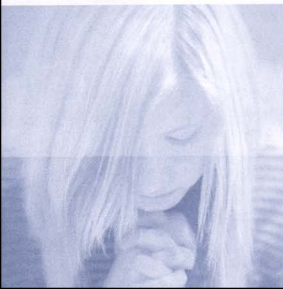


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## LEADER'S INTRODUCTION TO THE THEOLOGY OF THE BODY FOR TEENS CURRICULUM

Welcome to the *Theology of the Body for Teens* curriculum!

In this leader's guide you will find a wealth of activities and resources to help you bring Pope John Paul II's landmark teaching known as the Theology of the Body to your teens in a way that engages both their minds and hearts. The curriculum is both catechetical and evangelistic. We have made a great effort to make it accessible to the average student as well as interesting for those who are ready for an intellectual challenge. The curriculum also features a series of optional exercises within each lesson designed to create the best learning experience for your students.

Each chapter can be approached either as a single lesson (60 minutes) or two lessons (100-120 minutes). Whether it takes you one hour or two depends on the time you spend in discussion, which activities you choose, how quickly your students engage the program, and the amount of reading you have the students do outside of class time.

If you are already familiar with the Theology of the Body, you will notice that we have diverged somewhat from the original order of John Paul II's catechesis. This departure is intentional, as we believe our approach will be more easily embraced and understood by teenagers. We have not changed the teaching, but merely modified the order in which John Paul presented it. It also should be noted that since this curriculum is an introduction to the Theology of the Body specifically for teens, we have focused mainly on chastity and vocation, two areas of study that are particularly beneficial for teens. We realize the Theology of the Body is much larger in scope than what we have presented in this program.

There are twelve lessons in the curriculum. The structure of each lesson in this teacher manual is as follows:

**Overview:** A quick summary of the entire lesson.

**Objectives:** A list of what the student should know and be able to do by the end of each chapter.

**Opening Prayer with Scripture:** Using Scripture as the centerpiece, we have offered you two different opening prayers in each chapter. This is for two reasons: First, to give you a choice, and second, to provide for you two separate prayers, should you opt to spread each lesson over two learning sessions.

**Icebreaker:** An optional, attention-grabbing visual or physical activity that creatively helps to lead students into the topic covered in the lesson. We encourage you always to pray the Opening Prayer prior to doing the Icebreaker.

**Two Minute Drill/Verbal Review:** A set of quick questions designed to two-to-three minutes of oral review of the content in the previous lesson. Only the questions are in the student manual; the questions and answers are in the teacher manual.

**Story Starter:** A dramatic story that helps capture the attention of students and draw them into the topic of that chapter.

**Bridging the Gap:** A few paragraphs that connect the story to the lesson and prepare the students for the material they are about to cover.

**To The Core:** The main body of the teaching of the lesson.



**Comprehension & Discussion Questions:** Interspersed throughout the curriculum, a mix of questions ensures reading comprehension. It also offers meaningful points of departure for discussion or opinion writing/journaling.

**Notes & Nuggets:** Additional information for the teacher's "notes" and some "nuggets" (ideas) for teaching the lesson.

**Words of Wisdom:** Short quotes generally from Scripture, the Catechism, Pope John Paul II, a saint, or another learned person.

**Did You Know:** Interesting and relevant facts and statistics pertaining to each lesson.

**You Decide:** A match-up of ideas, pitting the words of a popular song (or movie, etc.) against the beauty and truth of Pope John Paul II, a saint, scripture, or some other wise person.

**Digging Deeper:** A call-out box that explores the topic at hand in a deeper, more focused manner than the rest of the chapter. Some of these sections are more nuanced or theologically rich and may have a few more theological terms in them, but they are excellent ways to understand the material in a deeper way, for those who are ready.

**Live it Out:** This is another call-out box, a practical section to help teens "apply" the teaching to their lives. It is packed with real-life examples, words of encouragement, and practical advice.

**Application:** This is usually a tangible way to help your students apply (or further and more tangibly explore) their comprehension of the lesson.

**Movie Clips/Songs:** This is a list of movie and song ideas that you can use to better unpack the topic at hand. The movie clips are intentionally short (for the most part) so as to be an "aid" to the lesson, not to take the place of it. They are conveniently noted by their exact time code according to the DVD versions, saving you the time of having to watch through the whole movie searching for the clip. If you have a VHS version, you can still use the DVD time code notation as an approximate guide for finding the clip in the movie. Each clip has a short explanation as to how it connects to the topic at hand.

The songs can be used as closing reflections or opportunities for journaling, etc. They are noted by the artist/band of the recording, along with the name of the CD on which the song appears. Many of the songs are also available through iTunes, if you want to download them instead of buying the whole CDs.

**Work It Out:** A list of three to six assignments generally ordered in such a way that they *ascend* in difficulty (#1 being easiest, #6 the hardest). After the assignments, there is usually a list of a few projects that entail more work, greater attention, and more time. Many of the projects are meant for group work.

**Closing Prayer:** A short prayer, asking for the intercession of a particular saint whose life reflected the value of the topic in that specific chapter.

**Glossary of Key Terms:** Throughout the curriculum, we have **bolded** key terms within each of the chapters. They are arranged in alphabetical order at the end of each chapter. Most of the terms are defined within the body of each chapter, but all of these key terms are specifically defined at the end of the chapter.

**In His Own Words:** This is a collection of relevant quotes from John Paul II, appearing only in the teacher manual, as some of them are fairly dense. They will enhance your own understanding and give you a richer appreciation of the material, which should enhance your teaching.

## THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL TEEN RELATIONSHIPS

Whether or not you have a team of volunteer adults and peer ministers helping out, it is essential for you (and/or for them) to form good relationships with the teenagers. Being a teacher of teens, surely you not only know this but probably are good at it. Still, a reminder on the importance of this never hurts.

The relationships that your students form with you at the beginning will be a foundation upon which you can build trust. In our society, it is no longer enough to teach solid doctrine and smile at our students. As teachers, we need to earn the right to be heard. We live in a skeptical age and are also competing against an intoxicating pop cul-

ture. We teachers need to be engaging to compete with the influences that dominate our teens' lives. This also means we must be genuine and take the time to really get to know our students. We must invest beyond our comfort zones to meet them in their world. One way to do this is to take an interest in their lives by attending their sporting events, plays, recitals, etc. This takes time, which the students realize is precious to you. In turn, they realize you want to know them. In return, they will become more open to what you have to say. Once they begin to trust you, you can act like the apostle Andrew did with Peter, bringing them directly to Christ (see Jn 1:42).

It is also vital to invest time into relating to your teens outside of the classroom, even if it is just talking after class or in the parking lot. It does not mean you need to be their "buddy" or that you should descend into teenage immaturity. Talking with teens and sharing time with them outside of class shows that you care. Teens want meaningful relationships with adults. Remember: you need to "earn the right to be heard" by these teenagers. If you invest your time in cultivating relationships with them, you are bound to see better results than you thought possible. Throughout years of teaching and youth ministry, we've seen tremendous fruit come from investing time with teens outside the classroom.

### **Learn Their Names**

A great classroom experience usually begins with the simple gesture of learning your students' names. It may take some time to memorize them, especially if you have 100-200 students, but when you look in a teen's eyes and remember his or her name it speaks volumes to that student. It is a simple but powerful way to say you care.

