service



#### Opening Prayer

Loving God,

Just as you created each one of us to reflect your love, you instituted the sacrament of marriage through which your grace flows between husband and wife. Open our hearts to explore and understand the gift of married love. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.  
AMEN.

#### First Reading Mark 10:2-12

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Some Pharisees came up to Jesus, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife. And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?" They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of Divorce and send her away." But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and the two shall become one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.

The Gospel of the Lord

**All: Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ**

#### Psalm 145:8-9, 10, 15, 17-18

Side One:      The Lord is gracious and merciful;  
                      Slow to anger and great in loving kindness.

Side Two:      **The Lord is good to all,**  
                      **And His mercies are over all His works.**

Side One: All Your works shall give thanks to You, O Lord,  
And Your godly ones shall bless You.

**Side Two: The eyes of all look to You,  
And You give them their food in due time.**

Side One: You open Your hand  
And satisfy the desire of every living thing.

**Side Two: The Lord is righteous in all His ways  
And kind in all His deeds.**

Side One: The Lord is near to all who call upon Him,  
To all who call upon Him in truth.



### Second Reading John 15:9-12

A Reading from the Gospel of John  
**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

“Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”

The Gospel of the Lord  
**Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ**

### Reflection : (To be shared in small groups of two or three)

Today we heard Jesus’ words about marriage and also listened to a reading from St. Paul which is very popular to hear at weddings.

- How is marriage different from other types of relationships? What sets marriage apart?
- How is God involved in a marriage?

### Closing Prayer

God of Hope,

You created each of us. Help us to understand the sacredness of marriage as a vocation, and to keep our hearts open to your call, not matter where it may lead us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.





# Created to Love

## High School Session

### Sacramentality of Marriage

### Lesson Plan



#### **The Point**

The Sacrament of Matrimony gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love which Christ has loved his Church.

#### **Learning Objectives**

During this presentation, it is essential to cover the following points:

- Marriage is a Sacrament through which God's grace perfects the human love of spouses, strengthens their unity and sanctifies them.
- Sexual intercourse can and should be the outward sign (for the married couple) of the inward grace (God's love for them) of the sacrament.
- Marriage is based on the free consent of the husband and wife, who willingly give themselves to one another in order to live a covenant of faithful and fruitful love. Their intention is to have a permanent union and to be open to the gift of children.

#### **Preparation Check List**

- Newsprint, markers, easel
- Copies of "Personal Plan for Dating and Marriage" (High School Version)
- Send home "Parent Page" (email recommended).

#### **Ice-breaker/ Starting point**

10 minutes

Invite young people into a discussion regarding weddings. What was the last wedding that they attended? Who was getting married? What was the relationship to the couple? What do they remember from the ceremony or the reception?

In terms of planning ahead... If and when they get married, the one thing that they want to see occur during the entire thing would be what? What do they NOT want to repeat that they have already seen at wedding/ reception? Why?

#### **Sacrament**

5 minutes

Definition: Sacraments are outward signs of inward grace, instituted by Christ for our sanctification.

Let's review..... You've seen sacraments. You've experienced grace (a help or gift from God) in those sacraments. Make the connections for these both- signs and grace - in Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation.

<u>Sacrament</u>		<u>Signs</u>	<u>Grace</u>
Baptism	-	waters	- forgiveness of sin, membership in community
Reconciliation	-	sign of peace	- forgiveness of sin,
Eucharist	-	bread, wine	- Communion with Jesus and community
Confirmation	-	oils	- sealed with Spirit and community

### **Sacramentality of Relationship**

5 minutes

Ask the young people to do the very same with Marriage. They've seen weddings, what's the sign or symbol.

Allow them to define the meaning of rings, unity candle, "the kiss," the public vows, the passing from father to betrothed after walking down the aisle. Let them know that all of these are "close" but not it.

### **The Marital Act**

15 minutes

Ask them if they have ever heard the phrase "the Marital Act?" Ask them what it means. Make sure that it is clearly identified as sexual intercourse. Ask why they believe that it is understood as "the Marital Act."

