

SECRETARY FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH

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August 15, 2011

Reverend and Dear Fathers, Parish Life Collaborator, and Esteemed Catechetical Leaders,

It has been nearly twenty years since the *Catholic Vision of Love Chastity Education and Personal Safety* program was promulgated for use in our Catholic schools and parish religious education programs. This program is a tremendous help to catechists and parents in presenting the Church's teaching about love, marriage and human sexuality and enables young people to make intelligent choices and decisions regarding their sexuality.

In the Diocese of Pittsburgh the *Catholic Vision of Love Chastity Education and Personal Safety* program has been the approved program for safe environment education for children, youth and their parents. It has been mandated for use in every parish program of religious education, Catholic school and youth ministry program. This program is fully integrated into the religious education curriculum of our schools and religious education programs in addition to providing specific lesson plans for students in grades 5 to 8, and a required parent meeting. Recently at the suggestion of the safe environment program auditors from the USCCB, we have made several additions to the *Catholic Vision of Love Chastity Education and Personal Safety* program, namely, a lesson plan on child safety to each of grades 5 through 8, and several specific lessons on child safety for grades Kindergarten through 4.

Additionally, after evaluating the program and receiving input from our catechetical leaders, we have put together information for conducting CVOL Parent Meetings. As you know, a meeting with parents must be held each year before the *Catholic Vision of Love Chastity Education and Personal Safety* program can be taught. Our hope is that this document will aid catechetical leaders in bringing parents on board with Catholic Church teaching regarding sexuality, so as to enable them to be more fully engaged in the education of their children, especially in this area. The revised program provides a wealth of resources that can be made available to all parents, including those who might not choose to come to the parent meeting. We need to continue our efforts to assist our parents in their responsibility as the primary educator of their children in the ways of faith.

Finally, we have updated the CVOL catechist section and student lessons for grades 5 through 8 in the area of technology use and language, and recent Church documents. We will be conducting in-services for all catechetical and pastoral leaders in the coming months as well as for our teachers and catechists. We need your diligence and leadership in making every effort possible to in-service your teachers and catechists on these revisions so that we can move forward implementing this program fully.

I want to thank Mrs. Judy Kirk, Mrs. Joyce Gillooly, Dr. Robert Paserba, Mr. Jeffrey Hirst and many other staff members of the Secretariat for Catholic Education for their diligent work in completing the revision and updating of this important program.

Your leadership and support in this important matter is appreciated. Together let us work with God's grace to ensure that our young people will have a knowledge of God's Truth and the ability to live a life in keeping with God's plan for human love and chastity.

With every best wish and prayer, I remain,

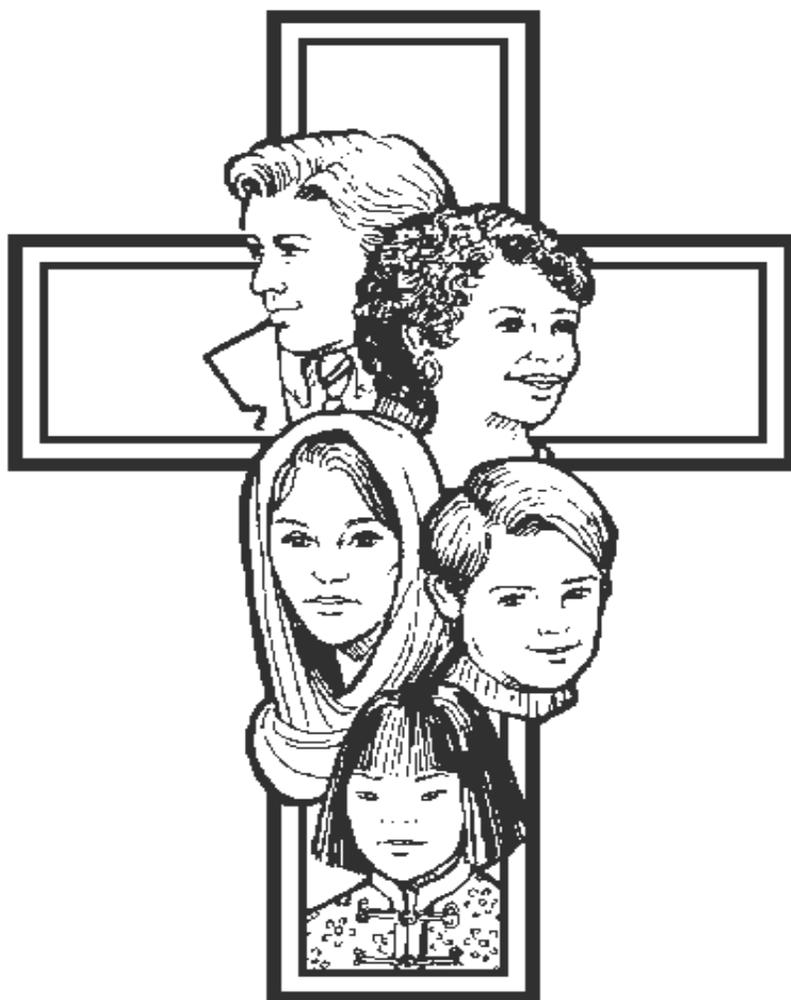
Sincerely in Christ,

Reverend Kris D. Stubna, S.T.D.
Secretary for Catholic Education

THE
CATHOLIC
Vision of Love
Diocese of Pittsburgh

FOR

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



Developed by
The Diocese of Pittsburgh
Secretariat for Catholic Education

The Catholic Vision of Love: Guidelines for Christian Education in Sexuality and the Family

These guidelines were promulgated by Bishop Donald Wuerl, Bishop of Pittsburgh, August 15, 1994. They have been revised under the direction of Bishop David A. Zubik and Fr. Kris D. Stubna, S.T.D., Secretary for Catholic Education, 2010.

The goal of such education is "to apply Christ's vision of love and sexuality, and the teaching of His Church, to the pressing needs of the time." (P. 1). The doctrine presented is rooted in Scripture, documents of the Universal Church, and documents of the American Church (p.2.) and was prepared to meet the varied educational and pastoral needs of the people of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Education in Catholic faith and life must always be inclusive of persons with disabilities and a sub-committee of parents and educators designed a comprehensive overview which would address the needs of students (5-21 years) with developmental delays.

To assist parents in their role as the primary educators of their children, and to support catechists as they endeavor to integrate information about human sexuality into the regular faith formation of students with special needs, we offer this developmentally arranged curriculum.

The single most important factor which needs to be grasped is the unconditional love of God for each one of us. Each lesson plan begins and ends with (some form of) prayer, so that parents/catechists can witness to the integral connection their faith has to every part of their lives and to the lives of those they teach in Jesus' name.



PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM



CATHOLIC VISION OF LOVE

A SEXUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

NAME _____ AGE _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Sexuality education is an important part of a person's development. The Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh Department for Persons with Disabilities recognizes the need for this education within the context of Catholic morals, values, and spiritual teaching. The information will be presented as part of your son's/daughter's religion or CCD class.

Please indicate below your preference regarding your son's/daughter's instruction in sexuality education. Return this form to the religion/CCD teacher.

PERMISSION FORM: LEVEL I, LEVEL II, LEVEL III (indicate)

_____ I give permission for my son/daughter to participate:

_____ Please instruct my son/daughter individually.

_____ Please instruct my son/daughter in a small group 2 or 3.

_____ Please instruct my son/daughter with his/her class.

_____ I do not give permission for my son/daughter to participate at this time.

_____ I have not been given the opportunity to review the material to be presented and would like to do so before deciding. Please call me at _____
(telephone #)

I understand I will review and reinforce this information with my son/daughter at home.

Comments: _____

Signature of
Parent/Guardian _____ Date: _____

For Parents and Catechists

General Concepts Relating to Individuals with Special Needs

It is with a definite purpose that we begin by presenting an outline of the scope and sequence of this program. Since our sexuality is a gift from God, it is always with us. The infant/toddler/child first learns about love from the parent who is the primary teacher. These experiences form the basis of our sexuality.

Since the development of a person's sexuality has already begun at birth, this formal program is intended to focus on the spiritual aspects of this development in light of the teachings of the Catholic Church. It is beneficial to review the **entire** outline to understand the progression - as the individual moves from childhood through adolescence to adult life - before deciding where to begin.

This outline is divided developmentally and chronologically into three levels. It is important to take into consideration the student's age as well as the level of functioning, focusing on various learning styles and building a positive self-image through age-appropriate activities, throughout.

Learning Styles:

Each individual learns new information differently. Some people are:

auditory learners (by listening)
visual learners(by looking at)
kinesthetic learners ... (by movement)
tactile learners(by touching)

or any combination of these four. In presenting these materials, adaptations to the student's learning style may be necessary. The catechist must first understand how this person learns; trust is established by building a positive relationship (rapport). A catechist should feel free to ask the parent what works best for this student, then proceed. This establishes a good basis on which learning can occur.

Each lesson plan is written using concrete examples and moves from everyday human experiences to spiritual (holy) concepts. Solidly based in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), lessons include prayer and scripture references. Some concepts are repeated at different levels. This is to ensure that important material is both reviewed, expanded upon and presented in an age-appropriate manner. Students with special needs benefit from repetition. For skills to become a part of adult life, continuous review and reinforcement are necessary.

Social Aspects:

Many persons with developmental disabilities are perceived in a negative manner by society. Parents and educators, therefore, need to work together to minimize these effects by paying particular attention to physical appearance.... cleanliness, personal hygiene, hair and clothing styles (contemporary, simple, age appropriate) - (no extremes) and social skills....(good eating habits, manners, behaviors acceptable in public/appropriate conversation, etc.)

These issues are addressed at appropriate levels in the lesson plans but, like academic information, need to be reviewed and reinforced on a regular basis.

Should a parent or catechist not be comfortable with presenting this material, it is important to seek someone who is. The wrong information, or misunderstood information can be detrimental to the student's spiritual development.

God has given us this wonderful gift of sexuality: Properly developed, it brings fulfillment and enrichment to our lives.

Compiled and written by:

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Director
Office for Persons with Mental Retardation
and Special Religious Education

To assist and support parents/catechists, additional (supplementary) materials may be obtained from the :

Department for Person with Disabilities
Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh
(412) 456-3119

LEVEL I
Outline for Ages 5 - 9 Years

I. Each Person is Made by God, and Loved by God Unconditionally

1. To show that each person is fundamentally good, made by God, in God's image and likeness.
2. To tell the story of creation.
3. To discuss ways in which we know God loves us.

II. Each Person is Unique and Special

1. To identify individual similarities.
2. To identify individual differences.
3. To show that in God's plan, everyone is special.
4. To emphasize the student's special gifts.

III. Since Life is a Gift from God, Each Person is Responsible for His/Her Own Well-being.

1. To look at and explain good relationships.
2. To identify ways to be a good friend.
3. To discuss our relationship with Jesus, who is always our friend.

IV. Since Life is a Gift from God, Each Person is Responsible for His/Her Own Body.

1. To accept one's body as a good gift from God.
2. To discuss ways of taking care of one's own body.
3. To respect one's own body and demand respect from others.
4. To identify God's moral teachings.
5. To discuss the Sacrament of Penance.

V. Persons Should Respect the Uniqueness of Themselves and Others.

1. To talk about families and differences in family structures.
2. To discuss family origins, showing differences.
3. To identify male roles, female roles.

VI. Each Person is a Complex Individual.

1. To define and describe outer-self characteristics.
2. To define and describe inner-self characteristics.
3. To explore everyone's need for a personal relationship with God.

VII. Persons Change. This is the Way God Made Us.

1. To explain changes in outer-self (growth).
2. To discuss physical changes as a person matures.
3. To explain changes in inner-self.

VIII. Some People Help Us to Grow and Develop While Others May Hinder Us.

1. To review positive relationships with others and with God.
2. To identify negative influences which may effect growth, health and self esteem.