### **An Environment of Dignity**

Though it may be obvious to some, the environment you set in your classroom is a major factor in helping students to accept the truths you are teaching. The environment begins with your demeanor and the way that you speak to your students. If you are pleasant and genuine in your approach to teens, you send a positive message to them.

Once you have set the tone of respect for your students, it's important to demand respect from them—not only for you, but for each other. At the core of the Theology of the

Body is the truth that we are all made in the image and likeness of God, and we all have dignity. The way you allow students to treat each other in class will witness to them the degree to which you believe what you are teaching about dignity. When teenagers get comfortable, they sometimes get jovial and sarcastic. It is easy to unintentionally let them cross the line of respect with each other, even if only in a "joking" sort of way. You can expect to see some immaturity at times, especially since you are dealing with subjects of a sexual nature. Be careful with your students in these instances, calling them to a higher level of maturity. Do so in a manner that is firm, yet charitable.

The more consistently you demand and uphold respect for every single student, the more they will relax. They will come to see that your classroom is a sanctuary from the rest of their life, hopefully a place where Christ can begin to heal their wounds. If you set rules of respect and then do not enforce them, you may create a situation worse than if you never had rules to begin with. (For new teachers who may not have worked with teens before, be aware that they are particularly keen about "fairness" and will quickly pick up on any inconsistency on your part.)

### **The "Co-ed" Question**

As you read through this manual and plan the implementation of this program, remember the unique opportunities that segregating boys and girls affords. We realize that, for many, splitting boys and girls into separate groups or separate classes is not a viable option. But if it is an option, consider that group discussions about chastity in same-sex settings can often be more frank, more comfortable and achieve more depth. Of course, if segregation is not an option, co-ed settings will provide a balanced perspective of both genders. Rest assured that this curriculum will be effective in whichever setting you use it.

### **A Message of Hope and Healing, Not Condemnation**

When teaching or preaching about morality—especially sexuality and God's plan for chastity—there may at times be a temptation to correct or admonish teens for their improper, disrespectful or outlandish views. Preaching condemnation or emphasizing a religion based upon rules is not only ill advised, but it is in direct opposition to the

heart of John Paul II's teaching of love, truth, and freedom. His approach was one of existential personalism. He taught the Theology of the Body through those personal appeals to human experiences that everyone understands. This methodology, along with the compelling content, is one more reason your students will connect with this teaching. Their hearts will be awakened and set free to love.

While your teaching and explanation of this material is important, your life example—your own incarnation of this Theology of the Body—will be equally, if not more important. This is why Pope Paul VI said, "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."<sup>1</sup>

Teenagers need witnesses of the truth. Teens *want* role models who will challenge them to be more than they thought possible and support them in their journey towards authentic love and freedom. Despite the challenges that come with teaching teenagers, take hope in knowing that John Paul II believed in our young people enough to entrust them with a "stupendous task" at the end of the Jubilee Year:

"Yet again, the young have shown themselves to be for Rome and for the Church a *special gift of the Spirit of God*. Sometimes when we look at the young, with the problems and weaknesses that characterize them in contemporary society, we tend to be pessimistic. The Jubilee of Young People, however, changed that, telling us that young people, whatever their possible ambiguities, have a profound longing for those genuine values which find their fullness in Christ. Is not Christ the secret of true freedom and profound joy of heart? Is not Christ the supreme friend and the teacher of all genuine friendship? If Christ is presented to young people as he really is, they experience him as an answer that is convincing and they can accept his message, even when it is demanding and bears the mark of the Cross. For this reason, in response to their enthusiasm, I did not hesitate to ask them to make a radical choice of faith and life and present them with a stupendous task: to become 'morning watchmen' (cf. Is 21:11-12) at the dawn of the new millennium."<sup>2</sup>

As you begin teaching *Theology of the Body for Teens*, may the Holy Spirit inspire and strengthen you to rise in faith to this great challenge and great privilege: of helping your students to learn their purpose in life and to live it out faithfully.

Thank you for joining us in the New Evangelization of our young people. You have been and will continue to be in our prayers. John Paul the Great, pray for us!

*Veni, Sancte Spiritus!*

— Jason & Crystalina Evert and Brian Butler  
Pentecost Sunday, June 4, 2006



<sup>1</sup> Pope Paul VI, Address to the Members of the Consilium de Laicis (2 October 1974): AAS 66 (1974), p. 568.

<sup>2</sup> Novo Millennio Ineunte, 9

**OBJECTIVES** At the end of this lesson, the teens should know and be able to:

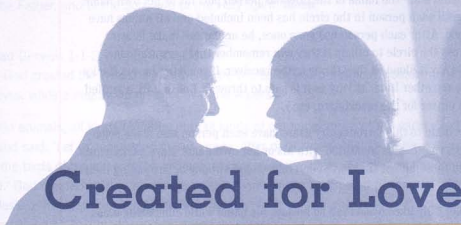
- Explain that God loves us and desires to have an intimate, personal relationship with us.
- Show how our bodies teach us profound truths about the reason for our very existence as well as our purpose in life.
- Define “theology” and “Theology of the Body.”
- Explain that our bodies are very good, as they were created by God and all that God creates is good.
- Demonstrate that God designed us for communion with Himself and with each other.
- Explain how our bodies make visible the invisible mystery of God.
- Identify that the reason for our existence is to be united in an eternal relationship of love with God in heaven.
- Explore opportunities for a deeper relationship with God and others.

**Notes & Nuggets:** Prayer is the key to success of any faith-based program. And prayer should not be a one-time thing as you teach. Please consider praying for and with your students every day that you present this material to them. Remember this little adaptation of an old teacher’s axiom: Proper prior prayer preparation prevents poor public pedagogical performance!

Today, pray that your students will be open to seeing that God created them for a specific purpose: to love and to be in communion with Him. In a society filled with broken families and extraordinary wounds from sexual sin, pray that God’s grace would overcome their hurts and doubts about the possibility of real, loving communion.



## Chapter One



**H**ave you ever wondered why the subject of sex is part of nearly every TV show, advertisement, song, and movie? And the sex shown or sung about is usually glorious—with no pain inflicted on those involved.

Rarely do we see the pain that comes, for example, from selfishness. Did you ever think about what society would be without selfishness in relationships? If everyone simply loved the other as he or she wished to be loved, we would have virtually no pain, no problems in relationships. Imagine, for example, if marriages never ended in divorce. Think about the pain that both parents and kids would be spared.

Confusion reigns, and it is leading to some seriously broken hearts. People today seem more confused about the meaning of love and the purpose of sex than perhaps ever before. Many people are searching for the meaning of life and love but don't realize that the answer is actually right in front of us; the key to finding that love we're all looking for (even if we don't know it) is hidden in God's original design of our bodies and souls. Yes, you read that correctly. This Catholic curriculum is stating that God has actually hidden in our design as "male and female" a key to the secret of love.

**STORY STARTER:**  
Words and Wounds of the Heart

**ICEBREAKER (optional): "Hacky Sack" Name Game**

Have the teens form a circle. The person with the Hacky Sack should state his or her name and toss the Hacky Sack to the next person in the circle. The receiver should state the name of the previous person plus his or her own name. Continue until each person in the circle has been included and all names have been learned. After each person has gone once, he or she can make longer throws across the circle to others if they can remember that person's name. They should say it aloud as they throw to the receiver. If you don't have a Hacky Sack, use some other item, as long as it is safe to throw (a Koosh Ball, a stuffed animal, an eraser for the blackboard, etc.).