The Church believes that sexual intercourse can and should be the outward sign (for the married couple) of the inward grace (of God's love for them)



Remind the participants of the definition of God's Love from the Healthy Relationships segment of this process.

Because we are created in God's image and likeness:

- Free - There are no conditions placed on God's love. God has made an active choice to love and always continues to act upon that choice.
- Full – God's love is complete- God gives himself completely without reservation or qualification. God is invested in you.
- Faithful – God love is consistent and is not diminished by the unfaithfulness of the other. God keeps his commitments
- Fruitful - God's love is generous. It is a love that does not limit but generates more love. God's love is a love of abundance and is life-giving.

(the four characteristics of love are found in Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Of Human Life*.)

Ask the Participants to redefine their understanding of Sexual Intercourse through Marital Love as Free, Full, Faithful, and Fruitful.

Remind participants that any sexual experience that is not equal or free is not an expression of love.

Invite Participants to explore how sexual intercourse outside a marriage relationship (this includes pre-marital sex and/or extra-marital affairs... aka adultery) fails to live up to their definitions.

**Sex is Good:**

10 minutes

Make no mistake. The Church thinks that sex is good. It's part of God's will for who we are.

It gives great pleasure and comfort. It is a wonderful act of intimacy that conveys so much- Gift, Commitment, Trust, and Affection. Any "intimate act" (hand holding, hugging, kissing, or anything else including "making love") that does not communicate these things is not really an act of intimacy. It is an act of selfishness. It is important not to confuse intimacy and selfishness.

**Note to Self:**

10 minutes

Participants will be invited to write out a personal plan for dating and the possibility of marriage.

Motivations:

- I date because I enjoy having an escort to parties and other social events.
- I date because it is better to go to movies and other things with someone so that we can discuss it afterwards.
- I date because I do enjoy "being close" to "someone special"

Goals:

- I am looking for a partner with whom I can share various parts of my life.
- I am looking for a partner with whom I can share my feelings.
- I am looking for "someone special" date.

After completing this task, review your list with a neighbor.

What would this list say about you? How would a future date read it? How would your parents read it? How would your future spouse read it?

**Wrap Up**

Close the session by asking participants to respond to the following questions about today's lesson.

I learned \_\_\_\_\_.

I remembered \_\_\_\_\_.

I was surprised by \_\_\_\_\_.

**Prayer**

We praise you, Lord,  
For your gentle love for us.

We who are made in your own image  
Are created to love as you have loved us,  
Freely and faithfully.

Strengthen our hearts so that  
We will be witnesses of your love with one another  
And that we, body and soul, may be fully in service of your will.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord,

AMEN

## Personal Plan for Dating and Marriage (Maybe?)

People date for lots of reasons. We are all looking for different qualities in our potential partner. Take some time to think about and respond to the following statements. After completing this task, choose some portion that you feel comfortable sharing and discuss it with a neighbor.

### What are my reasons for dating?

I date because . . .



### What are my relationship goals?

I am looking for a partner who . . .



### Discussion Questions:

What does this list say about you?

How would a future date read it?

How would your parents read it?

How would your future spouse read it?

# Created to Love

## Parent Pages

### High School Session

### Sacramentality of Marriage

#### **The Point**

The Sacrament of Matrimony gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love which Christ has loved his Church.

#### **Learning Objectives**

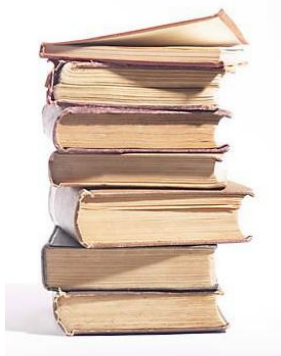
During this presentation, it is essential to cover the following points:

- Marriage is a Sacrament through which God's grace perfects the human love of spouses, strengthens their unity and sanctifies them.
- Sexual intercourse can and should be the outward sign (for the married couple) of the inward grace (God's love for them) of the sacrament.
- Marriage is based on the free consent of the husband and wife, who willingly give themselves to one another in order to live a covenant of faithful and fruitful love. Their intention is to have a permanent union and to be open to the gift of children.



