



Diocese of Buffalo

## Department of Lifelong Faith Formation

A member of the Division for Evangelization and Catechesis

### Christian Lifestyles

**Rationale:** By virtue of baptism, every Christian is called to discipleship and service. This call, or vocation, is fulfilled through a variety of lifestyles and ministries. A task of adolescents is to develop more mutual, trusting, and loyal relationships with peers, parents/guardians, and other adults by learning skills that enhance and maintain relationships.

**Goals:** That students recognize in their baptismal call to discipleship an opportunity to love and serve God through a lifestyle of Christian service and witness.

That students will respect and appreciate the gift of human sexuality as a gift from God and as an integral part of the unique person God created them to be.

**Objectives:** To understand the true meaning, beauty, and goodness of human sexuality as intended by God.

To recognize Jesus as the model of the fully integrated, sexual person.

To examine the importance of close personal relationships and to become aware of common behavior patterns which are healthy and unhealthy.

To learn what it means to live a life for the benefit of others and the value in considering a vocation in service to the Christian Community.

To acknowledge each lifestyle as a way to achieve meaning and fulfillment in life.



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**CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLES\***

\*(Based upon the *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework of the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age* (2008), p. 44-48)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p><b>I. Our Call to Holiness and Love</b></p> <p>A. <b>The Mystery of God’s Love</b></p> <p>B. <b>The Invitation to Share God’s Love</b></p> <p>C. <b>Our Baptismal Call to Holiness</b></p> <p><b>II. Friendship, Love, and Intimacy</b></p> <p>A. <b>Nature and Meaning of Friendship</b></p> <p>B. <b>Love as response and gift</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jesus, model of love</li> <li>2. Trinity, model of intimacy</li> <li>3. Appropriate expressions of intimacy</li> </ol> <p>* St. Valentine, Blessed John XXIII, St. Anthony of Padua</p>	<p>Rewrite 1 Cor 13 in your own words. Is this type of love realistic? Why/why not?</p> <p>Keep a prayer journal. Reflect on your growth in an understanding of God’s love for you.</p> <p>Compose a prayer to the Trinity as a model of community and intimacy.</p> <p>Using one of the gospels, find ten ways Jesus shows friendship toward his disciples.</p> <p>Read Jn 8:3-11. What can this story teach us today?</p> <p>Have the girls make a list of ten things they would like boys to remember when they relate with girls.</p> <p>Have the boys make a similar list of ten things they would like girls to remember.</p>	<p>How does infatuation differ from love? Can infatuation be a good experience?</p> <p>What is the difference between friendship and love? Between love and intimacy?</p> <p>In friendship we often experience painful, difficult times. How do such times help us learn to be a better friend?</p> <p>How do we apply what we learn from our human friendships to our friendship with God?</p>



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Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>III. <b>Relationships</b></p> <p>A. <b>Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. characteristics of a healthy relationship</li> <li>2. characteristics of an unhealthy relationship</li> <li>3. gender stereotyping</li> <li>4. peer pressure</li> <li>5. bullying and violence</li> <li>6. communication</li> </ol> <p>* Sister Thea Bowman</p> <p>IV. <b>Sexuality: A Gift From God</b></p> <p>A. <b>Sex and Sexuality</b></p> <p>B. <b>Sexual vs. Emotional Maturity</b></p>	<p>Name the five most important relationships in your life now in order of importance. Why is this relationship the most important now?</p> <p>Compose your “Ten Commandments of Good Communication.”</p> <p>Role play a scene (in small groups) depicting a man or woman in a gender stereotyping situation.</p> <p><i>*The mandated Sexual Abuse Awareness curriculum can be found at <a href="http://www.officeoflifelongfaithformation.org">www.officeoflifelongfaithformation.org</a> and can be integrated here.</i></p> <p>List some indicators that might signal a couple that their relationship should not continue.</p> <p>Choose a song that conflicts with our Gospel values toward sexuality.</p> <p>Make a list of all the comments you hear about sex in one day. How would you categorize these comments?</p>	<p>What risks are involved in a dating relationship?</p> <p>Why do some people stay in unhealthy relationships? What are the risks of staying? of leaving?</p> <p>Have you ever ended a relationship because of negative behaviors of the other person? Describe the break-up and the results.</p> <p>What difficulties do teenagers face when attempting to be sexually responsible in the way God wants them to be? List some ways teens can ease these pressures.</p> <p>What can we learn from the fact that people reach sexual maturity long before emotional maturity?</p>



