

**CHRIST THE REDEEMER
MEMO ABOUT FORMATION IN CHRISTIAN CHASTITY
AND CALLED TO PROTECT**

TO: Catechists in Grades 7-12 (Sunday/Monday nights)
FR: Jay Cuasay, Director of Christian Formation
RE: Formation in Christian Chastity (FCC) Program/Called to Protect
DT: RE YEAR 2018-2019

Dates for FCC (on Mondays) and Called to Protect (On Sundays):

- Formation in Christian Chastity for **Monday Grades 7 -8:**
 - MON OCT 15 and MON OCT 22
- Called to Protect for **Sunday Grades 9-12:**
 - SUN NOV 04 (make-up date TBD)

As part of our compliance with child safety procedures, the Arlington Diocese requires us to include the **Formation in Christian Chastity (FCC) Program** in our Religious Education Classes for Grades 7-8 on Mondays. This program began in 2004 and we have already taught these classes in the past. For Grades 9-12 on Sundays the video program **“Called to Protect”** followed by a Guided Discussion are done during class time on the date(s) listed.

Some Background:

The FCC Program is meant for Grades 1-8. In the lower grades the FCC Program consists mainly of parent letters and some general information sheets about basic child safety. Parents are given the primary responsibility to talk to their children and the letters provide some talking points.

- **In Grades 7 and 8**, in addition to parental letters and talking points, there are two lesson plans to cover.
- **For Grades 9-12** this requirement is fulfilled by watching a video entitled “Called to Protect” and followed by a guided discussion.
- JAY CUASAY will send letters to parents explaining the program(s) and offering them the option to OPT-OUT their child if they wish. (Students still come to classes on those days).

So what do I need to do as a catechist?

For Grades 9-12 on Sundays:

- You need simply to show the video and do the discussion guide on the date(s) listed. Show the video to any students who missed the Video on the make-up (second date). Continue with your regularly scheduled classes.
- **If any students have Opt-Out forms**, keep that form in your catechist binder. On the day you teach *Called to Protect*, send that student with the Opt-Out form to my office. I will set up an activity for them in a separate Room during that time.

For Grades 7-8 on Mondays:

- Read the Lesson Plan(s) online by visiting the FORMATION IN CHRISTIAN CHASTITY link on the CTR Website or by going here: <https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/Child-Protection/Youth-Training-Programs/Formation-in-Christian-Chastity/> and selecting the appropriate Grade.
- Read my **Notes for Formation in Christian Chastity/FCC on Mondays** (attached and also available on the CTR Website <http://ctrcc.org/7-12catechists> under Quick Links) and take time to prepare for the OCT Lesson Date(s).
- **For Grades 7-8**, I suggest you consider trying to reach as many students as you can with the first Lesson Date. Use the second Lesson Date/Make-Up time to reinforce the different themes (perhaps the first 10-15 mins of class). **One Suggestion:** For those who were absent initially, you can place them on one side of the class and have the other side of the class review for themselves as they teach the other side of the class.
- **If any students have Opt-Out forms**, keep that form in your catechist binder. On the day you teach the FCC component, send that student with the Opt-Out form to my office. I will set up an activity for them in a separate Room during that time.
- The best way to make this a win-win situation is to use this time and the themes to set the tone and stage for the rest of the year with your class. So use the time and themes wisely...learning self-respect (that each of us is made in the image and likeness of God, imbued with dignity and called to holiness) could be as simple as learning everyone's names and their major likes and dislikes, etc.
- **Do it and move on:** Although Mondays tend to have a lot of the holidays, the rockiest part is in the Fall. Don't worry about that. **You have a number of weeks following FCC** and you will have plenty of concentrated, focused time after Christmas, during Lent, and after Easter to develop longer topics.
- **Finally:** Have fun! Pay attention to where your class is and how best to present this class material to them.

Notes for Formation in Christian Chastity

FORMATION IN CHRISTIAN CHASTITY (FCC)

DATES: MON OCT 176(FCC#1) and MON OCT 23 (FCC #2, if not combining)

BACKGROUND:

- In Grades 5-6 students should have discussed “The Buddy System” and making/using a “Safety Plan.” This Safety Component is downloadable here:
<https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/Child-Protection/Formation-in-Christian-Chastity/Grade-5/f>

FOR GRADE 7-8:

