

THE
CATHOLIC
Vision of Love
Diocese of Pittsburgh

**CHASTITY EDUCATION AND
PERSONAL SAFETY CURRICULUM**

REVISED 2011
**A Curriculum for Christian Education
in Sexuality and the Family**
Reverend Kris D. Stubna, S.T.D.

GRADE 5



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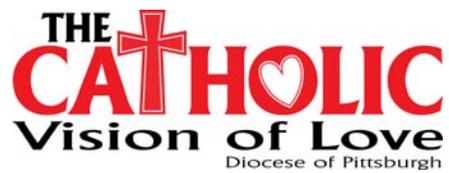
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Section Two

**CATECHIST'S NOTES
for Grade 5**

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Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to help the students realize how immensely important each one of them is, in truth and before God. It helps them see how important their lives are and how important are the things that deeply affect their lives. In a special way, it helps them see the importance of their sexuality, and of responding to the gift of sexuality in the light of the Lord's teaching, and in ways that respect how things really are.

Specific objectives

1. To assist the students in realizing personally — in the light of faith and their experience — how very important each one of them is, and how important it is that they lead their lives wisely and well.
2. To address the problems that arise for people who are wrongly persuaded that they are not worth much, and are not very much loved.
3. To realize that thinking and feeling rightly and wisely about sexuality is very important for them.
4. To help the students understand that sexuality has important purposes. God created sexuality to serve the wonderful and lasting good things He wishes it to bring to our lives.

These are the things we will talk about . . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. *You* are an important person, having been created in the image of God.
2. People who do not know how important they are often make mistakes with life.
3. The sexuality God gave you is important and good.
4. We have to think and behave intelligently to understand sexuality in this confusing world.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

It is important to open all the classes in *The Catholic Vision of Love* with prayer. Prayer reminds students that God is concerned with the precious things

Grade 5



Class 1

of ordinary life. God is not just a mystery and a warm feeling at Mass on Sunday or during special rare moments. God makes sense of everything, and is our Friend and Guide in all aspects of life.

A useful prayer for this lesson is paraphrased from Psalm 139. Copies can be made for the children, and perhaps used for the next class also. Or the prayer can be used as a responsorial psalm, and the students can be asked to repeat the first verse (italicized below) after each of the verses that you read.

O LORD, You have made me and You know me. You know when I sit down and when I stand. For You formed my inmost parts. You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I was fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works! You know me right well. When I was formed in my mother's womb, Your eyes beheld all that I am. How precious are Your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

1. You are important

This section treats one of the most important foundations of moral living. Young people need to realize how very much they are loved, and how important they are. They need to realize that since their lives are really precious, the way they live their lives is something very important.

Realization of the preciousness of one's life is very different from the shabby and weak kinds of phony self-love some people are taught by the world. False self-love is divisive; it leads people to have pride for shallow reasons, as the lesson indicates; and it makes people despise one another, and cease to be loved by one another. The roots of real self-love are deep in faith and in the experience of the love we have from people who really care about us. This session needs thoughtful presentation.

2. Mistakes people make when they do not love themselves.

Unfortunately, although all people should feel loved and important, many young people do not. Obviously we are not speaking of arrogant, vain self-love, but that deep and important acceptance of how much God loves us, and how much each one of us deserves to be loved for the reasons faith celebrates.

In every class we teach we should be seeking not to tell but to show children how important we think they are, how much we really care about them, and love them. Faith can only be taught to people if they understand that they are most important and precious to us, as the New Testament shows so constantly.

Some people seem to feel that they are not worth anything. If anyone gives them a little affection, that quickly becomes dearer than all else, since they are starving for some affirmation. And they can be led into all kinds of

trouble if they are shown affection by confused and tragic people, and not effectively shown affection by good and secure people who do really love them.



ACTIVITY A — Things that make you important

Activity A, which includes “Things that make you important” and “Reflection on the activity,” and Activity B, “Questions to think about,” can help in guiding students to see the sorts of traits that are most important, that make us really worthy of God’s love and the love of others.

For Activity A, the catechist could use plain paper, or have silhouettes of boys’ and girls’ heads prepared ahead of time, on which the students record their qualities. Choose whichever option that time and the catechist’s personal talents or assistance from helpers permit. The silhouettes could provide additional visual assistance for the students in comparing complementary qualities. This segment could be omitted, and returned to at the end, if the catechist judges that there might not be time for everything in the lesson.

