



Opening Prayer

**Leader:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (*all make the Sign of the Cross*).

**All respond:** *In the divine image, Lord, You created him; male and female You created them.*

**Reader 1:** God, You made us good, both body and soul.

**Response:** *In the divine image, Lord, You created him; male and female You created them.*

**Reader 2:** God, You saw that it was not good for us to be alone, so You gave us one another for loving relationships.

**Response:** *In the divine image, Lord, You created him; male and female You created them.*

**Reader 3:** God, You are love, and You made us for love.

**Response:** *In the divine image, Lord, You created him; male and female You created them.*

**Reader 4:** God, You made us without anything to hide from You.

**Response:** *In the divine image, Lord, You created him; male and female You created them.*

**Reader 5:** God, You made us to be happy with You forever.

**Response:** *In the divine image, Lord, You created him; male and female You created them.*

**Leader:** Jesus, You taught us to address Your Father as You did, and so in the Holy Spirit we pray...

**All:** *Our Father...*

## notes

# STORY STARTER

## Bee Yourself

Our story begins in a classroom of male students with a male teacher. A bee buzzed through the open window and into fifth-period class. The teacher stood in front, ready to say the opening prayer, when suddenly every boy in the room exploded out of his seat and twenty notebooks went slicing through the air. The teacher watched the bee dive-bomb a row of boys, who ducked in mid-swat, missing the bee. It quickly retreated to the ceiling. The whole class crammed together, each boy trying to make the kill, while the teacher ordered, "Sit down! Everybody sit down!"

## notes

About three good soldiers went back to their desks while the others continued their mission to kill the bee, which they had by now code-named "Operation Bee Sting." The teacher again commanded them to sit down, warning, "Anyone still standing in five seconds will go bee-hunting in this classroom after school. Sit!" The boys knew he was serious, so they sat down reluctantly, only to jump up and scatter again as soon as the bee dive-bombed the center of the room.

Chaos.

The teacher realized the only way to regain order was to terminate the bee. He grabbed the two closest notebooks and, as the bee streaked by him, smacked the notebooks together. Caught between the notebooks, the unfortunate bee fell to the floor. The entire class gave an instant roar of approval for the combat mission accomplished.

A few weeks later, a female teacher stood in front of her all-female class, ready to begin the opening prayer. But then a wasp swooped through the door and across the classroom. Screaming. Shrieking. Squealing. Girls scrambled wildly for cover, flipping some of the desks over in the process. Books skidded to the floor, papers fluttered in the air. The wasp sailed from corner to corner, and each time, the girls stampeded in the exact opposite direction—back and forth, left to right, shrieking louder with every dash.

The only one attempting to swat the wasp was the teacher. But she was laughing so hard that she kept missing. With each futile swat, the wasp spiraled in a different direction, sending the girls into pileups of flailing arms and legs. Finally, the teacher managed to land a solid blow that should have ended the commotion.

Yet the instant the wasp fell, instead of giving a victorious war cry, the class of girls huddled together to peer at the bug lying on the floor and whined all together, "Awww, poor thing!"

Two similar events. Two very different responses. Why?

## BRIDGING THE GAP

These two stories illustrate that boys and girls are clearly different. You've known that since you were a toddler, when you decided that certain toys and games were "just for boys" or "just for girls." In fact, this difference has been a major factor in your life from the moment the delivery room doctor announced to your parents, "Congratulations, it's a ...!" Your name, your clothes, and even the way people treat you are all strongly connected to your gender—or sex—whether you are male or female.





