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Session 6

Faith in Action

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EVERYONE'S Dignity

Morality Session Contents

urpo	ose	Scripture References	Content Summary
On J	Freedom and Responsibility We are created in God's image and ble served with the amazing freedom to make choices about our actions. With his freedom consess her responsibility to develop well-formed consciences in order to choose what is good, in this session, young people will learn about and practice making good moral choices.	Matthew 62-4, Matthew 7:12	We are free to choose, responsible for our choices, and guided in our moral decision-making. ➤ God made us with a free will, an intellect, and a soul, and our conscience works with these gifts so that we can choose to do good and avoid sin. ➤ Morally good actions regular that their object, intention, and circumstance be good; the end does not justify the means. ➤ A well-formed conscience will guide us to do what is right and good, and with the help of christ's teachings, the Church, the Holy Spirit, prayer, and wise people, we can make good decision Catechism of the Catholic Church: 46, I711, I713, I745, I757, I759–I766 I798, I793, IR17, I874–I876
	Valuing Life A core belief of Catholics is that all life is valuable and sacred. Every person possesses human dignity, and we have a responsibility to honor and protect life at all stages. In this session, the young people explore this basic belief.	Psalm 19:13-14, Matthew 5:22, Matthew 5:39, Matthew 18:6, Psalm 19:13-16, Matthew 5:38-48, John 19:23-24	As the People of God, we know that all human life is sacred and a git from God. * All people possess the human dignity that comes from being made in God's image, and we do not have the right to take that life away from others or ourselves. * We have a responsibility to honor and protect life at all stages, from conception to old age. * We respect the dignity of the human person by respecting the rights of others, taking care of ourselves physically and emotionally, not abusing ourselves or others, and by not leading others into is. *Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2319, 2320, 2322-2324, 2326
	Being Virtuous God has given us the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity (love) as gifts to guide us. Young people will learn about these and the cardinal virtues as a means to healthy and holy living.	Philippians 4:8, Philippians 4:13, Matthew 6:2-4, Matthew 7:12	We are called to strive for what is right, just, holy, and gracious. The virtues are strong habits of doing good that help us make good moral descions and guide our emotions and conduct. The theological virtues make the moral, or human, virtues possible. The cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortifue, and temperance can help us respect ourselves and others and act with integrity. Learning about and practicing the virtues can help us live truthful, faith-filled lives. Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1833, 1834, 1839–1841, 2393–2392; 2505, 2507, 2508, 2533
00	Honoring God God, as our Creator, deserves our deepest love and gratitude. The young people will learn about how we should value God above all people and things. They will learn about showing respect for the name of God.	Exodus 20:2-3. Matthew 22:40, Matthew 53:4-35. Matthew 2:33:4-0, Matthew 5:33-35, 37, Psalm 8:1	We are called to be in relationship with God. We honor him when we love and respect him and his name, connecting what we believ about him with how we live. The first commandment calls us to put God first in our lives, to give him the praise and honor he deserves as the Creator of everything. We need to avoid putting so much importance on things or othe people that they take God's place in our lives. God's name is holy, and we must always refer to his name with respect and reverence. Catechism of the Catholic Church: 70, 73, 1840, 2134, 2135, 2138-214 216-2163.