To add a wrinkle to this introductory game, have each person also make some physical sign that can be identified with his or her own name. Have participants recall aloud those names that have been introduced already before saying their own.

For example: Billy likes basketball so he says his name while simulating a basketball jump-shot; then the next teen, Jason, has to say Billy's name while simulating his jump shot, then adding his own symbol. Jason is in Junior ROTC, so he says his name and salutes as his symbol/gesture. Jill then says Billy's name while simulating a jump shot, says Jason's name while saluting, and then says her own name while giving the "peace sign" to signify her peaceful nature, etc.

Teens must pay attention to names, but they also learn a small gesture with which to identify each other. With groups of more than fifteen, the game gets harder and takes more time. However, remember to be patient. Investing time at the beginning is worth it if it can help the teens become familiar with each other and the safe environment you are trying to establish. At the very least, they can learn the name of the person sitting near them and already know one thing about them!

As the leader of the group, give them a few examples before you start. You should also go first to help break the ice. If you can, try to go first and last to show them that you are paying attention to them and want to connect with them. Do your best to recall all of their names and symbolic actions. (Hint: Study your roster or sign-up sheet of names a few times to familiarize yourself with each teen's name.)





## OPENING PRAYER

**Leader:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

### (Option #1)

**Leader or Reader #1:** Read Genesis 1:1-2, 25-28a, 30b, 31a

"In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters.

God made all kinds of wild animals, all kinds of cattle, and all kinds of creeping things of the earth. God saw how good it was. Then God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.' God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: 'Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it, and so it happened. God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good.'

**Leader or Reader #2:** Lord, as You created us in Your image and likeness, we know that You created us out of love and for love. You created us for a union of love with each other just as You created us to be together forever with You. Lord, help us to be open today to learn, to live, and to love like You. We ask all this as we pray together: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Saint (patron saint of your church or school), pray for us. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

### (Option #2)

**Leader or Reader #1:** Read John 10:10; 15:11

"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly... These things I have spoken to you that my joy might be in you and your joy may be full."

**Leader or Reader #2:** Jesus, You have created us for love. You made us for Yourself, and our hearts will not be at rest until they rest in You. So, open our minds and our hearts, so that this hour of study may be an hour of prayer. Help us to let go of those things that keep us from receiving the joy You wish to give us today and always. **Amen.**

## notes



## STORY STARTER: Words and Wounds of the Heart

- "I gave in to him because I thought it would make him like me more. But the next day, he acted like he hardly knew me."
- "My parents got divorced when I was four, so I never really had a dad. Now my mom is with this other guy, but he gets drunk all the time and they fight a lot."

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- “I’ve been hooked on porn for years and I don’t know how to get rid of the stuff.”
- “I had too much to drink and slept with this one guy. Now I got a call from the clinic and they said I have an STD that can’t be cured.”
- “No one has ever seemed interested in me. I hate my body.”
- “You always hear about the guys using the girls, but after I gave my virginity to my girlfriend, I found out she was cheating on me.”

Could you imagine a world in which there was no divorce, sexual abuse, rape, sexually transmitted diseases, depression, eating disorders, guilt, addictions, cutting, cheating, or pregnancies before marriage?

It's hardly imaginable. But if we all long for such a world, then why do we all live in such a different one? If we were made for love, why does it seem so hard to find? And if we want love, why do we so often settle for the counterfeit of lust?

The twelve chapters in this workbook will set out to answer those questions and will show that the answers are not as far away as you may think.



## COMPREHENSION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever felt like the teens quoted above?
2. Do you have friends who are having trouble with more than one of the issues discussed in the quotes above?
3. Do you think that many teens look at the broken relationships around them and lose hope for their own futures?
4. Can you name some ways that sexual behavior seems to be out of control in our culture?
5. What is the best advice you have ever heard to solve these problems?
6. How has the sexual confusion of our society influenced your view of sex and love?



### Did you know?

**The U.S. actually has the highest divorce rate in the Western world, followed by the U.K. and Canada.<sup>1</sup>**



### Did you know?

Between 1970 and 2000, the proportion of [American] women who divorced more than doubled and the corresponding proportion of men more than tripled.<sup>4</sup>

## notes

Here's a quick explanation. You'll notice that this theme repeats itself many times throughout this curriculum. If you can grasp this early, you'll understand the lofty (but awesome) concepts in the pages and discussions ahead. Here goes: Our sexuality is a gift through which we can choose to be generous or selfish. Society has flipped the idea of "self-giving" on its head. In fact, many "love stories" portrayed in the modern culture could more appropriately be called "lust stories." Why is this important? Because "love" involves being generous—like God—while "lust" is sexual desire that is selfish—apart from the love of God. Not to be confused with sexual attraction (which is good), lust is almost purely self-seeking. As renowned youth leader John Crudele succinctly says, "Love seeks to give; lust seeks to get."

## Are You Obsessed, Too?

Many people in the world think that the Catholic Church is obsessed with the topic of sex, saying that it has all these “rules” about it. In reality, it’s our culture that is obsessed with sex. Think about it. The next time you’re in a supermarket, look at all the magazines near the check-out counter. Virtually every one will be dominated with headlines about sex. Or, better yet (maybe, worse yet), think of the various shows on primetime television on any given night: they are loaded with sexual content that is either explicit or implied. The view of sex put forth by much of the world actually robs humans of **dignity**. The real problem, though, is that we often come to think about sex as the world does, instead of in the way that God intended.

## The Call to Love as God Loves

We humans are called to love one another. We are not called to dominate or oppress or use others, but to respect them as persons made in God's image and likeness. This call to love is actually "stamped" into our very bodies. The physical union of man and woman in the sexual act (also called the "marital act" because it is intended to express marital love) is actually meant to be a foreshadowing of the union that we will all experience in heaven. That heavenly union is not a sexual one, to be sure, but it is real—more real than anything we have (or will) experience here on earth. It's a perfect union between God and mankind—for eternity.

This union was also foreshadowed in the book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible. In it we read about God's original plan for unity with our original parents, Adam and Eve. But confusion reigned and there was a rupture—a breaking—between God and man. Because of this rupture, lust became a reality. A "twisting," if you will, took place in our hearts, so that instead of seeking the good of others, we desire to seek our own good, often at the expense of someone else's dignity.

Yet God created us for union with Him. He gave us an “echo” in our hearts of the love that He intends for us all. Pope John Paul II’s Theology of the Body is an attempt to identify and find that love that God intends for us. If you seek, you will find it. It simply takes work on our part along with God’s amazing grace.

## notes



### Did you know?

The government spends 12 dollars to promote safe sex and contraceptives for every one dollar spent on abstinence.<sup>iii</sup>

**Notes & Nuggets:** For Beginning Teachers

You can approach the following material in a few different ways as you move through the curriculum. The first option is to use the following Bridging the Gap and To the Core sections as "notes" from which you can present the information in your own way.

Another option is to pick teen volunteers to read the following paragraphs in small groups and answer the related comprehension and discussion questions. You probably already know that it's not a good idea to force kids to read. You don't want your desire to have them read make them uncomfortable, and thus, somehow cause them to be less open to you and the healing truth found within this beautiful teaching of John Paul II. Be patient with those students who do not seem to want to participate out loud through reading or discussion (for whatever reason). Give them some space, but don't write them off. It is easy to fall into the extreme of either pushing hard on those teens or ignoring them altogether in favor of those extroverts who really help the classroom experience. Continue to make eye contact with them and gently encourage them to step out of their comfort zones.