#### **Family Discussion Questions**

- I understand you talked about marriage. How is God present in a marriage?
- Why is sexual intercourse called “the marital act”? How does it reflect God's love as free, full, faithful and fruitful?
- How does sex outside of marriage fail to live up to this definition of love?



# Created to Love

## Evaluation of Child Protection Curriculum within Other Resources

Listed below are several of the most commonly used resources for teaching about child protection and/or human sexuality within a Catholic context. Each of these has its own areas of focus as well as areas that could be supplemented to more fully address the broad scope of catechesis for human sexuality. This evaluation is not intended as a criticism of the materials listed below, but rather as a tool to guide catechists in supplementing their curriculum to provide the most comprehensive youth protection education possible. As always, it is important for catechists to maintain awareness that the young people they instruct may have experienced some form of abuse and/or may be currently dealing with it. Sensitivity, openness and trust are essential to guiding young people to a healthy understanding of God's gift of human sexuality, as well as empowering them to seek help when they need it.

**Accent on You: The Challenge of a Moral Life.** Hi-Time Publishing. Comment: This text does cover abuse within families, noting that some families use scripture as an excuse to abuse. It also defines obedience and limits to obedience (such as it children are asked to do a moral wrong they are not obliged to obey). To supplement this text, insert materials about abuse that occurs outside of the family.

**Accent on You: Relating to Self, Others, God.** Hi-Time Publishing. Comment: The focus of the text is relationships. Supplement these materials with discussions of unhealthy relationships, including what to do when relationships go wrong. In particular, it would be helpful to include information about abuse, boundaries and violence in relationships, as these discussions are not already included in the text.

**Building Catholic Character: Developing Christian Life Skills.** Janie Gustafson. Ave Maria Press. Comments: Part 3 (Power) includes lessons on "right" relationships with others, sexual abuse, dating violence, and problems with parents. Students are asked to create group presentations on these and other topics. Part 5 (Love) provides definitions of friendship and healthy relationships.

**Called to Love: Your Christian Vocation.** Mary Kathleen Glavich. Ave Maria Press. Comment: This text includes sections about healthy and troubled families but does not discuss sexual abuse. It is important to supplement with materials about

sexual abuse, as well as resources to help young people in troubling situations to find help.

**Catholic Values and Sexuality.** John E. Forliti. Brown ROA. Comment: This text does address the issue of sexual abuse (Lesson 15: Some Touch Hurts). It would be helpful to supplement these lessons with more explicit information about victims and offenders (for instance, that sexual abuse is not uncommon and that many offenders are people that are known and trusted). The text also discusses self-protection strategies. Again, be sure to supplement these lessons with resources for getting help.

**Challenge: Faith Filled Growth, Teacher Manual.** Comment: This manual does briefly cover the topic of “touch.” Teachers may need more guidance about how to discuss sensitive topics, particularly more specific information about what to teach about “touch.”

**Christian Life Choices Part 1: Personal Growth and Development.** Comment: This text provides a great deal of clinical information, including proper vocabulary terms and definitions. There is also a brief statement about date rape. It is important to supplement with information about boundaries and abuse, as well as to find ways to make these topics more interactive and engaging for young people.

**Christian Life Choices Part 3: Christian Marriage.** Comment: Again, this text provides clinical information, as well as some information about adultery and abuse. Supplement with more in-depth discussions about boundaries and abuse, as well as student-centered activities to keep young people engaged.

**Deciding.** Michele McCarty. Comment: This text provides a more comprehensive discussion about forgiveness for abuse. Abuse, itself, is more on the periphery without specific details being provided.

**Hi-TimeSeries.** Hi-Time Publishing. Comment: This resource does not include discussions of sexual abuse, boundaries or violence in relationships. These are all areas where supplementary materials would be helpful.