We honor the special relationships we have with our families. The young people will learn that the obedience they owe their parents is modeled on Christ's obedience to the father, and that the Holy family is our best model of a healthy family life.	uke 2:41-52, Colossians 3:12-13	Families are called to be a school of faith in which we learn how to love, act, and treat others. **The obedience, love, and respect found in the Holy Family stant as a model for our own families. **The relationships within a family demand as much care, concern and energy on our part as with any of our other relationships. **Within the family, we develop personal character, grow in our understanding of right and wrong, and learn what's truly
provide a variety of calepanent		important. Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1746, 1796, 1798, 1800, 1801, 2251 2252
We five in community, in each community in which we participate, we must be mindful of the well-being of each individual, and of the group as a whole. The young people will learn how one person can make a difference through his or her acts of love and justice.	hn 1512 The state of the state	Because God created us with equal human dignity, we are require to work for the common good so that all people have what they need and can reach their fulfillment more fully and easily. In the common good comes about in a society when the fundamental rights of the person are met, social well-being of people is the gool, and there is security and peace. In the Church works to make sure that public and political authority acts within the truth, suitscie, freedom, and solidarity. Each and every member of the Church and ot his by making wise decisions based upon the human dignity of the person. Our individual actions to promote global social justice, peace, and love begin close to home. We can make a difference. Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1872, 1892, 1895, 1920, 1921, 1923, 1925, 1926, 1932, 1943, 1944, 1255, 2256, 2327-2329, 2458
Maith in Actional Carholic Social Trachine Theme: Solidarity of the Human Family This faith in Action feature teaches young adolescents the principle of solidarity of the human family.	tthew 5.9	The Catholic Church calls us to > promote the common good of all peoples. > promote peaceful alternatives to war for settling international conflicts. > become peacemakers in our daily lives. Catechism of the Catholic Church: 381, 1872, 1927, 2328, 2552



Session Background

Purpose

A core belief of Catholics is that all life is valuable and sacred. Every person possesses human dignity, and we have a responsibility to honor and protect life at all stages. In this session, the young people explore this basic belief.

Objectives Learners will

- explore the basic Catholic belief that every person has dignity that comes from being made in the image and likeness of God
- ▶ understand that the value of human beings is not determined by their usefulness.
- explore how the Church reflects Jesus' example of honoring life.

Church Documents

For more background on session content, refer to Catechism paragraphs 2319, 2320, 2322-2324, and 2326,

Because of the widespread acceptance of abortion, capital punishment, and other practices hostile to Catholic teaching, catechists have a special obligation to communicate clearly and unambiguously what the Church believes about human life and dignity.

-See National Directory for Catechesis, 42

Catechist Formation

It seems as if a new ethical dilemma stares up at us from a newspaper headline nearly every day. We face moral challenges that our parents and grandparents never dreamed of. These challenges present us with new and complex moral choices. The Catholic Church gives us a priceless gift: stability. In a world where change comes more rapidly than many of us can handle, and in a world where the poor and weak are marginalized if not trampled upon, the Church provides a powerful voice of timeless, unwavering moral truth. Every human being is valuable, worthy of respect and dignity. Jesus Christ modeled that belief. If the Son of God became human, there must be something intrinsically good about humanity.

How do you attempt to affirm human life and dignity?



Catechist Prayer

Jesus, you showed love for every person you encountered. Help me to do the same. May I see your face in every person's face, and may I affirm each one's dignity. Please grant me this through the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Young Adolescents Learning Faith

- Young adolescents tend to value the external appearance of others, such as looks, clothing, hairstyles, etc. This can lead to a person being treated cruelly or ostracized. Help the young people see that placing judgments on others is not life-giving.
- Youth have a growing awareness and interest in world affairs and issues. Connect the content of this session to current issues as a way to reinforce the timelessness and relevance of our shared faith. Encourage the young people to identify ways in which human life and dignity are under assault in today's world in the forms of poverty, war, racism, etc.

Preparing for the Session GO For a session planning sheet, visit



Session at a Glance



PRAY the opening prayer.

SHARE about people with special challenges.

READ David's story, PAGES 12-13

REFLECT on put-downs.





FACILITATE ACTIVITY that identifies core issues and beliefs from the story.

READ about MADE IN THE IMAGE OF THE DIVINE PAGE 14.

FACILITATE FAITH WALK ACTIVITY emphasizing we are Made by God.

EXTEND THE SESSION with The Office of Creation activity, add 20 minutes.

REFLECT on the idea of disposables

READ about USEFULNESS, PAGE 15.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY about the Church teaching on protecting life.

READ about what Scripture and Church teaches, PAGES 16-17.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY about valuing and honoring life during stages of human development.

EXTEND THE SESSION by creating a Valuing Life Mural, add 20 minutes.

PRESENT what demeans the human person.

SHARE an example of scandal.

EXTEND THE SESSION with Attitudes, Words, Actions activity, add 15 minutes.