Remember that you are a witness of God's love as much as you are a catechist of Catholic teaching. This material is intimately tied to relationships, and that does not exclude your relationship with your students. If you have a good relationship with them, they will be more open to receive the truth in the teaching that you are presenting. In time, they may do just that.



## BRIDGING THE GAP

So why is there so much pain and suffering in the world today? It all started with one simple choice: when Adam and Eve chose to go with their own plan instead of God's plan. Their **original sin**, which you will learn more about in the coming chapters, affects us all. Instead of wanting to do what's right, we often desire to do the wrong thing. This tendency to sin is called **concupiscence**.

Concupiscence is not something that affects only a select group of people; it affects every single one of us as members of a society that is damaged and hurting from the effects of sin. Just look at all the broken families, broken hearts, sexual abuse, addictions, infidelity, and shame and regret in people's lives. This is what **despair** looks like in a society that thought it found **sexual liberation** and freedom by using sexuality in whatever way it wanted. Consider how all this has brought us to where we are today.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the mass media grew stronger and stronger in their influence in society. You could say they became a primary teacher of young and old alike. Television and movies degenerated quickly from mere sexual suggestion to more sexually-explicit material. As some observers have noted, we are experiencing the "frog in the pot" scenario. You may be familiar with this example. If you take a frog and put it into a pot of boiling water, it will immediately jump out. However, if you place the frog in room-temperature water and then slowly heat the water, the frog will continue to adjust to the rising temperature and not know that it is in danger. It will stay in the ever-increasingly hot water until it finally dies. This describes very well the moral swamp displayed in our modern media. We have gradually become desensitized to the increase of explicit sexual content in our media. The result of all this is that our country is plagued by a seriously warped understanding of marriage and the role that sex should play in relationships.

**Lust** is "disordered desire for or inordinate enjoyment of sexual pleasure" (CCC 2351). It is sexual desire apart from God's love that selfishly seeks one's own pleasure at the expense of another. Lust often dominates our culture. This domination can easily lead to apathy, or lack of concern, on the part of many. Apathy then leads to a lack of motivation to change. We begin to settle for less than true, good, and beautiful relationships. These are heavy words, we know. They almost sound dismal. A natural question one would ask is, "Is there any hope?" Are we all doomed to suffer broken hearts and marry people who will commit to us only as long as it is convenient? Where is God in all this mess?

God is with us, and there is hope! The good news is that life and sexuality were not always the way we find it now. Jesus tells us, "In the beginning, it was not so" (Mt 19:8). In fact, in the beginning, love had its way and lust *didn't even exist*. To learn more about how to solve the problem of lust and sexual confusion, we must go back to the beginning to see how God created sexuality. In doing



### Did you know?

**One in three girls is sexually abused by the time she's eighteen years old."**



### Did you know?

**About 40 percent of all children in the United States will live with their single mother (never-married or divorced) and her boyfriend at some point before their 18th birthday."**



### Did you know?

**Every day, 8,000 teenagers in the United States become infected with a sexually transmitted disease."**

**Notes & Nuggets:** The "Wednesday audiences" are the Pope's weekly addresses to visitors gathered in St. Peter's Square. John Paul II used these opportunities to give reflections on Scripture, to greet visitors from around the world, and to teach the faith.

**Notes & Nuggets:** It's no secret that many high school students are suspicious of the stories found in the book of Genesis. Whether through secular or catechetical misinformation and disorientation, many teens believe that Adam and Eve weren't real people. Some of them lump the story of original sin into the same mental compartment that holds other catechetical missteps, such as the Exodus story being a gross exaggeration based upon the probability that a few Israelites escaped Egypt with the help of some coincidental natural phenomenon. To put all this into context and to give yourself the greatest handle on how to approach the book of Genesis and the truth found within it, we recommend you review the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraphs 355-421.

For your students, it may be helpful to offer the following analogy: Consider the difference between the approach that an optometrist takes when he looks into a woman's eyes, and the way that same woman's husband looks into her eyes. Both men look into the same eyes and have vastly different approaches and appreciations for the depth and beauty of the woman's eyes. One is looking with the eyes of a scientist; the other is looking with the eyes of a lover. This is analogous to how we can and should look at the book of Genesis.

The Church looks at Genesis differently than secular historians. While historians search for precise information detailing a chronological account of the events in Genesis, the Church looks to Genesis for the truth that it imparts about all of humanity, which is rooted in the story of Adam and Eve. In short, the Church is looking for the "truth behind the words." That said, it is also important to remember that Jesus referenced the reality of the story of Adam and Eve, even if He didn't refer to them by name (Mt 19:4-5).



so, we will discover the true purpose of our sexual gifts. We will see what went wrong and find the hope that will lead us back to true love and happiness.



## TO THE CORE

Pope John Paul II (1920—2005) dedicated 129 of his “Wednesday audiences” during the first six years of his papacy (1979 to 1984) to a series of talks about the human body and sexuality. These addresses were later compiled into book form, creating the first major teaching of John Paul II. This teaching is called the **Theology of the Body**, and an international surge of interest has followed its proclamation.

The Theology of the Body explores the meaning of our bodies and of sexual desire as it relates to the purpose of our existence. Philosophers have asked questions about the meaning of life for thousands of years. If you’ve ever wondered, “Who am I? What is my purpose in life? What is love all about?”, you are asking very good questions. Answering these questions was a major goal of John Paul II through his teaching of the Theology of the Body. After all, he was not just a great pope but also a great philosopher.

So, what is **theology**? Theology may be understood as the study of God. St. Anselm, an eleventh-century philosopher, theologian, and archbishop, called it “faith seeking understanding.” The word theology can be broken down like this: In Greek *theos* means “God” and *logos* means “word.” Logos was also defined by the ancient Greeks in other ways that relate to “science” and “study.” (Notice our modern words which have “-ology” at the end of them refer to some type of study: biology, archaeology, radiology, psychology, etc.) So, the Theology of the Body is the study of God as revealed through our bodies.<sup>1</sup>

By looking at the creation of Adam and Eve in the book of Genesis, we begin to find the answers to our questions about the purpose of life.

## Love Equals Communion

In Genesis 1:26-31 we learn that when God made man and woman it was “very good.” They were made in his “image and likeness.” We may hear that phrase often but let’s consider what it means: The Bible says “God is love” (1 Jn 4:8). Now, when love is present, it is never in isolation. This is why a person can’t marry himself. Rather, whenever you have love, you must have a lover, a beloved, and the love between them. There must be a communion of persons, united in love. A communion of persons is created when two or more persons give themselves to one another in love. So, in the case of God, you have the Father, the Son, and the fire of love between them, which is the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

As a “communion of persons,” God created humans to participate in heaven and on earth in God’s love. This means that God created us male and female



*“Then God said:  
‘Let us make man in our image,  
after our likeness.  
Let them have  
dominion over  
the fish of the sea,  
the birds of the air, and the  
cattle, and over all the wild  
animals and all the creatures  
that crawl on the ground.’*

*God created man  
in his image;  
in the divine image  
he created him; male and  
female he created them.”  
— Gn 1:26-27*

**Notes & Nuggets:** To help your students further understand how our bodies act as visible signs of the invisible, help them through this quote from John Paul II. Write it on the board, and then create a list on the other side of the board of things that we know are real but that are invisible to the naked eye. Challenge them to offer examples, and include the following in your list:

**"INVISIBLE" THINGS:**

- Thoughts
- Feelings
- Gravity
- Wind
- Heat/Cold
- Trust/Faith
- God (keep for last)

After compiling the list, pick out a few and point out that these are all things we cannot see. They are "invisible," but there are signs that help us to know they are all real; though we cannot see them, we can see their effects. Draw arrows from the list on the left to a new list of corresponding signs of the invisible realities.