## In Your Faith

*In Mark 10:6, Jesus says, "But from the beginning, God made them male and female." It's a simple statement but profound to think about. From the very beginning, God's plan included men and women together. In fact, the very first time God says something in His creation isn't good is when He sees Adam alone and without Eve (see Genesis 2:18). What would the world be like if there were only men or only women? Scary thought!*

*Our Catholic faith teaches us that from the beginning God made men and women to be a complementary pair. The Catechism tells us that we should all acknowledge and accept our sexual identities as men and women. It also tells us that what is best for society and families has to do with how we grow in our sexual identities and relate to each other as men and women (see CCC 2333).*

In our culture, the word "**sex**" is used mostly to talk about the physical intimacy that leads to babies. That's why you may laugh or feel a little awkward when you see the word in bold letters. But "sex" refers to a human person's gender—his maleness or her femaleness.

Think back to the Genesis story in Scripture. In Chapter 2, you learned that God made human persons in His own image and likeness. Right after that statement, Scripture gives us another very important detail: "**male and female He created them.**" That means everything we've discussed so far is affected by sex. What it means to be a human person; the fall and redemption of humanity; Jesus' Incarnation; virtue, vice, and grace—all of these issues in your life are shaped by whether God created you as male or female.

It's easy to misunderstand the difference between sexes. Some people mistakenly believe that men and women are opposites. Others mistakenly think that men and women have to compete to be better, stronger, smarter, superior, greater, or more important. Such misunderstandings can cause confusion and division.

Our Catholic faith helps us to understand that male and female differences are not meant to keep men and women apart but to bring them together. Each gender's unique, special characteristics bring out the best in the other. This is called *complementarity*. Complementarity does not mean that men and women are two halves that together add up to a complete human person. Each individual is a whole human person in himself or herself. Men are not lacking something because they aren't women. Women aren't incomplete because they aren't men.

Think about that classic pair, peanut butter and jelly. Each one is complete on its own. The peanut butter is totally "peanutty" by itself, just like the jelly is totally "jelliscious" by itself. Neither one lacks what it needs to be itself completely. Neither one changes what it is when they go together on a sandwich. But when they're together, peanut butter's best characteristics are enhanced by the jelly, and the best characteristics about jelly are highlighted by the peanut butter. Why? Complementarity!

Male and female complementarity leads to romantic attraction. Eventually, this attraction can lead a man and a woman to love each other in a unique way that doesn't happen with other relatives or friends. Their love may grow into a desire to give themselves to each other in a powerful, intimate way. So they get married and have children, who grow up and experience the same process for themselves.

## IF YOU ASK ME ...

1. Hanging out with girls is different from hanging out with guys because when I hang out with girls \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Hanging out with guys is different from hanging out with girls because when I hang out with guys \_\_\_\_\_.
3. One big misunderstanding that people have about the difference between guys and girls is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. When we were five, boys used to play \_\_\_\_\_ but the girls played \_\_\_\_\_.

When you were younger, you probably groaned, "Ew! Gross!" whenever you saw a man and a woman kissing. As you become a young adult, though, you begin to see the other sex in a "more-than-just-friends" way. You may feel extremely aware of being male or female when you're around the other sex. You may want to spend a lot of time interacting with the other sex through texting, having conversations online, phone calls, or just hanging out. You may even form a crush on or start to "like" someone.

Sexual attraction is one of the strongest desires humans experience. It's a particularly human desire. Animals do not form crushes, go on dates, fall in love, plan weddings, and promise to share the rest of their lives with each other. Attraction between male and female animals is simply for the sake of reproduction and survival.

God intended sexual attraction between a man and a woman to be much more than that. You may be surprised to hear that sexuality and sex—gender and physical intimacy—have an important place in our Catholic faith. Unfortunately, some people mistakenly think the Church has a negative view of sexuality and sex. But the Church actually has a better, not worse, opinion of sex than the world does.

Why? God designed the complementarity that causes romantic attraction and leads to marriage. God invented the physical sexual intimacy that creates families. And from the beginning with Adam and Eve, He meant for the closeness of husband and wife to be a powerful sign of His love. In fact, Scripture says the special bond of marriage is so sacred that it actually reveals how Christ has a special bond with us, the Church.