READ about what CATHOLICS BELIEVE, PAGE 19.





EXTEND THE SESSION using the PEOPLE OF FAI feature on Pierre Toussaint, add 10 mir

PRAY the closing prayer.

Getting Ready

- ▶ Read Session 2 in the Morality Faith Booklet.
- Prepare a simple prayer space with a small table, simple cloth, a Bible, candle, and cross. Be sure to have matches or a lighter for the candle.
- Create a newsprint with these sentences for use in the closing prayer: God has created you! Wonderful is his work!
- ▶ Get ready for the What Now? reflection by brainstorming ideas for movies, television shows, songs, and advertisements as examples of media that encourage people to respect life and media that devalues life.

Supplies Needed

- Morality Faith Booklets—one per participant
- · copies of Resource 2-one per participant
- newsprint
- markers
- · tape
- · 3 x 5 cards—one per participant
- · pens and pencils
- · hole punch
- · varn
- disposable items such as paper plates, plastic forks, disposable diapers, fast food containers, disposable contacts, etc.
- Call to Faith Grade 7 & 8 Music CDs

See individual EXTEND THE SESSION activities for other supplies needed.

Personal Sharing Preparation

- Prepare for personal sharing and faith sharing. In What's the Issue?, you will share about a person you know who has a special challenge or limitation. 2 minutes
- In What Does Faith Say?, you will share an example of scandal that you have observed or experienced. 2 minutes

Facilitating the Session

WHAT'S the ISSUE





Visit www.osvcurriculum.com.

Look under Reproducible Resources
for a printable version of this prayer.



PRAY Greet the young people as they arrive for the session.
 Ask for the group's attention and begin prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

- Light the candle. Invite a participant to read the Scripture passage, Psalm 139:13–17. A second volunteer can read the prayer.
- God of all life, we thank you and praise you for the many gifts you have given us. Your care and love for us goes deeper than the human mind can comprehend. Even before we came to be, you loved us. We thank you for your blessings and the abundance you share with us. Help us to honor and respect all life. Teach us to remember that all life is sacred. Each of us is your great work of art. Amen.

SHARE This sharing serves as a focusing activity for the session.

- Briefly share about a person you know who has a special challenge or limitation. Or you may wish to share about an experience you have had with people who are challenged mentally or physically, such as going to a Challenged Athletes event or volunteering with Special Olympics.
- Then, ask the participants to brainstorm types of challenges and difficulties people they know have.
- List them on a piece of newsprint.

READ Invite a participant to read the story on **PAGES 12-13** aloud to the group.

- Ask these questions for discussion:
 - Why do other people share the uncle's opinion?

Does anybody have a similar story?

How do you think this girl's special challenges will affect those close to her?

REFLECT Pose this question from WHAT ABOUT YOU?:

In a week's time, how often do you hear people putting down others?

- Give the young people a minute to think about how many times, then go from person to person and tally the number of put downs the group hears in one week's time.
- Ask:

What do you think about this total?

Tell the group that you want them to spend a minute reflecting, individually, on how often they laugh at the misfortune of others.



FACILITATE ACTIVITY In this brief activity, you will help the young people identify core issues and beliefs from the story.

- Ask the group:
- What do you think is the key issue that the story about David, his uncle, and unborn sister raises?
- ▶ Listen to their responses, and list some of them on newsprint.
- ▶ Then, invite a volunteer to read the CONNECT feature on PAGE 14.
- Ask the group to review the list on the newsprint, and add any additional words or phrases they now think belong there.
- Summarize by sharing that each and every human has been given the divine spark of life by God.

READ Before inviting volunteers to read aloud **MADE IN THE IMAGE OF THE DIVINE, PAGE 14**, ask the group to name some of the popular designers they know about. These can be clothing lines, shoe lines, etc.

- Ask them why they think people their age might like to buy and wear things made by the "in" designers.
- Suggest that they are going to read about the most "in" designer of all.
- Invite volunteers to read the text on PAGE 14, as well as the FAITH WALK feature on PAGE 15.

FACILITATE FAITH WALK ACTIVITY Made by God 15 minutes

This activity allows the young people to explore the core belief that every person is made in God's image and likeness and therefore possesses dignity and is entitled to respect.