For “Reflections on the activity,” one could discuss with the whole class, in pairs, or in small groups. Individual written reflections could also be used.

ACTIVITY B — Questions to think about

Activity B is intended to help the catechist guide the children to realize the basic truth that each person is wonderfully important! This activity may be enhanced by having the students answer the questions working in pairs, trios, or small groups. The catechist may wish the students to record their answers on paper to share with the whole class. The catechist may want to designate a leader for each small group to report back to the whole class with either verbal or written answers. For expediency’s sake, groups could be instructed to share only their best answer, or each subsequent group after the first might be instructed to report only on something that has not already been mentioned. Such an approach may draw out a wider variety of positive responses than one whole-class discussion. Posted, written responses create a visual pool of practical things students can do to encourage others or themselves when they feel unloved. When we find people who are sad, and have unhappy lives, we have a duty to exercise the love for one another that Christ taught. Everyone must know that they are important, loved, and that other people think highly of them.

3. Sexuality is important

Different ideas need to be drawn out of this part of the lesson. A) Sexuality is something God made. It is not at all suspicious or bad, even though it can be treated badly, as all good things can. B) God made sexuality very important. It is as boys and girls, as women and men, that we “Images of God.” C) Sex was made for specific, important purposes. Some of these purposes are to draw us away from loneliness and isolation, to be caring to one another, and to have many kinds of friendships that are enriched by the variety of charms and fascinating things that are involved in our being different in many ways, not the least of which is that we are boys or girls. And specifically, sexuality was made to attract people to an especially generous kind of love, the kind of love that can

Grade 5



Class 1

— if they work at it — make two people love each other so deeply that they gladly give their lives to each other, learning generosity and greatness of heart from each other in marriage. D) Sexuality was made so that we could be like God in calling new persons into existence, to have children who would be the center of our lives forever, and to be the source of gladness and confidence in the future that life always needs.

Sexuality has many delightful things about it. God made important, good things to be sources of great pleasure too — but the art of living is to put the more important things in perspective, so that the pleasures will last longer and the heart will be satisfied. It is never fully satisfied with passing pleasures.

4. DISCUSSION: Think and act intelligently to understand sexuality

This discussion aims at leading the students to realize that what is said in class is meant for ordinary life, not just for class talk. Several sorts of ideas are taught in this discussion, and catechists should seek to be sure that the students get a good grasp of them.

A) God made sexuality, and it is really very good; but sometimes it seems bad, because it is often used selfishly and badly. B) We should pay attention to the teachers who are most likely to teach us about sexuality in a way that makes sense, and is true and good. Surely we should listen to what the Lord teaches about sexuality, and to those who love us the most (especially to people like our parents). It may take some effort to let them know how we feel and what we expect to hear from them about this. C) We are Christians, but much of the talk and many of the attitudes shown about sexuality on TV, the internet and in movies are from people who have not found Christ, and who have not made much sense of sexuality for their own lives. They see only a small piece of it: its fascination and its power to give pleasure. We have to have sense not to let our minds be filled with images of sexuality that are contrary to what God teaches. D) When sex is treated shabbily, as it often is on TV, the internet and in movies, it can be depressing; it can incline us to share rather bad and depressing ideas about something that is really good. What sort TV programs have you seen that treat sexuality rather badly? Should our minds and imaginations be filled with things like that? Due to the importance of conveying the points listed above, this discussion might best be handled as a whole class discussion led by the catechist.

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*: 355-373; 2331-2336; 2354.

.....
Studying what the Lord teaches us about sexuality



Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to help the students to see that the many changes that come with adolescence should not be sources of anxiety, but are meant by God to be steps toward a richer fulfillment in life.

Specific objectives

1. To help students appreciate that it is good that our life advances in stages; that the good things of earlier years are meant to be fulfilled by better things as time advances.
2. To help students realize how many aspects there are to maturing. We are to grow not just physically (which we cannot help doing) but also emotionally, socially, intellectually, and spiritually.
3. To show that in God's plan everyone is special. Each one is different in a variety of ways, and this is good.
4. To make clear that it is all right to be different! We mature at different rates, and that is fine. Different people have different natural strengths and weaknesses: None of these make us unable to have great and good lives.
5. To show that sexuality is a gift from God, and that the physical growth that reveals our maleness and femaleness is a good thing.