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Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p><b>C. Related issues</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. respect and care for the body</li> <li>2. responsible decision-making</li> <li>3. portrayal of sex and sexuality in the media</li> <li>4. pre-marital sex</li> <li>5. abstinence and secondary virginity</li> <li>6. consistent life ethic</li> <li>7. American cultural values vs. Gospel values</li> </ol> <p>* Maria Goretti</p> <p><b>D. Scripture Teachings</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> Commandments</li> </ol>	<p>Read Solomon 2:1-17. Compare this message about sexuality with messages from media, friends, family, the Church?</p> <p>Read 1 Cor 6:19-20. To what is the body compared? How can you share this message with your peers?</p> <p>Invite a speaker from the diocesan Pro-Life Office to discuss the Church’s vision of the <i>consistent life ethic</i>.</p> <p>Create a billboard which promotes the virtue of abstinence.</p> <p>Write a 3-5 minute script/video showing how an individual could use to say “no” to intimate sexual involvement. In a small group, critique and discuss.</p> <p>Research Natural Family Planning. How does this method differ from other methods? Invite someone to speak on this method.</p>	<p>How does sexuality as <i>holy</i> go against the understanding of popular culture? How do people in love treat each other if they see sexuality as a gift from God?</p> <p>Have you ever thought of romantic love as <i>holy</i>?</p> <p>What view of sexuality is portrayed in the media? Are they true or false? Discuss.</p> <p>Name some forces that are encouraging young people to be sexually active today. Do these forces put sexual intimacy in its proper perspective?</p> <p>How can a serious relationship grow stronger and more intimate when a couple abstains from pre-marital sex?</p>



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Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>V. <b>Christian Discipleship</b></p> <p>A. <b>Baptismal call to holiness and Discipleship</b></p> <p>B. <b>Meaning of vocation</b></p> <p>C. <b>Importance of commitment in every lifestyle</b></p> <p>D. <b>Dedicated Single Life</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. forms of adult single life           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transitional</li> <li>• permanent</li> <li>• revisited</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. meaning and satisfaction of single life</li> <li>3. cultural &amp; social challenges</li> </ol> <p>E. <b>Vowed Religious Consecration</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. definition of consecrated life</li> <li>2. call to love through service</li> <li>3. Evangelical Counsels           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poverty</li> <li>• chastity</li> <li>• obedience</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. challenges of Religious Life</li> </ol>	<p>Research and reflect on a particular Christian lifestyle. Present a reasoned rationale for choosing this lifestyle.</p> <p>See <i>Theology of the Body</i> (Ascension Press), Chapter 10 for resources.</p> <p>Interview a married couple, a priest or religious brother, or sister, or a single person. What kinds of commitments are necessary to live their lifestyle? What are the gifts? Challenges?</p> <p>Learn about Jean Donovan, martyred in El Salvador, and her vocation.</p> <p>Brainstorm reasons why people might wish to remain single. Are they good or bad reasons? Discuss.</p> <p>Gather parish bulletins from your parish and neighboring parishes. Circle the programs and services offered to single adults. Discuss and draw some conclusions.</p>	<p>What is meant by holiness? Do you consider yourself a holy person? How can you grow in personal holiness as you mature into adulthood?</p> <p>In what areas can a person feel fulfilled and satisfied with life without being sexually active?</p> <p>Discuss some ways to assist and support people in making and keeping permanent commitments.</p> <p>What would you find most satisfying if you were living the life of a dedicated single adult? What would you find most challenging?</p> <p>What seems attractive to you about religious consecration and lifestyle? What aspects seem most challenging?</p> <p>Discuss the meaning of the vows of poverty, chastity, &amp; obedience. How are they relevant in the Church today?</p>



