

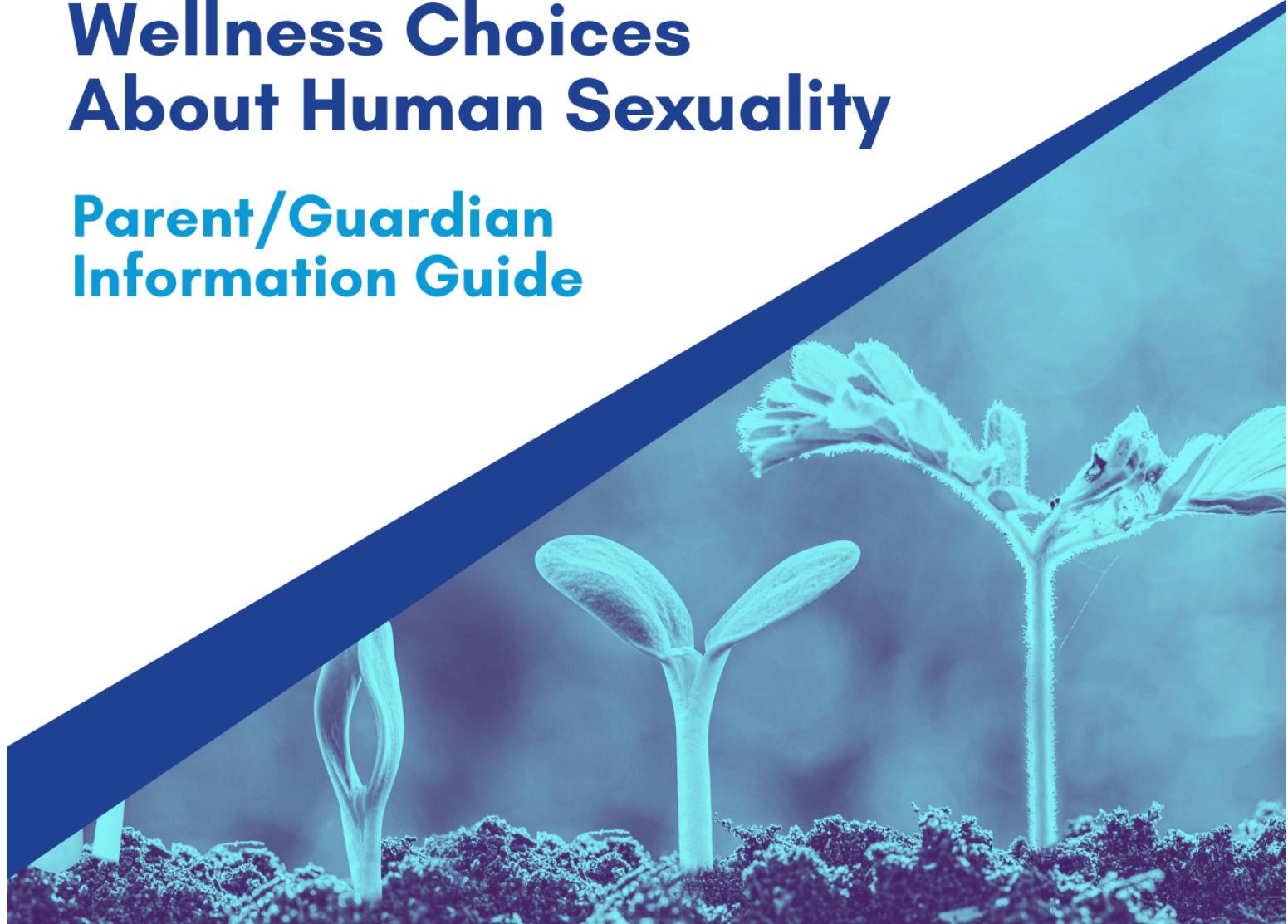


FORT McMURRAY
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Grade 7 Health/Religion

Wellness Choices About Human Sexuality

Parent/Guardian
Information Guide



Introduction

In accordance with Fort McMurray Catholic School's Administrative Procedure 206 - Family Life & Human Sexuality Education, this document provides parents and guardians with information related to the curriculum, topics, content, and instructional methods that will be used when their children learn about human sexuality. Human sexuality is part of the Alberta Grade 7-9 Wellness curriculum and is taught through a Catholic worldview as part of our school jurisdiction's Health & Religion Program.

About the Instructional Resources

A team of Fort McMurray Catholic School educators consisting of division leaders, school leaders, religion and curriculum consultants, and classroom teachers developed this set of resources that will be used by all teachers when instructing the outcomes for which opt-in/opt-out consent is required, as per legislation from the government of Alberta. These resources, which are highlighted in this information guide, include teacher-directed instruction and student-led activities. External guest speakers or service providers will not be utilized during the instruction of these outcomes.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to review this guide in its entirety to support an informed decision-making process for opt-in or opt-out consent.

The Catholic Understanding of the Human Person¹

The Catholic Church teaches that each person has been created by God in His image and likeness and therefore has an inherent and inviolable human dignity (CCC 1700). Scripture tells us that "God is love" (1 John 4:8), and it is ultimately from this understanding of God that the Church's vision of the human person becomes clear: every single human being, without exception, has immeasurable value. Human beings are called to love as God loves. Love and the expression of love are at the heart of the very meaning of human life and the Christian faith.

God greatly desires happiness for His people and has placed this longing in our hearts; nothing apart from drawing closer to God, the one who created us, can fully satisfy this desire (CCC 1718-1719). This longing also speaks to our need for human relationships. As love unifies the persons of the Trinity, we are called to image this love in and through our earthly relationships. Love is the central element of Jesus' Great Commandment (Mark 12:28-31) which commands us to "love the Lord your God" as well as to "love your neighbour as yourself". No human is exempt from this need for loving relationships. All humans find true happiness "in seeking and loving what is true and good" (CCC 1704).

The human being is an embodied being, created as a union of body and soul (CCC 362-365). Our body is not just the "shell" of our "real" interior self. Rather, our body is an essential part of who we are, and it plays an essential role in how we live out the love that God has given us. The discussion of the design, purpose and development of our bodies needs to be treated with the utmost dignity and respect.

An inherent purpose of the body is to reflect the love of God. Our sexual drive is a gift from God, and any discussion regarding sexuality needs to be approached from a positive stance: sexuality is a mystery to be lived, rather a problem to be solved, or a source of temptation to be overcome. Teachers need to focus on a positive, life-giving approach to decisions around sex, and thus its appropriate placement in marriage, rather than solely focusing on the negative consequences. While these consequences are important and must be taught, only focusing on them is a reduction approach to an essential topic and would miss important life lessons.

The image of God is not simply something already in us, it is also something that we must become. God is still creating us, and we are called to cooperate with his vision. Our life is a work that has been entrusted to us. Our free will allows us to make choices, choices that will either lead us away or lead us toward completing the image of God in us. Each person is called to use the

talents, abilities, and passions that they have been given by God to discover and live out the purpose and plans that God has for them (CCC 1730-1731).

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. Catholics believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

¹ The document *The Human Person, Love, and Sexuality: A Resource for Catholic Educators* released by the Education Commission of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario was an essential source for this summary.

The Use of a Question Box

An anonymous question box will be available in the classroom during the instruction of this curricular segment. This practice ensures that questions from students are addressed and allows teachers time to consider which questions to answer and how to respond. Teachers will use their professional judgment to discern which questions are relevant to the curricular outcomes and, thus, should be addressed with the whole class. The question box will be optional, submissions will not be read aloud in class, and confidentiality will be maintained.

LESSON OUTLINES

LESSON #1: Male & Female Reproductive Anatomy

Alberta Education Curriculum Outcome

7.1: Examine the human reproductive process, and recognize misunderstandings associated with sexual development.

Lesson Components

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
Everything you created is good.
We have received life from your hands.
We have been created in your image,
With the power to love and care for each other
And to share in your creation.
We thank you for this gift.
Help us to cherish all that you have created.
Help us to show gratitude for the gift of sexuality by the way we live.
Amen.

Review of Class Etiquette

- Be kind and supportive.
- Questions are welcome, but we might not be able to answer them all.
- Show respect for the body as a creation of God by using correct terms for body parts.
- Listen when others are speaking.
- Respect personal boundaries and physical space.
- Be mindful of personal questions and oversharing.
- Be respectful at all times.

A Quick Note for Students

Biologically Correct Terms

- Official agreed-upon definition.
- Reduces confusion and misunderstandings.
- Helps us respect the dignity of God's creation.

Slang

- May be used when someone feels uncomfortable or unsure of the correct term.
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Learning about reproduction and sexuality may leave you curious about things that you may not be comfortable asking out loud.

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Catholic Worldview on Studying Sexual Health

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher

- From a Catholic perspective, a study of sexual health starts with valuing the gift of sexuality and an appreciation for the gift of human fertility.
- This sets the foundation for making moral choices that respect these gifts.
- A study of the human reproductive system allows us to marvel at the complexity of God's creations.

Recap from Previous Grades: What Is Puberty?

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher

- As a child, the reproductive organs are not yet matured.
- When puberty starts, a child becomes an adolescent and the reproductive organs begin to mature.
- During this time, males and females undergo physical changes, which prepares them to create new life.

Recap from Previous Grades: What Is Puberty?

Mode of Instruction: Partner Activity - Venn Diagram

Directions for Students:

- Working with a partner, add the following physical changes to the appropriate section of the diagram (changes specific to males, changes specific to females, changes males and females will both experience):
 - Acne
 - Breast development
 - Growing taller
 - Oily hair and skin
 - Body hair growth
 - Widening hips
 - Menstruation begins
 - Sweat gland development
 - Voice deepens
 - More awkward/clumsy
 - Ovulation begins
 - Sperm production begins

The Male Reproductive System

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher

Catholic Worldview

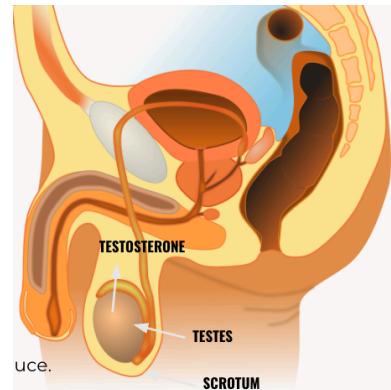
- The male body was designed by God to play a special role in the creation of new life.
- The processes that take place in the male reproductive system are amazing.

Male Reproductive Anatomy

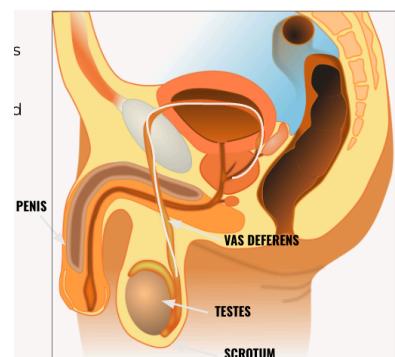
- As you learned previously, puberty starts when the pituitary gland in the brain sends a hormone to the testes.
- The testes are found inside of the skinned pouch called the scrotum.
- The testes will begin producing a hormone called testosterone.
- Testosterone is responsible for preparing the male body to reproduce.