IX. Each Person Has Many Feelings that are Natural and Good

1. To review basic feelings.
2. To encourage students to talk about feelings with parents, teacher, counselor.
3. To identify healthy and socially acceptable ways to express and cope with feelings.
4. To explore ways of reacting to other people's expressions of feelings.
5. To. introduce the concept of personal space and social distance.

X. Persons Need Good Friends Who Help Us to Feel Loved and Accepted.

1. To define a good friend.
2. To discuss ways in which friendship begins.
3. To emphasize the gift of friendship.
4. To realize that God, Jesus and Mary are our friends.

LEVEL II
Outline for Ages 10 - 13 Years

I. Each Person is Unique and Special, Made and Loved Unconditionally by God.

1. To identify similarities and differences among people.
2. To emphasize that every person is good.
3. To discuss that God made people like Himself because of His great love.

II. Each Person is a Gift from God.

1. To discuss the importance of our body (outer-self).
2. To review "personal space" and/or appropriate behavior.
3. To discuss feelings and thoughts (inner-self).
4. To talk about God's relationship with us.
5. To show that Jesus is God's greatest gift to us.

III. People Change.

1. To review ways in which we grow and change.
2. To identify people who help us grow.
3. To explore positive and negative influences around us.
4. To emphasize Mary and the saints as role models.

IV. Friendship.

1. To identify friendship.
2. To describe different types of friends.
3. To appreciate Jesus as friend.

V. Accepting Self: Strengths and Weaknesses.

1. To discuss different kinds of disabilities.
2. To emphasize unique gifts and abilities.
3. To explore ways of being the best person we can be.

VI. Accepting Others: Strengths and Weaknesses.

1. To review the importance of the presence of God in our lives.
2. To identify ways to show approval.
3. To identify ways of accepting and expressing compliments.
4. To identify ways of accepting and expressing criticism.

VII. How You Grew: The Miracle of Your Body.

1. To identify the body's physical systems.
2. To explain how the body's systems work together.
3. To explore the miracle that is life.

VIII. Family.

1. To discuss cooperation within the family.
2. To identify the many roles and responsibilities within a family.
3. To review basic human needs that are provided within the family.
4. To emphasize the importance of quality time management.

IX. Choices and Decisions.

1. To define and describe significant and insignificant choices.
2. To identify the positive and negative consequences of decisions.
3. To identify people who can help us make good decisions.
4. To talk about learning from mistakes.
5. To review the Sacrament of Penance (Rite of Reconciliation).
6. To explore the importance of prayer and sacraments in the decision-making process.

X. Social Skills.

1. To define appropriate skills needed in social situations.
2. To identify socially acceptable expressions of affection.
3. To identify productive leisure activities.
4. To review respect for oneself in relation to peer pressure.
5. To review that Jesus is always our friend.

LEVEL III
Outline for Ages 14 - 21 Years

I. The Sacrament of Marriage.

1. To discuss marriage as one of the Seven Sacraments of the Church.
2. To explore expectations of marriage.
3. To understand the challenges of married life.

II. The Gift of the Reproductive System.

1. To identify the reproductive system as a gift.
2. To identify the purpose and nature of the reproductive system.

III. To Explain the Difference Between Sex and Sexuality.

1. To define the difference between sex and sexuality.
2. To identify influences on an individual's sexuality throughout life.
3. To acknowledge the value of one's sexuality.

IV. Puberty is a Special Phase of Physical Growth.

1. To review sexuality as a gift from God.
2. To expand upon the concept of puberty as the beginning of adolescence.
3. To review the changes that occur during puberty.

V. Developing Social Skills Builds Respect for Self and Others.

1. To identify appropriate social skills.
2. To emphasize effective use of leisure time.
3. To introduce the idea of group dating.
4. To discuss one-to-one dating.
5. To explain Church teaching on pre/extramarital sexual relations.

VI. Catholic Moral Values.

1. To encourage the individual to trust and accept one's own judgments.
2. To acknowledge that some decisions must be based on Catholic morality.
3. To review the challenges of peer pressure.
4. To identify simple moral issues.

VII. Various Kinds of Love.

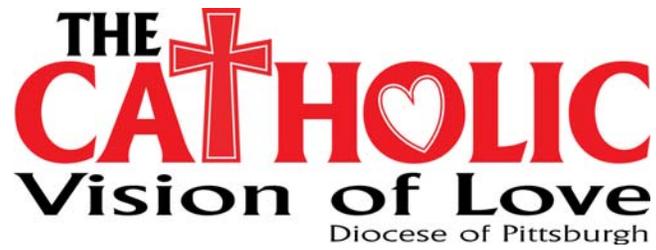
1. To review that God's love is unconditional.
2. To review respect for all persons as the basis of Christian love.
3. To explain that mature love moves from self to others and demands both trust and honor.
4. To define the meanings of intimacy.
5. To identify conditional love.

VIII. The Gift of Vocation: The Call to Single, Married or Religious Life.

1. To discuss the gift of vocation.
2. To compare and contrast different lifestyles.
3. To give examples or responses to God's vocational call.

IX. Living the Gospel Message.

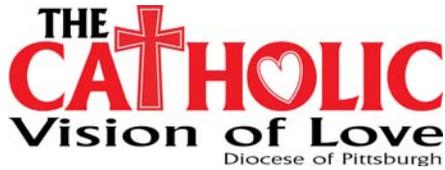
1. To discuss the commandments of love.
2. To review appropriate ways of expressing love.
3. To explain why selfishness and indifference are the opposite of love.
4. To identify the Gospel as the origin of these objectives.



LEVEL I

Outline for Ages 5 - 9 Years

Lesson Plans



LEVEL I

Outline for Ages 5 - 9 Years

I. Each Person is Made by God, and Loved by God Unconditionally

1. To show that each person is fundamentally good, made by God, in God's image and likeness.
2. To tell the story of creation.
3. To discuss ways in which we know God loves us.

II. Each Person is Unique and Special

1. To identify individual similarities.
2. To identify individual differences.
3. To show that in God's plan, everyone is special.
4. To emphasize the student's special gifts.

III. Since Life is a Gift-from God, Each Person is Responsible for His/Her Own Well-being.

1. To look at and explain good relationships.
2. To identify ways to be a good friend.
3. To discuss our relationship with Jesus, who is always our friend.

IV. Since Life is a Gift from God, Each Person is Responsible for His/Her Own Body.

1. To accept one's body as a good gift from God.
2. To discuss ways of taking care of one's own body.
3. To respect one's own body and demand respect from others.
4. To identify God's moral teachings.
5. To discuss the Sacrament of Penance.

V. Persons Should Respect the Uniqueness of Themselves and Others.

1. To talk about families and differences in family structures.
2. To discuss family origins, showing differences.
3. To identify male roles, female roles.

VI. Each Person is a Complex Individual.

1. To define and describe outer-self characteristics.
2. To define and describe inner-self characteristics.
3. To explore everyone's need for a personal relationship with God.

VII. Persons Change. This is the Way God Made Us.

1. To explain changes in outer-self (growth).
2. To discuss physical changes as a person matures.
3. To explain changes in inner-self.

VIII. Some People Help Us to Grow and. Develop While Others May Hinder Us.

1. To review positive relationships with others and with God.
2. To identify negative influences which may effect growth, health and self-esteem.

IX. Each Person Has Many Feelings that are Natural and Good

1. To review basic feelings.
2. To encourage students to talk about feelings with parents, teacher, counselor.
3. To identify healthy and socially acceptable ways to express and cope with feelings.
4. To explore ways of reacting to other people's expressions of feelings.
5. To introduce the concept of personal space and social distance.

X. Persons Need Good Friends Who Help Us to Feel Loved and Accepted.

1. To define a good friend.
2. To discuss ways in which friendship begins.
3. To emphasize the gift of friendship.
4. To realize that God, Jesus and Mary are our friends.

LEVEL I

Lesson 1

Each Person is Made by God, and Loved by God Unconditionally

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to strengthen the students' self-esteem by helping them understand that God made us, loves us and we are good.

Specific objectives

1. To show that each person is fundamentally good, made by God, in God's image and likeness.
2. To tell the story of creation.
3. To discuss ways in which we know God loves us.

These are the things we will talk about . . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Each person is made by God.
2. Each person is loved by God.
3. Each person is fundamentally good.

Path through the lesson

It is important to start each lesson with prayer. Prayer reminds students that God is concerned with ordinary life.

Opening prayer

Dear God, You made all persons and all good things. Help us to learn about You and Your love for us. Amen.

1. God Made Us

The catechist will ask the students to name things around them: sky, flowers, grass, water, sun, animals, people, everything including us.

Activity A - Creation Story

Catechist reads a simplified story and shows various pictures (Genesis 1 OR Genesis 2).

2. God Loves Us

Catechist will talk about ways in which God loves us.

Who takes care of you?

What do they do for you?

How do they show love?

How do you feel when someone takes care of you? (Happy, safe, loved, etc.)

Just as your parents and caregivers take care of you, God does, too. God shows His love for you by giving you people to take care of you, food to eat, flowers, sunshine, clothes to keep you warm, pets to love, houses to live in, etc.

God loves us so much He gave us a special gift: His Son, Jesus, Who comes to us in the Eucharist.

3. ***We Are Good***

Catechist can emphasize the phrase.... "and God saw that it was good" from the creation story (Genesis - Chapter 1).

Tying things together

Activity B

Create a collage:

Show or draw pictures of God's gifts to us;

These could be held up or projected on the wall; as each is shown, catechist or student can say:

"For the good gift of _____,

All respond: "Thank You, God."

(This is the second activity of the lesson, closing prayer and conclusion of class..)

LEVEL I

Lesson 2

Each Person is Unique and Special

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to identify each person's God-given gifts.

Specific objectives

1. To identify individual similarities.
2. To identify individual differences.
3. To show that in God's plan everyone is special.
4. To emphasize the students' special gifts.

These are the things we will talk about . . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. People are the same in many ways.
2. People are different in many ways.
3. Each person is unique.
4. Each person has a special gift.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

Thank You, God, for loving us and making us good. Help us to learn about each other.
Amen.

1. People are alike

The catechist will elicit from the students ways in which they are the same (eat, sleep, play, love, etc.) Talk about some examples.

2. People are different

Catechist will choose any two students to demonstrate differences in hair, eyes, height, gender, etc. Students will identify these and catechist can expand to include ethnic, cultural and racial differences.

3. It's alright to be different

Since God made only good things, even though we have differences, we are good. The Bible says we are each made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:24).

Activity

Take digital pictures of students (with permission) or students can bring in pictures.

OR

Draw a self-portrait entitled: God's Gifts.

Mount on poster board which has been prepared to look like a gift/present.

Level I
Lesson 2
Page Two

4. I am special

Catechist will ask each student to describe what he/she does best. This can be written near the picture on the poster board.

Tying things together

“A Wondrous Work of Art,” Young People’s Glory and Praise.

"Every Person Is A Gift of God," Young People’s Glory and Praise.

or

Closing prayer

Using the poster, thank God for each person and his/her gifts;
e.g., Thank God for (Name) and His gift of _____.

LEVEL I

Lesson 3

Since Life is a Gift from God, Each Person is Responsible for His/Her Own Well-being.

Introduction:

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to place a value on good relationships which help the student grow and develop.

Specific Objectives

1. To look at and explain good relationships
2. To identify ways to be a good friend
3. To discuss our relationship with Jesus, who is always our friend

These are the things we will talk about...

Outline of the Lesson

Opening Prayer

1. People in our lives who love and help us
2. It is important to be a good friend
3. God gave us Jesus as a friend

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Dear God, we are Your gifts. Help us to learn to be a “good friend.”

1. People who love and help us

The catechist will ask the students to name people who love and care for them. How do they do this? (Elaborate on this) How does this make you feel? (Good, happy, important, special).