**Horizons: Taking Charge: Managing Life's Struggles.** Marilyn Kielbasa and Michael Theisen. Comment: Supplement this text with discussions about boundaries, power, healthy relationships and abuse.

**Horizons: Life-Giving Relationships.** Saint Mary's Press. Comments: This text explores relationships, including signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships, secrecy, balance of power and covenant relationships. Pair this curriculum with a lesson about why and how to seek help, and how to help friends seek help when they are in unhealthy relationships.



**Horizons: Dating and Love.** Micheal Theisen. Comments: This curriculum may be protective due to the messages about the Church's beliefs regarding sexual activity before marriage, yet it would be a good idea to point out that a much older person who encourages a dating relationship with a teen is a warning sign or red flag. *Healthy adults seek relationships with other adults.* The leader should understand that teens who become involved in sexual relationships with adults often believe that they are in loving, committed relationships that are headed toward marriage.

**Horizons: Sexuality:Challenges and Choices.** Michael Theisen. Comments: This resource includes a parent component and provides opportunities for young people to ask questions regarding all aspects of sexuality, including abuse. To get the most out of the session, the leader must be sensitive and open to questions from the young people.

**Living a Moral Life: Gifted and Growing.** Benziger. Comment: This text includes a brief discussion of date rape. Additional lessons about abuse and boundaries would be helpful. .

**Living Our Faith: Morality.** Harcourt. Comment: This text includes brief lessons about sexuality including a brief section about abuse and rape. Supplement with materials about offenders and victims, including how, when and why to seek help.

**Living the Christian Scriptures.** Joel Gorun. Comment: This resource includes a section about healthy relationships and brief discussions about sexual harassment and date rape. It also includes a section about forgiveness. It would be helpful for the catechist to acknowledge in some way that the feelings of people who have been abused and/or experienced severe trauma are complex and may not fit neatly into the definition of forgiveness that is offered in the text. Also supplement with information about how, when, and why to seek help.

**Marriage and Life Choices: The Catholic Experience.** David Thomas. Benziger. Comment: Supplement this resource with clear information about sexual abuse. Victims who were not outwardly threatened may not recognize their experience as abusive.

**Relating: A Christian Approach to Friendship and Love.** Michele McCarty. Comment: This text includes discussions about marriage and celibacy in the context of the sacredness of human sexuality. It does not cover relationships that are inappropriate for other reasons. It is important for the catechist to point out that while sexuality is a gift from God that must be respected, victims are never to blame for abuse. Supplement this lesson with discussions which show the features of healthy relationships.

**Sex and the Teenager: Choices and Decisions.** Kieran Sawyer. Ave Maria Press.

Comments: The chapter on sexual abuse includes statistics, effects, and encourages victims to seek help. It also shows that offenders may be people teens know and trust. The text provides case examples and references professionals in the field of child abuse treatment and prevention.

**Total Youth Ministry:Community Life.** Ann Marie Eckert. Saint Mary's Press.

Comments: Chapter 5 ("Making Friends") provides opportunities to discuss boundaries within friendships as well as appropriate vs. concerning relationships between same-age as well as not same age "friendship" relationships (include discussions of balance of power). Note that Chapter 8 ("Trust") activities require significant touching, including hugging, which may be uncomfortable for victims. The section addressing behavioral covenants may be helpful (p.174). Invite youth to participate in creating the covenant and in structuring the consequences for breaking the covenant. This entire chapter ("Promoting Positive Behavior in the Community") may be helpful to reprint for adult leaders. This curriculum does not include discussions about betrayals of trust. It may be helpful to supplement with this topic.