- **Grade 7:** The lesson plans for Grade 7 are fairly straightforward. Lesson 1 offers an activity with the 10 Commandments and Lesson 2 introduces the idea of Vocation: that we are each called to be Holy. As this is their first year of Confirmation Preparation, you might advise them to pay attention not just to the Do’s and Don’ts of being a Catholic, but also to the blessings of what it means to become more and more Catholic, which is what this preparation for Confirmation is partly about. (*Further Suggestions are Attached*).
- **Grade 8:** I personally find the Lesson Plans for Grade 8 less successful, though the content is pretty straight forward. It may be difficult to talk about how many everyday activities, movies, and values in popular culture are at odds with Catholic values. It is one thing for works of fiction to present such worlds to us. But it’s another to have personal contact with such things. While it is too simplistic to believe that “saving yourself sexually” or that not having done so is what makes the difference, there is nothing wrong with properly focusing on how do we respond to personal and social challenges when we may run the risk of not being popular or losing friends or family because of such actions.
- The trouble I have seen in the past is that the Grade 8 Lesson Plans puts forth a very simplistic view that easily points out what is “good”, but doesn’t deal realistically with what is then “bad.” The children can understand to a certain extent that early sexual activity is not going to be good for them. But it’s another thing for them to take these wholesome values and then apply them: How “good” or “bad” are my parents if they are divorced, remarried, never married? It’s the equivalent of telling them not just that smoking/drinking is bad, but is evil. And then sending them home to see that many of their friends and relatives who mean the world to them also smoke or drink. Can it really be as simple as not drinking/smoking to be good? And that all evil and evil people are because of smoking/drinking? **So be aware of that complication** and be prepared and willing to teach about Catholic values that are something that they’ll take home positively with them and live out appreciatively instead of giving them something that will only increase the amount of Catholic guilt in the world. (*Further Suggestions are Attached*).

Outline of Formation in Christian Chastity: Grade 7

Class #1: God made us to be happy. Morality is a matter of understanding what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God and using good decision making skills to discern what is best.

FCC suggested two activities to help strengthen this understanding:

- 1) Make a list of “I will do” and “I will not do” statements that reinforce the 10 commandments.
(This could be expanded to address particular situations for moral decision making).
- 2) Exploring moral dimensions of scripture readings.

I think activity #1 probably is the easiest to implement. The key is to make the “rules” (i.e. 10 commandments, Beatitudes, etc.) visible by applying it to real, actual situations in the individual person’s life and in the social group situations that are faced at this age.

Class #2:

God not only wants us to be happy, but God calls us to true happiness through vocations. Whether that is the vocation of ordained priesthood, consecrated religious life, married, or single, we are each called to be saints, called to be holy people of God.

I would want to remind children of their baptism, in which they were called to be “priests, prophets, and kings”—rather than “soldiers for Christ” (the image used by the FCC). I would translate “soldiers for Christ” into “disciples on mission.” We continue the same work that the early believers did with the same commissioning, the same Spirit. We need to see ourselves as being part of that work, the work of the Kingdom.

A second, but not terribly well developed lesson in Class#2 is the importance of appropriate friendships for supporting our vocational life. That is, “How to choose friends and develop relationships wisely.”

One of the activities suggests discussing the attributes of a good friend and identifying which characteristics are virtues. A more integrative activity for this class would be to identify different vocations that are virtuous and discuss how relationships support these vocations. Ultimately, the class ought to also experience the sense in which they have relationships that are virtuous and call them forward in their ongoing development in their vocations and potential future professions.

Suggestion: Perhaps this would be a good time to have a priest or other church minister (lector, eucharistic minister, music minister, catechist, DRE, etc.) come into the class and talk not so much about their vocation, but about who their friends are and how that has helped them in their vocation.

Outline of Formation in Christian Chastity: Grade 8

Class #1: The sacrament of marriage and the appropriate place of “the marital act” inside marriage.

The activities suggested for this class do not look particularly promising, in my opinion. I would suggest reinforcing the “made in the image of God” concepts of Grade 7 (made accessible through the Genesis Story of Adam and Eve) to talk about how we are created for proper relationships that include proper male/female relationships.

A helpful activity might be to look at how sexuality is cheapened or not properly handled by contemporary culture. For example, the way that women are portrayed or made to look in order to be “sexy” ends up demeaning the various other types of women (i.e. women are *just* sex objects) and the many other ways that woman can be valuable. This forces both boys/men and girls/women to conform to images and expectations that they did not create and places them in a process of trying to keep up with fashions, “being cool”, etc. instead of exercising their own free will and developing healthy relationships that enable them, their friends and partners to more properly grow in God’s image. Activities that help your class get in touch with the core value of their created-ness in the image and likeness of God would be beneficial. This could be a good time for your class to offer positive compliments and support to one another for their good points in their character and personality.

Class #2: This class is about appropriate behavior and attitudes. It tends to combine different topics without the best of connections (i.e. it’s too young to date, abuse is wrong). A better theme for this class would be the notion of self-respect. Again, understanding what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God, created for proper relationships, means that there are certain things and choices one is supposed to make to enhance (not demean) one’s self-respect and to deepen our relationships and support the dignity of others.

The suggested activity is to examine contemporary movies and discuss whether proper decisions or appropriate behaviors were modeled. Perhaps a particular TV series or episode could be chosen beforehand and used in class. Or students could be asked to describe a show that they watch and then assess what personal values (positive or negative) are displayed through the attitudes and behavior of the characters.