2. Being a good friend

The catechist will ask the students how they help, love and take care of others. How does this make you feel? Friends do these things for each other. Talk about ways to be a good friend: smile, share, take turns, respect, etc.

3. Jesus, our friend

God gave us many gifts (including our lives), but the most important gift is Jesus, His Son.

How is Jesus a friend? Catechist can read a story about Jesus and His friends from the New Testament, e.g., Zaccheus: Luke 19:1-10; or, Large catch of fish/Call of Simon, Luke 5:1-11.

Jesus is our friend, too. He showed us how to help others. We can always talk to Jesus, through prayer. He can help us to be good friends to each other.

Activity

Give each student a strip of construction paper 9 inches x 2 inches, which can be decorated with name, etc.

Connect each to make a chain (the last strip will have the name of Jesus on it) turning the chain into a circle: a Circle of Friends to hang in the classroom.

Tying things together

Have all students stand in a circle, holding hands. Listen to and sing:

“Friends All Gather ‘Round,” Young People’s Glory and Praise.

“God’s Circle of Love,” Young People’s Glory and Praise.

Each child says, “Jesus, help me to be a good friend.”

LEVEL I

Lesson 4

Since Life is a Gift from God, Each Person is Responsible for His/Her Own Body.

Introduction

General aim of lesson

This lesson seeks to emphasize the importance of looking after our own bodies.

Specific Objectives

1. To accept one's body as a good gift from God
2. To discuss ways of taking care of one's own body
3. To respect one's own body and demand respect from others
4. To identify God's moral teachings
5. To discuss the Sacrament of Penance (Rite of Reconciliation)

These are the things we will talk about...

Outline of the Lesson

Opening Prayer

1. My body is a gift from God
2. I must take care of my body
3. It is my right that others respect my body
4. I learn God's teachings about right and wrong
5. I use the rite of Reconciliation (Sacrament of Penance) to tell God I'm sorry

Path through the lesson

This lesson contains a large amount of material. Catechist could divide it into several lessons.

Opening Prayer

Thank you, God, for our bodies. Keep us safe in all that we do.

1. Catechist will review the idea that each individual is a gift from God, briefly discussing physical characteristics which distinguish us from one another.
2. How do you take care of your body? (wash, food, clothing, exercise). What might happen if you don't take care of your body? (odor, illness, become over-weight). Our clothing protects our body from the cold. How else could we protect our body?

Activity

Catechist could make a list of examples, adding pictures, if appropriate:

1. Heavy coat, mittens, boots: in cold weather
2. Sunscreen, hat, sunglasses: in summer
3. Soap, toothbrush, deodorant: cleanliness
4. Healthy food vs. junk foods
5. Exercise vs. "couch potato": inactivity
6. Closing bathroom door: privacy
7. Keeping clothing on in public: modesty
8. Appropriate clothing: good fitting, clean, no extreme styles, e.g., short shorts, halter tops, tight jeans

3. This activity addresses respecting one's body in all ways.

If another person touches you in inappropriate (bad) ways. . . . If another person tries to touch private parts of your body. . . . If you are alone in an unfamiliar place, and someone approaches you. . . .

you need to say: "NO"
you need to: get away
you need to: tell someone

Teacher could demonstrate/practice yelling "NO!" and/or talk about where to go to get away. For example, go to someone who cares for children: a friend's mother, a neighbor's house, a crossing guard, a policeman, etc.

Who could you talk to if something (bad) happens?: Parents, family members, teacher, adult friends, etc.

4. God says: "Blessed are the pure in heart..." (Matthew 5:8) CCC 2518

Catechist should review cleanliness: of body, of clothing, of hands and then relate that cleanliness of mind and heart.

This is very abstract, so talk about how God wants us to live good lives, be nice to others, have good thoughts, do kind actions, rather than be unkind; say mean things; not keeping our hands to ourselves (hitting, poking, punching, etc.); (inappropriate hugging or touching can be mentioned here if situation warrants that).

5. How do we tell God we are sorry?

By saying "I'm sorry" to the person we hurt; then by telling God how sorry we are. The Sacrament of Penance (Rite of Reconciliation) is the correct way. God loves us and will always forgive us.

Activity could be:

1. Going to the church to see where the Sacrament/Rite is celebrated.
2. Having a priest talk to the students about the sacrament.
3. Role-play the Rite of Reconciliation.

Some students may have not, as yet, celebrated the Sacrament of Penance (or even begun preparation). This activity could serve as an introduction for them or as a review for older students who may have had only one experience.

Tying things together

Catechist can light a candle to represent the light of Christ in us. This light will be in us as long as we live good lives. (Catechist can refer to those values we listed above under #4.) But whenever we do unkind, hurtful, wrong things, the light goes out. (Catechist can blow out candle to illustrate the idea.) By saying we are sorry to God, Jesus' light is renewed (again) within us. Relight candle. Students may say: "Thank You, God, for forgiving us."

LEVEL I

Lesson 5

Persons Should Respect the Uniqueness of Themselves and Others.

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to explore differences within families and cultures, focusing on gender roles.

Specific objectives

1. To talk about families and differences in family structures.
2. To discuss family origins, showing differences.
3. To identify male roles, female roles.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Our families and how they differ.
2. Where did my family come from?
3. Ways in which boys and girls are different.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Thank You, God, for our families. Help us to learn about our families and each other.

1. My family is special
Catechist asks students who is in their families. Pointing out differences in size, make-up, locality, etc. God gave us our families; each is different and special.
2. What my family does
Discuss activities like meals, holiday celebrations which illustrate differences.

Activity (homework)

Collect family photos and some background information, like cultural origins and family traditions used on special occasions which would illustrate the point.

3. God made man and woman (Genesis 1:28)
Catechist can read the story of Adam and Eve focusing on how He made us different. Talk about how boys and girls are different: clothing, activities, hairstyles, physical characteristics. Note the similarities between the two, e.g., some boys have longer hair, some girls prefer sports, etc.

Most jobs people do are open to both men and women. God made us equal; He gave us special abilities and He loves us unconditionally.

Level I
Lesson 5
Page Two

Tying things together

“God Has Made Us a Family,” Young People’s Glory and Praise.

Activity

Make a poster/bulletin board with the photographs, labeling it: "We Are God's Family." Have the students do as much of this activity as possible (labeling, gluing). (If no photographs are available, cut out paper doll figures and have students decorate.)

LEVEL I

Lesson 6

Each Person is a Complex Individual.

Introduction

General Aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to show there is more than one dimension to the person God made.

Specific Objectives

1. To define and describe outer-self characteristics.
2. To define and describe inner-self characteristics.
3. To explore everyone's need for a personal relationship with God.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Each person has a body and should care for it.
2. Each person has a mind and feelings.
3. Each person is born with a need for God.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Dear God, help me to learn more about myself and my need for You.

1. My body is special.

Using a large sheet of paper, draw an outline of a body. Have students name parts as catechist writes "labels" (e.g., head, neck, shoulders, arms, elbows, hands, chest (torso), hips, legs, feet, etc.).

At this level, the catechist can stay with simple direct words, but if and when more intimate questions arise, always use correct anatomical words avoiding "baby-talk" or slang expressions.

Everyone needs to take care of his/her body. Review objectives of Lesson 4.

2. I think and feel

Talk about things done in school to help us learn: reading, writing, math, spelling.

We use our minds to think and learn.

We use our minds to think about right and wrong.

The catechist can give some examples of each and show how choices are made.

Feelings are also an important part of each person: happiness, love, anger, sadness, surprise, etc.

The catechist could collect pictures showing feelings and have the students talk about each one.

Why does the person feel that way? Have you ever felt that way? Is it hard to say how you feel?

God gave us feelings, so we can talk to God about all our feelings.

Level I
Lesson 6
Page Two

3. *I talk to God every day.*

I can share my feelings with God, He is always listening. This is called prayer. I can use my own words when I pray to Him, because He understands and loves me.

Tying things together

Activity

Make a collage of magazine pictures showing feelings.

The catechist can lead by saying:

When I feel (happy, sad, angry, unsure, etc.)

After each one, student responds: I can pray to God about it.

LEVEL I

Lesson 7

Persons Change. This is the Way God Made Us.

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to develop an awareness of the many changes each person goes through.

Specific objectives

1. To explain changes in outer-self (growth).
2. To discuss physical changes as a person matures.
3. To explain changes in inner-self.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Each person's abilities change as he/she grows.
2. Each person's body changes.
3. Each person's thoughts and feelings change, too.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Dear God, thank You for making us. Help us to understand the changes in us as we grow. Amen.

1. I am learning to do now things that I could not do when I was a baby.

The catechist will discuss what a baby does (sleeps, eats, cries, wets). A baby cannot operate alone (someone takes care of baby). Talk about how to take care of a baby (feed, change, keep safe). As a baby grows, what are some of the things he/she learns to do (walk, talk, dress, feed self.)

When you go to school you learn many things.

Talk about what you learn.

Talk about those things you are able to do which you couldn't do before.

Talk about things adults do (work, drive car, raise family, cook, clean, vote). These are things you will learn to do as you grow older.

2. My body changes as I get older

The catechist will discuss characteristics of a baby: size, no teeth, can't see well, can't walk. As the baby grows, teeth come in, sight improves, muscles get strong. The child learns to walk and do many things.

Encourage students to talk about what their bodies look like now. Make a list on the chalkboard or a poster (size, height, weight, length of hair, shoe size, clothing size).

The catechist shows pictures of adults here and students compare how they look as a child to these adults in the pictures. Catechist can bring a picture of him/herself as a baby or a child and compare how they look as a baby/child and how they look now.

These comparisons can be varied according to the age and readiness of the students. From general to very specific (facial/body hair, body shape, height, etc.)

God made each of us special, and knows that we will change into unique men and women.

Activity

Cut out pictures of men, women and children
Make a collage
Label it: "I Am Growing and Changing"

3. *I am more aware of other people around me*

Review "thoughts and feelings" from Lesson 6.

When you were a baby, you were only aware of yourself; as you grow, you become aware of others (playing, sharing). Now you are learning that others have feelings, too. If you do, something good or bad, others may be affected.

Talk about good things to do (sharing, listening, helping) and how other people feel when you act this way.

Mean, hurtful actions can make others feel sad, unfriendly. Talk about this.

God wants us to live like Jesus and always be kind to others.

Tying things together

A mini service project here would be meaningful

- (e.g. collecting canned goods,
- baby items
- making cards for nursing home, etc.)

using the opportunity to raise awareness about the needs of others. Learn about whatever group you are helping.

LEVEL I

Lesson 8

Some People Help Us to Grow and Develop While Others May Hinder Us.

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to review positive relationships as well as negative influences in our lives.

Specific objectives

1. To review positive relationships with others and with God.
2. To identify negative influences which may effect growth, health and self-esteem.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Recalling the people God gave to love and help us.
2. Things that get in the way of God's good plan.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Song: "Great Things Happen," Young People's Glory & Praise

1. I can tell you who loves and helps me.

Catechist will review Lesson 3 (people who help and love us).

God is with us always (review Lesson 1) and loves us.

We can tell God anything (review Prayer, Lesson 3).

2. Some things may hurt me

Catechist can review lesson 4, objective 3 (saying "no," etc.)

God wants us to live a good life so that one day we will be with Him in heaven.

Sometimes there are things that go on around us which may make it hard for us to be good.

Examples: some use of technology, texting, social networking sites, TV programs, movies, magazines, using bad language, being with people who do wrong things, etc.

Remember to always respect your own body as well as others, because they are gifts from God. (Review personal privacy, Lesson 4.)

Tying things together

Activity

Catechist can read aloud the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37).

Role-play the story.

Jesus teaches us how to react to other people. But to be realistic in our present day society, catechist could stress caution; it might be dangerous to help a complete stranger unless another adult person we know well, is with us.