- Ask the participants to join with a partner.
- Distribute 3 x 5 cards and a pen or pencil to each person. Have colored pencils or markers available.
- Have the partners interview each other, using the questions on Resource 2 as a guide.
- After the interviews, each person creates a Made by God label for his or her partner, decorating it any way they choose. On the back of the label they are to write "Care Instructions" for how this person needs to be cared for.
- After partners have completed labels for each other, they can punch holes in the cards, string yarn through them, and tie the ends to create a necklace to be used in the closing.





WHAT DOES FAITH SAY? (continued)

EXTEND THE SESSION 20 minutes

The Office of Creation

In this activity, young people are challenged to identify ways in which humans are different from the rest of God's creation.

- Divide the participants into small groups. Each group will need a piece of newsprint and markers.
- Explain that each small group is to imagine itself as assistants who work in God's Office of Creation. Their task is to make a list of how human beings are different from the rest of creation. Discuss the issue as a small group task force, and create a list to present to the large group.
- ▶ Give the small groups 10–13 minutes to create their lists, using the newsprint. They can use the student text as a resource.
- Ask each group to present what they come up with.
- See if a consensus arises about how humans are different from the rest of creation.

REFLECT Place on a table in front of the group the disposable items you have collected.

- Ask the group to share other things they would put on the table that fit in the category of disposable.
- Share that these are all objects that we use, then toss away. Point out that human beings are very different than these objects and ask the group to share how.

READ Invite volunteers to read aloud **USEFULNESS** from PAGE 15.

Invite volunteers to summarize, in one sentence, what they find most powerful about the message in the reading.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY Honoring Life 10 minutes

In this brief activity, you will focus on what the Church teaches about how we are to honor life.

- ▶ Draw the participants' attention to the title on PAGE 16, HONORING LIFE, and the focus question: What does the Church teach about protecting life at all stages?
- Ask the young people to spend several minutes with a partner listing as many answers as they can for the focus question.
- Gather the responses as a large group, listing them on newsprint as the young people share their responses.

READ Ask the young people to read **PAGES 16-17** quietly.

- As they read, have them circle or underline what the Scripture and the Church teaches about how we are to honor life.
- After they have read the content, invite young people to add to the newsprint list.



FACILITATE ACTIVITY Valuing Life 15 minutes

In this activity, which corresponds with **CONNECT YOUR FAITH** on **PAGE 17**, the young people will focus on the different stages of human development.

- Divide the participants into six groups.
- Assign each group one of the stages of human development: unborn, infants, children, adolescents, adults, seniors.
- Distribute a piece of newsprint and markers to each group.
- ▶ Tell the groups: Label your newsprint with the stage of life you have been assigned. Then, come up with names of organizations or people who protect the right to life of people at that stage. List these on the newsprint.
- Have small groups present to the large group.
- Tape newsprints on the board or wall, creating a graphic like the one on PAGE 17.
- After the groups have presented, add the "All Ages" newsprint to the center. As a group, list ways that we can honor and value life at any age on the newsprint.

EXTEND THE SESSION 20 minutes

Valuing Life Mural

In this activity, the young people will be able to depict creatively how we are meant to value human life across the life span.

- Post a long piece of newsprint for a mural across a wall.
- With the participants, create a timeline, designating sections of the mural to depict the stages of the human life span.
- ▶ Tell the group that together they will create a mural that depicts how we are challenged to honor, respect, and value life across the life cycle. The participants can work individually or in groups, with art supplies such as magazines, newspapers, yarn, markers, scissors, and glue.
- Tell the participants that this is their mural. Each of them can contribute by adding symbols, visual images, photos, words, and so forth at any time during the activity. However, what they add must in some way reflect how we value human life.
- When finished, encourage discussion about the mural.

PRESENT This presentation includes an opportunity for sharing and input from the young people.

- After reading PAGE 18, share the following points:
 - Many things can cause damage and demean the human person.

Unkind words don't have a positive purpose. They don't build people up.