These are the things we will talk about . . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. There are different stages of life through which we grow.
2. These are different kinds of growth and development that we experience.
3. God's plan for life and for each of us includes these teachings:
 - It is all right to be different.
 - Sexuality is a gift from God.
 - It is important to have a correct answer to the question: Who am I?

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

The opening prayer for Lesson 1 of this program may be used (paraphrased from Psalm 139). See notes from the first lesson.



1. Stages of life

Every stage of life is good; but things are made to get better as stages progress. Infancy and early childhood are great: Everyone loves little children. But it would be said if an adolescent wanted to be a child again, or an adult wanted to be an adolescent again. Growing through life is passing toward richer life, all the way to eternal life: God always “saves the best wine until last” (John 2:10).

Passing through a stage of life is not losing what was, but coming to something richer that guards and develops the richness of what had been. The idea of growth is a good one. We are called to better forms of life as we live. A catechist can show children how being a middle-aged adult has a certain richness not yet had in young adults; and how senior adults, even very elderly people, possess a most precious stage of life. It is not as if young adulthood were glorious and it is all downhill from there. The total reality of life (not any one of its aspects) can get better and better, all the way to heaven.

The activities can be made more interesting if the catechist brings in the ideas noted in the paragraphs above. Questions like “What is the best stage of life?” can become sources of very interesting thoughts. Catechists need to have wise and clear thoughts to help young people see more than they are immediately inclined to see. The catechist should have clear thoughts on “preadolescence” and “adolescence” to help the students. The actual filling out of the spaces might be saved for the students to work on between classes. These spaces regarding preadolescence and adolescence would also be good things to discuss with parents as homework assigned to be shared at the next class.

2. Different kinds of growth and development

The lesson points out the many ways in which young people are changing, and should be changing. Point out that the physical changes sometimes seem awkward and embarrassing, especially when one seems to be changing into a man or woman faster or slower than one’s close pals. Some of the physical changes can be spelled out for clarity. One description that is most useful is “girls begin to look more like young women” and “boys begin to look more like young men.” This is something attractive, and helps them see the lure of moving to a more mature stage.

They should be helped to see, as the lesson plan notes, that the physical changes are not just for their own sake. We bodily creatures, and the bodily changes will have a big (and, in God’s plan, very good) impact on all our ways of growing. Let them know that it would be good if they would talk with their parents about these changes.

We grow emotionally! This is a good place to emphasize that as we change and grow, we also need to become more understanding and considerate of others who are also changing and growing. The other stages in the lesson plan need to be noted: the intellectual, social, and spiritual changes. Especially the last one needs a bit of stress.



ACTIVITY: We grow in our life of faith

This activity clearly stresses reflection on growing up spiritually. It is very valuable to associate the general longing to grow up with remembrance that this is one of the most important ways of growing up. The catechist could divide the class into small groups and have each group address one of the four points. Charge the group with designating a speaker and being prepared to report their work back to the larger group. Students could list their group work on posters as a reminder of the task of growing spiritually. Group one could list reasons for why Mass is important. Group two could list ways to pray more meaningfully or give examples of occasions when they could pray longer. Group three could list examples of works of justice and love. Group four could list reasons to celebrate the sacrament of penance often. Each of the groups' ideas could become the topic of daily prayer in the days and weeks ahead. Likewise, students could work in small groups and verbally share examples of the first three points, then discuss the last point together as a class.

3. God's plan

To grow is not just to change, but to change in a positive and good direction. As we mature, we are growing toward something good. And God has special plans for each of us.

In some ways, of course, we are alike, and we change in many similar ways. But God made each person special, and all of our changes have some feature unique to each one of us. We are all custom made, not just copies of identical things, stamped out of a mold. And we should be glad of the special gifts God has given to each one of us, and the special ways he has made each of us.

Each of us is called to be a mature person and to be a friend of God. But each is called to good things in a special way, and we should not want to submerge the good differences God has given us. This does not keep us from being close and good friends. It would not be so great a world if there were not so many distinctive and interesting people in it.

It's all right to be different

This section is important for two reasons. One is obvious: In growing up, some children are embarrassed at being so far ahead of others, and so "strange," and some are embarrassed at seeming so slow in their growth. There can be some advance help for both groups by speaking ahead of time of this growth rate as something quite unimportant. The second is about the kinds of differences that are more lasting and require good sense to manage. Being of different races, having different handicaps can be challenging. People can live excellent lives from all the different conditions in which they are placed. To live a good life with handicaps can be far better than not having any difficulties at all. Life is best when a person does well even in trying circumstances. For example, actors get Academy Awards for doing well in roles that are demanding and Olympic divers get higher scores for dives that are more difficult.