Functions of Testosterone

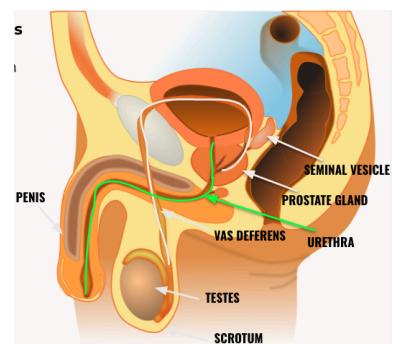
- Causes sperm production in the testes.
 - Sperm are tiny cells that can only be seen under a microscope.
 - They fertilize a female's egg in order to create new life.
- Causes the appearance of male secondary sex characteristics.
 - Hair on armpits, pubic area, chest, and face.
 - Voice becomes lower/deeper.
 - Body becomes more muscular.
 - Body produces more sweat, which can have an odour.
 - Skin becomes more oily and can cause acne.



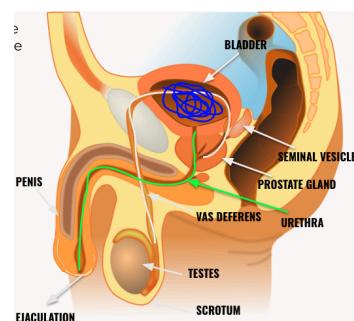
- In order to reproduce, the penis first becomes erect. This happens when the tissue inside of the penis fills with blood, which makes it firm and enlarged.
- When a male has an erection, mature sperm cells begin to travel from the testes through the vas deferens, which is a tube that connects the testes to the penis.



- When moving through the vas deferens, other fluids are added in with the sperm from the prostate gland and the seminal vesicle. The resulting fluid is called semen.
- When the semen reaches the end of the vas deferens, it enters the urethra, which is a tube inside of the penis.



- The urethra is also responsible for transporting urine from the bladder.
- The urethra does not carry semen and urine at the same time.
- When the semen reaches the end of the urethra, it exits the penis. This is called ejaculation. When a male ejaculates, millions of sperm are released at once.



Consolidation Activity #1

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity

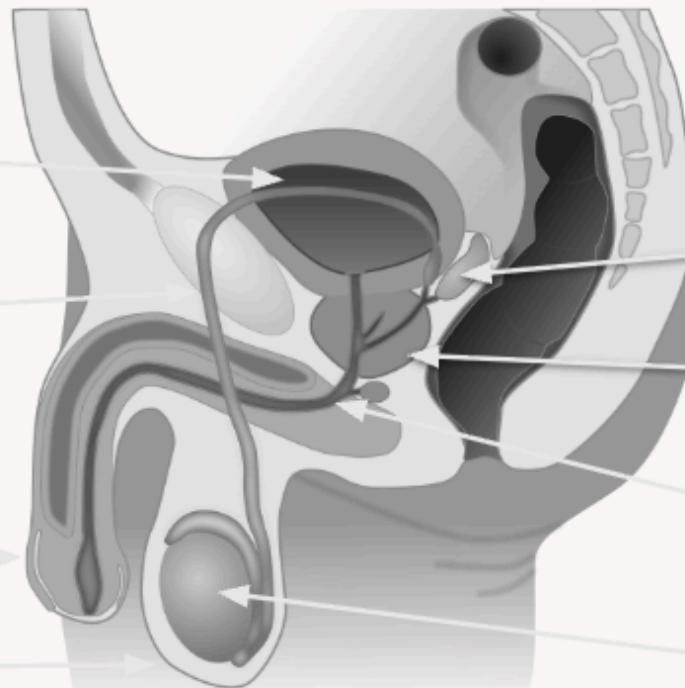
Directions for Students:

- In your small group, work together to label each part of the male reproductive system.
- A word bank is provided to help you.
- Your teacher will go over the answers when you are done.

MALE REPRODUCTIVE ANATOMY REVIEW

In a small group, attempt to label the diagram of the male reproductive system.

ANSWERS



1. Testes
2. Bladder
3. Seminal Vesicle
4. Urethra
5. Penis
6. Vas Deferens
7. Prostate
8. Scrotum

The Female Reproductive System

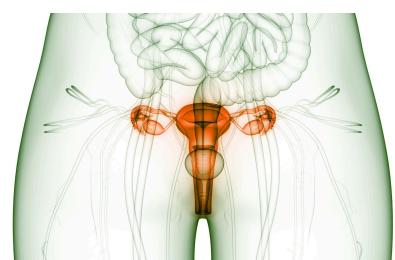
Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher

Catholic Worldview

- The female body was designed by God to play a special role in the creation of new life.
- Imagine! The organs and tiny cells you will learn about today all play a part in the creation of a new life.

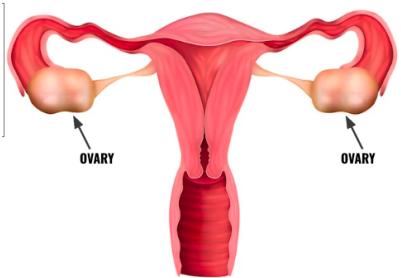
Introduction

- Though the end result of the female reproductive system is the same as the male (to create new life), it functions very differently.
- Unlike the male reproductive system, all parts of the female system are located inside the pelvic region of the body.



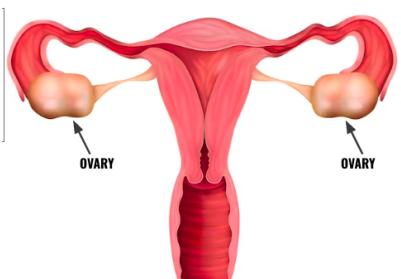
Female Reproductive Anatomy

- Puberty in females begins when the pituitary gland in the brain sends a message to the ovaries to begin producing a hormone called estrogen.
- Estrogen is responsible for preparing the female's body for reproduction.
- The functions of estrogen:
 - Supports the production of egg cells in the ovaries. These cells are also referred to as ova (singular: ovum).
 - Like sperm cells, egg cells are tiny and can only be seen under a microscope.
 - When an egg is fertilized by a sperm, new life is created.
 - Causes the appearance of female secondary sex characteristics.
 - Hair on armpits, legs, and pubic area.
 - Breasts grow.
 - Hips widen.
 - Body produces more sweat, which can have an odour.



Ovaries

- The ovaries are the primary female reproductive organ and are responsible for:
 - Producing estrogen
 - Producing and maturing egg cells, which are also known as ova (singular: ovum).
 - Releases a mature egg each month in a process called ovulation.



Fallopian Tubes

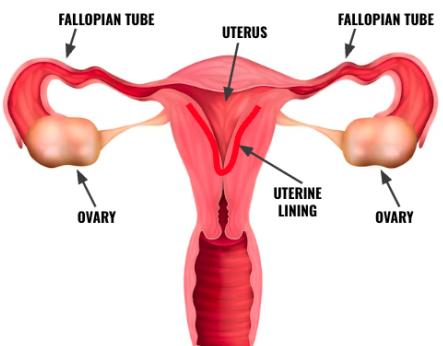
- Responsible for connecting the ovaries to the uterus.

Uterus

- Small organ where a baby may grow. It may also be called a womb.

Uterine Lining

- A layer of tiny blood vessels that grow along the lining of the uterus each month. If a female becomes pregnant, the uterine lining supports the growing baby.

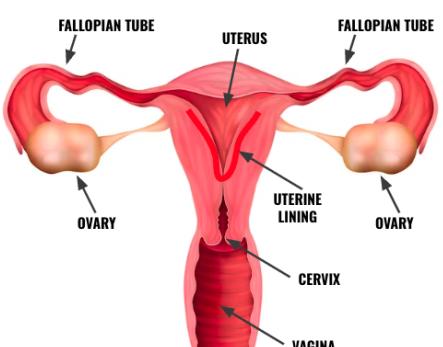


Cervix

- A strong muscular ring that keeps the uterus closed.

Vagina

- A passageway that connects the internal female reproductive structures to the outside of the body. It may also be referred to as the birth canal.



Consolidation Activity #2

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity

Directions for Students:

- In your small group, work together to complete the Female Reproductive System worksheet.
- Each student needs to complete their own worksheet.
- Your teacher will go over the answers when you are done.

WORD BANK

A. Fallopian Tube	C. Cervix	E. Ovary
B. Uterine Lining	D. Uterus	F. Vagina

Letter	Statement
F	The passageway between the internal components of the female reproductive system and outside of the female's body.
D	The organ in which a baby grows and develops if a female is pregnant.
C	A strong muscular ring which keeps a female's womb closed.
E	The primary female reproductive organ which produces estrogen and eggs (ova).
B	Tiny blood vessels found along the sides of a female's womb.
A	The structure into which a mature egg is released when ovulation occurs.

Closing Prayer

Lord,

You have made each of us in your own image and likeness and have called each of us to love as you love.

Help us to love and respect each other as persons made with dignity.

Help us to see, understand and learn about the gifts of life, love, and human sexuality as you made them and apply them to the way we live.

Amen.

LESSON #2: The Menstrual Cycle

Alberta Education Curriculum Outcome

7.1: Examine the human reproductive process, and recognize misunderstandings associated with sexual development.

Lesson Components

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
Everything you created is good.
We have received life from your hands.
We have been created in your image,
With the power to love and care for each other
And to share in your creation.
We thank you for this gift.
Help us to cherish all that you have created.
Help us to show gratitude for the gift of sexuality by the way we live.
Amen.

Review of Class Etiquette

- Be kind and supportive.
- Questions are welcome, but we might not be able to answer them all.
- Show respect for the body as a creation of God by using correct terms for body parts.
- Listen when others are speaking.
- Respect personal boundaries and physical space.
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A Quick Note for Students

Biologically Correct Terms

- Official agreed-upon definition.
- Reduces confusion and misunderstandings.
- Helps us respect the dignity of God's creation.

Slang

- May be used when someone feels uncomfortable or unsure of the correct term.
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Review of Question Box Process

Learning about reproduction and sexuality may leave you curious about things that you may not be comfortable asking out loud.

Message to Students:

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- You may choose to write a question on the slip.
- If you don't have a question, you'll put the blank slip in the box.
- Do not put your name on the slip.

The teacher will review all questions before the next class but may not be able to answer them all.

If your question does not get answered, you are encouraged to discuss it with your parent or guardian.

Recap From Lesson 1

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity

Directions for Students:

- You will be working in a small group to complete this task.
- You have two sets of cards:
 - Organ/Tissue Labels
 - Functions
- Place each label on the diagram and then add the correct function card that goes with it.
- Your teacher will walk around to guide your work.