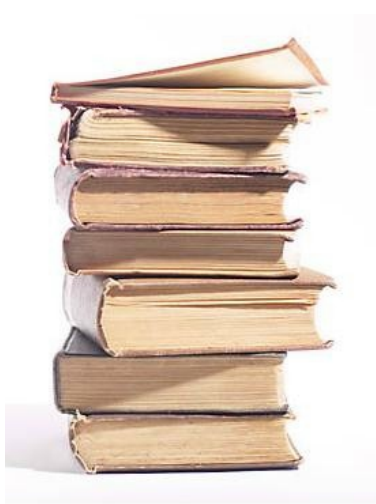
**Total Youth Ministry:Pastoral Care.** Mary Kielbasa. Comments: This curriculum is a good starting point for discussions about abusive relationships of all types. It includes sections about power imbalance, friendship, managing life's ups and downs, helping peers in crisis, sexuality and spirituality.

**Valuing Values:Sexuality Education and the Catholic Tradition.** John E. Forliti. .

Comment: This text does address some of the issues of abuse and trust. There is a lesson about the value of keeping promises. It is important for the catechist to balance this with guidelines about when it is important not to keep something a secret. Point out that most offenders are people who are known and trusted. Self-protection strategies are discussed. Supplement these with clear explanations that victims are not to blame for abuse (or failing to protect themselves). Be sure to provide resources for how to get help.

**Your Life in Christ:Foundations of Catholic Morality.** Michael Pennock. Ave Maria Press. Comment: This text does attempt a holistic understanding of sexuality, and discusses abuse and misuse of sexuality as offenses against marriage. Supplement these with more interactive lessons for recognizing victims and offenders and finding help for those who need it.

The Office of Child and Youth Protection and the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry are grateful to Allison West, Child Safe Program Manager for Catholic Charities for providing the evaluations of both the written and video supplemental resources for Created to Love.



# Created to Love

## Recommended Video

### Supplemental Material Regarding Child Protection

#### **Videos Available from the Archdiocese of Baltimore Media Resource Center**

*Christian Morality: Human Sexuality.* (6347.04) While this video does not address sexual abuse directly, it does provide a good foundation or starting point to lead into such a discussion. Appropriate for older teens and young adults.

*Katie's Secret.* (Available, but not in catalogue) Grades 7 – 12. Katie is being sexually abused at home by her mother's fiancé. A concerned teacher convinces Katie to tell her story. With support and encouragement she comes to realize that she is not alone. Discovery Education.

*Real Love 7: Love Means Never Having to Say Sorry.* (6141.07) Does not discuss abuse directly yet zeroes in on characteristics of healthy relationships. Asks the question "what is love?" and emphasizes empathy for others.

*Teen Files Flipped: Date Rape/Abusive Relationships.* (Available, but not in catalogue). For grades 6-12. Provides good discussion opportunities. AIMS Multimedia.

*True Love: Relationships.* (6142.04). Focuses on characteristics of healthy relationships including respect, accountability, and communication. Discusses rape but no other forms of abuse. Also raises the issue of secondary virginity.

*Youth Protection: Personal Safety Awareness.* (6662.03). For boys 7-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Includes discussions of acquaintance rape, internet safety, peer sexual harassment. Boy Scouts of America.



## Created to Love

### Sexual Abuse Fact Sheet

- Sexual abuse doesn't have to involve sexual intercourse – it can also include touching, fondling, prostitution, pornography, and obscene phone calls
- Studies indicate that one in four girls and one in seven boys have experienced some type of sexual abuse
- Sexual abuse offenders are not usually strangers to children – approximately 90 percent are known to children as friends, acquaintances, family members, teachers, camp counselors, etc.
- Offenders often “groom” their victims, building up trust and then betraying that trust. Sometimes offenders lead children to believe that the abuse was the child's fault. *Children are NEVER to blame for the abusive actions of adults.*
- Studies of offenders show that there is no “typical offender” – they often look just like anyone else.
- Victims of sexual abuse may cope in many ways. Some victims may appear withdrawn, while others may be over-achievers in school. You cannot always tell by someone's appearance or behavior whether or not they have been abused, although victims of sexual abuse are typically not as involved with their peers as other children.
- Sexual abuse can have many long-term effects on its victims. These include problems with self-esteem and self-concept, problems with interpersonal relationships, problems with school and academics, and sexual abuse can sometimes even lead to violent or self-destructive behaviors.
- It is believed that up to 90% of victims never tell anyone about their abuse. Many people who do tell do not tell right away, but rather wait weeks, months, or – in many cases – years, to disclose. *It is never too late to tell someone about abuse.*