For example, we cannot see gravity, but we all know it exists, because whenever we throw a ball, it lands on the ground again. We can't see the wind, but we can see trees bending from it and houses destroyed by it in hurricanes. Feelings of fear, courage, pain, sadness, and joy are all very real, but they are invisible in themselves; instead, we see visible signs of them: smiles, frowns, crying, laughing, etc. Now make the connection to God. He is invisible, but our visible bodies tell us something about the invisible mystery of God.

You may want to finish with this example: since God is invisible, He has given us bodies to help one another learn about Him. The fact is that the authors of this program can type these words, and God has enabled you to read with your eyes, transmit the information to your brain, and therefore understand more about God and all that happens through the use of our bodies.

precisely so that we could image His love by becoming a sincere gift to each other.<sup>3</sup> Giving this sincere gift to one another creates a communion of persons, through which we share God's love with each other.



## COMPREHENSION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is *theology*?
2. What was the goal of John Paul II in his teaching of the Theology of the Body?
3. What do you think our society believes and teaches us about the meanings of our bodies?
4. Where in Scripture does it say that our bodies are very good?
5. Why do you think some people believe our bodies are bad?
6. How is a communion of persons formed?



*The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that "God himself is an eternal exchange of love...and He has destined us to share in that exchange"*  
(CCC 221).

### Not Meant to Be Alone

When God said that Adam and Eve were made in His image and likeness, one thing this meant was that they were designed for love. But when Adam was created, he was without Eve. But even before Eve was created, Adam knew something was missing. As a result, God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gn 1:18).

Since we're made in God's image and likeness, the Church teaches that, "Man can fully discover his true self only in a sincere gift of self."<sup>4</sup> In order to give to someone else, one must not be alone. *Someone else* is there for communion. This total gift of self can be seen in the married life or in the **celibate life**, which is *choosing* to forego earthly marriage so as to devote oneself entirely to the marriage of Christ and the Church. In both cases, marriage and **celibacy**, we are called to make ourselves living sacrifices. In the words of Blessed Mother Teresa, "Life is not worth living unless it is lived for others."

John Paul II's vision of the body is a key to understanding the meaning of our lives. This short quote summarizes his view of the body as a visible sign that points to things that are invisible:

"The body, in fact, and it alone is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery [of God]... and thus to be a sign of it."<sup>5</sup>

Although we cannot see God, our bodies reveal many amazing truths about Him, because we are made in His "image and likeness." For example, just as a

**sacrament** makes a spiritual reality (grace) visible, the body makes our call to love visible. This is what John Paul II refers to as the **sacramentality of the body**. Just like a sign on the side of a road points you to something in reality, our bodies point us to the meaning of life. Our bodies and their desires are very good signs of God's existence, of His love for us, and of our call to love others!

### More Than Human Love

But God is not simply calling us to love one another. Our most intimate human love actually points us to the love that we were ultimately created for: union with God (here and in heaven). It may be hard to believe that God desires an intimate relationship with you, especially if you've been through a lot of suffering in your life. You may not even believe that God loves you. But don't forget that the man who gave us the Theology of the Body, John Paul II, was no stranger to suffering and death. First his sister died, then his mother, then his brother, then his father, and then many of his friends ... all by the time he was twenty years old. As a young man, he witnessed the brutality of the Nazis in World War II and was forced to take a deep look at the heart of man and the meaning of life. Through his prayer, personal suffering, and study, Pope John Paul II learned that God had not abandoned man. Rather, he saw that God has a plan of hope and freedom for each one of us.

notes



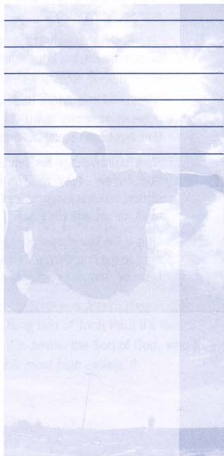
## COMPREHENSION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does John Paul II mean by the *sacramentality of the body*?
2. How do you think our culture views the body? List three examples.
3. Give your own example of a *visible reality* that points to an *invisible one*.
4. What is your deepest question about life?



## DIGGING DEEPER: Who am I?

Have you ever heard the expression, "Know thyself"? If you have seen the movie *The Matrix*, you may recall a scene where Neo (Keanu Reeves) is first introduced to the Oracle. In this important meeting, the Oracle points to a phrase carved in a piece of wood hanging over her kitchen door which reads, "Know thyself." The advice would become a turning point in Neo's life. It should be a turning point in our lives, too.



## APPLICATION: GOD LOVES PLAY-DOH

Provide the teens with Play-Doh or another type of modeling clay. Ask them to sculpt their concept of God and their relationship with Him. Remind them that God is a "communion of persons" and that He created us to share in His eternal exchange of love. Encourage them to be honest and to create something that represents their present (and possibly future) relationship with God. Take the time to create your own model prior to class that day. Share your model with your students, describing its meaning before they begin modeling their own. Then, as they begin modeling, move around to help give ideas to those teens who seem "stumped." If time allows, have them all share what they created and why.

The goal is to have teens create scenes that may bring comments and explanations wherein they honestly let you know where they see themselves in their walk with the Lord. It is important to remember that there are no "wrong answers" here. If the teens are honest, then whatever they depict—assuming it is not improper or vulgar—is acceptable. You may find students coming up with symbols or comments like these:

- "My relationship with God is on and off, so I made a light switch"
- "My relationship with God is supposed to be one of communion, but I don't think I'm there yet, so this is me still walking up the aisle."
- "Here's me and there's God over there—the maze between us shows that I want to get closer to Him, but I can't figure out how yet."
- "This broken-down car represents me without God. I'm on empty; but I'm heading to the gas station, which is Mass, where I know God is going to fill me up with His grace."
- "This is me in a chapel praying, and there is God outside the Church. You'll notice He has no ears, because God never answers my prayers."

- "This is me helping at a soup kitchen, and this is little Sally who comes every Saturday to get food. When I serve her, I feel like I can see God in her eyes. I feel closest to God when I help others."
- "This is a ball of clay that represents the world. There's nothing else in my picture because I'm an atheist and don't believe God exists."
- "This is my grandmother saying her rosary in her rocking chair. This is me doing a puzzle, trying to figure out if the stuff my parents and grandma teach me is real."
- "This is me with a big smile because I just came out of reconciliation. I feel closest to God after that."
- "This is my brother lying dead from cancer. This is me walking away from the Church because I don't believe in a loving God anymore."

As a teacher, pay very close attention to what your students do with this activity. It may give you helpful hints about their world, their beliefs, their struggles, and their sources of either joy or pain. Remember to watch for these particulars, which may give you hints about how to best minister to them throughout the program:

- Did the picture focus more on themselves or on God?
- Did they make God out to be someone far away and unapproachable?
- On what characteristics of God did they focus? Did Jesus enter the picture at all?
- Was their picture generally hopeful or filled with despair or confusion?