The Menstrual Cycle

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher

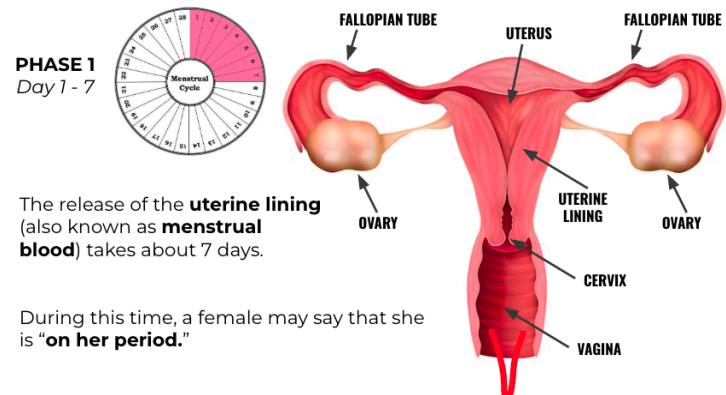
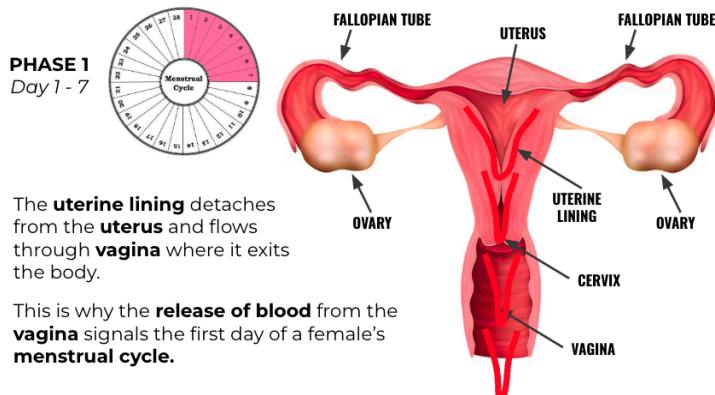
Catholic Worldview

- From a Catholic perspective, the menstrual cycle is a good and important part of a unique female identity, one that points toward a female's capacity for love and life as designed by God.

What is the Menstrual Cycle?

- It is a series of events that happen in the female reproductive system each month to prepare for the possibility of having a baby.
- A typical menstrual cycle is 28 days; however, every female body is different and some may have longer or shorter cycles. This is completely normal.
- The menstrual cycle is controlled by a number of hormones released from the pituitary gland in the brain and the ovaries in the pelvic region.

Phase 1

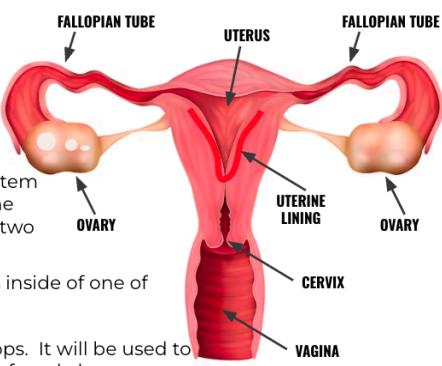
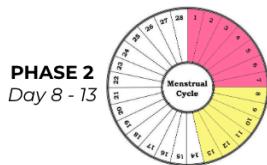


Directions for Students:

ON YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER:

- Color days 1-7 red.
- Complete the blanks in the Phase 1 box using these words:
 - Vagina
 - 7
 - Uterine Lining
 - Period
 - Uterus

Phase 2



The female's reproductive system will now start preparing for the possibility of a baby by doing two things:

1. An egg grows and matures inside of one of the ovaries.

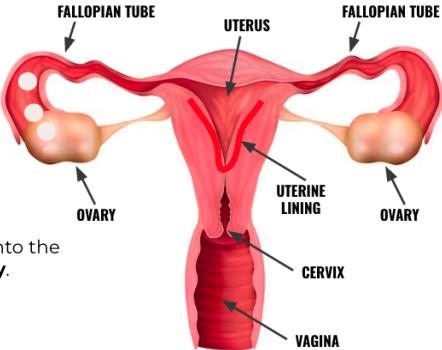
2. A new uterine lining develops. It will be used to nourish a growing baby **if** the female becomes pregnant.

Directions for Students:

ON YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER:

- Color days 8-13 yellow.
- Complete the blanks in the Phase 2 box using these words:
 - Pregnant
 - Ovaries
 - Uterus
 - Egg
 - Uterine lining
 - Nourish

Phase 3



The **mature egg** is released into the **fallopian tube** from the **ovary**.

This is known as **ovulation**.

Directions for Students:

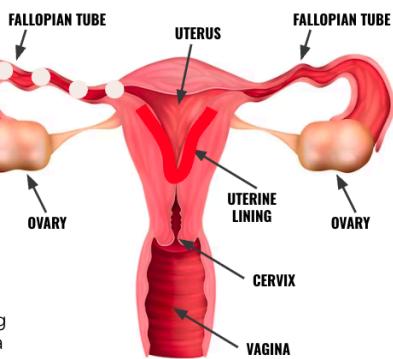
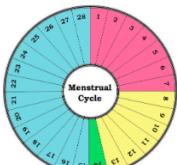
ON YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER:

- Color day 14 green.
- Complete the blanks in the Phase 3 box using these words:
 - Fallopian Tube
 - Ovaries
 - Ovulation
 - Egg

Phase 4

PHASE 4

Day 15-28

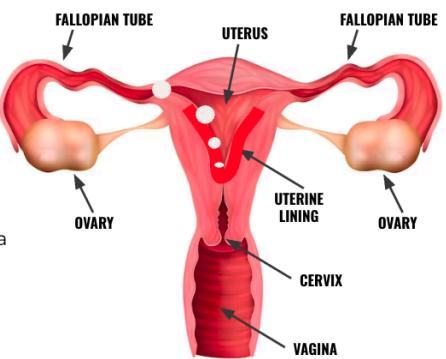
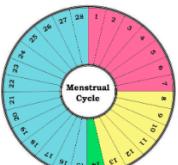


The **egg** travels to the **uterus** through the **fallopian tube**. This usually takes **3-4** days.

The **uterine lining** finishes growing as it prepares for the possibility of a baby.

PHASE 4

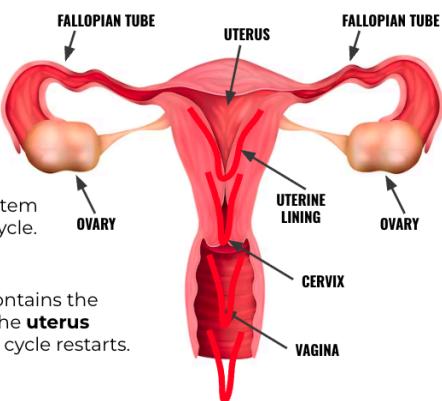
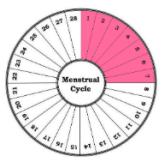
Day 15-28



If the **egg** is **not fertilized** by a **sperm**, it will **dissolve** in the **uterine lining**.

PHASE 1

Day 1 - 7



The female reproductive system is now at Day 1 of the **next** cycle.

The **uterine lining** (which contains the dissolved egg) flows out of the **uterus** through the **vagina** and the cycle restarts.

Directions for Students:

ON YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER:

- Color days 15-28 blue.
- Complete the blanks in the Phase 4 box using these words:
 - Uterus
 - Egg (use twice)
 - Sperm
 - Uterine lining (use twice)
 - Fertilized
 - Fallopian Tube

Consolidation Video

Click [here](#).

Closing Prayer

Lord,

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Help us to love and respect each other as persons made with dignity.

Help us to see, understand and learn about the gifts of life, love, and human sexuality as you made them and apply them to the way we live.

Amen.

LESSON #3: Fertilization & Pregnancy

Alberta Education Curriculum Outcome

7.1: Examine the human reproductive process, and recognize misunderstandings associated with sexual development.

Lesson Components

Opening Prayer

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Everything you created is good.
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With the power to love and care for each other
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We thank you for this gift.
Help us to cherish all that you have created.
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Recap From Lesson 2

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity

Directions for Students:

- On your chart paper, write the following headings:
 - Phase 1
 - Phase 2
 - Phase 3
 - Phase 4
- Your teacher will give you a set of cards. Place each card under the phase to which you think it corresponds.
- Your teacher will circulate the room to provide you feedback and guidance.
- *Cards:*

<p>If an egg is not fertilized by a sperm, it dissolves into the uterine lining.</p>
<p>Uterine lining grows thicker as it prepares for the possibility of pregnancy.</p>
<p>Ovulation occurs. This is when a mature egg cell is released from the ovary into the fallopian tube.</p>
<p>An egg cell grows to maturity inside the ovary.</p>
<p>Uterine lining detaches from the wall of the uterus and flows through the vagina to exit the body.</p>
<p>The egg travels to the uterus through the fallopian tube. This takes about 3-4 days.</p>

Catholic View on Sexual Intimacy and Marriage

Mode of Instruction: Teacher-facilitated Activities

Scripture Reflection

"And the Lord will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, within the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give you."

Deuteronomy 28:11

What do you think this scripture means?

Faith & Life with Maria & David, Episode 1: The Meaning of Sex & Marriage [Podcast]

Transcript:

Maria: Welcome to "Faith and Life," the podcast where we explore important topics for young Catholics. I'm Maria, and I'm here with my co-host David. Today we're talking about something really important - how Catholics understand the connection between our bodies and our souls.

David: Thanks Maria! This is actually a really cool topic because it helps us understand why our actions matter so much. You know how sometimes people say "it's just physical" or "it doesn't really mean anything"? Well, the Catholic Church teaches something very different.

Maria: Exactly! The Church teaches that we're not just souls trapped in bodies, like some people think. We're actually a unity - our body and soul work together as one person. Pope Saint John Paul II wrote a lot about this in something called the "Theology of the Body."

David: That's right. So when we do something with our bodies, it's not separate from who we are as persons. Our bodies actually express what's happening in our hearts and souls. It's like our body is the way our invisible soul becomes visible to the world.

Maria: Let me give you a simple example that might help. Think about a handshake. On the physical level, it's just two hands gripping each other, right? But there's so much more happening!

David: Oh, I see what you mean! When I shake someone's hand, I'm not just touching their hand. I might be saying "nice to meet you" or "we have a deal" or "I forgive you." The physical action carries a personal meaning.

Maria: Perfect example, David! The handshake becomes like a sign or symbol of what's happening between two people on the inside. It makes the invisible feelings and intentions visible through the body.

David: This is why Catholics believe that all our physical actions should match what we really mean in our hearts. We can't separate the physical from the personal because we're integrated beings - body and soul together.

Maria: Now, this becomes especially important when we talk about more intimate physical actions. The Church teaches that the most intimate physical expression between people - which is sexual intimacy - has a very specific meaning built into it.

David: Right, and this is where it gets really important for us as young people to understand. Sexual intimacy isn't just a physical act. Because of how God designed it, it has two main meanings built right into it.