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<p>* Benedict, Scholastica, Francis and Clare of Assisi, Dominic, Ignatius Loyola, Teresa of Avila, Therese of Lisieux</p> <p><b>F. Ordained Priesthood</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sacrament of Holy Orders</li> <li>2. forms of priestly ministry</li> <li>3. celibacy</li> <li>4. challenges of priestly life</li> <li>5. diocesan priesthood</li> <li>6. religious order priests, brothers, and monks</li> <li>7. deacons</li> </ol> <p>* Lawrence, Peter and Paul, John Bosco, John Vianney</p>	<p>Write a job description for the bishop or parish priest. What qualities are necessary for those in church leadership?</p> <p>Invite a vocation director from the diocese or a religious order to discuss his/her ministry and to answer questions.</p> <p>Read Mt 19:16-23. Would it be difficult for you to follow Jesus by becoming a priest, religious, or lay person working in and for the church? If yes, why? If not, why not?</p> <p>Compare the ministry of the baptized lay person to the ministry conveyed by the Sacrament of Holy Orders.</p> <p>Interview a minister, priest, or rabbi from another denomination. Discuss the differences from Roman Catholic priesthood.</p>	<p>How would the Catholic Church and society be affected if people stopped entering priesthood and religious life? Do you think this will happen?</p>



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<p><b>G. The Covenant of Marriage</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. marriage in God’s plan (Gn 1:26-31)</li> <li>2. meaning and purpose of covenant</li> <li>3. meaning and purpose of marriage</li> <li>4. Sacrament of Matrimony</li> <li>5. fidelity to the covenant of marriage</li> <li>6. family – church of the home</li> </ol> <p>* Mary, Mother of God; Elizabeth Ann Seton; Bridget; Monica</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. challenges to marriage and family           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sexual attitudes and behavior</li> <li>• anti-life practices</li> <li>• economy and work</li> <li>• child-rearing and parenting</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Prepare a report on the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Buffalo. How does a permanent deacon differ from an ordained priest?</p> <p>Watch two of your favorite TV programs. Identify all the messages these programs and advertisements give which support marital commitment. What messages undermine this kind of commitment?</p> <p>Research the annulment process in your diocese. Why does the church permit annulments? Include the criteria for receiving an annulment and discuss the process.</p> <p>Read Eph 5:31-32. What qualities is Paul describing concerning the relationship between husband and wife and Christ and the Church?</p>	<p>Discuss: “The most crucial lesson in sex education is learned by watching how your mother and father treat each other.”</p> <p>What seems most attractive to you regarding the marriage covenant? What seems most challenging?</p> <p>Why does the Church set down procedures and requirements for couples preparing for marriage?</p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• portrayal in the media</li> <li>• cultural and social vs. gospel values</li> </ul> <p>* Monica and Augustine, Joseph, Katharine Drexel, Marguerite D'Youville</p>	<p>Research the requirements that a man and woman must meet in order for a sacramental marriage to take place.</p> <p>Read Mk 10:6-9. What does this passage say about marriage?</p> <p>Invite a marriage counselor to speak about the traits of a happy marriage and the traits of an unhappy marriage.</p> <p>Research a marriage ritual from another culture. Explain the symbols and their significance of the ceremony.</p> <p>Make a list of the behavior you would find intolerable in a marriage partner. What qualities would be necessary?</p>	<p>Do you think a couple should be married in the Church if neither practices their faith? Explain.</p> <p>Describe a married couple you know that has been a sign of Jesus' presence to you. If you get married in the future, how would you like to imitate this couple?</p> <p>What are some of the significant challenges to family life in America today? How do you see the family of the future?</p> <p>How does a family change after divorce? After remarriage?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Rev. 2011</p>



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