LEVEL I

Lesson 9

Each Person Has Many Feelings that are Natural and Good.

Introduction

General Aim of the lesson

This lesson can be divided into two parts. The first part ends after objective 3, dealing with one's own feelings. The second part emphasizes reacting to others.

Specific Objectives

1. To review basic feelings.
2. To encourage students to talk about feelings with parents, teacher, or counselor.
3. To identify healthy and socially acceptable ways to express and cope with feelings.
4. To explore ways of reacting to other people's expressions of feelings.
5. To introduce the concept of personal space and social distance.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Each person has feelings.
2. People talk to others about their feelings.
3. Each person expresses and copes with feelings differently.
4. Each person reacts when other people express their feelings.
5. Everyone needs personal space.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Dear God, help me to learn more about my feelings and how to deal with them.

1. I have feelings

Review Lesson 6, using the collage that was made as a basis for discussion.

2. I can talk with others about my feelings

Catechist can discuss with the students who would be a good person to talk with about feelings (parent, relative, teacher, counselor, doctor, etc.)

We can always talk to God about our feelings (see Lesson 6). We talk to God every day when we pray. He will always listen no matter what we are feeling or worrying about.

3. How I deal with my feelings

Catechist will begin by asking questions of students about how they would react in certain situations: What do you do when you are _____ (angry, sad, mad, happy, surprised, hurt), e.g., getting angry and slamming a door; stamping feet when you are feeling mad

Activity

Role-play some of the examples given. Then use these to identify appropriate ways of dealing with feelings.

4. How I react to other people's feelings.

Catechist will give examples like: How do you feel when you see someone crying? mad? sad? happy, surprised? Do you share their feelings? (empathize) Do you understand why they feel that way? What ways do you help? Sometimes it may be better to leave that person alone for a while, sometimes they may need comforting.

It is confusing and hard to decide what is best to do. Talking to an adult may be helpful.

5. I am aware of personal space

Each person needs "personal space" and needs to learn about social distance. The teaching of social distance and levels of intimacy is a task which will bear frequent repetition.

A traffic signal is a concrete example that could be used to explain levels of personal space.

The red light represents danger/stop. This would refer to strangers and people whose name you don't know.

The yellow light represents caution/wait. This would refer to professional people (doctors, teachers, coaches, therapists, mailman, store clerk, bus driver) acquaintances and friends. A handshake, wave or conversation would be appropriate here.

The green light represents okay/go. This refers to family members. Hugs and kisses are reserved for this level.

There could be exceptions to these; always relate to individual families, always realizing that touching and hugging are more intimate and require permission from the person.

This leads to the idea of "personal space" or the idea of each person needing a place, a space, some time alone. There is a tie-in here with "The right to say No": Level I, Lesson 4; Cultural differences in families: Level I, Lesson 5; The value of good friendships: Level I, Lesson 10.

Tying things together

Activity

A poster could be made of the traffic light as a visual model for the classroom with the colors and words: stop, caution, go. Students could make an individual traffic signal placing names/pictures of people in their lives and where they fit on the chart.

LEVEL I

Lesson 10

Persons Need Good Friends Who Help Us to Feel Loved and Accepted.

Introduction

General Aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to explore the characteristics and value of good friends.

Specific objectives

1. To define a good friend
2. To discuss ways in which friendship begins
3. To emphasize the gift of friendship
4. To realize that God, Jesus and Mary are our friends

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. What is a good friend?
2. How do friendships start?
3. Friends are a gift.
4. We have spiritual friends.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Song: "Friends are Like Flowers," Hi God

1. A good friend is . . .

Catechist can review Objective 2, Lesson 3, emphasizing the characteristics of a good friend: kindness, honesty, helpfulness.

2. Friendships begin by . . .

Catechist elicits responses of how friendships start by drawing from the personal experiences of the students:

First day of a new school, new neighborhood, going to a playground alone, starting a new recreational activity, etc.

People that are interested in the same things we like (hobbies, sports, etc.) have things to talk about and we become friends by talking together and sharing.

How friendship grows depends upon how much time we spend with each other and how we respect and trust each other.

3. Friends are special

The catechist needs to discuss (and make a list on chalkboard) examples of doing things with a friend. Compare lonely feelings and the pleasure of being with a friend:

- Time goes faster
- More things to do
- Relationship develops
- Feelings of contentedness, self-esteem, etc.

Level I
Lesson 10
Page Two

4. *We are never alone.*

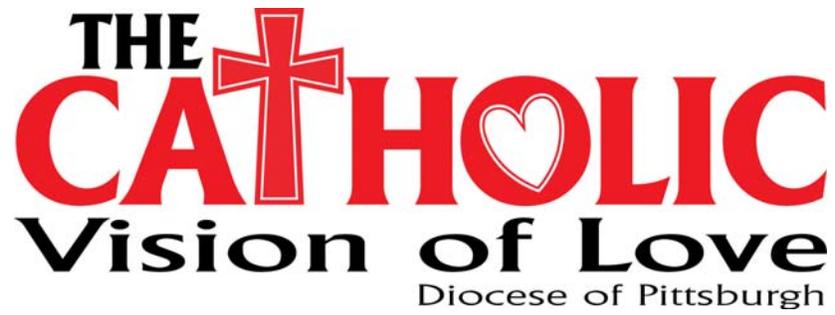
God, Jesus and Mary are always our friends whenever we are lonely. Catechist can remind students that prayer is a way to talk to God and Jesus. We can also pray to Mary. You can pray in your own words or say the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, etc.

Tying things together

Activity

1. Review each of the above prayers.
2. Make flowers from construction paper. In the center, place Jesus' name, student's name on the stem, and on each petal an individual friend's name.

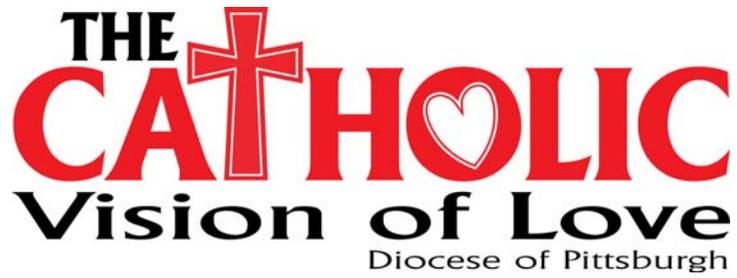
Close with prayer/song: "Friends are Like Flowers," Hi God



LEVEL II

Outline for ages 10 - 13 Years

Lesson Plans



Notice to precede Level II, Lesson 2

This lesson begins to be more specific.

In this lesson, the catechist may want to divide the group (class) by gender or to decide beforehand on individual instruction.

Since students with special needs require material presented concretely, catechist should feel free to divide this lesson into segments according to each objective, or to expand upon any one concept depending upon individual circumstances.

LEVEL II
Outline for Ages 10 - 13 Years

I. Each Person is Unique and Special, Made and Loved Unconditionally by God.

1. To identify similarities and differences among people.
2. To emphasize that every person is good.
3. To discuss that God made people like Himself because of His great love.

II. Each Person is a Gift from God.

1. To discuss the importance of our body (outer-self).
2. To review "personal space" and/or appropriate behavior.
3. To discuss feelings and thoughts (inner-self).
4. To talk about God's relationship with us.
5. To show that Jesus is God's greatest gift to us.

III. People Change.

1. To review ways in which we grow and change.
2. To identify people who help us grow.
3. To explore positive and negative influences around us.
4. To emphasize Mary and the saints as role models.

IV. Friendship.

1. To identify friendship.
2. To describe different types of friends.
3. To appreciate Jesus as friend.

V. Accepting Self: Strengths and Weaknesses.

1. To discuss different kinds of disabilities.
2. To emphasize unique gifts and abilities.
3. To explore ways of being the best person we can be.

VI. Accepting Others: Strengths and Weaknesses.

1. To review the importance of the presence of God in our lives.
2. To identify ways to show approval.
3. To identify ways of accepting and expressing compliments.
4. To identify ways of accepting and expressing criticism.

VII. How You Grew: The Miracle of Your Body.

1. To identify the body's physical systems.
2. To explain how the body's systems work together.
3. To explore the miracle that is life.

VIII. Family.

1. To discuss cooperation within the family.
2. To identify the many roles and responsibilities within a family.
3. To review basic human needs that are provided within the family.
4. To emphasize the importance of quality time management.

IX. Choices and Decisions.

1. To define and describe significant and insignificant choices.
2. To identify the positive and negative consequences of decisions.
3. To identify people who can help us make good decisions.
4. To talk about learning from mistakes.
5. To review the Sacrament of Penance (Rite of Reconciliation).
6. To explore the importance of prayer and sacraments in the decision-making process.

X. Social Skills.

1. To define appropriate skills needed in social situations.
2. To identify socially acceptable expressions of affection.
3. To identify productive leisure activities.
4. To review respect for oneself in relation to peer pressure.
5. To review that Jesus is always our friend.

LEVEL II

Lesson 1

Each Person is Unique and Special, Made and Loved Unconditionally by God.

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to strengthen self-esteem in the student through an understanding of God's unconditional love.

Specific objectives

1. To identify similarities and differences among people.
2. To emphasize that every person is good.
3. God made people like Himself because of His great love.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. People are the same yet different.
2. God made people fundamentally good.
3. God made people like Himself because of His great love.

Path through the lesson

It is important to begin each lesson with prayer. The prayer should reflect the objectives. Some objectives may have been addressed previously. If more basic material is required, see Level 1.

Opening Prayer

Dear God, help me to know that I am a good person.

1. We are unique.

The catechist will ask students to talk about similarities and differences in physical characteristics, family structures, cultural differences. (Write samples on board, if appropriate.)

2. We are fundamentally good.

The catechist can read the Creation story from Genesis, Chapter 1, emphasizing the repeated phrase "... God saw that it was good." The students can talk about ways in which they are good. (Being loving, being kind, being helpful, listening, etc.)

3. We are made in the likeness of God.

The catechist will show that God loves us by talking about His gifts to us. (Components of Creation story, family, food, friends, etc.) Since we are made like God, we need to take care of and love His many gifts.

Level II
Lesson 1
Page Two

Tying things together

Create a poster or bulletin board titled, "I am made in God's image." Students could draw or bring in a photo of themselves to be mounted. As each one is completed, a prayer is said: "Thank you, God, for making me, _____(name)_____like you."

LEVEL II

Lesson 2

Each Person is a Gift from God

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to strengthen the students' awareness of themselves as changing and growing individuals.

Specific objectives

1. To discuss the importance of the body (outer self).
2. To review "personal space" and/or appropriate behavior:
3. To discuss feelings and thoughts (inner self).
4. To talk about God's relationship with us.
5. To know that Jesus is God's greatest gift to us.

Although there are five specific objectives, numbers 1 and 2 could form one lesson and numbers 3, 4 and 5 could form another lesson.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Each person must take care of his/her body and respect its value.
2. Each person has the right to say no if someone disrespects his/her body.
3. Each person has feelings and thoughts.
4. Each person belongs to God.
5. God gives us Jesus in the Eucharist.

Path through the lesson

Depending on the gender of the students (and their maturity), the catechist may want to divide the group by gender for the first part of the lesson. A responsible adult would be needed to supervise the group not being instructed. This group could watch an appropriate video on Jesus or the Eucharist, then switch activities.

Opening Prayer

Dear God, help me to understand my changing body and live the life you have planned for me.

1. I must know my body and keep it clean.

Male version (see attached sheet)

Female version (see attached sheet)

2. I have a right to say "no."

The catechist may review Level I, Lesson 4, Objective 1 and revisit the concepts of personal space and social distance. See Level I, Lesson 9, Objective 5.