Maria: The first meaning is what we call "unitive" - it's meant to unite two people in the deepest possible way. It's like the ultimate way of saying "I give myself completely to you."

David: And the second meaning is "procreative" - it's designed by God to potentially create new life. So this physical act is literally designed to be life-giving in multiple ways.

Maria: Because these meanings are so profound - complete self-gift and potential for new life - the Church teaches that this kind of intimacy should only happen in marriage. Marriage is the only relationship where people have made that complete, permanent commitment to each other.

David: It's like the physical language of sexual intimacy is so powerful that it should only be "spoken" when it's telling the truth. And the truth it's meant to speak is "I'm yours forever, and you're mine forever."

Maria: That's a beautiful way to put it, David! When the physical action matches the personal commitment, then the body is truly expressing what the person means.

David: This is why the Church cares so much about chastity. Chastity isn't just a bunch of rules - it's about making sure our physical actions always tell the truth about our relationships and our hearts.

Maria: For us as seventh graders, this means understanding that our bodies are sacred and that physical expressions of affection should always be appropriate for the level of commitment in our relationships.

David: It also helps us understand why we should be careful about things like how we dress, how we act around others, and what kind of media we consume. Everything affects this unity of body and soul.

Maria: The cool thing is that this teaching actually gives us so much dignity! It means our bodies aren't just objects or tools - they're part of who we are as persons made in God's image.

David: And it means that when we respect our bodies and other people's bodies, we're actually respecting the whole person - body and soul together.

Maria: As we grow up and start thinking about relationships, dating, and eventually marriage, understanding this connection between body and soul will help us make good decisions that honor God and respect ourselves and others.

David: Thanks for joining us today on "Faith and Life." Remember, you are fearfully and wonderfully made - body and soul - and God has an amazing plan for your life!

Maria: Until next time, this is Maria and David reminding you to live your faith with your whole person - body, mind, and soul!

Small Group Debrief & Discussion

Prompts:

1. What does it mean that humans are a "unity of body and soul"? How is this different from thinking our bodies are just containers for our souls?
2. Maria uses a handshake as an example of how physical actions carry deeper meaning. Can you think of other physical actions that express what's happening in someone's heart or mind?
3. The podcast mentions that sexual intimacy has two meanings: "unitive" and "procreative." Why do you think the Church teaches that something with such powerful meanings should only happen in marriage?
4. How might understanding the connection between body and soul help you make better decisions about relationships, media, and how you treat your own body?

Catholic View of Marriage [Direct Instruction]

Unitive

- Commitment between a man and a woman to love each other unconditionally, mirroring God's love for humanity, and is considered a special gift from God.
- The husband and wife commit to completely sharing their lives together.
- While their initial wedding-day love may be eros (romantic love), their commitment is expected to deepen and mature over time.

Procreative

- Marriage is the ideal and proper environment for bearing and raising children.
- Raising children is considered the most crucial and demanding task in any society.
- The healthy union of a mother and father in marriage uniquely equips them for this vitally important job.

The Relation of Sexual Intimacy & Marriage

- Sexual intimacy can embody and symbolize the personal relationship of marriage.
- Sex within a marriage symbolizes the relationship of husband and wife and therefore makes it stronger.
- Sex outside of marriage makes it difficult or even impossible to symbolize the marital relationship.

The Biology of Creating New Life

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher

Creating New Life Introduction

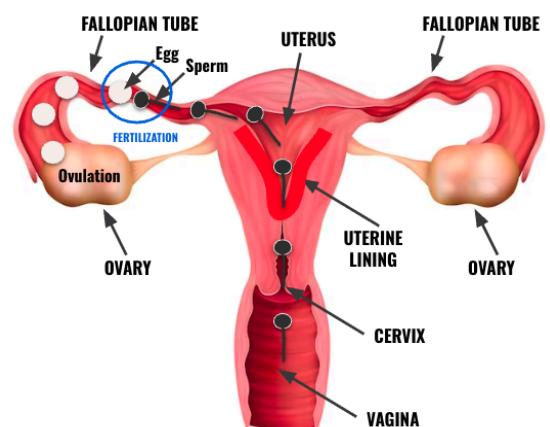
- In the last lesson, we talked about how the menstrual cycle functions when an egg does not get fertilized by a sperm.
- Today, we will learn how the menstrual cycle changes when an egg does get fertilized by a sperm.

Sexual Intercourse

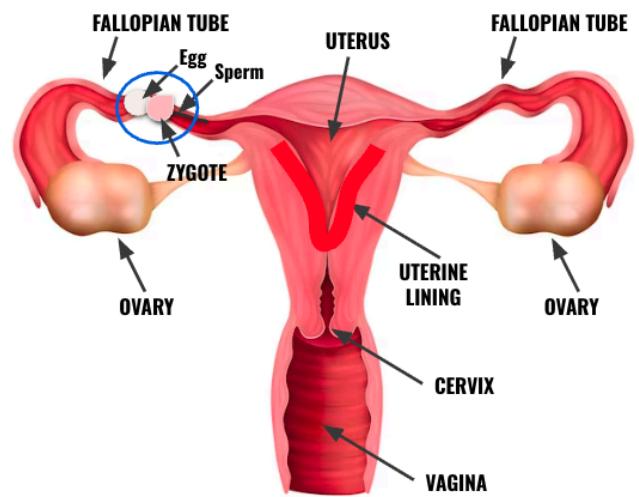
- In order to create new life, a male and female engage in sexual intercourse.
- An erect penis is inserted into the vagina.
- Ejaculation occurs and the male releases semen into the vagina.
- Sperm, which is contained in semen, pass through the vagina, cervix, and uterus on its way to the fallopian tubes.
- *Catholic Worldview on Sexual Intercourse*
 - One of the ways a husband and wife express their love after marriage is through this act of sexual intercourse.
 - This act shows the deep love and trust a husband and wife have for each other.

Fertilization

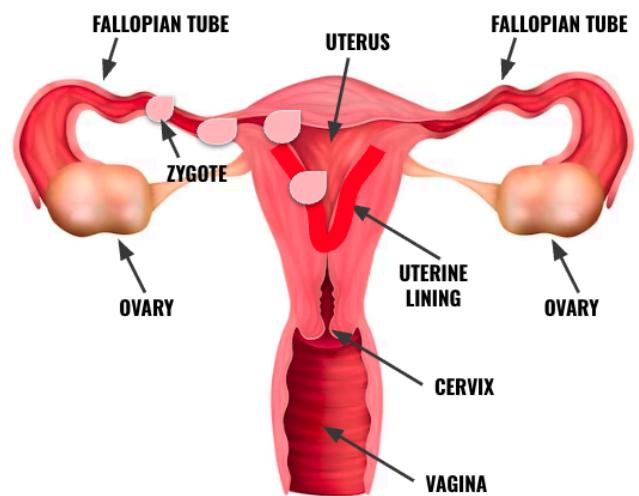
- This occurs when a sperm enters an egg.
- This takes place in the fallopian tube after a female ovulates.
- When fertilization occurs, a new life has been created.



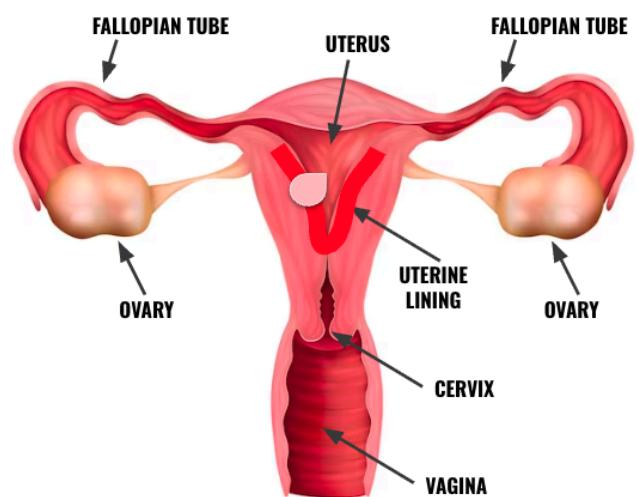
- After fertilization, the egg and sperm fuse together to become one cell known as a zygote.
- This moment is called conception.
- The zygote will immediately start growing and changing and will eventually become the developing baby.



- The zygote will continue travelling through the fallopian tube on its way to the uterus.
- The zygote will continue travelling through the fallopian tube on its way to the uterus.
- Once it arrives at the uterus, it will insert into the uterine lining. This is known as implantation.
- The uterine lining will nourish the developing baby for the next 9 months.



- Hormonal changes in the female's body ensure that the uterine lining stays intact throughout the pregnancy.
- This is why females do not release menstrual blood when they are pregnant.



Catholic Worldview on Creating New Life

- Together, a husband and wife have given life to a new human being through their love and shared in God's creative power.
- God welcomes this new life from its first moment of existence.
- Now, this tiny human begins to grow and develop inside its mother. Her body will provide everything it needs.
- Finally, after about 9 months the time will come for the baby to leave the mother's body and enter the world.
- The husband and wife, now father and mother, welcome their child with great love.

Closing Prayer

Lord,

You have made each of us in your own image and likeness and have called each of us to love as you love.

Help us to love and respect each other as persons made with dignity.

Help us to see, understand and learn about the gifts of life, love, and human sexuality as you made them and apply them to the way we live.

Amen.

LESSON #4: Common Misconceptions About Sexual Development

Alberta Education Curriculum Outcome

7.1: Examine the human reproductive process, and recognize misunderstandings associated with sexual development.

Lesson Components

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
Everything you created is good.
We have received life from your hands.
We have been created in your image,
With the power to love and care for each other
And to share in your creation.
We thank you for this gift.
Help us to cherish all that you have created.
Help us to show gratitude for the gift of sexuality by the way we live.
Amen.

Review of Class Etiquette

- Be kind and supportive.
- Questions are welcome, but we might not be able to answer them all.
- Show respect for the body as a creation of God by using correct terms for body parts.
- Listen when others are speaking.
- Respect personal boundaries and physical space.
- Be mindful of personal questions and oversharing.
- Be respectful at all times.

A Quick Note for Students

Biologically Correct Terms

- Official agreed-upon definition.
- Reduces confusion and misunderstandings.
- Helps us respect the dignity of God's creation.

Slang

- May be used when someone feels uncomfortable or unsure of the correct term.
- Meanings can change over time or in different places.
- Using slang is not respectful.

Review of Question Box Process

Learning about reproduction and sexuality may leave you curious about things that you may not be comfortable asking out loud.

Message to Students:

At the end of each lesson, each student will be given a slip of paper to place in the box.

- You may choose to write a question on the slip.
- If you don't have a question, you'll put the blank slip in the box.
- Do not put your name on the slip.

The teacher will review all questions before the next class but may not be able to answer them all.

If your question does not get answered, you are encouraged to discuss it with your parent or guardian.