# Created to Love

## Responding to Disclosures in Ways That Promote Trust and Healing

### What to do for the child.....

- 1. Remain calm. Allow the child to speak and tell their story.** Remember that this particular child has chosen you, a particular person, to tell because they trust you, believe in you, and feel comforted in your presence. **Breathe.**
- 2. Be supportive. Listen.** Provide encouragement through words and body language. Lean forward, focus on the child, nod to indicate that you are listening. Use open-ended questions and phrases such as “Can you tell me more about that?” “Uh huh,” and “What happened next?”
- 3. Remain neutral in tone. Be aware of facial expressions.** Expressions of shock, anger or disbelief may inhibit the child from continuing his or her story.
- 4. Refrain from asking closed-ended and leading questions.** Closed ended questions are questions that lead to a yes or no response, such as “Did this happen every night?” These questions limit the amount of information you can accurately gather from the child. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, allow children to tell their story in their own words. Leading questions, questions that suggest detailed information about people, places, and events, may confuse children by suggesting information to a child that causes them to remember events inaccurately. “Did Uncle Bill touch you in your private places under the covers?” is one example.
- 5. Congratulate him or her for sharing.** Acknowledge that sharing must have been very difficult and that they did the right thing by telling you about the abuse.
- 6. Respect the privacy of the child** by not telling any more people about the abuse than those who absolutely need to know.
- 7. MOST IMPORTANTLY, tell the child repeatedly that the abuse was not his or her fault, and that s/he has the right to feel safe.** Children often blame themselves for the abuse. Some perpetrators, in fact, convince children that they “wanted it” or “enjoyed it.” Other children may feel guilty either because they may have experienced some pleasurable sensations as a result of the abuse, or because they did not disclose the abuse sooner. From a developmental perspective, children are not able to provide informed consent to sexual activity of any type and, therefore, are NEVER to blame.

**8. Finally, remember that your job is not to investigate the allegation,** but rather to listen and provide support to the child and make the report to social services.

**What NOT to do or say....**

**1. Do not confront the offender.** You may put you or the child at risk of harm, and you may compromise an investigation.

**2. Do not offer empty promises, such as “everything will be okay.”** Children who are abused by caretakers will likely experience many losses as a result of the abuse and may be temporarily or permanently separated from their family, their home, their friends, their pets, their school. To a young child, this is not “okay.” Try to refrain from offering the child any picture of what the future may hold, other than to suggest that they did the right thing because now s/he can get the help they need to feel safe.

**3. Do not offer promises of which you are not certain,** such as that the abuser will be sent to jail. Evidence suggests that arrests are made in only about one in four cases of CSA.

**4. Do not say anything bad about the abuser,** particularly since it is often someone the child knows or the child cares about. Young children are often not capable of understanding that someone they love and trust could be capable of doing something harmful to them.



# Created to Love

## Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

Maryland requires that any person who suspects child abuse or neglect report it to the appropriate authorities. It does **NOT** require **PROOF** that abuse or neglect has occurred before reporting. Incidents are to be reported as soon as they are suspected. Professionals such as social workers, health practitioners and educators who knowingly fail to report suspected abuse of a child may be subject to professional sanctions by their licensing boards. For those who do report, the law provides protection for persons who make "good faith" reports are immune from civil liability and criminal penalty.