And for these reasons, sexuality and sex—identity, maleness, femaleness, romance, physical intimacy—are holy, beautiful, good, exciting...and a *big* deal.



## TO THE CORE

Our culture is obsessed with sex. If you've ever turned on a TV—even to watch a nature show or a sporting event—you've seen commercials that try to make everything “sexy” to keep us interested. Our culture feeds us these images over and over through sitcoms, movies, songs, and the Internet.

But the obsession distorts sex from the way God designed it. In the media, sex—being male and female—is rarely discussed as a sign of God's love. Very few media efforts explore maleness and femaleness as key parts of personal identity, and complementarity is rarely shown. Instead, men and women are often depicted as competitors or even enemies. Masculinity and femininity are even sometimes depicted as choices one makes, rather than the basic truth of the way God has designed each of us.

These distortions twist sex into a source of manipulation, confusion, regret, and shame. What a tragedy—because living our sexuality in the way God intended can actually be a source of union, fulfillment, intimacy, and freedom. Maybe the most misunderstood reality is this: God created sex to first be about who we are, not merely what we do. Sex is first about our identity as men and women created in God's image and likeness, not merely about an activity between a husband and a wife. While many people in today's world are confused about sex, truly understanding God's design for sex takes us once again to the beginning.

In Genesis, after each creature He made, God proclaimed, “It is good!” Stars, water, birds, fish—all were good because they had been made by a totally good God. Then, after God created Adam, He saw Adam alone, and for the first time said about something, “It is not good” (Genesis 2:18). Although Adam himself was good, his aloneness was the problem. God brought many creatures to Adam, but none of them was a good match. As they paraded by, Adam named the creatures but couldn't find in them what he needed and desired—an equal helpmate.

So God put Adam into a deep sleep and finished His masterpiece: Eve. She was formed from one of Adam's ribs—Adam's own self—so she would definitely be an equal match. When Adam woke up and saw Eve, he was

is not just for the sake of reproduction but also for giving themselves to each other in love. Adam's unselfish gift of himself to Eve, and hers to him, brought out the best in each. As human persons, they expressed the invisible gift of their love through the visible gift of their bodies—the physical act of sex.

Think about the reason for the meaning behind such an act. The language of the body is expressed within relationships, depending on the type of bond two people share. You hug your friends, not strangers. You kiss your parents and grandparents, not your teachers. You wouldn't hold hands with your mail carrier, but you might hold your little brother's or sister's hand. Why? Because different forms of body contact say different things. Intimate physical contact expresses a unique and intimate relationship.

Hugging, holding hands, and kissing express affection, but they do not involve the total body. Sexual union, however, is about the most dramatic form of the language of the body that exists. In this way, a husband and wife literally give their total bodies to each other. The language of their bodies says, "We have no barriers. I am making myself totally vulnerable with you, so I trust you to be faithful to me for life, and you can also trust me for life." The language of their bodies also says, "I freely give myself to you, so freely that I am ready to become a parent with you."

What kind of relationship is expressed by this language of the body? Marriage! Sex is the total gift of the body. You give the most you can physically give to someone. Likewise, marriage is the total gift of the self. You give the most you can—your entire life. This is why the total gift of the body—sex—expresses the truth about a relationship only when shared by two people who have made total gifts of themselves in marriage.

### IF YOU ASK ME ...

Circle the physical sign that, in your opinion, is most appropriate for the relationship and situation being described.

