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Studying what the Lord teaches us about sexuality



Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson speaks of the importance of the home. It speaks of the ways in which Christ taught us to love the home, and encouraged us to make our homes the happy places He wants them to be. The Lord meant homes to be schools of faith and love, places where our hearts learn life from people who deeply love us. It recalls how Christ wishes us all to have happy lives, by tasting the joy first of being loved by generous parents, and the joy of loving those in our homes, and so learning the goodness of real love.

Specific objectives

1. To assist the students in realizing how important homes are; how glad we should be for the good things God wishes us to find in our homes; how true it is that we must do all in our power to make our homes places of generous love.
2. To recall the things Christ did to call homes to be faithful to what God wants them to be, and how much he wants each of our homes to be happy and good.
3. To show that even homes that are broken, and have many trials, can be healed and helped by closeness to Christ.
4. To show that everything the Lord teaches us about sexuality is aimed at helping us to learn that generous kind of love that can make homes and lives happy. Impure acts are wrong because they undermine real love, and makes homes suffer.
5. To urge students to thank God for their parents and their homes, and to pray that they will themselves have love generous enough to make their homes happier places.

These are the things we will talk about . . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Homes are the most important places in the world.
2. Our homes are where we learn to be generous.
3. Each family member must learn to help the home be a happy place.
4. With God's help, even difficulties at home can be healed.
5. Love in the home must be chaste love.
6. Generous hearts are thoughtful hearts.



Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

Beginning a class like this in a spirit of prayer is especially important. The prayer itself needs some introduction by the catechist. Tell the students something like this: “Today we are speaking of something most important, about our homes, and all that we want God to give us through our homes. We want first to pray for the homes of each one of you: for all your fathers and mothers, your brothers and sisters. When Jesus was on this earth, He spent most of this life in an ordinary little home, to help us see how important homes are. Let us pray a prayer that comes from the feast of the Holy Family, a feast that celebrates the home of Jesus.”

Father, help us to live as the Holy Family — Jesus, Mary, and Joseph — did. Like them, may we live in peace with You, and with one another. Help us to love each other generously. Make us happy in our families on this earth, and bring us to the joy and peace of our eternal home with You. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

1. Homes are important

Seek to make the central idea clear here. Our homes ought to be, and can be, very happy places. But homes are not automatically happy; we have to work at them and seek to put generous love in our homes. Many places on this earth can be fun, but our lives are not deeply happy unless our homes are happy. And we can do a lot to make our homes happier.

REFLECTION: Thinking about home

This small section helps students to give their own ideas about home, especially about the things they find dear in their homes and the things they could do to make their own homes happier.

2. Homes are places of generous love

This section seeks to point out some of the concrete blessings that we find in our homes. It is true, of course, that not all homes are happy. But even those from unhappy homes need to know what Christ wanted their homes to be like. We do not need to be harsh critics on any homes. They need to encourage all to trust God, and to try to love each other in homes in ways that give the home a better chance to be deeply blessed by God.

DISCUSSION: Understanding homes

This small exercise asks the children to think, and to see, that even homes that are not perfect have blessings. Even imperfect homes are protections for us, places where we still do find some of the generous love we long for so much. We need to help students appreciate how their own homes are special.



3. Each one is called to make the home a happy place

Two central ideas need to be stressed here: A) We need good homes, and the love and encouragement and the many blessings a good home brings. Christ wants us to have happy homes. But getting a happy home is a shared task; we have to do something ourselves to make our homes happy. B) Even though every home has crosses to bear — even the home of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph had real crosses — still, when those in the home try to love one another generously, God makes the home a much happier place.

4. Brokenness can be healed in God's love

The love of the Lord is all-powerful. Christ came to heal.

5. Sexuality, family, and the home

This section is the one that the catechist will have to go over most carefully before class. The ideas are very important, and though they are not difficult, the catechist must be very clear in presenting them.

This gets at one of the most important ideas in teaching chastity. To teach chastity is not negative, not just telling people to say no. Chastity is very sensible, a generous and warmhearted gift from God. Everyone knows why people commit sins of impurity. We are all tempted to run after pleasure, even if we can see that pursuing pleasures in wrong ways ruins the best things in our life.

God wants us to be chaste, because He wants us to be happy, and to have the precious good things we need. Chastity does not lessen pleasure, but gives guidance to it. It teaches us to respect important things, like sex, which are meant for more than pleasure. Sexuality is meant to be guarded in ways that enable it to make love last a whole life long, to guard families and little children, to make young love last. It is for the sake of good and worthy things that Christ tells us not to pursue pleasure in sinful ways. People should be chaste as a way of loving one another and of guarding good things in the lives of all.

6. Thankful and generous hearts

This section should be presented as an encouragement to the students. The world often wants to make young people think: to live chastely is just too hard! No one can overcome temptations to seize pleasure. Even if the sinful pleasures we seek are truly foolish, even if in being impure we hurt our lives and hurt the people we want to love — still, no one can have the generosity and purity of heart which Christ asks.

But people do not have to give up and fall into sins that hurt them. Christ is able to make it easy to live generous and chaste love. For those who come to Him, He gives all the gifts they need to have good hearts and happy lives.

Grade 5



Class 4

REFLECTION: Ways of making chaste love easier

The class discussion ends with some very practical ideas and concrete things that the Lord want us to do to learn generous love, the kind of love that makes our homes and lives happy.

The class could end with a reminder that Mary, the mother of Jesus, does know and care about each of their homes. Invite everyone to pray the "Hail Mary" to ask to bring the blessing of her Son Jesus on each of our homes.

Tying things together

At the end of this lesson, it could be very useful to bring together the various parts of the lesson, as listed on the student's sheet.

For further reference and background the catechist should consult the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: 488; 525-534; 1638-1657; 2197-2205; 2214-2231; 2337-2350; 2360-2379.