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天主教教育部

關於人類之愛的教育指引

性教育綱要

引言

1. 人格的均衡發展使人逐漸展現天主子女的肖像。「真正的教育必須按照人的終極目的來塑造人。」¹ 梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議在論及基督信仰的教育時，指出有必要為兒童和青少年提供「積極而審慎的性教育。」²

教育部為履行其職分，認為有必要致力實行此會議宣言，而且多個主教團已各自在其教區如此行事。

2. 本文件是在精通教育問題的專家協助下，經過廣泛諮詢而擬定，並提出一個明確目標：審視性教育的教學，並就基督信徒按各自的召叫所接受的全面培育，提供適當的指引。

即使文件沒有處處言明，但其內容總是依據教會訓導當局制定的信理原則和相關的倫理規範。

¹ 梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議，《天主教教育宣言》，1。

² 同上。

3. 聖部理解到各國的文化和社會環境有所不同，因此各地主教團在應用這些指引時，應按其地方教會的牧靈需要作出調整。

性的意義

4. 性是人格的基本組成部分，是存在於世、體現自我、與人交流，以及感受、表達和活出人性愛情的途徑。因此，性是人格發展及其培育過程中不可或缺的部分：「事實上，人的位格因其性別，而具有在生理、心理和精神層面使其作為男人或女人的特質，從而深深影響他或她發展成熟並與社會融合的進程。」³

性特質使男與女不僅在生理層面上，也在心理和精神層面上，表現不同的特質，使他們各自的表達各具特色。這種差異關係到兩性的互補，並讓各人得以按其蒙受的召叫，對天主的計畫作出徹底的回應。

5. 導向生育的交合在生理層面上以最極致的方式，體現夫婦之間的愛的共融。要是脫離這個彼此奉獻自我的框架，脫離這個基督信徒所活出並獲天主的恩寵所支持和豐富的現實，交合便失去意義，只為滿足個人的自私，成為一種道德錯亂。⁴

6. 性獲得愛的導引、提升和整合後，展現真正的人性

³ 信理部，《人的位格：對某些性道德問題的宣言》，1，1975年12月29日；《宗座公報》68（1976），第77頁。

⁴ 參閱：若望保祿二世，《家庭團體》宗座勸諭，37，1981年11月22日；《宗座公報》74（1982），第128頁；參閱：下文16。

特質，並在生理與心靈層面的愛的薰陶下，均衡地發展成長。只有當情感發展成熟，性才能充分體現其意義，而成熟的情感正是藉著無私的愛和完全奉獻自我表現出來。

現況

7. 目前，大眾對於性教育意見相左，即使基督信徒亦有不同意見。今日世界瀰漫著倫理道德失去方向的氣氛，因而潛藏著危險：既可能形成遺害不淺的盲從態度，也可能對最深層的人性有所偏見而扭曲人性，忘記造物主創造的人性本是完美無缺的。

8. 為應付這種情況，最理想的方法是由多方提供適宜的性教育。可是，雖然普遍認為性教育在理論上有其必要性，但在實踐上，對於應由什麼人或什麼機構承擔教育責任，對於性教育應採納的內容和方法，仍有很多不確定的因素和歧見。

9. 教育工作者和為人父母者往往承認：他們還沒作好充分準備施行適當的性教育。校方對性教育的看法未必如此全面，並僅是提供科學資訊，但這並非全面的性教育。

10. 在某些國家，人們尚未體會到這個問題的迫切性，或是有人認為即使沒有提供特別的教育，問題也會自然而然解決。在這樣的國家，情況會特別困難。

11. 整體而言，我們必須承認這是個艱鉅的任務，因為教育行動關係到多方面的因素（生理、心理、教學、社

會與文化、司法、倫理和宗教等），情況相當複雜。

12. 不同地區的天主教組織在地方主教團的認可和鼓勵下，已積極開展性教育工作；其目的不僅是幫助兒童和青少年在心理和靈性方面逐漸發展成熟，而且最重要的是讓他們遠避無知的危險和不受普遍的墮落風氣所傷害。

13. 此外，有人懷著科學的嚴謹態度，致力研究這個問題，並走出人文科學的範疇，將有關的研究結果整合於奉行福音精神而尊重人性尊嚴的教育事業。他們的努力同樣值得稱許。

教會訓導當局的聲明

14. 教會訓導當局已就性教育頒布多項聲明，制定了既可滿足歷史的合理要求，同時忠於教會傳統的發展路線。⁵

5 教宗碧岳十一世於1929年12月31日頒布《主的導師》(Divini illius Magistri) 通諭，指出當時盛行的性教育之流弊：過早和不加選擇地傳授偏重自然主義的資訊(《宗座公報》22 [1930]，第49~86頁)。