A child abuse reporting form is available online at:

<http://www.dhr.state.md.us/cps/mandated.htm>

### **Maryland Child Protective Services Phone Numbers**

**Allegany County:** (301)784-7122  
After hours: (301)759-0362

**Anne Arundel County:** (410) 421-8400  
(24 hours)

**Baltimore City:** (410)361-2235  
(24 hours)

**Baltimore County:** (410)853-3000  
(24 hours)

**Calvert County:** (443)550-6969  
After hours: (410)286-2100

**Caroline County:** (410)819-4500  
After hours call the Sheriff's office:  
(410)479-2515

**Carroll County:** (410)386-3434  
(24 hours)

**Cecil County:** (410)996-0100  
After hours: 410-996-0228

**Charles County:** (301)392-6739  
After hours call Sheriff's office:  
(301)934-2222

**Dorchester County:** (410)901-4100  
After hours: 410-221-3246

**Frederick County:** (301)694-2464

**Garrett County:** (301)533-3005  
After hours: (301)334-1911

**Harford County:** (410)836-4713  
After hours: (410)838-6600

**Howard County:** (410)872-8700  
After hours: (410)313-2929

**Kent County:** (410)810-7600  
After hours: (410)758-1101

**Montgomery County:** (240) 777-4417

**Prince George's County:** (301)909-2450  
After hours: (301)699-8605

**Queen Anne's County:** (410)-758-8000  
Alternate p.m. # 410-758-0770

**St. Mary's County:** (240)895-7016  
After hours: (301)475-8016

**Somerset County:** (410)677-4200  
After hours: (410)651-0630

**Talbot County:** (410)770-4848  
After hours call State Police: (410)822- 3101

**Washington County:** (240)420-2222  
(24 hours)

**Wicomico County:** (410)713-3900  
After hours: (410)548-4891

**Worcester County:** (410)677-6800  
After hours: 410-632-1111





## Created to Love

### Local Resources

#### **Child Safe**

An educational program of St. Vincent's Center and Catholic Charities, the Child Safe program seeks to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse through child, adult, and community outreach and education. Services include workshops and consultation for parents and other caregivers, professionals who work with children and families, and children. We also provide information and referrals. Call 410-252-4000 extension 1602.

#### **The Family Tree**

A non-profit organization which offers a wide range of child, family, and community-focused advocacy and outreach services aimed at breaking the cycle of child abuse and neglect. Services include parenting information and classes, school-based services, Family Stressline, Parents Anonymous groups, and community and volunteer education. Services are free of charge. Office are located in Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Howard, Harford, and Prince George's Counties. Main number: 410-889-2300. Family Stressline: 1-800-243-7337. Website: [www.familytreemd.org](http://www.familytreemd.org).

#### **House of Ruth**

Crisis hotline, temporary emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence, counseling for victims, abusers, children, legal information and court accompaniment, referrals to legal, financial, housing, and employment services. 410-889-0840. 24 hour hotline: 410-889-7884.

#### **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV)**

A state coalition working to eliminate domestic violence through education, training, and advocacy. For more information about domestic violence or to locate a service provider in your area, call the 24 hour statewide Helpline at 1-800-MD HELPS or visit [www.mnadv.org](http://www.mnadv.org).

#### **Survivors of Incest Anonymous, Inc.**

International network of anonymous, self-help meetings that can be used with other forms of therapy by survivors of child sexual abuse. Also provides literature, bulletins, pen-pals, and speakers. No fees. Website: [www.siawso.org](http://www.siawso.org)  
World Service Office, Benson, Maryland – 410-893-3322  
Catonsville – 410-719-9026; Lutherville – 443-413-3465;  
Owings Mills (women only) – 410-233-0280

**Turnaround, Inc.**

Provides individual and group counseling for adult, teenage and child victims of sexual assault and/or domestic violence. Other services include treatment programs for batterers, counseling for friends and families of survivors, hotline, emergency shelter, ER companion program, on-site school programs (therapeutic groups), community/professional outreach, community antiviolence project (addresses violence in the gay and lesbian community), Safe Homes-Safe Pets Program, and a Teen Empowerment Program. Towson: 410-377-8111; Rosedale: 410-391-2396; Baltimore City: 410-837-7000.