3. *I have thoughts and feelings.* *(These were discussed under Objective 1.)*

The catechist should stress that thoughts and feelings in and of themselves are not wrong because God gives them. What one does with these thoughts and feelings is important. God wants us to respect ourselves as well as others. Remembering that our bodies are gifts from God, we should be careful not to physically act upon any feelings we may get after watching TV, reading magazines; looking at pictures of partially dressed people in ads and catalogs. Such actions would be disrespectful of the other person who is also a gift of God.

4. *I belong to God.*

The catechist will reassure students that God gives us grace and strength to deal with our thoughts and feelings, which may sometimes distress us. When problems arise we can pray, talk to our parents, teachers, priest, celebrate the Sacraments (Penance/Eucharist).

5. *Jesus comes to me in the Eucharist.*

God loves us so much He gave us Jesus as a friend and guide for life. Jesus enters our hearts and bodies whenever we receive Eucharist. From this sacrament we get the strength to live like Jesus, as God wants.

Tying things together

Catechist could preview and select an appropriate video, i.e., one or two segments from "Sacred Heart Kids Club, Series III: The Commandments":

- e.g., #7 "Pure Hearts - Joyful Hearts"
- #8 "Sacredness - Respectful. Love"

LEVEL II

Lesson 2

Objective 1 (I must know my body and keep it clean)

MALE VERSION

How my body changes as I grow up:

A. Feelings and Thoughts:

Our thoughts and feelings change as we get older -- boys become interested in girls. These feelings are natural and to be expected: (Remember: God gave us our feelings.)

B. Maleness (Attitude)

These are general examples: Talk about stereotypical behaviors: sports, macho behavior, rough activities; some men prefer cooking (chefs).

C. Puberty

Independence begins; (some growing away from parents) decision-making time; friendships develop, which are important. Mood changes: tendencies toward sulking; defiant behavior. Note: Not all changes at puberty are negative; stress the positive aspects. (Puberty is discussed again in Level III.)

D. Hygiene

Bath or shower daily
Body odor - use of deodorant
Shaving - facial hair

E. My Body

Talk about maleness; simple body parts (names of) were used in Level I, Lessons 4, 5 and 6:

head/neck
chest (torso)
leg/thigh/knee/calf/ankle/foot/toes
arm/shoulder/forearm/wrist/hand/fingers
waist/hips

Get more specific (if needed):

beard begins (facial hair)
muscles develop
"straight" body shape
chest hair (chest is flat)
underarm hair/leg hair
pubic hair
penis (nocturnal emissions)
testicles

LEVEL II

Lesson 2

Objective 1 (I must know my body and keep it clean)

FEMALE VERSION

How my body changes as I grow up:

A. Feelings and Thoughts

Our thoughts and feelings change as we get older. Girls become interested in boys. These feelings are natural and to be expected. (Remember: God gave us our feelings.)

B. Femeness (Attitude)

These are general examples: Talk about stereotypical behaviors: cooking, dolls, dressing-up (but some girls pursue activities that are athletic too):

C. Puberty

Independence begins (some growing away from parents); decision-making time; friendships develop, which are important. Mood changes: tendencies toward crying, unpredictable behavior; menstruation (period) begins. Note: Not all changes at puberty are negative; stress the positive aspects. (Puberty is discussed again in Level III.)

D. Hygiene

Bath or shower daily

Body odor - use of deodorant

Menstrual cycle: menstrual care - use and disposal of sanitary pads (some practice and individual care will be necessary)

Shaving legs, underarm hair

E. My Body

Talk about femaleness; simple body parts (names of) were used in Level I, Lessons 4, 5 and 6:

head/neck

chest (breast)

leg/thigh/knee/calf/ankle/foot/toes

arm/shoulder/forearm/wrist/hand/fingers

waist/hips

Get more specific (if needed):

menstruation begins (period)

"curved body" shape (waist shows)

breasts develop

underarm hair/leg hair (on some)

pubic hair (vagina)

LEVEL II

Lesson 3

People Change

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to explore the positive and negative influences in our lives.

Specific objectives

1. To review ways in which we grow and change.
2. To identify people who help us grow.
3. To explore positive and negative influences around us.
4. To emphasize Mary and the saints as role models.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Each person grows and changes.
2. People who help us grow.
3. There are good things and bad things in the world.
4. Mary and the saints show us how to live.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Dear God, changes can be confusing. Help me to understand them.

1. I am always changing

The catechist will briefly review physical and emotional changes from Lesson 2, objectives 1 & 3. We can deal with our feelings by talking about them with someone we trust (even a friend), by keeping busy with hobbies, by helping other people. The catechist can elicit responses about favorite activities.

2. I have help along the way

Parents, teachers, older siblings, grandparents, can help me by listening, trusting me and giving me more responsibilities.

The catechist can ask for examples of responsibilities students have now which they didn't have before (jobs around the house, managing an allowance, etc.).

3. Watching out for the good and bad

We live in a big world. Many things happen around us, some good, some bad. (The catechist could make a list on board: people helping each other, disaster relief, food banks, volunteer work - OR - crime, drugs, people hurting others, racial incidents, hate). This is the perfect opportunity to talk about the "heroes" of everyday life, using the above examples. How do we learn about these influences? Media: (web, newspaper, TV, magazines, radio).

Activity: Students could bring in paper clipping or know of a "hero" story which could illustrate the power of media. The catechist could compare good and bad influences of media.

4. Heroes of God

Mary said "yes" to God's plan for her and so influenced our lives forever. Read: Annunciation story from Luke (1:26-38).

God rewarded Mary's good life by taking her to heaven. This is also God's plan for us: that we live good lives on earth so that one day we will also be with Him in heaven.

Tying things together

The saints led good lives and are heroes. We can learn from the saints how to live as God wants. The catechist could illustrate this by some stories of students' namesakes: Peter, John, Francis, Elizabeth, Teresa

Closing Prayer

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace... (Catechist could read this prayer or class could sing it, from Glory & Praise.)

"Prayer of St. Francis" (Sebastian Temple)

LEVEL II

Lesson 4

Friendship

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to explain friendship as an important part of each person's life.

Specific objectives

1. To identify friendship
2. To describe different types of friends
3. To appreciate Jesus as friend

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. People need friends.
2. There are different types of friends.
3. Jesus is my friend always.

Path through the lesson

The catechist should realize that most persons with developmental disabilities do not have intimate friends, even though many paid professionals fill their lives: examples; teachers, therapists, doctors, recreation instructors. While family members care, it is important that other (peer) friendships are established, encouraged and maintained.

Opening Prayer

Song: "Friends Are Like Flowers," Hi God or "Smile," Young People's Glory and Praise

1. I need friends.

Review characteristics of being a good friend from Level I, Lesson 1, Objective 2. Friends share and talk about things together. The catechist can encourage conversation about this: How do you feel when you ARE or HAVE a good friend?

2. Different kinds of friends:

My doctor is my friend, policemen are my friends, my dentist is my friend. These people are friendly and take care of me but are not the same as close friends. We have friends of the family, too, but I need a friend of my own, someone around my own age, who likes to do some of the same things I like to do, who likes me just the way I am.

3. *I always have a friend in Jesus.*

See Level I, Lesson 3, Objective 3.

Use the New Testament to select other stories, i.e., Jesus and the children (Luke 15:17). The catechist can emphasize the fact that Jesus was tired and the disciples were "cranky," but Jesus called the children to Him anyway. This is a good example of Jesus showing us, by example, how to be a caring friend. Good friends always have time to listen, take care of, and be there for each other.

Example #2: John 11:1-44 The Raising of Lazarus

Example #2 Luke 10:30-37 The Good Samaritan

Tying things together

After reading one or more of these stories, the catechist could encourage students to write a "thank you" note to Jesus.

Example: Thank you, Jesus, for helping me to be a friend who . . .
(listens, cares, helps, respects, etc.)

Reading these aloud could be the closing prayer.

LEVEL II

Lesson 5

Accepting Self: Strengths and Weaknesses

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to help students develop self-acceptance.

Specific objectives

1. To discuss different kinds of disabilities.
2. To emphasize unique gifts and abilities.
3. To explore ways of being the best person we can be.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Each person faces daily challenges.
2. Each person has special gifts and abilities.
3. There are positive ways of meeting challenges.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Dear Jesus, in the Bible, You tell us not to be afraid and to pray for Your peace. Help us to remember You are always with us. (John 15:27)

1. I have daily challenges.

The catechist can talk about tasks which are difficult to do (reading, math, physical activities, etc.). Ask students to give examples of their difficulties. Even though we have these difficulties, God made and loves each one of us.

2. I can do many things.

Here are the things I am good at: _____, _____,
_____, _____. The catechist can have students list these,
noting that not everyone is good at the same things.

3. I want to have a positive attitude.

If tasks are difficult, I can try harder, always remembering there are people to help me. Asking for help is OK as long as I am trying to do my best. I can always pray to Jesus for help.

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Tying things together

Activity: Cut out a cross from construction paper. The student can write or draw symbols of easy tasks on one side, and difficult tasks on the reverse. The cross reminds them that Jesus is with them through good times and bad.

Closing Song (Prayer): "Be Not Afraid," Glory & Praise (Bob Dufford)
At this time crosses can be held up.

LEVEL II

Lesson 6

Accepting Others: Strengths and Weaknesses

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to help students develop acceptance of other people by learning to deal with compliments and criticism.

Specific objectives

1. To review the importance of the presence of God in our lives.
2. To identify ways to show approval.
3. To identify ways of accepting and expressing compliments.
4. To identify ways of accepting and expressing criticism.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

Path through the lesson

Individual strengths and weaknesses were identified in the previous lesson. This lesson focuses on how others perceive our actions and react to us with either compliments or criticism.

Opening Prayer

Lord, I know You are with me. Help me to be the best person I can be. Amen.

1. How I know God is with me.

The catechist can have the students recall: gifts of God's creation, family, Jesus, Mary, the saints, Mass, sacraments. These are everyday signs of God's presence in our lives. The most important is going to Mass and receiving Jesus into our hearts through the Eucharist.

2. How I know I am doing right things.

People show feelings of approval by smiles, pats on the back, applause, or by saying, "Good work!" "Good job!" "Well done!" "Keep up the good work!" etc. (Ask students which they prefer or have experienced.)

3. How to react to compliments.

Sometimes it is hard to know the right way to act when someone compliments us. We should simply look at the person and say: "Thank you." Now that we are getting older, we need to show our approval of other people's actions. The catechist can suggest times when students can return compliments.

4. How to react to criticisms.

At times, when we are not doing our best, someone may correct us. This is hard to accept, but it should remind us to try again. Feelings of anger and disappointment are to be expected but it is important to put them aside and attempt to do our best again.

Offering criticism to another person should be done in a gentle way, like Jesus would.

Tying things together

Role play simple situations which illustrate examples of giving and receiving compliments and criticisms.

Closing prayer (Song): "Be With Me, Lord" (based on Psalm 91),
Glory & Praise (Marty Haugen)

Level II

Lesson 7

How You Grew: The Miracle of Your Body

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to identify the basic functions of the body and the miracle of how they work together.

Specific objectives

1. To identify the body's physical systems.
2. To explain how the body's systems work together.
3. To explore the miracle that is life.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Our bodies do many things.
2. All these systems work simultaneously.
3. Life is a miracle.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

Dear God, help me to understand my body and how it works. Thank you for giving me life.

1. What makes my body work? The catechist will briefly explain each process:

1. Respiratory system (breathing)
2. Circulatory system (bloodstream)
3. Digestive system
4. Skeletal system (bones)
5. Muscular system (muscles)
6. Integumentary system (skin)
7. Nervous system (brain)
8. Endocrine system (glands)
9. Reproductive system (generation of life)
10. Excretory system (urinary)

Catechist may want to find simple pictures to illustrate each and/or use activities to demonstrate each, e.g., feeling ribs, flexing muscles, breathing in and out, feeling pulse, lightly pinch one's skin, etc.