#### 1. Grandma comes over for dinner.

Fist bump

Hug

High five

Genuflect

#### 2. You see your uncle in the grocery store.

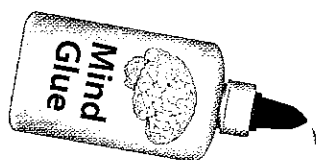
Kiss on the cheek

Handshake

Hug

Wink from across the aisle





### The FTFF of Marriage

Marriage speaks a language of love that expresses four main ways that God loves us:

- Free
- Total
- Faithful
- Fruitful



### In Your Faith

*Our Catholic faith is loaded with the language of the body. Think about how much the body "speaks" at Mass. When you walk in and make the Sign of the Cross, your body is saying, "I renew my baptismal vows and live in the name of the Trinity."*

*You stand out of respect at the Gospel. You genuflect to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Who else would you genuflect to except for God? Genuflecting would be a pretty awkward way to greet your math teacher. Why does Mass involve so much sit-stand-kneel action? It's simple: the language of your body is expressing a relationship—your relationship with God.*

### 3. The bishop comes to your classroom.

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Stand up when he walks in the room     | Wink      |
| Fold your hands over your head and nod | Genuflect |

### 4. Your best friend gets bad news.

- |           |                  |
|-----------|------------------|
| High five | Hand on shoulder |
| Hug       | Head butt        |

If God made them in His image, then all the parts of a husband and wife's relationship—including sex—are necessary to form that image. Remember that God is not alone or isolated. The Three Persons of the Trinity are in a constant relationship of love, giving themselves totally to each other. A husband and a wife are called to give themselves to each other always, in all circumstances—for better or worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health. The husband and wife's ongoing faithfulness to love each other reflects the ongoing love between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We already know that the Trinity is the ultimate self-giving love. Because marriage is a human sign of this ultimate love, everything marriage entails—including sex—is good and indeed holy—because a good and holy God invented them to express something good and holy: divine love.

### IF YOU ASK ME ...

1. How would you express the language of your body to your best friend?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How would you express the language of your body to your grandmother?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How would you express the language of your body to a friend with serious garlic breath?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Does This Leaf Look Okay On Me?

Genesis also tells us an important detail about Adam and Eve's fashion choices—or lack thereof. In the beginning, they were naked, but it wasn't an awkward experience because they had no shame—and this was an important part of God's original design for sex.

Shame is the urge to hide or cover up something personal—from God, others, and maybe even ourselves. Shame is about fear and vulnerability. You might feel shame when you get caught doing something wrong, but you might also feel shame when you are “overexposed” physically or emotionally. For example, what if you did something wrong at home, but then your parents told the whole neighborhood about your mistake? You would feel shame—and maybe would want to hide—because something private was exposed to others who should not be involved. Shame fits with our sinful world, where we actually do have something to hide.

However, in the beginning, Adam and Eve had no cause for shame. Remember their situation: God had created them in absolute love and had given them absolute paradise. They had no insecurities to make them conceal personal things from each other. Before sin, it did not occur to Adam and Eve to use each other. They focused totally on loving God and each other, and they did not worry or think about themselves. They were without shame because they had no reason for shame. Adam and Eve did not experience shame about their nakedness because they had no barriers to their loving relationship with God and each other.

Of course, sin damaged this original experience. What was the very first thing Adam and Eve did after they sinned? They tried to cover their nakedness and hide from God. Before sin, Adam and Eve were so focused on loving each other that they weren't self-conscious about being naked. They weren't thinking about themselves. Sin created barriers in their relationship, and barriers make it hard to grow in loving relationships. Think about a time when you met a new group of people. You weren't sure how they would respond. Maybe you didn't want to reveal too much about yourself. This hesitance was a barrier you set up to protect yourself against being rejected or used. Sin brought more than just barriers; it brought distortion. Sin distorted the proper focus of sex from expressing committed love to achieving physical pleasure. Sin makes it easy to misuse people as objects for personal satisfaction, or to misuse the body as a tool to manipulate others or gain attention.

This distortion of the way people experience nakedness means it is no longer safe to be without covering. We wear clothes to protect us from more than just the weather. Because of shame, we clothe ourselves, and this reminds us of something positive: our bodies are sacred and should be protected from anyone treating us like objects instead of persons with great dignity.