Recap From Lesson 3

Mode of Instruction: Independent Student Task

Directions for Students:

- Complete the seven review questions on your own.
- Your teacher will review the answers when everyone has finished.

1. What happens during fertilization?

- a. The egg travels from the ovary to the fallopian tube
- b. A sperm enters an egg in the fallopian tube
- c. The uterine lining thickens to prepare for pregnancy
- d. The zygote implants into the uterus

2. According to Catholic teaching, what are the two meanings of sexual intimacy in marriage?

- a. Physical and emotional
- b. Unitive and procreative
- c. Romantic and spiritual
- d. Personal and social

3. What is a zygote?

- a. An unfertilized egg that has been released during ovulation
- b. The thick lining of the uterus that nourishes a developing baby
- c. The single cell formed when a sperm and egg fuse together
- d. A sperm cell that has entered the fallopian tube

4. How long does it take for the zygote to travel through the fallopian tube and reach the uterus?

- a. 1 day
- b. 3 days
- c. 7 days
- d. 14 days

5. Why don't females have menstrual periods during pregnancy?

- a. The ovaries stop producing eggs completely
- b. The fallopian tubes become blocked during pregnancy
- c. Hormonal changes keep the uterine lining intact to nourish the baby
- d. The cervix closes to prevent any bleeding

6. Put the following events in the correct order from first to last:

1. Fertilization occurs in the fallopian tube
2. The zygote travels through the fallopian tube
3. Implantation occurs in the uterus
4. The egg is released from the ovary

- a. 4, 1, 2, 3
- b. 1, 4, 2, 3
- c. 4, 2, 1, 3
- d. 1, 2, 4, 3

7. Based on the Catholic perspective presented in the lesson, when is sexual intimacy considered appropriate?

- a. When two people are in love
- b. When both people are adults
- c. Within the commitment of marriage
- d. When people have been dating for a long time

Facts & Myths About Sexual Development

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity & Whole Class Discussion

Directions for Students:

- Phase 1, Small Group
 - Groups of 2-3
 - Read each statement and, as a group, decide if you think it is a fact or myth.
- Phase 2, Whole Class
 - The teacher will read each statement.
 - A rep from each group will hold up the paddle showing their team's decision.
 - GREEN: Fact

- RED: Myth
- If there is widespread disagreement, the teacher will review the statement.

Fact or Myth		Grade 7 Health/Religion
Common Misconceptions About Sexual Development		NAMES: _____
1. God designed humans for relationships, including sexual ones, and the female and male sexes are different but intended to form a complete unit.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: This reflects Catholic teaching about complementarity between males and females. The Church teaches that men and women have different but equal roles and that their differences are meant to work together harmoniously in relationships, especially marriage. 	MYTH	FACT
2. During puberty, it would be abnormal for males to experience breast development.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: Many boys experience gynecomastia (temporary breast tissue growth) during puberty due to hormone changes. This is completely normal and usually goes away on its own as hormone levels stabilize during adolescence. 	MYTH	FACT
3. Each ejaculation contains between 20 million and 600 million sperm, but it only takes two to fertilize one egg.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: While the sperm count is correct, it only takes one sperm to fertilize an egg, not two. Students often confuse this with the fact that fertilization creates one new cell from two parents' genetic material. 	MYTH	FACT
4. A female generally starts her period somewhere between the ages of 8 and 10.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: The average age for first menstruation is between 12-13 years old, though the typical range is 9-16 years. 	MYTH	FACT
5. Any time the penis comes into direct contact with the vaginal area, there is a chance of pregnancy.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: Even without full intercourse, sperm can survive outside the body for short periods and can potentially cause pregnancy. This is why abstinence is the only 100% effective method of preventing pregnancy. 	MYTH	FACT
6. Ovulation (release of the egg from the ovary) usually occurs once per month.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: In a typical 28-day cycle, ovulation occurs around day 14. This monthly release of an egg is what makes pregnancy possible and is a normal part of the female reproductive cycle. 	MYTH	FACT
7. For males, erections only happen when they are sexually aroused.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: Males experience spontaneous erections throughout their lives, especially during puberty, due to hormone fluctuations, physical stimulation, or even for no apparent reason. This is completely normal and not always related to sexual thoughts. 	MYTH	FACT
8. Reproduction is the way God gives the gift of new life to parents.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: Catholic teaching emphasizes that procreation is sacred and that parents participate with God in creating new life. This reflects the Church's view that having children is a blessing and responsibility. 	MYTH	FACT
9. The church sees sex as a bad thing that should always be avoided.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: The Catholic Church teaches that sexuality is a gift from God and is good when expressed within marriage. The Church promotes chastity (appropriate sexual behavior for one's state in life) rather than viewing sex as inherently bad. 	FACT	FACT
10. It is normal to have increased sexual feelings during puberty.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: Rising hormone levels during puberty naturally increase sexual thoughts and feelings. This is a normal part of development, and learning to manage these feelings appropriately is part of growing up. 	FACT	FACT
11. Abstinence (not having sexual intercourse) is the only 100% effective way to prevent pregnancy.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: While other methods claim high effectiveness rates, only abstinence is 100% guaranteed to prevent pregnancy. All other methods have some failure rate, even when used correctly. 	MYTH	FACT
12. It is abnormal for girls to have irregular menstrual cycles, where they only get their period once every 1.5 to 2 months.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: Irregular cycles are very common during the first few years after first menstruation as the body's hormone system matures. Cycles can range from 21-35 days and still be considered normal. 	MYTH	FACT
13. The pre-ejaculatory fluid, which is a liquid that is released from the penis prior to ejaculation, does not contain sperm.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: Pre-ejaculatory fluid can contain sperm from previous ejaculations that remain in the urethra. This is why removing the penis from the vagina prior to ejaculation is not considered a reliable method of preventing pregnancy. 	MYTH	FACT
14. Catholic teaching says that romantic love (eros) is the only type of love needed to make a marriage work.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: Catholic teaching identifies multiple types of love necessary for marriage, including eros (romantic), philia (friendship), storge (familial), and agape (self-sacrificial love). All are important for a strong marriage. 	MYTH	FACT
15. The Catholic Church teaches that sexual intimacy should only happen between a husband and wife because it symbolizes their complete commitment to share their lives together.	FACT	MYTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching notes: This reflects the Church's teaching about the unitive and procreative purposes of sexuality. Sexual intimacy within marriage represents the total gift of self between spouses and their openness to new life. 	MYTH	FACT

Closing Prayer

Lord,

You have made each of us in your own image and likeness and have called each of us to love as you love.

Help us to love and respect each other as persons made with dignity.

Help us to see, understand and learn about the gifts of life, love, and human sexuality as you made them and apply them to the way we live.

Amen.

LESSON #5: Social Influences on Sexuality & Gender

Alberta Education Curriculum Outcome

7.12. Identify the effects of social influences on sexuality and gender roles and equity; e.g., media, culture

Lesson Components

Opening Prayer

Loving God,

Everything you created is good.

We have received life from your hands.

We have been created in your image,

With the power to love and care for each other

And to share in your creation.

We thank you for this gift.

Help us to cherish all that you have created.

Help us to show gratitude for the gift of sexuality by the way we live.

Amen.

Review of Class Etiquette

- Be kind and supportive.
- Questions are welcome, but we might not be able to answer them all.
- Show respect for the body as a creation of God by using correct terms for body parts.
- Listen when others are speaking.
- Respect personal boundaries and physical space.
- Be mindful of personal questions and oversharing.
- Be respectful at all times.

A Quick Note for Students

Biologically Correct Terms

- Official agreed-upon definition.
- Reduces confusion and misunderstandings.
- Helps us respect the dignity of God's creation.

Slang

- May be used when someone feels uncomfortable or unsure of the correct term.
- Meanings can change over time or in different places.
- Using slang is not respectful.

Review of Question Box Process

Learning about reproduction and sexuality may leave you curious about things that you may not be comfortable asking out loud.

Message to Students:

At the end of each lesson, each student will be given a slip of paper to place in the box.

- You may choose to write a question on the slip.
- If you don't have a question, you'll put the blank slip in the box.
- Do not put your name on the slip.

The teacher will review all questions before the next class but may not be able to answer them all.

If your question does not get answered, you are encouraged to discuss it with your parent or guardian.

A Moment on Virtues

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher & Class Discussion

Temperance

- God created everything good, including pleasures.
- Temperance helps us enjoy these good things in a healthy way and keep them from taking over our lives.
- It means not having "too much" of something.
- It also helps us choose what's good for us, keeping us from forming unhealthy habits.
- *Class Discussion Prompts:*
 - How might youth show the virtue of temperance?
 - How do you show temperance in your daily life?

Chastity

- Special type of temperance that deals directly with how we understand and use our sexuality.
- It is about respect for our own bodies and the bodies of others, seeing them as wonderful gifts from God.

A Moment on the Catholic Worldview on Sexuality

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher

General View of Sexuality

- Sexuality is the complex array of feelings, attractions, identities, and behaviors that define a person's sexual and romantic life. It is a dynamic and individual expression of who a person is and who they are attracted to.

Catholic View of Sexuality

- Sexuality is the fundamental and sacred gift that shapes every person (body and soul) into a capacity for profound, loving relationship. It is integrated through the virtue of chastity to ensure all acts of love are selfless and respectful of human dignity.

Faith & Life with Maria and David: Catholic Worldview of Sexuality

Mode of Instruction: Podcast & Listening Guide

Directions for Students:

- Complete the listening guide as you listen to the podcast.

Podcast Transcript:

Maria: Welcome to Faith and Life, the podcast where we explore important topics that help us understand ourselves and our relationships with others. I'm Maria.

David: And I'm David. Today we're talking about something that might sound complicated at first, but it's actually really important for understanding who we are as people - the Catholic understanding of sexuality.

Maria: Now, when we hear the word "sexuality," we might immediately think about physical differences between people or romantic relationships. But in the Catholic view, it's so much bigger than that., it's so much bigger than that.

David: Exactly, Maria. The Catholic Church teaches that sexuality is actually a fundamental power that's woven into the very heart of every single person. It's not just about biology - it affects everything about who we are.

Maria: That's a really interesting way to think about it. So it's not something separate from the rest of our personality?

David: Not at all! In fact, that brings us to the first key idea we want to talk about today. Sexuality is integral to the person. That means it's not something you have, like you have a backpack or a phone. It's actually a core part of your identity.

Maria: So it's more like saying it's part of who you are, not what you own. It shapes your personality and your ability to love and form relationships with others.

David: Right! Think about it this way - when you meet someone new, you don't just notice their physical appearance. You notice how they communicate, how they show kindness, how they connect with others. All of that is influenced by this deep part of their identity.

Maria: That makes sense. It's like saying that this aspect of who we are affects how we interact with our friends, our family, even how we participate in our community.

David: Exactly! And that leads us to the second key idea - sexuality unites body and soul. In Catholic teaching, we're not just physical bodies walking around, and we're not just spirits floating in space. We're a unity of both body and soul together.