The idea of knowing ourselves opens up to us an ocean of questions about the purpose of our existence. Such questions have captivated man since ancient times.

Who am I? Where have I come from? Where am I going? John Paul II, who often thought about these questions, called them “fundamental questions which pervade human life ... These are the questions which we find in the sacred writings of Israel ... in the poetry of Homer and in the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles ... in the philosophical writings of Plato and Aristotle. They are questions which have their common source in the quest for meaning which has always compelled the human heart. In fact, the answer given to these questions decides the direction which people seek to give to their lives.”<sup>6</sup>

The question must now be turned to you, “Who are you?”

Read these inspiring words from John Paul II and see if they speak to you, even in a faint echo in your heart: *“It is Jesus that you seek when you dream of happiness; He is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you; He is the beauty to which you are so attracted; it is He who provoked you with that thirst for fullness that will not let you settle for compromise; it is He who urges you to shed the masks of a false life; it is He who reads in your hearts your most genuine choices, the choices that others try to stifle. It is Jesus who stirs in you the desire to do something great with your lives, the will to follow an ideal, the refusal to allow yourselves to be ground down by mediocrity, the courage to commit yourselves humbly and patiently to improving yourselves and society, making the world more human and more fraternal.”*

— Pope John Paul II  
World Youth Day, Rome 2000

Even if you have not given this question much thought, you are in some way already answering it. Your actions say much about who you understand yourself to be. What answer have you made and where is your path leading you? Your path is probably leading you toward the desires of your heart. The truth is that, “God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth—in a word, to know Himself—so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.” To confirm this truth, just think about how angry it makes you feel when someone lies to you. You don’t want lies. Your heart desires the truth, even if you do not consciously realize that you desire it.

You may wonder what your body and sexuality have to do with knowing yourself. Well, consider how the desire of your heart to know the truth is actually expressed on a daily basis. Your body expresses your very essence (your person) as well as your desires. This is why John Paul II taught that through the lens of love and God’s plan for sexual union, we can rediscover “the meaning of the whole of existence, the meaning of life.”<sup>8</sup> He is saying that, through and in our bodies, we can learn the meaning of existence. That’s a powerful statement, and it is why we have written this program.

If our hearts desire the truth, and Jesus is revealed as “the truth” (“I am the way, the truth, and the life” – Jn 14:6), then our hearts ultimately desire Jesus. Christianity is not afraid to proclaim that the ultimate knowledge of self lies in the mystery of the “Word made flesh,”<sup>9</sup> Jesus Christ. He is true God and true man, the one in and through whom everything was made, revealing to us “who” we are and “why” we are here. Using one of John Paul II’s favorite phrases from the Second Vatican Council, it is Jesus, the Son of God, *who fully reveals man to himself* and brings to light *his most high calling*.<sup>10</sup>



It is Jesus who first calls to us, saying "know thyself." He challenges us to learn the truth of our existence and to direct our lives toward the purpose of the loving communion for which we have been created. He knows that our fulfillment cannot be found in lies but in truth. God, who is a perfect communion in the blessed Trinity, created us to be in communion with Him. This relationship with God "is defined by that unique fact that the more deeply I abandon myself to Him, the more completely I let Him penetrate my being, the more powerfully He, the Creator, gains authority in me, the more *I become myself*."<sup>11</sup>

So, the great command to be given is to *become who you are*. In the movie trilogy, *Lord of the Rings*, this call is given directly to Aragorn in the *The Return of the King*. Aragorn is the heir to the throne of his kingdom, but he has not accepted responsibility for it yet. When in the midst of the greatest challenge facing Middle Earth, Lord Elrond has re-forged the sword of the king, he presents it to Aragorn with the words, "Put aside the 'ranger.' *Become who you were born to be!*" Just like Aragorn, if we set aside the lies that we have believed about ourselves and embrace the reality of our life in Christ, we can claim and proclaim with boldness the truth of who we really are.

Read these inspiring words from John Paul II and see if they speak to you, even in a faint echo in your heart:

"It is Jesus that you seek when you dream of happiness; He is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you; He is the beauty to which you are so attracted; it is He who provoked you with that thirst for fullness that will not let you settle for compromise; it is He who urges you to shed the masks of a false life; it is He who reads in your hearts your most genuine choices, the choices that others try to stifle.

It is Jesus who stirs in you the desire to do something great with your lives, the will to follow an ideal, the refusal to allow yourselves to be ground down by mediocrity, the courage to commit yourselves humbly and patiently to improving yourselves and society, making the world more human and more fraternal."

— Pope John Paul II, *World Youth Day, Rome 2000*

## You Decide

In whose vision of life do you think true happiness is found?

**Weezer, from the song "Tired of Sex"**

"I'm tired, so tired. I'm tired of having sex. So tired. I'm spread so thin. I don't know who I am. Monday night I'm makin' Jen. Tuesday night I'm makin' Lyn. Wednesday night I'm makin' Catherine. Oh, why can't I be makin' Love come true?"

**vs.**

**Pope John Paul II**

"The person who does not decide to love forever will find it very difficult to really love for even one day."



The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that "God himself is an eternal exchange of love...and He has destined us to share in that exchange" (CCC 221).

## LIVE IT OUT: Living with Purpose



Understanding the propulsion system on a space shuttle...

Having a working knowledge of the new tax laws governing foreign trade...

Knowing how to properly care for a beached whale...

These are not situations that the average person really needs to know much about. To be ignorant of any one of these facts—or millions of others like them—does not render one stupid or lazy. That being said...

Knowing how to shut off the water to an overflowing toilet...

Knowing how to perform the Heimlich maneuver on a person who is choking...

Knowing how to ask for the nearest clean restroom in a foreign country...

These are all situations in which a little bit of knowledge can go a long way. To be ignorant in one of these moments could be disastrous—or at least messy.

Sure, if you *wanted* to learn about the physics of a shuttle launch, or the ramifications of changes in tax laws, or how to take care of a whale, you're usually just one book, one click, or one seminar away. Again, these issues might be interesting, but they really are not necessary to the average person's everyday happiness. You can choose to remain ignorant when it comes to several areas of life and your world will just keep on spinning.

But remaining ignorant on "the purpose of your life" is an entirely different matter. Knowing your purpose in life and living it out will determine your future on earth as well as your eternity after death. That's an amazing concept worthy of your attention.

As you study this curriculum, you will have a choice each day of whether to be open-minded as you read. You'll also have the choice of whether to be open to change in your life. If you have an open heart, you will grow in wisdom and knowledge before God and man. The truth you find in these pages will bring challenges, but also great satisfaction. And remember that God will never offer you a challenge without also offering you every grace needed to overcome it.

In short, if you take what you learn in this workbook and apply it, in a practical way, your life is going to change ... for the better. This is a crash course in love, in truth,

and in authentic freedom. In these "live it out" sections, you will be offered encouragement and practical ideas of things you can do with your body that will have an everlasting impact on your soul. That will help the "head knowledge" you gain on these pages become "heart knowledge" you retain for life.

So, what is the goal of your life? What is it supposed to be? The answer is actually quite simple—it's living it that is the challenge. The answer is "to love." God calls us to this. This is what Christ lived. This is what the Holy Spirit makes possible. This is what the saints achieved.