Harmful conditions also demean people—without basic necessities such as food, clean water, housing, clothes, education, health care, and a job, people cannot flourish as God intends.



WHAT DOES FAITH SAY? (continued)



HUMAN PERSON

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PAGE 18

WHAT DOES FAITH SAY? (continued

We are each wondrous pieces of art, created by God. Like a piece of invaluable art, though, we need to care for ourselves and for each other, or we damage the "artwork."

Ask the group to share with you some of the ways that we can damage the artistry of God at work in the human person (i.e., abusing food, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sacrificing everything else for physical perfection, bullying, sexual exploitation, etc.). We can also lead each other, God's artwork, into behaviors that lead to sin, either through our actions or inactions.

SHARE Share an example of scandal that you have observed.

► Conclude by saying:

God calls us to more. God calls us to care for ourselves and one another-his artistry-through our attitudes, words, and actions.



In this reflection, the young people use quiet time to reflect on how well they value life and honor the artistry of God.

- Read aloud the FAITH WALK feature on PAGE 19.
- Invite young people to spend time reflecting on how their attitudes, words, and actions show they respect life.
- Ask these questions:

If you were to go before a judge today who would determine whether you value life through your attitudes, words, and actions, what kind of evidence would you present that shows you value and respect life?

▶ Allow the young people to find a quiet place for reflection.

READ Invite a volunteer to read **CATHOLICS BELIEVE** on **PAGE 19**.



WHAT NOW

(10) minutes

REFLECT Invite participants to share one or two new insights about valuing life they have now.

What is one word or phrase from this session that you want to take with you and incorporate into your life?

- Share some of the ideas from the LIVE OUR FAITH box and challenge them to consider how they can carry out one of the ideas.
- ▶ Quickly brainstorm a few movies, television shows, songs, etc. that represent popular culture. Ask:

 Which of these accourages people to respect life? How? Which
- Which of these encourages people to respect life? How? Which de-value life? How?
- Encourage young people to use WHAT ABOUT YOU? as a focal point for their prayer and reflection in the coming days.

EXTEND THE SESSION 10 minutes

PEOPLE OF FAITH PAGE 21

Pierre Toussaint (pē-âr, tōō-sănt) grew up in present-day Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

- Invite the young people to read about Pierre Toussaint's life.
- Discuss how he added value to the lives of others through his generosity.



Invite all the participants to bring their Made by God labels forward and place them at the prayer center. Put the newsprint with the acclamation, "God has created you! Wonderful is his work!" where everyone can see it.

Play or sing one of the suggested songs.

Leader: We begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

> God, you have given us the awesome gift of life. Each of us is created in your image. We praise you. and we thank you for making us precious and special.

Reading

Invite the reader to the prayer center to proclaim the Psalm.

Reader: A reading from the Book of Psalms. Read Psalm 139-13-16

The word of the Lord.

AII: Thanks be to God.

Tell the participants that one by one, they will be called by name to the prayer center. They will take a Made by God label and call out the name of the person on the label. That person will come forward, and will have the label put around his or her neck. All will proclaim: "[Name], God has created you! Wonderful is his work!" Then, that person will take another label and call out the name of the next person, who comes forward and is adorned with the label by his or her peer. Continue until every person is wearing their Made by God labels.

Reflection

Leader: Lord, you teach us to remember that all life is

sacred, that no one is better or less than the other, that no one is undeserving of dignity and respect.

Indeed, we are wonderfully made!

We pray that we may respect all human life through our attitudes, words, and actions,

Pause for silent prayer.

Going Forth

Leader: God has created us! Wonderful is his work!

God has created us! Wonderful is his work! All:

WHAT NOW? (continued)



GO Visit www.osvcurriculum.com.
Look under Reproducible Resources for a printable version of this

FYI If you don't have time for the prayer service, you may choose to pray together the prayer on PAGE 20 of the Faith Booklet.

Suggested Songs

"Who Calls You by Name," David Haas, © 1988, GIA Publications, Inc., Call to Faith Grade 7 & 8 Music CD2. track 1

"We Are God's Work of Art," © 1996, Mark Friedman. Published by OCP Publications