Maria: So our physical selves and our spiritual selves aren't separate things fighting against each other?

David: Not at all! They work together. Our sexuality is the part of us that expresses our whole being in the world. It directs our powers of life and love - both the physical and spiritual aspects.

Maria: I think this is really important for young people to understand, David. Sometimes we get messages that our bodies are bad or that our feelings are wrong, or that we should ignore our physical selves completely.

David: You're absolutely right, Maria. The Catholic view is much more balanced. It says that our whole person - body, mind, feelings, and spirit - is good and works together. We don't have to be ashamed of being human beings with both physical and spiritual dimensions.

Maria: That's really freeing, actually. But it also sounds like it comes with some responsibility.

David: It definitely does. And that brings us to our third key idea - sexuality is a call to relationship. Because humans are social beings, our sexuality is fundamentally about our capacity to love and connect with others.

Maria: So it's not just about romantic relationships or marriage?

David: No, it's much broader than that! It includes our friendships, our family relationships, how we participate in our community, and even our relationship with God. It's about our fundamental call to communion with others.

Maria: That's beautiful. So when we think about sexuality in this Catholic way, we're really thinking about our ability to form meaningful, respectful, and loving relationships with everyone in our lives.

David: Exactly! And this is where the virtue of chastity comes in. Chastity isn't about being afraid of sexuality or pretending it doesn't exist. It's about integrating this powerful part of ourselves in a way that respects our own dignity and the dignity of everyone we meet..

Maria: So chastity is like a guide that helps us use this gift of sexuality in the right way?

David: That's a great way to put it, Maria. It's about self-control and guidance, making sure that this powerful part of who we are serves love and respect rather than selfishness or harm.

Maria: I think this perspective is really helpful for young people who are trying to figure out who they are and how to relate to others. It gives sexuality a much deeper meaning than what we often see in movies or social media.

David: Absolutely. Instead of seeing sexuality as just physical attraction or something to be consumed, the Catholic view presents it as a great gift that empowers us to form authentic relationships and grow in love.

Maria: And it applies to everyone, regardless of their state in life. Whether someone is called to marriage, religious life, or single life, this understanding of sexuality as integral to the person, uniting body and soul, and calling us to relationship is relevant.

David: That's such an important point, Maria. This isn't just about preparing for marriage someday. It's about understanding ourselves as whole persons right now and learning how to love others well in whatever relationships we have.

Maria: So as we wrap up today's episode, let's remember these three key ideas: sexuality is integral to who we are as persons, it unites our body and soul, and it's fundamentally about our call to loving relationships.

David: And most importantly, it's a gift that comes with the responsibility to treat ourselves and others with dignity and respect. Thanks for joining us on Faith and Life today.

Maria: We hope this conversation has given you something meaningful to think about. Until next time, this is Maria and David reminding you that understanding yourself as a whole person is the first step toward loving others well.

Faith & Life Episode 2: Sexuality

Listening Guide

Grade 7 Health/Religion

NAME: _____

Fill in the blanks and answer the questions as you listen to the podcast. This will help you stay focused and remember the key ideas being discussed.

Key Idea #1: Sexuality is _____ to the person

- This means sexuality is not something you _____, like a backpack or phone.
- Instead, it's a core part of your _____.
- It shapes your _____ and your ability to form relationships.

According to the hosts, when you meet someone new, what do you notice besides their physical appearance?

Key Idea #2: Sexuality unites _____ and _____

- We are not just physical _____ walking around.
- We are also not just _____ floating in space.
- We are a _____ of both body and soul together.

Do our physical and spiritual selves fight against each other? Explain your response.

Key Idea #3: Sexuality is a call to _____

- Because humans are _____ beings, sexuality helps us connect with others.
- This includes: _____, family, _____, and even our relationship with _____.

Understanding Chastity

- Chastity is **not** about being _____ of sexuality.
- Chastity **is** about _____ this powerful part of ourselves.
- It helps us treat ourselves and others with _____ and _____.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Final Thoughts

What is one important message the hosts want young people to remember?

Catholic Worldview on Chastity

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher

Integration & Wellness

- Your physical self (your body) and your spiritual self (your mind, heart, and soul) are united and working together.
- Chastity helps you see that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Mastery Over Passions

- Our sexual desires are very powerful. Chastity gives us the strength and freedom to direct this power toward love, respect, and truth, instead of letting it control us and lead us to selfish actions.
- It teaches us to treat the gift of sex with reverence and respect, understanding that it is a sacred gift meant for truly selfless and committed love.

Every State of Life

- Chastity is a virtue for every person, no matter their age or situation (e.g., teens, single adults, married people)

Social Influences on Sexuality & Gender Roles

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher & Class Discussion

Opening Discussion Prompt:

What messages do you see on social media, movies, TV shows, and advertisements about how people of different genders should look, act, or behave?

Teacher Instruction Notes:

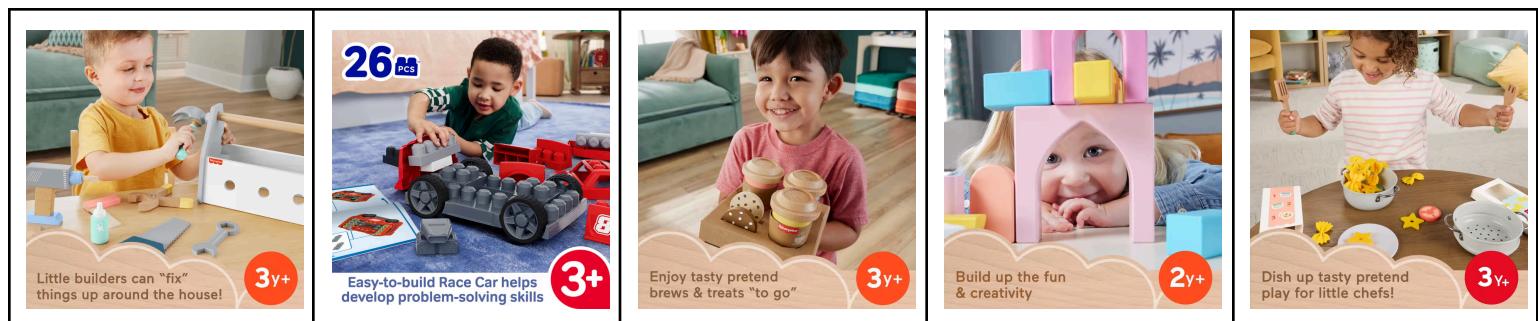
- Social influences are messages we receive from our environment that shape how we think and act.
- MEDIA: Television, movies, social media, music videos, and advertisements often show exaggerated or stereotypical images of gender.
- CULTURE: Family traditions, community values, and societal expectations teach us what are considered "normal" or "acceptable" roles.
- PEERS: Friends and classmates influence how we see ourselves and others.
- MARKETING: Companies use gender stereotypes to sell products.

Think-Pair-Share: Gender Stereotypes in Advertisements

Mode of Instruction: Partner Discussion

Directions for Students:

- With your partner, consider the images on the screen and discuss this question: How might these online ads for toys influence gender stereotypes?



Digging Deeper Into Advertisements

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity

Directions for Students:

- When sexuality is used in advertising, certain values and attitudes towards sexuality and sexual activity may be used to sell the products.
- In this activity, your team will search for an online advertisement for a product that is popular with your age group. Once you select the ad, discuss these questions:
 - What underlying message is being used in this ad?
 - What product or service is the ad selling?
 - Who is the target audience for this ad? (include age range, culture, gender, race)
 - What underlying message or value is being sold by the ad? Is it obvious or hidden?
 - What do people in the ad look like? Do they represent the general population?
 - What message does the ad give about sexuality?
 - Is this a positive or negative message about sexuality?
- Be prepared to share with another group.

The Effects of Social Influences and Gender Stereotypes on Behaviours and Actions

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity

Directions for Students:

PHASE 1

- Each group will receive one of six scenarios that you will discuss using the provided reflection questions.

PHASE 2

- Groups will be reorganized into teams of 6. These new groups will have a representative from each scenario. Each group member will share their scenario and provide a summary of their original group's discussion.

Closing Prayer

Lord,

You have made each of us in your own image and likeness and have called each of us to love as you love.

Help us to love and respect each other as persons made with dignity.

Help us to see, understand and learn about the gifts of life, love, and human sexuality as you made them and apply them to the way we live.

Amen.

LESSON #6: Personal Decision Making for Responsible Sexual Behaviour

Alberta Education Curriculum Outcome

W-7.13 Examine the influences on personal decision making for responsible sexual behaviour.

Lesson Components

Opening Prayer

Loving God,

Everything you created is good.

We have received life from your hands.

We have been created in your image,

With the power to love and care for each other

And to share in your creation.

We thank you for this gift.

Help us to cherish all that you have created.

Help us to show gratitude for the gift of sexuality by the way we live.

Amen.

Review of Class Etiquette

- Be kind and supportive.
- Questions are welcome, but we might not be able to answer them all.
- Show respect for the body as a creation of God by using correct terms for body parts.
- Listen when others are speaking.
- Respect personal boundaries and physical space.
- Be mindful of personal questions and oversharing.
- Be respectful at all times.
-

Review of Question Box Process

Learning about reproduction and sexuality may leave you curious about things that you may not be comfortable asking out loud.

Message to Students:

At the end of each lesson, each student will be given a slip of paper to place in the box.

- You may choose to write a question on the slip.
- If you don't have a question, you'll put the blank slip in the box.
- Do not put your name on the slip.

The teacher will review all questions before the next class but may not be able to answer them all.

If your question does not get answered, you are encouraged to discuss it with your parent or guardian.

Opening Scripture Reflection

Mode of Instruction: Teacher-facilitated Classroom Discussion

God guides our decision making:

- Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

A Moment on Virtues

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher & Class Discussion

Prudence

- God gave us minds to think and hearts to choose.
- Prudence helps us make good choices by thinking carefully about what is right and what will lead to good outcomes.
- It means thinking before acting and considering the consequences of our decisions.
- It also helps us choose wisely, so our actions reflect God's will and lead to what is truly good.
- *Discussion Prompts:*
 - How might youth show the virtue of prudence?
 - How do you show prudence in your daily life?
- Show the segment of this [video](#) that deals with an overview of the Cardinal Virtues

Decision Making

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher & Class Discussion

- We've talked lots about growing up. Part of growing up and taking responsibility for yourself is learning about how to deal with situations when you need to make personal choices. This is called decision making.
 - *Discussion Prompt:*
 - What kinds of decisions do we make every day?
- Some decisions are just for us, like what color of socks to wear. Other decisions are more important. Some decisions we make are important to our health.
 - *Discussion Prompt:*
 - What decisions are important to our health?
- Some decisions are important because we are deciding what is right and what is wrong. Your values are your own opinion of what is right and wrong. Following your values when making decisions is called moral decision making - or using prudence.
 - *Discussion Prompt:*
 - How do you know if something is the right thing to do?
 - Where do your values come from?
- When we need to make a decision, as an exercise in prudence we can follow these simple steps:
 - 1. What is the question?
 - 2. What are my choices?
 - 3. Think about what is good and bad about each choice
 - 4. Make a choice and do the right thing.
- Example:
 - You have an upcoming test and fear you won't do well
 - What's the right choice?