But only after you have accepted the love of God can you share that love with others, freely and purely. So, here's your chance—your "Love 101" course starts today. Learn how to receive the love of God, and to allow that love to transform your life into something beautiful. (And guys, this is absolutely for you, too. Love is an extremely masculine thing. If you're looking for the ultimate challenge, try laying down your life—in big and small ways—for another. And then try doing it day in and day out. You'll find if you get married, for example, that the test of a real man involves "dying to yourself" every day. We'll say more about this later.)

If you ask, "Why am I here?", know that God created you to love and to be loved. As Christ said, "Love one another, even as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34). Want to know God's expectations for you? Consider Micah 6:8: "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

God loves you more than yourself. Doubt it? Read John 15:13: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The verses listed above are to be prayed through...that's how you will start to *live it out* in a real, practical way.

Here's one final idea before we move forward: next time you see a crucifix, consider the fact that you have a God who loves you so much that He would rather die than spend eternity without you.

**Notes & Nuggets:** If you have the opportunity to take your teens to a church or adoration chapel, this prayer and journal activity would be an excellent, prayerful way to begin a time of quiet reflection or adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. This is also a great time for you to dedicate your teaching of the Theology of the Body to God through prayer before the Body of Christ in the Eucharist.

**Notes & Nuggets:** Explain up front to the students whether you intend to read their journals or not. Most states have laws that bind you as a teacher (if you collect the journals) to read them in their entirety. If you are not sure of the laws in your state, check with a counselor at your school or the pastor at your parish. In addition, if there is anything within the journal that incriminates the student or someone else in a crime, suggests suicidal tendencies, or hints of abuse of any sort, you are bound by law to report it to the proper authorities. You may choose to check the journals during class (without collecting and reading them), to see that they have been done. There are benefits to reading the journals, but with that reading comes much responsibility.

## MOVIE CLIP/SONG SUGGESTIONS

### MOVIE CLIPS:

- 1. The Return of the King:** Show the segment between 1:15:48 and 1:17:35. (Note: The time code we are providing here is from the second disc of the extended version.) Frodo and his best friend, Sam, are on a mission together. Frodo has had to carry the burden of the ring and just can't go on. Sam tells him that he can't carry the ring for him, but he can carry Frodo. It could be said that their friendship resembles the relationship between God and His creation. God created us with a purpose, and while He will not accomplish our mission for us, He is always there offering us grace. He is a faithful friend ready to help us at every turn.
- 2. Signs:** Show the segment between 1:25:56 and 1:39:28. (Note: This scene is a little scary.) This clip can be used to convey the section about finding one's purpose in life. Mel Gibson's character finds out the truth about his purpose in life.

- 3. The Day after Tomorrow:** Show the segment between 1:44:03 and 1:50:23. This scene demonstrates the power of family love. Dennis Quaid's character vows against all odds that he will find his son. His son never doubted that his father would come to rescue him.

### SONGS:

- 1. Not Home Yet** — Steven Curtis Chapman (Greatest Hits)

*This song stresses the need to remember we are not home until we are in heaven. Contemporary.*

- 2. Meant to Live** — Switchfoot (The Beautiful Letdown)

*The singer wonders what life is about as he explains that we are meant to live for heaven. Hard/Alternative Rock.*

- 3. Wait for Me** — Rebecca St. James (Transform)

*A call to one's future spouse to "wait" for the right time for love: marriage. Note: This song is extremely popular with girls. Pop/Contemporary.*



## PRAYER & JOURNAL ACTIVITY

**Read:** Quietly and slowly read the following meditation.

Everyone longs to give himself or herself completely to someone, to have a deep and committed soul relationship with another. We want to be loved thoroughly and unconditionally. But God says:

*Wait until you are satisfied, fulfilled, and content with being loved by Me alone, with giving yourself totally, unreservedly to Me alone.*

*I love you, my child. But until you discover that only in Me is your satisfaction to be found, you will not be capable of the perfect human relationship that I have planned for you. You will never be united with another as you desire to be until you are united with Me, exclusive of anyone or anything else, exclusive of any other desires and belongings.*

*I want you to stop planning and stop wishing, and allow Me to give you the most thrilling plan that exists—one that you can't imagine. I want you to have the very best. Please allow Me to bring it to you.*

*Just keep your eyes on Me, expecting the greatest things.  
Keep experiencing that satisfaction knowing that I AM.  
Keep learning and listening to the things I tell you.  
You must be patient.*

*Don't be anxious.*

*Don't worry.*

*Don't look around at the things others have.*

*Don't look at the things you think you want.*

*Just keep looking to Me, or you will miss what I want to give you.*

*And then, when you are ready, I will surprise you with a love far more wonderful than you could ever dream. You see, until you are ready, and until the one I have for you is ready ... until you are both satisfied exclusively with Me and the life I have prepared for you, you won't be able to experience the love that exemplifies your relationship with Me ... and this is perfect love.*

*(Anonymous Prayer)*

**Pray:** Take a few minutes to silently reflect on what God is saying to you in your heart.

**Respond:** Use your journal to respond to this amazing love that God has for you. If it helps you, read through the meditation again (written from God's point of view) and respond to each of the sections.



*"Chastity is a difficult, long-term matter; one must wait patiently for it to bear fruit, for the happiness of loving kindness which it must bring. But at the same time, chastity is the sure way to happiness."*

*— Pope John Paul II*

**4. Voice of Truth** — Casting Crowns (Self-titled release)

*This one is about believing Jesus, the "voice of truth" above all other doubts and lies. Contemporary/Rock.*

**5. Dangerous Wonder** — Curtis Stephan (Sacred Revolution)

*This song helps us to rejoice in the fact that we are made in the image and likeness of God. Pop/Rock.*

**6. Big Enough** — Chris Rice (Past The Edges)

*This is about facing doubt, having lots of questions and asking God about them. Folk/Easy Listening.*

**7. I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For** — U2 (Joshua Tree)

*Journey of searching near and far, knowing what Jesus did and still not being convinced it is what we need. Suggestions in the song are made that connect sexuality with eternity. His "burning desire" is more than just a physical thing. He knows he is meant for more, but he is confused.*

**7. God of Grace** — Adam Watts (Noise Inside)

*Our God is a God of grace and love and He is there whenever we need Him. Pop-Rock.*

**8. God is Love** — John Reuben (Are We There Yet?)

*God is love and love is God. If we focus on Him we will be love. Hip-Hop Ballad.*

**Notes & Nuggets:** This project is only a possibility if you can break teens into groups and have access to video cameras. It will be worth the effort as the teens will really enjoy this exercise. Get permission from the school to have video cameras on campus.

**Notes & Nuggets:** We chose to ask the Blessed Mother for her intercession because she beautifully exhibits for us the teaching of John Paul II on the Theology of the Body. She made a perfect gift of herself through her body, and she was perfectly pure. She is a model for holiness for us all.



## WORK IT OUT

**Assignment #1:** Draw a picture, write a poem, or write a song that creatively helps others realize why men and women do not make sense without the other—the two were made for union with each other. What would the world be like if there were no women? What if there were no men? Creatively include the text of Genesis 2:24 at some point in your creation. By the simple realization of our need for each other, we can also recognize that we were made for communion with each other.

**Assignment #2:** Use the terms from the glossary at the end of the chapter and go online to create your own crossword puzzle or word search that other students could use to help them better learn the many definitions in this chapter.