■ ***Sexuality — a gift from God***

This section is important, though it is rather short. First, it stresses that people should be glad to be what they are. A boy should be glad he is a boy; a girl glad that she is a girl. God made each one deliberately as he or she is. What we are is a gift of God. That one is a boy or a girl and has male or female characteristics is a gift of God to you, and it will make your life richer if you let it.

Secondly, there is a reference to “genital sexuality.” The general idea given in the lesson plan should be mentioned, together with remarks that parents have an interesting booklet for you to read and discuss with them at home. The booklet addresses how they develop in adolescence. Remind them that it is very good to have clear ideas about the sexuality God has given us. The Blessed Mother had very clear ideas, and was very sensible and good in her grasp of them (see Luke 1:34).

Then there is a reminder that the term “sexuality” is also used in a broader sense to point out ways in which male and female person are different, and have distinctive charms and appeals. God gave us all the differences of being male and female not only to make life more interesting and happy (as it does), but also to give us stimuli to being more friendly and caring about one another.

■ ***Who am I?***

This section should be used to tie the whole lesson together.

Who am I? Note the elements of the response: A) I am a special person: I am *this* boy or *this* girl. B) I am like you in many ways, but I am different too. C) And I am growing!

Next, there is recollection of the idea that growing is not just changing; it also indicates progress. It is moving on to something better. We have to pass through good things to go further; but it is to something better we go.

Then there is a reminder that when change seems dangerous it is God who plans the adventures of growing up. He is with us on the way, guiding us. We are wonderfully made.

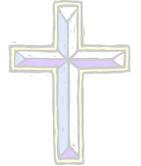
Finally, we recall that growing up is becoming more distinctively male or female. Our gratitude for growing toward better things should be evident in the reverence we show toward the changes that occur. This is a mature way of showing that we appreciate the gift of sexuality, realizing its importance as a gift of God, to be thought about and managed in our lives intelligently and reverently.

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*: 356-358; 2331-2333.

Studying what the Lord teaches us about sexuality



Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to help students understand what friendship is and why it is so precious a gift. Friendship makes life much happier and enables us to be better persons. The lesson seeks to explore the truest kind of friendship, and to see why it lasts longer and is more rewarding than less perfect kinds of friendships. In a special way it treats romantic friendships, and what characterizes true and lasting friendships to serve life well.

Specific objectives

1. To understand the reasons why friendship is both so attractive and so important for our lives.
2. To be able to tell the difference between “true friendships” and less solid kinds of friendship.
3. To reflect on how Scripture praises true friendship, and why Christ wants to be a friend to each of us.
4. To think about a special kind of friendship, romantic friendships, and to understand why and how God wanted friendships like these to be.
5. To understand how important it is that we have truthful, generous, and pure hearts in all our friendships.

These are the things we will talk about . . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Friendship is a gift precious to each of us.
2. There are many kinds of friendships and love.
3. True romantic love involves appropriate times and pure hearts.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

The opening prayer could have the two following short readings from Scripture, and then a prayer that God will give to each of us good friends.

1. Reading from Sirach, 6:14-16:

A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he that has found one has found a treasure. There is nothing so precious as a faithful friend, and no scales can measure his excellence.



II. Reading from the Gospel of John 15:13-17:

Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends.... I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit.... This I command you, to love one another.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, we thank You for choosing us to be Your disciples and Your friends, and to walk in Your light. Teach us to be faithful friends to You, to keep Your commandments, and to be good friends to one another. Remain always a friend to us, and kindly give us good friends on earth, who will stand by us faithfully all our lives. We ask this in Your name, O Lord. Amen.

Perhaps you could then invite your students to pray the "Our Father" together.

1. Why friendship is precious to us

- While definitions come later in the lesson, the catechist can begin by suggesting briefly what friendships are and reminding the students how much they like to have good friends. "Friendship is a wonderful thing. Friends are people whom we really care about, and who really care about us too. Friendships make everything in life better."
- Point out how much Christ wanted His disciples to be His *friends*. It is useful to look over all that his lesson says about Christ's desire for us to be His friends, by keeping His commandments.
- Have one of the students read the paragraphs on how much friendship blesses us.

DISCUSSION: Who are our friends?