What are my choices?	Good things about this choice	Bad things about this choice
Cheat on the test	- Might get a higher mark - Less stress in the moment	- It is dishonest - Could get in serious trouble if caught - Hurts trust with teachers and parents - Feels wrong in your conscience
Don't cheat but remain silent about struggling	- You stay honest - Avoids immediate conflict or embarrassment - You learn from your own effort	- Might get a lower mark - Could feel stressed or frustrated - Missed chance to get help from teacher
Don't cheat but let teacher know you're struggling	- You act with honesty and courage - Builds trust with the teacher - You may get help or another chance to learn	- Feels uncomfortable or embarrassing - Takes courage to speak up

- As you get older, some decisions that you make will be about your relationships, attraction, and sexual behavior. These choices are important because they affect your health, emotions, values, and the people around you. Using prudence (thinking carefully, considering consequences, and respecting yourself and others) can help you make responsible decisions that reflect your faith, values, and the respect you have for yourself and those you care about.

Influence

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher & Class Discussion

- *Opening Discussion Prompt:*
 - What does the word “influence” mean?
- Influence is anything that affects the choices we make, including our thoughts, feelings, and actions. This can come from friends, family, media, culture, or even our own emotions and desires. Influence is especially important when making decisions about sexual behavior because these decisions have long-term effects on our health, emotions, relationships, and values. Being aware of what influences us helps us make responsible choices that respect ourselves and others and reflect our faith and personal values.
- We can experience influence in powerful ways (e.g., laws) or through more subtle ways (e.g., advertisements).
- Influence can come from our knowledge, experience, culture, attitudes, family and friends.
- Influence can be direct (someone telling you to do something) or indirect (wanting to be part of a group and so doing something they are doing).
 - *Discussion Prompt:*
 - Can you think of some examples for both?
- We can discern whether an influence is positive or negative by the outcome or the consequences (or ‘fruit’) of the influence (e.g. influence to be involved in the school play or a sports team vs. influence to become sexually active before the time is right).
- Remember, influence occurs in many different shapes and sizes, and can be positive (healthy) or negative (unhealthy).

Healthy and Unhealthy Influences Regarding Sexuality

Mode of Instruction: Independent Student Activity - Worksheet

HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY INFLUENCES

Fill in the table below with sources that could influence a person's personal decision making regarding sexuality.

Healthy Influences	Unhealthy Influences

List 5 strategies you might use to resist the pressures to engage in sexual behaviour before you are ready.

Boundaries

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher & Class Discussion

- Now we have established the different places that influences come from, what can we do about it?
- When we make a decision, it sometimes means we need to set a boundary – a boundary is our limit or rule about what we will and won't do.
- Sometimes people might not like our boundaries and might try to make us change them. We can call this pushing our boundaries.
- Show this [video](#).
- When people push your boundaries, it's important to think about your values and work through what they're asking of you.
 - What are the positives of their request?
 - What are the negatives?
 - How do I feel about this?
- It's important to practice how to respond when someone tries to push your boundaries, so you can confidently stick to your decisions. This is especially important if the request involves anything sexual.

Closing Prayer

Lord,

You have made each of us in your own image and likeness and have called each of us to love as you love.

Help us to love and respect each other as persons made with dignity.

Help us to see, understand and learn about the gifts of life, love, and human sexuality as you made them and apply them to the way we live.

Amen.

LESSON #7: Abstinence

Alberta Education Curriculum Outcome

W-7.14 Examine abstinence and decisions to postpone sexual activity as healthy choices.

Lesson Components

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
Everything you created is good.
We have received life from your hands.
We have been created in your image,
With the power to love and care for each other
And to share in your creation.
We thank you for this gift.
Help us to cherish all that you have created.
Help us to show gratitude for the gift of sexuality by the way we live.
Amen.

Review of Class Etiquette

- Be kind and supportive.
- Questions are welcome, but we might not be able to answer them all.
- Show respect for the body as a creation of God by using correct terms for body parts.
- Listen when others are speaking.
- Respect personal boundaries and physical space.
- Be mindful of personal questions and oversharing.
- Be respectful at all times.

Review of Question Box Process

Learning about reproduction and sexuality may leave you curious about things that you may not be comfortable asking out loud.

Message to Students:

At the end of each lesson, each student will be given a slip of paper to place in the box.

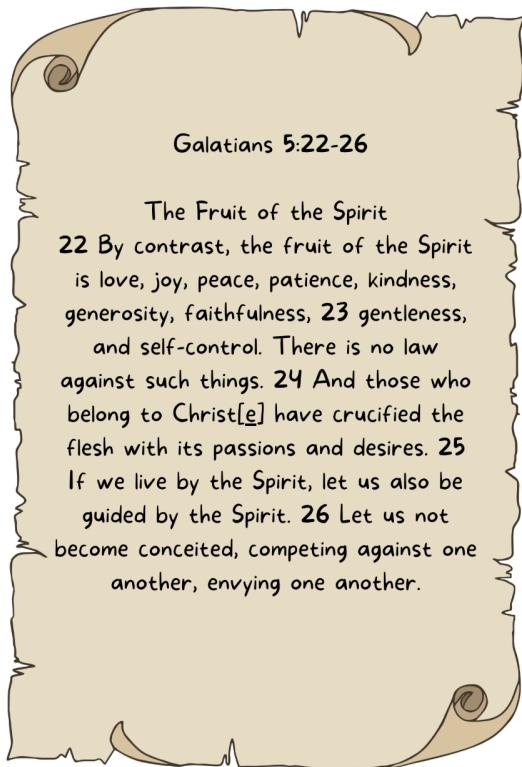
- You may choose to write a question on the slip.
- If you don't have a question, you'll put the blank slip in the box.
- Do not put your name on the slip.

The teacher will review all questions before the next class but may not be able to answer them all.

If your question does not get answered, you are encouraged to discuss it with your parent or guardian.

Opening Scripture Reflection

Mode of Instruction: Teacher-facilitated Classroom Discussion



Galatians 5:22-26

The Fruit of the Spirit

22 By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. 24 And those who belong to Christ[e] have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

What is God saying to us in this passage?

Chastity & Abstinence

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher & Class Discussion

Opening Discussion

- Can anyone describe the difference between Abstinence and Chastity?
- Have you heard these words before?

Abstinence

- Abstinence means choosing not to do certain things.
- For example, it can mean not eating meat on Fridays during Lent, avoiding sweets or snacks as a way to pray, or not drinking alcohol if you are the designated driver.
- It also means waiting to be sexually active until marriage.
- Abstinence means choosing not to have sexual activity for a time or until marriage. It's about a specific action, deciding not to have sex, and people may do it for religious, moral, health, or personal reasons. Abstinence focuses on what you are not doing.

Chastity

- Chastity is for everyone, no matter your age or life path. It means respecting yourself and others by expressing love in a healthy and responsible way. A chaste person understands their feelings and integrates them into who they are (Youcat 404). With God's help, chastity helps our words and actions show love that is true, faithful, and caring.
- Chastity is more than just an action, it's a way of living. It helps you use your sexuality with love, respect, and self-control. Everyone is called to live chastely, no matter their age or life path. Chastity looks different depending on your state of life: Married people: express sexuality faithfully within marriage. Single people: refrain from sexual activity. Religious or priests: remain celibate. Chastity isn't only about what you avoid—it's about who you are becoming. It's living your sexuality in a way that reflects God's love and plan.

Summary

- For this lesson, we'll refer to abstinence as abstaining from sexual intimacy before marriage. This is a faithful response to God's call to live a chaste life as a single person. The fruits of a chaste life are a sense of dignity and the freedom God gave us.
- The possible consequences of being unchaste include increased chances of emotional stress, contracting sexually transmitted diseases, or unintended pregnancies.

Catholic Worldview on Human Dignity

Mode of Instruction: Direct Instruction from the Teacher & Class Skit

- Human dignity means that every person is valuable and worthy of respect, simply because we are made by God in His image. No matter who we are, where we come from, or what we do, God loves us and gives us dignity that can never be taken away. Our dignity is the reason we treat ourselves and others with kindness, fairness, and respect.
- God gave us our bodies as a gift, and our sexuality is part of that gift. Human dignity means our bodies are good, valuable, and meant to be treated with respect. How we act with our bodies shows respect for ourselves and others and reflects God's love.
- Living with dignity means making choices that honor our body and the gift of sexuality. This includes being loving, respectful, and patient in relationships, and waiting for the right time and place, according to God's plan.
- Our choices can reflect the love, care, and respect God calls us to share with others.
- "Having come to a deeper appreciation of my own human dignity, I will have the grace and the strength to stick to what I believe in the face of those who would want me to do different."
- *Directions for Students:*
 - We need two volunteers to read through a skit that highlights what a conversation around dignity can look like.
 - *Discussion Prompt:* What if you didn't have someone to talk to about these feelings?

Skit

Teen 1: Hey, you know, I've been thinking a lot about relationships and stuff lately.

Teen 2: Yeah, me too. It's all so confusing sometimes, especially when everyone around us seems to be in such a hurry.

Teen 1: I totally get what you're saying. But I've made up my mind about something. I've learned to value myself and stuff. So, I'm gonna try my best to be strong and stand up for what I believe in, even when others want me to give in.

Teen 2: Wow, that's deep. What do you mean exactly?

Teen 1: Well, I've realized that I want my first time to be special and with someone I truly care about. I don't want to give in to peer pressure just because it seems like everyone else is doing it.

Teen 2: I respect that, but isn't it hard to stick to your beliefs when everyone's talking about it all the time?

Teen 1: It can be, but I've learned that standing up for what I believe in is essential, even when it's tough. Having the strength to say no when I'm not ready is a big part of respecting myself and my own boundaries.

Teen 2: That's really inspiring. I've been feeling the same way but didn't know how to put it into words. Thanks for being a good friend.

Teen 1: Strong friendships are so important. Remember, it's about what feels right for you and your own journey. Having the grace to assert our convictions will help us navigate this crazy world of relationships and growing up.

Teen 2: Thanks for sharing this. It's good to know I'm not alone in feeling this way.

714A

Teen 1: Hey, I wanted to talk to you about something important. You know, I've been thinking a lot about abstinence lately.

Teen 1: Really? That's interesting. What's been on your mind?

Teen 2: Well, I've been learning more about Catholic morals and values, and I've come to a deeper appreciation of my own human dignity. I believe that it's important to respect my body and the gift of sexuality that God has given us.

Teen 1: That's deep. I admire your commitment to your faith and values. I've been thinking about it, too, especially as we're getting older and facing more pressures.