**Assignment #3:** Dig into the primary text of Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body from November 14, 1979, which focuses on man imaging God through the communion of persons. Write a summary essay of the address.



**Project #1:** Create your own "man on the street" video. Go to your cafeteria or a school sporting event to ask the following question: What is the meaning of life? After taping ten responses from people in different age groups, get on camera yourself and give a verbal summary of what you heard. Then give your own one minute answer to the same question.



## CLOSING PRAYER

**Leader:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Leader or Reader #1: O Blessed Virgin and Mother Mary,** please pray with me that I, like you, can live a life of perfect love. Help me to live a life worthy of returning to the One Who created me in love and for love. Please pray that I, like you, will live as a sinless and perfect vessel of the Holy Spirit.

**Leader or Reader #2:** Let us pray together: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Hail Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. Saint (patron saint of your church or school), pray for us. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**



## IN HIS OWN WORDS

- On the Body in "Theology":** "Through the fact that the Word of God became flesh, the body entered theology through the main door. The Incarnation and the redemption that springs from it became also the definitive source of the sacramentality of marriage ..." (April 2, 1980).
- On imaging God in the Communion of Persons:** "Formed in the image of God, also inasmuch as they form a true communion of persons, the first man and the first woman must constitute the beginning and the model of that communion for all men and women, who, in any period, are united so intimately as to be one flesh" (November 21, 1979).
- "Man becomes the image of God not so much in the moment of solitude as in the moment of communion. Right 'from the beginning,' He is not only an image in which the solitude of a person who rules the world is reflected, but also, and essentially, an image of an inscrutable divine communion of persons"** (November 14, 1979).
- On Intimacy & Nakedness:** [Gen 2:25] "According to this passage, the man and the woman saw themselves, as it were, through the mystery of creation. They saw themselves in this way, before knowing that they were naked. ... They see and know each other with all the peace of the interior gaze, which creates precisely the fullness of the intimacy of the persons" (January 2, 1980).
- On Original Happiness:** "Happiness is being rooted in love. Original happiness speaks to us of the beginning of man, who emerged from love and initiated love. That happened in an irrevocable way, despite the subsequent sin and death ... This beginning can also be defined as the original and beatifying immunity from shame as the result of love" (January 30, 1980).
- "The revelation and discovery of the nuptial meaning of the body explain man's original happiness"** (January 16, 1980).
- On the Sacramentality of the Body:** "The sacrament, as a visible sign, is constituted with man, as a body, by means of his visible masculinity and femininity. The body, and it alone, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and the divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden since time immemorial in God, and thus be a sign of it" (February 20, 1980).
- On Communion and Marriage:** "Against this vast background we understand fully the words that constitute the sacrament of marriage, present in Genesis 2:24: 'A man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh'" (February 20, 1980).
- "Therefore, in his original situation man is alone and at the same time he becomes male and female—unity of the two. In his solitude he is revealed to himself as a person, in order to reveal, at the same time, the communion of persons in the unity of the two ... In the unity of the couple he becomes male and female, discovering the nuptial meaning of his body as a personal subject"** (January 13, 1982).



# Glossary of Key Terms

**Celibacy (celibate life):** Freely choosing to forego earthly marriage “for the sake of the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 19:12), that is, for the sake of the heavenly marriage of Christ and the Church. Celibate people “consecrate themselves with undivided heart to the Lord and to ‘the affairs of the Lord’” (CCC 1579, 1 Cor 7:32).

**Communion of persons:** The “common union” joined between two or more persons who give themselves to one another in love; they see in each other the image and likeness of God and want the best for the other. John Paul II refers to the unity of Adam and Eve as the “prototype” for the communion of persons, through which man and woman become more fully the image of God.

**Concupiscence:** The “inclination to sin” that is present in all humans, inherited through the sin of Adam and Eve, and against which we must struggle to resist “by the grace of Jesus Christ” (CCC 1264). While it inclines us to sin and comes from sin, concupiscence itself is not a sin.

**Dignity:** The inherent and unchanging value of all persons as a direct result of their being created by God in His image and likeness.

**Despair:** The opposite of hope, despair is the resolve to give up pursuing whatever was initially pursued. In the case of relationships in our culture, many people despair, thinking that the possibility of finding loving, faithful relationships is impossible. But with God there is always hope, and in Him we find the keys to building loving, life-giving relationships that last.

**Love:** A decision to “will the good of another” person (St. Thomas Aquinas, as quoted in CCC 1766). John Paul II echoes this same definition in much of his writing on love, and adds that love involves a sincere gift of oneself to others.

**Lust:** It is “disordered desire for or inordinate enjoyment of sexual pleasure” (CCC 2351). It is sexual desire apart from God’s love—a selfish desire that seeks one’s own pleasure at the expense of another.

**Original sin:** The first sin of mankind against God, when Adam and Eve chose to disobey God’s command and do what they wanted instead. This choice affected all of humanity, giving us all a tendency to sin, a disordered desire to break God’s law, and a world prone to suffering and struggles of all kinds—including death.

**Sacrament:** An outward sign “instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church by which divine life [grace] is dispensed to us” (CCC 1131).

**Sacramentality of the body:** The inherent ability of the body to act as a visible sign of God’s invisible love.

**Sexual liberation:** The common term for escaping sexual “rules” so as to do whatever one wants with his or her sexuality. In reality, this liberation is not sexual freedom but an excuse to use sexuality as a form of recreation, often leading to the slavery of sexual addiction and a life of emptiness and broken relationships.

**Theology:** The study of God, or “faith seeking understanding” (St. Anselm). The word comes from the Greek words *Theos* (God) and *logos* (word). Theology is its own science of faithful study, seeking to understand God and His word.

**Theology of the Body:** A study of God and the purpose of our existence, as discovered and revealed through our bodies.

**OBJECTIVES** At the end of this lesson, the student should know and be able to:

- Define and explain the nature of love.
- Identify the differences between self-donating love as “*giving*” and self-indulgent “love” as “*using*.”
- Explain the difference between abstinence and chastity.
- Recognize chastity as a way to happiness.
- Recognize love as the only proper attitude (or response) toward another person and explain why.
- Test the quality of a relationship based upon the difference between “*giving*” and “*using*.”
- Differentiate between love and lust.

**Notes & Nuggets:** Pray today that your students would be open to seeing that many of their ideas of love are shallow or misdirected. Pray also that you would be able to be a model of authentic love for them, and that your love would attract them to want to learn more.

**Notes & Nuggets:** It may be a good idea to explain to your students that many analogies will be used throughout this curriculum, as well as throughout your own teaching. It is important to understand, though, that the point of using an analogy is to make use of a simple idea or word picture that is easy to grasp so that your students can make deeper connections. Analogies help us make the complex simpler. That said, analogies used to describe the attributes and actions of God always fall short because there is no way for a finite concept to fully contain an infinite God. In fact, St. Thomas Aquinas said that we can say more about what God is not (*via negativa*) than we can in describing what He is (*via positiva*).

For example, when we say God’s love is like an ocean (meaning it is “deep” and “wide”), the reality is that God’s love is actually more unlike an ocean than it is like it. But the word picture helps us to understand the concept that God’s love is vast and stretches beyond the parameters in which we place it. But do not assume that your students will understand this concept. Explain it to them. This is especially important when applying the analogy of spousal union to God and His love. God is not sexual. But our sexuality does reveal something of His divine mystery.