Go over the first five questions, helping the class see the many different kinds of friends. The catechist could have the students briefly answer questions six and seven in pairs and report back to the whole class. This leads them to see that friendship means different things, though there is a shared meaning: Friends are those whom we love, and who love us, and friends recognize that their friends do care about them.

Then begin exploring the questions about how friends should treat each other. Be able to explain the Golden Rule. This section should not take too long; the lesson returns to some of this later. The catechist may also choose to have the students answer the remaining two questions in pairs, again reporting back to the whole class as a conclusion to this section.



2. The many kinds of friendship and love

Begin with recalling what is common to all kinds of friendships: Friends love each other, and know they are loved by the other.

But some friendships are comparatively shallow friendships, and may not last too long. Make clear the extent of *fun* and *useful* friendships. Let the students know these are not bad friendships. Fun and useful friendships are also not so deep, because the aim is to get something out of the relationship instead of caring deeply about the friend.

But *true friendships* are the kind everyone most wants to have. Read through the paragraph on this, and make sure the students get the idea.

DISCUSSIONS: Real friendship and handling problems of peer relationships

If you used the Sirach scripture reading in the opening prayer, you could go at once to questions two to four on the student's sheet. These are probing questions; the students should have a chance to think through them. The catechist may want to use these questions as a whole-class discussion.

Then explain the idea of "peers." Students can see easily that peers are ordinarily people we like, but they are not always exactly friends. Why? The discussion questions in this section can be very helpful for the students. The catechist may want to have the students develop some strategies to handle the suggested peer pressures. The class may want to use these topics as the subject of prayer in the days ahead.

3. Romantic love: Good times and pure hearts

Several things are treated in these paragraphs. A) It is a good thing to have true friends among the boys and girls with whom we grow up. B) There is something magic about romantic friendships. Why did God create romantic friendships? Try to make it very clear: God is the author of romantic friendship too, when they are truthful and strong. The section "Why God created romance" is very useful.

The next section about romantic love and marriage is a bit more difficult, but very important. Prepare this section carefully in advance of the class, and be able to speak of it with ease and confidence.

It is important for the students to realize there may be something magic and wonderful about romantic love now, but there is something about it that God made for later years. It is great already, but will be much greater when we have learned the generous kind of love that God wants us to be able to have.

Things that spoil love

Certainly we want it to be clear to the students that love is a great and good thing. (One could read the classical passage in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.)

Precisely because love is so good and so important, it should not be spoiled. Explain how people and things get hurt when we use them foolishly. When a small child uses the good china to throw around like a ball, trouble

Grade 5



Class 3

comes! When one is beginning to have a serious friendship, and feeling the mysterious ways sexuality touches the friendship, it is good to learn from the Lord how to handle these emotions. He is the one who created sexuality. He knows how love and sexuality are to be treated, if people are not to be hurt.

Important concepts are taught here. At all ages of our life, love is important. Our being boys and girls, persons who have sexuality, is a source of joy all the time. Sexual activity is not a toy; it is made to go with important realities — with having children, having the kind of love and honest promises of married love that make homes strong, and make it safe to bring children into the world.

The Lord teaches us clearly that sexual activity is made for mature love in marriage. It is not something casual. Unless it is surrounded by the mature and honest love that marriage promises, it goes very wrong.

We see how very wrong it goes when people engage in sexual activity outside marriage. Some of the greatest troubles of our time come from that! AIDS — abortions — diseases of many kinds — broken lives when people do not learn how love must be handled so that it can last a marriage a whole life long.

Much of the world, especially those who have not learned the truest meaning of love from Christ, have many troubles. The world often encourages young people to fill their minds with wrong thoughts and dreams about sexuality — to act in ways that offend love's true meaning. True friendship involves people who honestly love and do not harm each other because of their friendship with Christ. Those are the kinds of friendships that are faithful and strong.

We always need to end on a positive note! There are lots of people who have learned love rightly from Christ, and their lives work well. Christ is our great teacher. If we learn and listen to him, we need not worry. Important things like love and sexuality can go well in our lives if we learn from Christ and remain faithful friends of his.

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*: 456-463; 478; 519-521; 604-605.

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

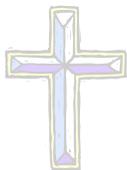
1. To assist the students in realizing how important homes are; how glad we should be for the good things God wishes us to find in our homes; how true it is that we must do all in our power to make our homes places of generous love.
2. To recall the things Christ did to call homes to be faithful to what 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.