2. All these systems work together.

The catechist will stress that all these systems work together, at the same time, in every body, every day. Many of the processes occur involuntarily (without our thinking about it). If one system is not working, the body will become sick. In order to keep the body healthy, food, rest and exercise are needed.

3. The body is a wonderful gift from God.

The catechist will review that we are made in God's image and likeness (Gen. 1:24) with a spiritual and human nature (355 CCC) willed by the breath of God (362 CCC). God created us, male and female, and the catechist will explain that God's plan is for us to do good things for ourselves and others.

Tying things together.

Review previously taught topics (good hygiene, good eating practices, possible exercises, proper rest) by making posters or charts or listing on chalk board. Reinforce what may be taught in a health class.

Closing prayer:

Thank you Jesus. Help me to always take care of my body. Amen

Level II
Lesson 8
Family

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to emphasize the importance of family in each person's growth and development.

Specific objectives

1. To discuss cooperation within the family.
2. To identify the many roles and responsibilities within a family.
3. To review basic human needs that are provided within the family.
4. To emphasize the importance of quality time management.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Cooperation is an important factor in family life.
2. Each family member has a role and responsibilities.
3. Respect and good manners are important.
4. Family members need to spend time together and time apart.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, be our model of family life. Amen.

1. Cooperation.

Catechist will ask students ways in which they cooperate, focusing on their family experiences.

2. Responsibilities.

Catechist will review individual family structures noting that no two families are exactly the same. Make a list (from the students' responses, of the different roles and responsibilities: money making, house cleaning, child care, laundry, cooking; homework, etc.). Ask each student who is responsible for each of these at home, adding their own personal tasks.

3. How do we get along together?

We all need food, clothing and shelter, but equally important are love and security. The family provides these. Respecting each other demands kind behaviors and use of good manners (CCC 2215-17).

4. Time together/time apart.

Families spend a lot of time together. Catechist will ask students for examples of family activities (work, play, prayer, going to Church). Family members also need time away from each other. This can be time by oneself or going out with friends (CCC 2685).

Tying things together

The Christian family is the first place of education and prayer. The family is where God's children learn to pray (CCC 2685).

Catechist can invite students to write a family blessing prayer to share at home.

Level II

Lesson 9

Choices and Decisions

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to place a value on the importance of making appropriate choices and decisions with God's help and guidance.

Specific objectives

1. To define and describe significant and insignificant choices.
2. To identify the positive and negative consequences of decisions.
3. To identify people who can help make good decisions.
4. To talk about learning from mistakes.
5. To review the Sacrament of Penance (Rite of Reconciliation).
6. To explore the importance of prayer and sacraments in the decision-making process.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. People make choices everyday.
2. Decisions can have good or bad results.
3. Who can help us make good decisions?
4. Everybody makes mistakes.
5. Forgiving and being forgiven happens when we celebrate the Sacrament of Penance.
6. God helps us make good decisions.

Path through the lesson

Children need to be given the opportunity to make choices or decisions. Significant adults in the child's life need to provide situations which encourage the decision-making process, building from routine to more complex matters.

Opening prayer

God, You are with me always. Help me make good choices in my life.

1. I make choices.

Catechist will discuss the many choices we make each day and why some are more significant than others. Insignificant choices do not have a major effect on other people's lives: e.g., what to eat, what to wear, what TV to watch, etc.

Significant choices may involve other people: e.g., my behavior (non-compliance, selfishness), my attitude (smart mouth, know-it-all).

Activity: Make a choice chart (or list of activities) which would explain a few opportunities for choices during the day.

2. My decisions may be good or bad.

Go back to the chart and discuss the list focusing on good decisions, but giving examples of how wrong decisions could have affected the outcome. For example, I refused to share the remote control with my brother. He became angry, threw it onto the floor, it broke, and now the whole family is upset.

3. Sometimes I need help making good decisions.

Catechist can ask students who it is who helps them make choices. Emphasize that the older trusted adult, rather than a peer, can give better advice for major decisions.

4. Sometimes I make the wrong decision.

The catechist will ask for examples of wrong decisions, and discuss how we can learn from our mistakes. Our willingness to say we are sorry when we hurt someone is very important but likewise we should forgive someone who hurts us.

5. I can tell God I am sorry; right now in prayer.

Review the Sacrament of Penance, Lesson 4, Objective 5. Catechist could encourage the student to attend a penance service or celebrate the Rite of Reconciliation.

6. I can also pray for God's help in making decisions.

Review how God always listens when we pray, Lesson 6, Level 1, Objective 3.

Catechist will emphasize that God's help (grace) is available to us whenever we make decisions and lead to the right path (CCC 2863).

Tying things together

Pray the Our Father

Level II
Lesson 10
Social Skills

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to strengthen the students' self-esteem by encouraging appropriate social skills and activities.

Specific objectives

1. To define appropriate skills needed in social situations.
2. To identify socially acceptable expressions of affection.
3. To identify productive leisure activities.
4. To review respect for oneself in relation to peer pressure.
5. To review that Jesus is always our friend.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Appropriate social skills are necessary.
2. Correct ways to show affection.
3. Structured activities are beneficial.
4. Good friends respect each other.
5. Jesus is our model for friendship.

Path through the lesson

Opening Prayer

Jesus, our friend, help us to act appropriately when alone and with others.

1. How I act

Catechist can review the idea of choices, giving some examples through role-playing situations:

- Greeting someone.
- Asking questions: obtaining information.
- Expressing feelings.
- How the environment determines behavior (e.g., yelling at a football game vs. being quiet in church. Students can identify which behavior is appropriate in each situation).

2. I like you: how do I act?

Catechist should review "stranger danger," explaining that it isn't always appropriate to ' say "hi" to everybody. If I know the person, I can say "hi" and/or shake hands. Catechist should be aware that repetitive actions should not be encouraged.

Review that hugs are reserved for family members and that we should always respect a person's space.

Review "Traffic Signals" as a good example of behavior (and how to make judgements on social distance). See Level I, Lesson 9, Objective 5.

3. What to do in my free time.

Catechist will ask class for examples of activities at home, which are fun. Emphasize that free time is not boring when activities are planned. Make a list, adding picture symbols if needed to help identify. Students can take this home to help with choices. Some activities can be shared with friends: bowling, visiting, movie, shopping, going out to eat.

4. True friends don't pressure each other.

Catechist should briefly review cleanliness and appropriate dressing, (Level I, Lesson 4) etc. Trendy clothing, too much make-up, extreme hair styles, smoking, drugs, should be avoided while allowing for age-appropriate styles and activities. Good friends do not lead each other into trouble.

5. Jesus as friend.

Gospel stories can illustrate Jesus' role as friend.

Zaccheus. Luke 19:1 - 10

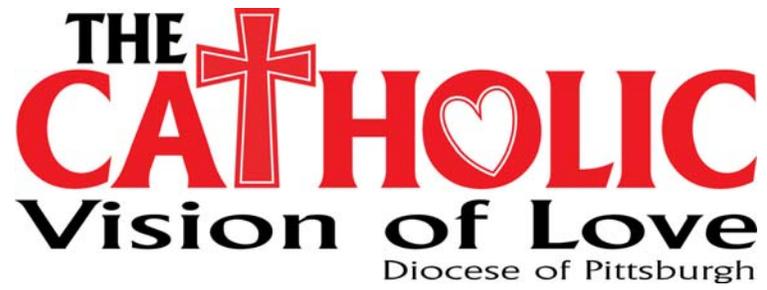
Mary/Martha: Luke 10:38 - 42

Cure of Simon's Mother-in-Law: Mark 1:29 - 31

Lazarus: John 11:1 - 44

Tying things together

Pray or sing the "Prayer of St. Francis," Young People's Glory and Praise



LEVEL III

Outline for Ages 14 - 21 Years

Lesson Plans

LEVEL III
Outline for Ages 14 - 21 Years

I. The Sacrament of Marriage.

1. To discuss marriage as one of the Seven Sacraments of the Church.
2. To explore expectations of marriage.
3. To understand the challenges of married life.

II. The Gift of the Reproductive System.

1. To identify the reproductive system as a gift.
2. To identify the purpose and nature of the reproductive system.

III. To Explain the Difference Between Sex and Sexuality.

1. To define the difference between sex and sexuality.
2. To identify influences on an individual's sexuality throughout life.
3. To acknowledge the value of one's sexuality.

IV. Puberty is a Special Phase of Physical Growth.

1. To review sexuality as a gift from God.
2. To expand upon the concept of puberty as the beginning of adolescence.
3. To review the changes that occur during puberty.

V. Developing Social Skills Builds Respect for Self and Others.

1. To identify appropriate social skills.
2. To emphasize effective use of leisure time.
3. To introduce the idea of group dating.
4. To discuss one-to-one dating.
5. To explain Church teaching on pre/extramarital sexual relations.

VI. Catholic Moral Values.

1. To encourage the individual to trust and accept one's own judgements.
2. To acknowledge that some decisions must be based on Catholic morality.
3. To review the challenges of peer pressure.
4. To identify simple moral issues.

VII. Various Kinds of Love.

1. To review that God's love is unconditional.
2. To review respect for all persons as the basis of Christian love.
3. To explain that mature love moves from self to others and demands both trust and honor.
4. To define the meanings of intimacy.
5. To identify conditional love.

VIII. The Gift of Vocation: The Call to Single, Married or Religious Life.

1. To discuss the gift of vocation.
2. To compare and contrast different lifestyles.
3. To give examples or responses to God's vocational call.

IX. Living the Gospel Message.

1. To discuss the commandments of love.
2. To review appropriate ways of expressing love.
3. To explain why selfishness and indifference are the opposite of love.
4. To identify the Gospel as the origin of these objectives.

Level III

Lesson 1

The Sacrament of Marriage

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to develop an awareness of the realities of marriage.

Specific objectives

1. To discuss marriage as one of the seven Sacraments of the Church (CCC 1113, CCC 1210).
2. To explore expectations of marriage.
3. To understand the challenges of married life.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Marriage is a sacrament.
2. Is marriage for everybody?
3. The responsibilities which accompany marriage.

Path through the lesson

Many young people who are developmentally disabled associate the wedding ceremony and the fun of the reception (party) with the totality of marriage. Catechist should help to dispel this misconception.

Opening prayer

0 Lord, help us to explore our life choices and to know your real plan for us.

1. Marriage

Marriage is a covenant relationship between a man and a woman (CCC 1660). It is so important, Jesus gave it to His Church as a sacrament, because Christ is present (CCC 1613) and because it mirrors the relationship between Christ and His Church (CCC 1616, CCC 1661).

St. Paul says: (Eph. 5:25,32) Husbands love your wives ... (CCC 1659).

2. Life choices

Catechist will ask for examples of people that are married or not married and talk about the lives they lead. Options could include family members, friends, clergy, religious, others in the community. Catechist should elicit the idea that people can live happy, fulfilled lives whether they are married or not.

3. Responsibilities

Catechist could make a list (from students' responses) about what married life involves (working, paying bills, needs of the other person, sharing, intimacy, caring for children).

Not everyone is able to take on these responsibilities due to limitations in one or more of the following areas: (physical, emotional, mental or financial status).

Tying things together

This symbol  could be drawn on a poster, cut from construction paper, or modeled in clay.

The symbol represents the covenant relationship with Christ at the center.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, be the center of our lives. Amen

Level III

Lesson 2

The Gift of the Reproductive System

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to emphasize the importance of the reproductive system as part of God's plan.

Specific objectives

1. To identify the reproductive system as a gift.
2. To identify the purpose and nature of the reproductive system.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. The reproductive system is part of the human body.
2. The reproductive system is part of God's creative plan.

Path through the lesson

By its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory (CCC 1652).

Opening prayer

O God, help us to continue to understand your plan for our lives.

