
FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION THEMES

- **Family Life education** is multi-disciplinary curriculum designed to promote Christian formation in **authentic human issues related to personhood, relationships and sexuality**
- "Remote preparation (for marriage or celibate life) begins in early childhood, in that wise family training which leads children to discover themselves as being endowed with a rich and complex psychology and with a particular personality with its own strengths and weaknesses. It is the period when esteem for authentic human values is instilled, both in interpersonal and social relationships, with all that this signifies for the formation of character, for the control and right use of one's inclinations, for the manner of regarding and meeting people of the opposite sex, and so on. Also necessary, especially for Christians, is solid spiritual and catechetical formation." Familiaris Consortio # 55
- Family Life Education is a **process** – many of the topics must be dealt with repeatedly and in increasing depth as students reach new stages in their development and maturity. .
- Provides opportunities for **holistic formation** according to Christian vision of personhood, relationship and sexuality. Draws on discipline of theology, life sciences, and social sciences. Affirms primary and central role of family in formation of character, moral development and attitudes toward sexuality.
- **Distinctive curriculum** area **providing guidelines for Catholic teaching** on marriage, the nature of family life, the meaning and role of human sexuality, and specific moral questions related to sexuality.
- **Systematic curriculum** in family life education. Know that programs need a home if they are to be taught developmentally and systematically throughout the years.
- Family Life education has a **significant contribution** to make in encouraging respect for individuals, wonderment at human potential, compassion for the human condition and a deep awareness of the interdependence of all persons.
- Family Life education **enhances and complements the crucial role of the family** in the development of the capacity for self-giving love and faithfulness.
- Family Life education promotes and bears witness to the beauty, the power and the authentic freedom of **chastity**. (the virtue that is concerned with integration of sexuality into our lives as Christians). Brings to youth good news **that sexuality is a sacred dimension** of the person and of true human love; anything that distorts or diminishes this gift is deeply harmful to individuals and to society. Family Life programme, with its gradual and sensitive teaching on the relational and procreational meaning of human sexuality, **is essential component of Catholic education**. Through this teaching Catholic school community becomes a visible sign of support and encouragement for youth to grow in the virtue of chastity and deepen their appreciation for the power and beauty of sexuality.
- There is a **written curriculum and a lived curriculum**. Often most effective lessons are those in response to the reality of the lives of students.
- School board, parents and Catholic community **expect that teachers will faithfully communicate to their students the vision, teachings, and values of the Catholic faith**. Few adolescent students are open to legalistic pronouncements on issues. They are at stage when they want to work things out for themselves – to question, challenge and engage in critical reflection on their faith in order to make it their own. **Teachers need to**

welcome the views of students as part of the educational process, while still asserting the insight and wisdom of the Church. There may be some aspects of catholic teaching with which teachers are personally struggling. They are still expected to communicate respectfully and convincingly the teachings of the church without drawing students into their own soul searching.

- **Privacy important element** – clear boundary between personal life of each individual in classroom, teacher and students and what is acceptable for objective study and discussion. Balance between openness and willingness on part of all to discuss some aspects of lives and boundaries necessary.

FULLY ALIVE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES ELEMENTARY CYCLE

Family Life a shared program between home and school. Books provided for teachers, families and students.

Family books for program: summary of main ideas students are learning; copies of stories grades 1 – 3 read to students; information and suggestions for parents related to topics; info on what will be taught about sexuality well before presented as well as how to talk to child about life before birth; special sections in grades 5 – 8 with additional info about puberty and some answers to questions kids have

Focused on commitment in a separate theme in order to develop basic concepts related to making decisions, accepting responsibilities, and learning to be faithful; By high school, commitment should be seen as an integral component of personal identity, relationships with others, and sexual decision-making.

The fifth theme which explores the communal nature of persons and the social teaching of the Church, is already a core component of religious education at the secondary level.

Opening theme created and loved by God is the foundation of the program. It affirms and explores the fundamental Christian belief that God creates and loves each one of us.

FIVE THEMES – FULLY ALIVE

Elementary school family life programme, Fully Alive, is organized around five themes at each grade level.