### In Your Faith

*“While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.” – Luke 15:20*

*The father in the parable of the Prodigal Son is longing, waiting for his son to return.*

*When the father spots his son in the distance, he cannot wait to show his forgiveness and love for his long-lost son who has returned home. In the same way, God constantly longs for us to come back to him no matter how long we have been away. God the Father is always waiting for us, His “prodigal” sons and daughters. This parable shows the merciful love that God wants to shower on us, no matter what we have done.*



Fortunately, Jesus redeemed the misuse of sex just as He redeemed everything else. Jesus helps us resist the lies about love, sex, and relationships told by the sinful culture of the world. Instead of following these lies into regret and anxiety, we can follow Jesus into freedom and peace. Jesus can heal all. Deep down, our hearts desire the truth about sex and sexuality. And you can definitely handle the truth.

### How to Handle Fire

Sex is like fire. Before you start cracking jokes, think about the analogy. The ability to produce fire was one of the most important breakthroughs in human history. Why? Because fire does amazing things to improve our lives. Fire lights up the darkness, keeps us warm, protects us from wild animals, cooks food for us to eat, melts metal for molding into tools, boils water for disinfecting and cleaning, creates the romantic atmosphere of candlelight, allows us to make s'mores, and does tons of other good things for us.



But what about forest fires? And homes that burn to the ground? And serious injuries? Can't fire also cause damage? That's exactly the point! Fire is good and wonderful and enriching—but only in the right place, cared for in the right way. In your fireplace, a fire is cozy and beautiful. But if you threw down some kindling sticks on your living room floor and lit a match, disaster would follow. At the same time, if you tried to stuff that kindling into your couch cushions, you would have an even bigger problem very quickly. It's the same fire, but where and how that fire is handled and used makes all the difference between whether it causes good or brings destruction.

Sex is like fire. In the right place, it can be an amazing blessing in your life. But, used wrongly, it will damage you emotionally, spiritually, and maybe even physically. Sex is a great blessing, but it is powerful and must be respected. If sex is misused, the consequences are serious.

So what is the right place for sex? Marriage. You have already heard that it should be shared only in marriage. That's true. But why? Is it just some old-fashioned rule that nobody really follows anymore?

The idea of saving sex for marriage is certainly ancient, but it is not out-of-date. Sex means the same thing now that it has always meant from the moment God first invented it. When a man and a woman share sexual intimacy, the language of their body says, "I am married to you; I am giving my total self to you as a gift." That's a huge statement. Your total self! Think about how hard it is to risk rejection even in small ways, like volunteering an answer in class or saying no to peer pressure. Giving your total self in sex makes you extremely vulnerable. There are two possible responses when you give your total self to someone: you are either loved or used.

So what kind of person do you want to give your total self to? What person can you trust to accept you with love and not reject you or use you? Someone you barely know? Someone you're trying to impress? Someone who will dump you in a few weeks or months? Of course not. And how many people should you give your total self to? Just one—your spouse.

It only makes sense to give yourself totally to a person you are sure is committed to you and who will give an equal self-gift to you and only you. In what relationship are two people totally vowed to each other and only each other? Marriage. Dating relationships have a level of commitment, but it's not yet total. A relationship that includes sexual intimacy must be one of total, vowed commitment—or else what is being said through the language of the body is a lie. And you deserve much more than a relationship full of lies.

So what are you supposed to do about attraction and relationships if you're still years away from marriage? How are you supposed to express your affection now?

As with other areas of life, sex is designed to be practiced with virtue. God doesn't want us to pretend like we do not experience sexual attraction and desire, or just forget about the whole subject until after college. Instead, through the virtue of **chastity**, God intends for us to live and love through our sexuality in a way that matches God's road map to happiness for us. Chastity is the virtue that helps us love ourselves and others rightly through our bodies. It means learning, as male and female, to love as God loved us. The way we express ourselves through our bodies should reveal the actual reality of our relationships. Chastity means telling the truth with the language of our bodies.