Teen 2: Yeah, it's not always easy, especially when our friends might be doing things differently. But I think if we stick to our beliefs, we can find the strength to stand up for our beliefs.

Teen 1: I totally agree! We have to be brave and stand up for what we believe in, even when it is hard. And finding friends and people who understand and respect our choices and values is super important, too!

Teen 2: Absolutely. I think when we find the right person, they'll understand and appreciate our decision to abstain until marriage. It's all about building a solid foundation for a meaningful relationship.

Teen 1: You're right. And knowing that we're following our faith and respecting our own dignity will make it worth it in the end.

Teen 2: It's comforting to have someone like you who shares these values, Emma. We can support each other in this journey.

Teen 1: Definitely. We'll navigate this together and stay true to our beliefs.

In this conversation, Teen 1 and Teen 2 discuss their commitment to abstinence from sex, drawing on their understanding of Catholic morals and values. They emphasize the importance of respecting their own human dignity and assert their convictions in the face of societal pressures. Their conversation reflects their mutual support for one another in staying true to their beliefs.

714A

Consolidation Activity: Reflecting on Abstinence

Mode of Instruction: Independent Student Activity

ABSTINENCE

ABSTINENCE IS A FAITHFUL RESPONSE TO GOD'S CALL TO LIVE A CHASTE LIFE. IT IS THE POSITIVE CHOICE TO NOT ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITY UNTIL YOU ARE MARRIED. ABSTINENCE FROM SEXUAL ACTIVITY OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE SHOWS LOVE AND RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF SELF AND OTHERS AND FOR GOD'S GIFT OF OUR SEXUALITY. ABSTINENCE IS A CHOICE THAT WE CANNOT MAINTAIN ON OUR OWN. GOD'S GRACE AND THE HELP OF THE SPIRIT HELP US TO CHOOSE A CHASTE LIFE AND ABSTINENCE.

Why do people choose to abstain from sexual activity?

What are some of the pressures to become involved in sexual activity?

We may be confronted with pressures to engage in sexual activity. What strategies can we use to say "no" to the pressures to become sexually active?

Chastity is a virtue that holds a deep reverence and regard for one's dignity and the dignity of others. It recognizes that our sexuality is a gift from God that is special and good. Who can help support me in my decision to live a chaste life?

How can God help us?

How does abstinence lead to human dignity?

7.14A

Closing Prayer

Lord,

You have made each of us in your own image and likeness and have called each of us to love as you love.

Help us to love and respect each other as persons made with dignity.

Help us to see, understand and learn about the gifts of life, love, and human sexuality as you made them and apply them to the way we live.

Amen.

LESSON #8: Abstinence and Decisions to Postpone Sexual Activity

Alberta Education Curriculum Outcome

W-7.14 Examine abstinence and decisions to postpone sexual activity as healthy choices

Lesson Components

Opening Prayer

Loving God,

Everything you created is good.

We have received life from your hands.

We have been created in your image,

With the power to love and care for each other

And to share in your creation.

We thank you for this gift.

Help us to cherish all that you have created.

Help us to show gratitude for the gift of sexuality by the way we live.

Amen.

Review of Class Etiquette

- Be kind and supportive.
- Questions are welcome, but we might not be able to answer them all.
- Show respect for the body as a creation of God by using correct terms for body parts.
- Listen when others are speaking.
- Respect personal boundaries and physical space.
- Be mindful of personal questions and oversharing.
- Be respectful at all times.
-

Review of Question Box Process

Learning about reproduction and sexuality may leave you curious about things that you may not be comfortable asking out loud.

Message to Students:

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If your question does not get answered, you are encouraged to discuss it with your parent or guardian.

Opening Activity - Delaying Sexual Activity: My Choice

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity

Directions for Students:

- Working in groups of three - come up with some ideas in answer to the following questions.
- We will discuss your answers as a class.
 - What activities can young people do together without being sexually active?
 - What are some reasons young people choose to be abstinent or to delay sexual activity?

It's Okay to Say No

Mode of Instruction: Teacher-facilitated Class Discussion

Student Prompt:

Together, let's read through some suggestions for how we respond to others

It's Okay to say "NO"

Here are some suggestions for saying "No" and still keeping your friends.

- Know ahead of time what you will do in situations when you will need to make choices about sexual activity, drugs, smoking, or drinking.
- Tell your friends what your convictions/values are. Be friendly, but firm. Be assertive.
- Be honest. Tell your friend how you really feel. If you lie, you may be forced to make up more lies.
- Speak only for yourself; show respect for yourself. For instance, you might say, "I'm not ready to have sex yet." "I plan to save sex for marriage."
- Suggest an alternative activity. "Let's go to a movie or the mall!" There are alternatives to sexual activity that will enhance a deepening friendship.
- You can always walk away. Your friend might just join you.

Be prepared to accept the fact that if you don't say "yes" your friend may reject you. If that happens, he or she really wasn't the friend that you thought they were.

Role-Play Scenarios

Mode of Instruction: Small Group Activity

The teacher will select one of two activities described below.

Group Role Play

Role-Play - Responding to God's call

Role-play scenarios about living a chaste life and responding assertively to God's call.

Here are six scenarios for role-play:

Peer Pressure at a Party

Scenario: You're invited to a party where you know there will be pressure to engage in inappropriate behaviour. A friend insists that it's no big deal.

Objective: Respond assertively while maintaining your commitment to chastity and your dignity.

Online Chat

Scenario: You're chatting online with someone who starts sending inappropriate messages or images. They ask you to do the same.

Objective: Respond assertively by setting boundaries and refusing to engage in inappropriate content.

Group Study Session

Scenario: During a group study session, some classmates start making offensive jokes or comments about relationships and dating.

Objective: Assertively express your discomfort with the conversation and steer the group back to the study topic.

Social Media Pressure

Scenario: You see a post on social media where someone is being bullied or mocked for their choices regarding chastity and human dignity.

Objective: Assertively comment on the post, defending the person's right to their choices and advocating for respect.

Dating Boundaries

Scenario: You're in a dating relationship, and your partner is pushing for physical intimacy beyond your comfort zone.

Objective: Communicate assertively with your partner about your boundaries, emphasizing the importance of respecting each other's dignity.

Health Class Discussion

Scenario: In health class, there's a discussion about relationships and sexuality. Some students are making disrespectful comments.

Objective: Assertively speak up in class, sharing your perspective on the importance of chastity and respecting human dignity in relationships.

Role-Play - Responding to God's call

Role-play scenarios about living a chaste life and responding assertively to God's call.

Here are six scenarios for role-play:

Peer Pressure at a Party:

Scenario: You are at a friend's birthday party, and some older kids start pressuring you to play a game involving physical contact you're uncomfortable with.

How do you assertively decline while still being respectful to your friends?

Online Chat with a Stranger:

Scenario: You receive a message from someone you don't know online who is making inappropriate comments and asking personal questions.

How do you assertively respond and protect yourself without being rude?

Dating Boundaries:

Scenario: You've been dating someone for a few months, and they start pressuring you to take your relationship to a more physical level than you are comfortable with.

How do you assertively communicate your boundaries and values?

Group Project Dilemma:

Scenario: You are assigned to a group project with classmates who want to include explicit or inappropriate content in your presentation.

How could you express your discomfort and suggest an alternative approach?

Family Gathering Conversation:

Scenario: During a family gathering, a relative brings up a sensitive topic related to relationships and chastity that you find uncomfortable to discuss openly.

How could you redirect the conversation or express your discomfort without offending anyone?

Media Influence:

Scenario: You and your friends are watching a movie or TV show that contains explicit content.

How do you assertively suggest an alternative, more age-appropriate activity or express your discomfort with the content?

In these role-play scenarios, encourage students to practice assertive communication by using "I" statements, expressing their feelings and boundaries clearly, and standing up for their values while respecting others. Discuss the importance of making choices aligning with their beliefs and God's call to live chaste lives.

7.14A

Written Response Activity

Directions for Students:

Consider the role-play scenarios about living a chaste life and responding assertively to God's call. Read each of the scenarios and reflect on how to respond.

Scenario	Objective
Peer Pressure at a Party Scenario: You're invited to a party where you know there will be pressure to engage in inappropriate behaviour. A friend insists that it's no big deal.	Respond assertively while maintaining your commitment to chastity and your dignity.

Online Chat Scenario: You're chatting online with someone who starts sending inappropriate messages or images. They ask you to do the same.	Respond assertively by setting boundaries and refusing to engage in inappropriate content.
Group Study Session Scenario: During a group study session, some classmates start making offensive jokes or comments about relationships and dating.	Assertively express your discomfort with the conversation and steer the group back to the study topic.
Social Media Pressure Scenario: You see a post on social media where someone is being bullied or mocked for their choices regarding chastity and human dignity.	Assertively comment on the post, defending the person's right to their choices and advocating for respect.
Dating Boundaries Scenario: You're in a dating relationship, and your partner is pushing for physical intimacy beyond your comfort zone.	Communicate assertively with your partner about your boundaries, emphasizing the importance of respecting each other's dignity.
Health Class Discussion Scenario: In health class, there's a discussion about relationships and sexuality. Some students are making disrespectful comments.	Assertively speak up in class, sharing your perspective on the importance of chastity and respecting human dignity in relationships.
Family Gathering Conversation Scenario: During a family gathering, a relative brings up a sensitive topic related to relationships and chastity that you find uncomfortable to discuss openly.	How could you redirect the conversation or express your discomfort without offending anyone?
Media Influence Scenario: You and your friends are watching a movie or TV show that contains explicit content	How do you assertively suggest an alternative, more age-appropriate activity or express your discomfort with the content?

Closing Activity: Nurturing Friendships

Mode of Instruction: Independent Student Task

Directions for Students:

Complete this worksheet individually to show what you have learned about the Catholic view of abstinence and chastity, the call to live a chaste life, and the responsibilities surrounding postponing sexual activity.

Nurturing Friendships

1. Read CCC #2347

"... The virtue of chastity blossoms in friendship." CCC #2347

"The virtue of chastity blossoms in friendship. It shows the disciple how to follow and imitate him who has chosen us as his friends, [Cf. Jn 15:15] who has given himself totally to us and allows us to participate in his divine estate. Chastity is a promise of immortality. Chastity is expressed notably in friendship with one's neighbor. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion."

Based on this reading, how would you describe the relationship between chastity and friendship?

Nurturing Friendships

2. How do you develop friendships?

3. List appropriate ways to nurture healthy friendships with your peers.

4. Is it important to know someone well before dating? Why?

5. What would be appropriate for a "nice" date in Grade seven?

6. In what way can I respond and make the right choice if I face sexual pressures or temptations?

Closing Prayer

Lord,

You have made each of us in your own image and likeness and have called each of us to love as you love.

Help us to love and respect each other as persons made with dignity.

Help us to see, understand and learn about the gifts of life, love, and human sexuality as you made them and apply them to the way we live.

Amen.