- **Created and loved by God. We are created in image of God and loved as a special creation – human life as a gift; the nature of persons**
 - **Grades 1 – 3** God's gift of creation and people; God knows me; being me; my likes and dislikes; growing up; my feelings; other people's feelings; our gifts; sharing gifts with others
 - **Grades 4 – 6** my life is a gift; God's love for us; we are alike and different; we are mysterious; growing up; human development; death; we need each other; we affect each other; we are life givers
 - **Grades 7 – 8** God's gift of human nature; personality; human mind; genes and environment; being fully human
- **Living in relationship. The bonds of family and friendship are central to our identity and development. – family relationships and friendship**
 - **Grades 1 – 3** My family; family love; family changes; brothers and sisters; learning to be friends; cooperation; friendliness

- **Grades 4 – 6** our families; family time together; family love; family rules; family history; family changes; communication; sharing chores; making friends; friendship growth and stress
- **Grades 7 – 8** relating to others; family (structure, birth order, rules, communication, changes, conflict resolution, abuse); friendship (qualities, changes, loyalty, peer pressure, moods, cliques)
- **Created sexual: male and female. Gift of sexuality, which is intended for love and life, is integral part of our identity and development. Sexuality as personal, relational and procreative**
 - **Grades 1 – 3** Love and marriage; becoming parents; life before birth; how life begins; caring for new babies; gift of bodies; being girls and boys
 - **Grades 4 –6** marriage and family love; gift of sexuality; how life begins; heredity and environment; fetal development; birth; reproductive system; human fertility; puberty
 - **Grades 7 – 8** Sexuality (Christian vision, sexual identity and roles, fertility, puberty, sexual attraction and chastity, sexually transmitted diseases and family planning)
- **Growing in commitment. We are called to be faithful and fully human in our promises, choices and decisions. Promises, decisions, responsibilities, commitments**
 - **Grades 1 – 3** Caring in family; caring adults; family commitment; promises; choices and decisions
 - **Grades 4 – 6** commitments and responsibilities; models of commitment; learning to make and keep commitments
 - **Grades 7 – 8** growing up: making decisions; responsibilities; commitment as a gift of self; understanding and managing stress
- **Living in world. We are members of human society and have a responsibility to care for and build God's world. The environment, human work, community, social justice**
 - **Grades 1 – 3** an exciting world; God's good world; many people in world; caring for world; value of work; learning to work
 - **Grades 4 – 6** the world as a home; caring for and building world; communities; we are members of society; values and media; influencing society
 - **Grades 7 – 8** participating in groups (purpose, responsibility, discrimination); social justice (poverty, environment, abortion); growing toward social justice

TURNING POINTS & REACHING OUT FAMILY LIFE RESOURCES SECONDARY CYCLE

THREE THEMES

- **Personhood** The value and dignity of human persons; potential for growth and development; models of human development; conscience, freedom, and commitment; the achievement of emotional balance
 - **GRADE NINE:** Recognize that a wide range of emotions influence personal decisions, actions and relationships; Recognize the importance of a healthy positive acceptance of self, with strengths and weaknesses; Demonstrate a respect for the human body, in light of the sacredness of human life created by God; Discern personal values and reality in relationship to love revealed by Jesus

- **GRADE TEN:** recognize need to belong and to identify with one's peer group as powerful human need; stages of cognitive and emotional development with focus on adolescence; knowledge about anger and its expression; anger management strategies
- **GRADE ELEVEN:** God loves each person unconditionally; self-esteem; emotional wellness; stages of human faith development; prayerful and critical reflection
- **GRADE TWELVE:** human persons are relational, emotional, physical, social and spiritual in nature and these develop; emotional balance defined; gift of free will, process of conscience; sacredness of human life

- **Relationships** The relational nature of human persons; building healthy relationships; the family; the growth of friendship
 - **GRADE NINE:** understand importance of personal freedom in shaping interpersonal relationships; recognize authentic authority; appreciate value of forgiveness and reconciliation that heals relationships
 - **GRADE TEN:** describe ways human growth distorted by relationships that involve exploitative, harassing and abusive behaviours; family life cycle; conflict resolution skills; intimacy and mutuality
 - **GRADE ELEVEN:** essential elements of intimacy, mutuality and trust in human relationships; role of family in other religions; various models of family; gender roles; root causes of violent behaviour
 - **GRADE TWELVE:** positive aspects of relationships; skills to build healthy relationships; Christian understanding of family and how it contributes to healthy and just society; critique ways society shows its responsibility to support and nurture family; issues related to sexual attraction and sexual decision making; how sacred gift of human procreation and life can be protected

- **Sexuality** Sexuality as a sacred gift; relational and procreational dimensions of sexuality; chastity and decision-making; sexual identity; sexual health
 - **GRADE NINE:** demonstrate knowledge and understanding of and respect for sacred gift of human fertility; meaning of responsible sexual expression in light of virtue of chastity; describe symptoms, treatments and prevention of major sexually transmitted diseases and their effect on human fertility and life; love and infatuation with respect to contemporary understanding and gospel
 - **GRADE TEN:** sexuality and sexual attraction as gifts from God; respect for life from conception to natural death; HIV effects and stages of infection; sexual decision making guided by virtue of chastity; critique media messages
 - **GRADE ELEVEN:** social attitudes and values related to human body; ways AIDS is transmitted; sexuality as loving and life-giving; depersonalizing attitudes and behaviours associated with sexuality