Everyone is called to practice chastity—single people, priests, religious brothers and sisters, and married couples. Of course, chastity takes different forms depending on your state of life. In marriage, what language of the body matches the reality that the couple is committed for life only to each other? As the total gift of the body, sex says with the language of the body what is actually true about the relationship. When people are single, dating, even engaged, however, their relationships have not yet reached a level of total commitment, so sex would not be truthful language of the body.

At this point in your life, a big part of practicing chastity means abstinence.

**Abstinence** refers to refraining in an exterior way from all intimate sexual activity until marriage. But there is much more to practicing chastity than just abstaining from sexual activity. Chastity means maintaining *interior purity* as well. Having a pure mind and heart is not easy, but it trains us to see each other rightly, always recognizing our great dignity and the dignity of others. This is how chastity helps us save all exterior sexual contact for the right time—and the right time, of course, is in marriage. Chastity enables us to say exactly what we mean to say with the language of our bodies. So it is not chaste, for example, to participate in any activity that causes you or another person to become sexually aroused, which may include things like prolonged kissing. Why? Because these activities say through the language of our bodies that we are ready for more sexual contact. But when we're not married, this is a lie.

Chastity is not about rules just for the sake of rules; it is about the very important goal of loving well. Chastity means saying "yes" to the right action at the right time, which means saying "no" to the wrong action at the wrong time. Chastity means not having sex or engaging in sexual activity when sex and sexual activity do not tell the truth about the relationship through the language of the body. In short, chastity is saying "yes" to the truth of love through purity of mind, heart, and body.

### Protecting Your Goal

Think about a football team. A good team needs both an offense and a defense. Both are critical. Practicing chastity in your life right now involves both an offense and a defense. Offense is pursuing your goal of a pure heart.



### In Your Faith

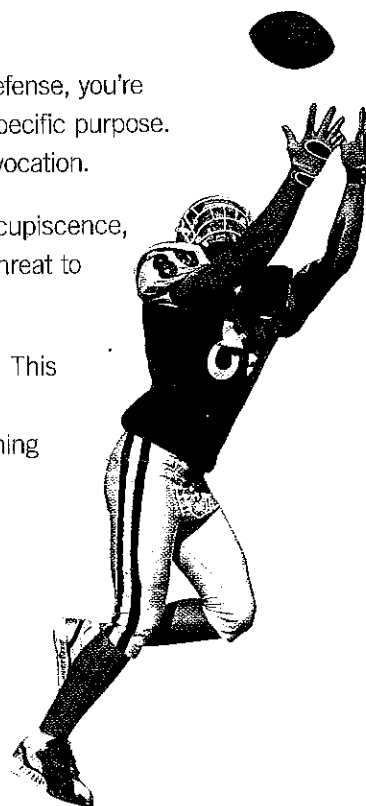
*A pure heart is like a clean bedroom—it isn't crammed with mess and layers of junk. Everything is where it should be. It is much easier to find what you need or want if your room is in order. In the same way, when our hearts are clean and in order, we can recognize God's presence in every person.*

Defense is protecting that pure heart; for you right now this involves abstinence. On defense, you're not just sitting around passively, doing nothing. You're doing something active with a specific purpose. You're protecting your goal of having the freedom to truly love now and in your future vocation.

You might wonder what you are defending yourself against. A main opponent is concupiscence, which is a big word describing the tendency in all of us to sin. Concupiscence is a threat to your pure heart.

**Concupiscence** affects every area of our lives, especially the way we see each other. This is why an important part of practicing chastity is modesty. **Modesty** is speaking and dressing in a way that respects God's design for our bodies. Telling dirty jokes, listening to sexually explicit music, or watching raunchy movies are all ways of abusing our sexuality, because they distort sex from being about self-gift into being about self-satisfaction. Wearing sexy, skimpy clothes is another abuse. But maybe not for the reason you might think.

