

Formation in Christian Chastity + Grade 2

Dear Parents,

The Church states with confidence that parents are the primary educators of their children. This is most true when we speak of the religious education of your children. This teaching flows from the natural bond that exists between parent and child, and from the very basis of our faith. You know your child best. While many parents seek the assistance of others to impart some of the systematic elements of education in faith, in Catholic schools or in parish religious education programs, you retain the primary duty to form your children in the faith. From you, your children will learn their first prayers, and with you they will first experience the worship of God. They also need to learn from you how to live responsibly in this world. This program is intended to assist parents in the formation of their children in the virtue of chastity.

Why Chastity?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) introduces the discussion of chastity by calling it a “vocation”. (See CCC #2337 ff) Chastity is the virtue whereby we regulate our use of sexual activity in accord with our state in life. We want to emphasize the good elements of the Christian life that are ours as followers of Jesus Christ. Every disciple observes chastity, though the manner of how it is observed varies according to our state in life. The married person, the priest or religious, and the young person all observe chastity, though in different ways. For example, a young person practices chastity by remaining pure in all of their relationships. A married couple observes a holy life in their exclusive commitment to each other. Priests and religious dedicate themselves exclusively to God. We want our children to grow up with a proper, healthy and holy understanding of themselves and their gift of human sexuality.

How will this program work?

This program is based on the premise that parents know their children, where they are in their own personal development, and can best judge when their child is ready for specific lessons or information. The natural innocence of young children may be protected in this way. During the first four grades, parents will be the teachers. For each year, we will provide a series of ideas and recommendations for you to review with your children. These will outline some of the basic concepts that are building blocks to understanding a chaste life and one that looks forward to a holy family life for their future. In later grades (5 to 8), we will assist parents with some classroom activity to support part of what they will be teaching at home.

What can parents teach to Second Graders?

The basic theme is the human person as a child of God. It starts with simple concepts and moves to the gift of the Lord to us in the sacramental life, and how we reverence these gifts of God by care for the body we have been given. A listing of the teaching points follows, and concludes with some ideas of how you might present these concepts.

God made us in His image.

- God made human beings in His image and likeness.
- As human beings, we can know things and we can freely choose based on what we know.
- God gave us this gift of free will to choose what is good.
- When we choose to disobey God's will, then we sin.
- Going to Mass every week and receiving Holy Communion gives us the grace to do God's will. It is only in doing God's will that we can be truly happy.
- If you go to Confession often, (once a month would be a good goal), you will find that it gradually becomes easier to choose what is good, because of the grace that God gives you in this sacrament.
- Grace is a special gift that God gives people to share in His life and love.
- Grace helps us to do what God wants us to do.
- Because God made us in His image, we are good.
- Because God made our bodies, we should take good care of them, for example, we should wash our hands before we eat, we should comb our hair, and we should brush our teeth.
- We are to share God's goodness with others.
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit love each other.
- Because we are made in God's image, He wants us to love Him and to love others, too.
- God loves us so much that He became one of us.
- When God the Son became man, He was still God. Jesus is true God and true man.
- Mary is the mother of Jesus.
- Jesus loved and obeyed St. Joseph, His foster-father, and His mother, Mary. We should love them, too.
- Jesus gave us Mary to be our mother, too. Our Blessed Mother leads us to Jesus and she helps us to love and obey Him.

Teaching Examples

- (1) The parent explains to the child that we are created in the image of God and are to live as a child of God. Illustrate this idea by using a mirror or compact and have the child see how clear their image is. Then sprinkle some powder over the mirror. Have the child look at the mirror again, noting how the powder clouds their image. The powder, clouding the person's image is like sin. By wiping the powder away, we also see the operation of the Sacrament of Penance, cleansing us of our sins, and restoring the beauty that was present before sin.
- (2) Talk about and create a good hygiene plan. It is important to keep oneself healthy, as our body is a gift from God. Create a healthy food list for shopping and pick out at least one item from the list and have the child help in the preparation of this healthy food for dinner.
- (3) Speak of a mother's love for her child, and tell him or her of Mary and her love for the child Jesus. Pray together the Hail Mary.