1. Children are a gift from God

Being able to have children is a gift from God.

Catechist should stress that not everyone receives the same gifts, and those persons who do not have children are gifted in other ways: examples: priests, nuns, single people, etc. Some married persons do not have children (some are not able to) and God gives these married persons special graces to love and help each other and other people.

2. New Life CCC 2249

Life is God's gift CCC 2258

Review other body systems from Level II, Lesson 7. Like these other systems, the reproductive system has a clear purpose. It is the creation of new life. Sexual intercourse carries with it the potential for bringing new life into being. It is recommended that at this point, the parents consult the parent handbook for correct explanations and terminology.

Tying things together (activity)

Catechist may suggest students review this lesson at home with a parent/guardian.

Closing Prayer

O God, help us to continue to understand your plan for our lives.

Level III

Lesson 3

To Explain the Difference Between Sex and Sexuality.

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to identify the difference between the terms sex and sexuality with respect to Catholic teaching.

Specific objectives

1. To define the difference between sex and sexuality.
2. To identify influences on an individual's sexuality throughout life.
3. To acknowledge the value of one's sexuality.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Sex and sexuality are not the same.
2. Many factors influence our sexuality.
3. God created sexual beings.

Path through. the lesson

Opening prayer

O Lord, help us to continue to explore possibilities for our lives.

1. Sex versus sexuality

Sexuality is an inherent gift from God who made us male or female; it affects the way we think, feel, love and act around other people.

Sex refers to a person's gender (male/female/boy/girl) and also to the physical act which can result in new life (sexual intimacy) which is reserved for married persons.

2. Influences around us

Catechist should review physical characteristics and interests to show differences. Talk about what clothes, what leisure activities, what household tasks the students prefer and why.

From these responses, elicit the idea that some activities are gender specific, others not. Parents set their child on a certain path in infancy but these gender roles are reinforced by society, peers, TV, advertisements, etc.

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3. The power of sexuality

God's wonderful gift of attraction to the opposite sex is part of His plan. Within the Sacrament of Marriage, two people have the power to bring new life into existence (CCC 2249).

Catechist should review the fact that not everyone marries, but we need to learn ways to build friendships which make our lives meaningful and good. Loving friendships are important building blocks for self-esteem.

Tying things together

Read Psalm 139. NAB. Catechist could use a paraphrased version to read aloud, or in unison with students.

Level III

Lesson 4

Puberty is a Special Phase of Physical Growth

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to expand the student's understanding of puberty.

Specific objectives

1. To review sexuality as a gift from God.
2. To expand upon the concept of puberty as the beginning of adolescence.
3. To review the changes that occur during puberty.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Sexuality is a gift.
2. Puberty is the beginning of adolescence.
3. Changes occur during puberty.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

Dear God, help us to continue to understand the many changes that occur during this time in our lives. Help us to become good adults.

1. God's gift of sexuality

Review Level III, Lesson 3, Objective 1, focusing on how sexuality intensifies during puberty, e.g., physical changes, emotional changes, attraction to persons of the opposite sex.

2. We all experience puberty

Review Level II, Lesson 2, expanding upon issues that students in the classroom are facing, remembering to divide the class according to gender.

3. I am changing

With signed parent permission forms, catechist can engage in conversation with small groups of same gender, encouraging questions. A good beginning would be to ask the question: Who do you talk to at home about the changes you are experiencing? This will usually open up the discussion sufficiently to generate other topics/questions.

Tying things together

Catechist could send home a note explaining topics discussed, giving parents the opportunity to review and reinforce the information. Parental comments in return are encouraged and welcomed.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, changes are good. Help us to know how to follow You. Amen.

Level III

Lesson 5

Developing Social Skills Builds Respect for Self and Others

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to strengthen the student's awareness of the Church's guidelines for interpersonal relationships.

Specific objectives

1. To identify appropriate social skills.
2. To emphasize effective use of leisure time.
3. To introduce the idea of group dating.
4. To discuss one-to-one dating.
5. To explain Church teaching on pre/extramarital sexual relations.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. Each person needs to develop good social skills.
2. Wise use of leisure time is beneficial.
3. Group dating is an acceptable option.
4. One-to-one dating is a challenge.
5. The Catholic Church has specific guidelines regarding sexual behavior.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

Sing: "They Will Know We Are Christians By Our Love."

1. I need good social skills

Elicit from students responses about how they act in the following situations: Meeting family, meeting acquaintances (compare). How do you act in a restaurant, in the school cafeteria, in church, in school assembly, in the mall or at the change of classes, focusing on social distance, eye-contact, manners, participation in conversation, etc. Catechist needs to stress that people's opinions of you and your capabilities are shaped by your actions.

2. I need to choose good leisure time, activities

Review Level II, Lesson 10, Objectives 3.

3. I can go out with a group of friends.

Parents make the decision whether to allow students to participate in outside group activities. Catechist could elicit responses about what students have done... school sporting events, bowling, going to mall, movies. These are fun ways to spend leisure time and interact with peers.

4. What is a date?

Catechist could ask the students to describe a date, while being aware perceptions may vary widely.

Reinforce the appropriate things which happen on a date: holding hands, conversation, getting to know the other person. (Actions or activities which students would only do in front of parents or adults.) Review here the "Right to say NO?" Level I, Lesson 4, Objective 3 or Level II, Lesson 2, Objective 2.

Parents should decide whether students may participate in one-to-one dating.

5. What does the Church teach?

Any sexual activity is wrong without the commitment of married love. The Church teaches chastity. See Parent Handbook, and CCC 2349, 2350. The catechist will stress that there is to be **no** sexual activity prior to the Sacrament of Marriage.

Tying things together

Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude (strength), Knowledge, Piety (holiness), Fear of the Lord (awe).
(CCC 1831)

Make a poster, wrap gift boxes, or use gift bags tagged with these names.. The catechist can elaborate that these are the gifts of the Holy Spirit (the "helps" along the way) given to us at the Sacrament of Confirmation which enable us to live holy and good lives.

Closing Prayer

Holy Spirit, help us to live holy and good lives. Amen.

Level III

Lesson 6

Catholic Moral Values

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to help individuals form good moral values through conscience formation.

Specific objectives

1. To encourage the individual to trust and accept one's own judgments.
2. To acknowledge that some decisions must be based on Catholic morality.
3. To review the challenges of peer pressure.
4. To identify simple moral issues.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening prayer

1. Self-worth is an essential factor in trusting one's own judgments.
2. Catholic values and goals help in making good moral decisions.
3. Challenges come when we think and act independently.
4. We may face moral issues every day.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

O Holy Spirit, show us the way to lead good lives.

1. I believe in my ability to make good decisions.

Level II, Lesson 9, could be reviewed.

Here the catechist should focus on significant decisions that may effect other people: If I'm angry, do I punch someone? Do I take this book from the store because I want it? Do I take money from Mother's purse? Do I smoke the cigarettes lying on the table? Whatever I choose to do, I must live with the consequences. If a good decision is made, the results are positive and I benefit, as well as others. When a poor decision is made, this may hurt all who are involved (e.g., physically, emotionally, socially).

2. The Catholic Church offers us guidelines.

God teaches us how to live good lives; when we remember this, we make good decisions (CCC 1796). Our families, caregivers and teachers provide us with the basis of knowing right from wrong. As we grow and learn, we make decisions based on these experiences (informed conscience). (CCC 1798, 1796) Through our religious education, participation at Mass and celebrating the sacraments, the Church guides our lives.

This is an ongoing process all through our lives and we should trust our own judgments, but when confronted with a difficult decision, we should not hesitate to seek help from parents, caregivers and teachers.

3. Sometimes I experience peer pressure

It is a challenge to make my own decisions. Catechist should ask students for examples of problems they have faced when dealing with their friends: Should I smoke? Should I be part of this clique? Should I cut class? Should I take these pills someone gave me? Should I stay out past my curfew? Should I follow fads for clothing and hair? Should I allow someone to touch my private parts? Catechist should emphasize that all people face questions like these. True friends would not pressure you to act foolishly or against God's teaching.

4. The Ten Commandments (CCC 2052 ff)

(Ex. 3:1-18/Deut. 5:6-21/Deut. 6:4-9 O/T)

(Matt: 5:17-48/Luke 18:18-23/Mark 12:28-33 N/T)

Disobeying one's parents, lying and cheating are sins against God's commandments. Stealing, physical violence and killing are very serious offenses against both God's law and civil law (law of our land). These sins hurt other people and are punishable by police action and jail sentences. Dating a person who is already married is wrong, as is any sexual activity outside of marriage. Abortion is the murder of an unborn baby (still growing inside the mother) and is a sin, an offense against God and life (CCC 1799). God gave us the Ten Commandments as a guide for living a good life. Catechist and students can make a chart or poster to learn about them. Referencing the O/T and N/T will concretize that these are laws coming directly from God. "The Word of God is light for our path" (CCC 1802). The above references could be read to/with the students so they learn that God's law can be found in God's Holy Book (Bible).

Tying things together

1. Catechist and students can make a chart (or poster) of the Ten Commandments and learn to arrange them in order. (This can be one lesson or two.)
2. Catechist can give "everyday" examples, i.e., life situations (applications) and students can decide which commandment is involved in each.

These examples may help make the commandments more concrete in the lives of the students, but cautiously explain that there could be "serious" and "not so serious" sins/actions.

E.g., swearing.....#2 You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
taking candy.....#7 You shall not steal.
fighting with siblings.....#4 Honor your father and your mother.
intimate touching.....#6 You shall not commit adultery.

Note: Catechist should realize this application will be an added difficulty for students with developmental disabilities, because their thinking is so concrete. They will not be able to relate "intimate touching" with "adultery."

"The tradition of the Church has always understood the Sixth Commandment as encompassing the whole of human sexuality." (CCC 2336)

It will be the task of the catechist to assure the student that holding hands, kissing, hugging are not wrong (sinful) but the prolongation of such actions can lead to more intimate behaviors. A person's integrity then, depends on the right behavior - in this case, chastity.

The virtue of chastity (depends on temperance and) is a continuous vocation throughout life and takes on different aspects at various stages of our development (after baptism) through childhood, adolescence, single life, married state, and requires diverse (increased) levels of mastery and commitment at each of these stages of life (CCC 2337-2345).

"The Holy Spirit enables one whom the water of Baptism has regenerated to imitate the purity of Christ." (CCC 2345, I John 3:2-3)

Closing Prayer

Holy Spirit, help us to make good decisions. Amen.

Level III

Lesson 7

Various Kinds of Love

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to identify and explain various kinds of love from a Christian perspective.

Specific objectives

1. To review that God's love is unconditional.
2. To review respect for all persons as the basis of Christian love.
3. To explain that mature love moves from self to others and demands both trust and honor.
4. To define the meanings of intimacy.
5. To identify conditional love.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. God's love is never-ending.
2. Love of others is the greatest commandment.
3. Love must consist of trust and honor.
4. Intimacy need not be sexual.
5. "If you really love me, you'd "

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

Sing: "Where Charity and Love Prevail"

1. God always loves me.

Review Level I, Lesson I ; Level II, Lesson 1.

God so loved the world that He gave us His only begotten Son. "We love because He first loved us." (I John 4:19) "God's love is the supreme model for us - we could never have known this model by reason alone." (TOC 256)

2. "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 13.34)

Jesus makes love the "new" (greatest) commandment. Jesus receives the Father's love and shows it to us "> This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." (CCC 1823). (This kind of love does **NOT** mean hugging and kissing.) We, as Christians, need to treat everyone with respect, dignity and fairness no matter whether we like them or not.

3. Trust and honor are part of love.

God loves us; we trust and honor God. Our parents love us; we trust, love and honor them. We have friends we love.

Review Commandments one and four from (poster) previous lesson.