Immodest clothes encourage others to look at a person as a collection of body parts rather than as a whole person. Be honest—what do you think when you see a person dressed immodestly? Are you encouraged to see the whole person, or do you just notice body parts? Immodest clothing may bring lots of attention, but it isn't the kind of attention your heart truly desires.



Unfortunately, concupiscence means that, like other virtues, chastity can be difficult to practice. Sexual desire, which is good when we first see someone, can turn into temptation and maybe even sin if we allow our imaginations to go to places they shouldn't. Chastity helps us to remember who we are when temptations arise. It's okay to be honest with God, especially when you are tempted to be selfish in some way. You might say, "Lord, I'm really attracted to this person. Thank You for making someone so amazing. But I know You made me to give, not to take. Give me the grace to treat others with respect at all times."

Chastity also helps us to develop the habit of loving others rather than using them for selfish purposes. Blessed Pope John Paul emphasized that the opposite of love is not hatred, but use of another person—a temptation we can also face in many non-sexual situations. We may be tempted to use our parents for money or our classmates for homework. Chastity helps you see the way you can grow in self-gift.

The vice of **lust** is the opposite of chastity. Lust distorts sex into an expression of total selfishness and violates the language of the body that says, "I am a total gift to my spouse." Lust lights a fire in the middle of the living room. Lust runs around a football field without any particular goal or strategy. And what are the consequences? The house burns down. The team loses the game.

Lust sees people as objects to be used, rather than persons to be loved. In a relationship, lust causes cheating, abuse, insecurity, and negative drama. Worst of all, lust destroys your understanding of your true identity. You're more than an object. You're a person of great worth—worthy of being loved.

### IF YOU ASK ME ...

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is a place where I can get modest clothes that I actually like.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is a good role model when it comes to modesty.

## Practice Makes "Perfect"

Imagine you want to be a pro basketball player. You would practice over and over again. What if you practiced the wrong way? What if you ran sloppy drills, double dribbled, traveled, fouled, and ran out of bounds at every practice? What would happen during the real game? It's not rocket science. If you practice wrong, you will play wrong.

In our culture, guy-girl relationships have become about bad practice. Instead of practicing true friendship and mutual respect, many dating relationships include sexual activity between people who aren't married. If dating couples can't practice being honest with their bodies before marriage, how will they be honest with their bodies after marriage? Such bad practice has made our world so full of divorce and failed relationships that some people lose faith in love completely.

But remember—love is more than just a feeling or emotion. Love is a virtue. Just like any virtue, love takes work, training, and attention. And to love well, you have to practice well. Relationships between guys and girls are meant to train us for a healthy marriage later on. Sadly, many people view interaction between guys and girls as a game, or as a way of having physical experiences, or seeming older and more mature. But if you practice the wrong way now, what makes you think you will succeed later?

If you want fulfilling relationships now and successful future marriage, practice. Treat others, especially those you date, the way you would want your future spouse, your brother or sister, or even your own children to be treated. Would you be okay with any of them being taken advantage of, or manipulated, or used as an object? Of course not, so set the same standard for yourself. Practice virtue. Find solid Catholic role models to talk with about personal issues and make friends who have the same goals.

The only way to win the game is practice and teamwork.

## WORK IT OUT

### A. Growing Up

Think of an adult or find someone in your parish, school, or local community who shows what it means to be a man or woman of God. Make him or her an award of gratitude (or write them an encouraging letter) for being a good role model who helps you to see what it means to be a true Christian.

### B. Pen Pals

Select one of the characters in the "case study" that your leader provides for you. Write an imaginary email to them, advising what they should do in their situation. Include three things you learned from this chapter in your advice.



## In Your Faith

*The biggest part of chastity is having a pure heart. Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God" (Matthew 5:8). Being clean of heart is more than what we do with our bodies. Purity of heart is how we live and interact with others. It is how we see each other and the world. Whatever captures our minds will eventually capture our hearts. This is why St. Paul encouraged us when he wrote:*

*"Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" – Philippians 4:8.*