Catechist could ask students how friendships are formed:

Review Level I, Lesson and Level II, Lesson 4

Catechist should focus on the trust that develops between friends and that honoring the person means accepting them as they are.

4. What is intimacy?

Intimacy is a closeness that need not be sexual. We can have close friends with whom we can share personal information and ideas. We can create intimacy with God through prayer (Level I, Lesson 6, Objective 3) (Level II, Lesson 9, Objective 6) and sacraments, especially the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is a concrete symbol of our close, personal relationship with God.

5. Love with conditions.

Persons who truly love us do not place limits on their love. A loving parent will continue to love us even while disapproving of certain behaviors. Do right behaviors mean more love? NO! Mom does not love me more because I clean my room. She may be happy about it, but she loves me anyway. The same thing applies if I do wrong: parents may be angry or hurt, but they still love me. The point of this is not to confuse "feelings" with true love which is CONSTANT/UNCHANGING.

So, when your boyfriend/girlfriend wants to have an intimate sexual relationship with you (outside of the Sacrament of Marriage) they are setting conditions on their love for you. Instant gratification is more important to him/her than; than your spiritual and physical well-being.

Tying things together

The Act of Love. Read/recite.

O my God, I love You above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because You are all-good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for love of You. I forgive all who have injured me, and I ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

(TOC, Fourth Edition, p.511)

Level III

Lesson 8

The Gift of Vocation: The Call to Single, Married or Religious Life

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to familiarize the students with various adult life styles and ways to serve God.

Specific objectives

1. To discuss the gift of vocation.
2. To compare and contrast different lifestyles.
3. To give examples of responses to God's vocational call.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. God calls people to do His work.
2. Each lifestyle is different and valuable.
3. Each person responds to God's vocational call.

Path through the lesson

Opening prayer

Learn the song, or meditate/listen to:

"We Are Called" by David Haas, comes from a collection: "Who Calls You By Name"
GIA,1988.

1. The gift of vocation

God's call to vocation applies to all people. This lesson will focus on various life choices and their role in the Church. The ministerial priesthood is a specific sacrament (Holy Orders) conferring the power upon men to consecrate the Eucharist and guide the Church as a representative of Christ (CCC 1119/1581).

When possible, invite a priest to speak to the students. Topics should include education, celebration of sacraments, ministerial responsibilities, celibacy.

Other forms of religious life include nuns, brothers, monks and contemplatives: consecrated people who devote their lives to Christ through vows of poverty, chastity and obedience (CCC 944) and who collaborate with the work of the diocesan bishop (CCC 927). They embrace this way of life because they love God above all. (Contemplative orders embrace persons, whose primary work is prayer, in monasteries and convents).

Lay persons share in the life of Christ. They participate in the common priesthood of the people (CCC 1591) bestowed on them at baptism and strengthened through confirmation. This is why the vocations of the laity are also calls from God through which they cooperate with their pastor in the service of the Church Community (CCC 910).

2. Comparing vocations

Catechist should make a chart (poster or chalkboard) listing the three major lifestyles:

1. Single
2. Married
3. Priesthood/Religious Life

List characteristics of each, e.g.:

Single	Married	Priesthood/Religious
Live alone	Live with spouse	May or may not live alone Other priests/other nuns, etc.
Refrain from sexual intimacy	Sexual intimacy with spouse alone	Vow of celibacy
Friends	Friends	Friends
Extended family	Extended family Children	Extended family
Bills/financial obligations	Bills/financial obligations	Limited funds Shared financial obligations

Catechist should stress the similarities, differences and value of each way of life. It is a good idea to have students “name” people they know in each category.

3. Our response

No matter what lifestyle or life stage we are in, we are responding to God’s call whenever we approach our simple everyday tasks in a positive way. Catholics could ask for examples: using manners, interacting positively (and appropriately), helping with chores, assuming responsibilities without being asked, etc.

This "response" gets channeled into service in the Church when we volunteer as greeter (minister of hospitality), altar server, choir member, clerical worker in office, helper to maintain interior of church, or church grounds, etc.

These services to the Church are examples of fulfilling our mission to build up and strengthen the Church community. It is your vocation to make the world a better place.

Tying things together

The call to vocation is an ongoing process and our response changes at different times of our life. We should always keep our hearts and minds open for ways to serve God.

Closing Prayer

"We Are Called" by David Haas, comes from a collection: "Who Calls You By Name" GIA, 1988.

LEVEL III

Lesson 9

Living the Gospel Message

Introduction

General aim of the lesson

This lesson seeks to help the students to learn ways to express love, based on the Gospel.

Specific objectives

1. To discuss the commandments of love.
2. To review appropriate ways of expressing love.
3. To explain why selfishness and indifference are the opposite of love.
4. To identify the Gospel as the origin of these objectives.

These are the things we will talk about. . .

Outline of the lesson

Opening Prayer

1. God's commandments to love are found in the Old Testament and the New Testament.
2. Expressions of love take many forms.
3. The opposite of love is selfishness and indifference.
4. The Gospel has a message for our daily lives.

Path through the lesson

Catechist needs to realize that there is sufficient material here for several lessons. When determining the extent of information, the chronological age and mental age of the students should be taken into consideration.

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, You show us the way to eternal life. Help us to live Your way. Amen.

1. Commandments of Love

The catechist could review all of Level III, Lesson 6, or simply show the formula which is the Decalogue: the first three commandments show how we are to love God while the last seven commandments show how we are to love each other/our neighbor (CCC 2055).

When God sent Jesus to us, Jesus taught us how to live the commandments (from the Jewish Law) by teaching us the "greatest commandment" (Love One Another As I Have Loved You, JN, 13:34). See Level III, Lesson 7, Objective #2. A rich young man asked Jesus how he could obtain eternal life (Matt. 19:16-17) and Jesus replied: "If you wish to enter into eternal life, keep the commandments." (CCC 2075)

2. Expressing Love

Review Level III, Lesson 3, Objective 3, (marriage) and review Level III, Lesson 7, Objective 4 (friendship).

What the catechist should emphasize is that, since God made us male and female in His image and likeness (Gen. 1:24), our sexuality is not only **good**, but an integral part of us (this

is also review: Level III, Lesson 3, Objective 1). We are able to love all persons, even persons of the opposite gender without the intimacy associated with the sexual act. Having friendships is important to one's overall well-being.

3. Selfishness and Indifference

Some people make an unwise choice **NOT** to love. This may be expressed through uncooperativeness, unfriendly behavior, unkind actions, non-compliance. Treating people with indifference is disrespectful. Indifference could include lack of response to conversation, no eye contact, having a negative attitude.

In the Gospel, Jesus teaches us to love one another: to treat others as we would want to be treated.

Activity:

Catechist could encourage the students to give examples of how they act when they are "having a bad day." Review answers in the light of "What would Jesus do?" or "How would Jesus act in this situation?"

4. Jesus Shows Us How to Love:

- A. Wedding Feast at Cana, JN 2:1-11
- B. Good Samaritan, Luke 10:30-37
- C. Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11-32
- D. Lost Sheep, Luke 15:1-7
- E. Zaccheus, Luke 19:1-10
- F. Anointing with Oil, (Pardoning of Sinful Woman) Luke 7:36-50
- G. Blessing the Children, Matt. 19:13-15/Mark 10:13-16 .
- H. Love of Enemies, Matt. 5:43-48
- I. Forgiving Others, Matt. 6:14-15

Catechist could choose and paraphrase some of the above parables to illustrate that the Gospel shows how we should act if we are living the Christian life.

These examples culminate in the Beatitudes, Matt. 5:3-12 (CCC 1716-29) and the Spiritual Works of Mercy (CCC 2447) and the Corporal Works of Mercy (CCC 2447) (Matt. 25 31-46) ISA. 58 6-7.

Tying things together

Closing Prayer/Song

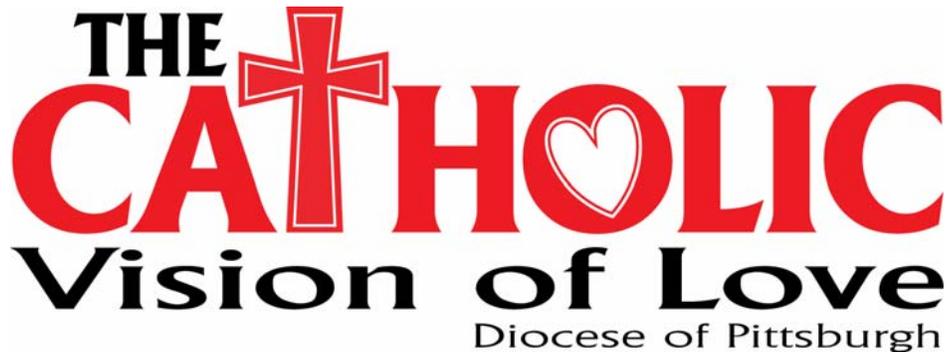
"Whatsoever You Do," by Willard Francis Jabusch

Summary and Conclusion

In conclusion, we remind parents and catechists of the important nature of this material. This catechesis must be ongoing throughout life and might never be considered as "complete."

The amount of information to be shared at any one time will depend on the person's need, questions, and the level of functioning. Many of the lesson plans can be divided into several segments, and, since there is always a value in repetition, review of the material is recommended for the affective learner.

Move slowly through the curriculum, building a personal relationship of trust with your young person/student. Growth in self-esteem is the goal, as is growth in faith in Jesus (and acceptance of the teachings of His Church) as we strive to live good and holy lives.



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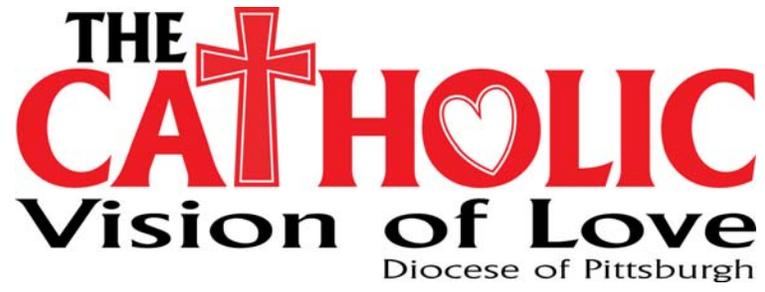
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4. *Man and Woman He Made Them*, Jean Vanier, Paulist Press, Mahwah, New Jersey, New York, 1985
5. *We Choose to Love*, Brigid M. O'Donnell, Winston Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403, 1984
6. *Talking to Youth About Sexuality, A Parents' Guide*, Mike Aquilina, General Editor, Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, Huntington, Indiana 46750

Media

- Sacred Heart Kids' Club*: Series I, Prayer, Video/DVD Elementary, 30 minutes
Segmented. (God speaks and listens through prayer.)
- Sacred Heart Kids' Club*: Series I, Video/DVD, Vocation, Elementary, 30 minutes,
Segmented. (Vocation explains a response to God.)
- Sacred Heart Kids' Club*: Series II, The Commandments: Video/DVD, Elementary,
30 minutes - Segmented.
- #1. *Listen to the Maker*- Commandments in general
 - #2 *Love God- Treasure God's Name*- First and second commandments
 - #3. *Day of Rest and Celebration*- Third commandment
 - #4 *Believe, Love and Obey*, Fourth commandment
 - #5. *Sounds of Peace and Love*, Fifth commandment
 - #6. *Choose Life!*- Fifth commandment
 - #7 *Pure Hearts- Joyful Hearts*- Sixth commandment
 - #8. *Sacredness- Respectful Love*- Sixth commandment
 - #9. *Be Generous- Live Honestly*- Seventh and Tenth commandments
 - #10. *Choose to Live the Truth*- Eighth commandment

Music

Glory and Praise

Available from Oregon Catholic Press, 1-800-LITURGY, www.ocp.org

Hi God

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Young People's Glory and Praise

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