我們必須基於這個背景，細閱在1931年3月21日頒布的聖部法令(《宗座公報》23 (1931)，第118~119頁)。然而，教宗碧岳十一世認為有可能讓「那些從天主領受了教育使命並按其身分獲得恩寵的人」推行積極和個人的性教育(《宗座公報》22 [1930]，第71頁)。教宗碧岳十一世這樣指出性教育的正面價值，其後多位教宗也逐步闡釋這價值。教宗碧岳十二世在1953年4月1日於第五屆國際心理治療與臨床心理學大會上的致詞(《宗座公報》45 [1953]，第278~286頁)，以及在1941年10月26日向義大利天主教行動婦女會的演講(《宗座公報》33 [1941]，第450~458頁)，述明應如何在家庭內施行性教

梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議的《天主教教育宣言》指出性教育應有的方向，⁶ 並確認青少年有權利獲得切合個人需要的教育。

會議指出：「應借助心理學、教育學和教學法的最新發展，幫助兒童和青少年均衡地發展他們的體能、道德能力和智力，逐步培養更成熟的責任感，不斷努力提升他們的生命，追求真正的自由，以勇氣和毅力克服障礙。隨著年紀漸長，他們必須接受積極而審慎的性教育。」⁷

15. 《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》在論及婚姻與家庭的尊嚴時，指出家庭是青少年培養貞潔的首要場所。⁸ 然而，由於這是全人教育的其中一個方面，父母在履行他們的使命時，必須與教育工作者攜手合作。⁹ 因此，必須在家庭內循序漸進地向兒童和青少年提供這方面的教育，¹⁰ 總是以位格的全面培育為目標。

16. 有關基督信仰家庭於當代世界的使命，教宗若望保祿二世曾在以此為主題的宗座勸諭中，指出性教育有其重要地位，對個人很有價值。教宗說：「對於有必要提

育。請亦參閱：教宗碧岳十二世致加爾默羅會士信函：《宗座公報》43 (1951)，第734~738頁；致法國為人父母者信函：《宗座公報》43 (1951)，第730~734頁。教宗碧岳十二世的教導是大公會《天主教教育宣言》的前導。

6 參閱：《天主教教育宣言》，1。

7 同上。

8 參閱：梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議，《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》，49。

9 參閱：《天主教教育宣言》，5。

10 同上，3；參閱：《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》，52。

供清晰細緻的性教育的父母，愛的教育也是不可缺少的前提，而所指的愛是奉獻自我的愛。現今文化把性大大貶抑成最普通不過的事，以貶抑和輕賤的方法詮釋和實踐性，認為性只與身體和自私享樂有關。面對這種文化，父母提供教育時，必須堅定確保有關性的培育是真正並完全合乎人性的，因為性能豐富整個人，包括肉身、情感和靈魂，而性體現其最深層意義，在於引領人在愛中作出自我奉獻。」¹¹

17. 教宗繼而指出，學校應為父母服務並與父母合作，負責提供這樣的教育：「性教育是父母的基本權利與責任，無論在家裡或在他們所選擇和監督的教育機構中施行的性教育，都必須在父母嚴謹的督導下推行。就此而言，教會重申：學校與父母合作施行性教育時，應遵守輔助原則，並懷有那推動父母的同一精神。」¹²

18. 為使性的價值得以充分體現，「貞潔的教育（……）絕不可少。這樣的教育使人懂得尊重和體現身體的『配偶意義』。」¹³ 貞潔在於駕馭自我，有能力將性本能導向為愛服務，並將之整合於個人的發展。貞潔是天主的恩寵與我們的合作所結的果實，有助於協調人的不同方面，並克服那帶有罪性的人性軟弱，使所有人都能夠追隨天主給他們的召叫。

為致力推行受信仰光照的貞潔教育，「為人父母的基督徒在辨識聖召的標記時，應特別注意和重視有關童貞

11 《家庭團體》，37。

12 同上。

13 同上。

生活的教育，將童貞生活看作最卓絕的自我奉獻，而這奉獻正是性的真正意義。」¹⁴

19. 若望保祿二世的教導重視積極審視應被探索和肯定的價值，多於那不可違背的規範。然而，規範亦可解釋和表述人必須努力追求的價值。

教宗續說：「由於人在性方面的表現與其道德觀關係密切，教育必須引導子女認識並尊重倫理規範，將之看作必要和極有價值的保證，以促成個人在性方面以負責任的態度日漸成長。因此，教會堅決反對某種形式的性資訊。這類往往廣泛流傳的資訊偏離倫理原則，毫無建樹，在孩童還處於天真無邪的年紀便講述歡愉的經驗，使人失去內心的平安，誘導人作出敗壞的行為。」¹⁵

20. 因此，本文件從基督信仰的人觀出發，並參照教會訓導當局近年制定的原則，期望為教育工作者提供一些關於性教育的基本指引，並講解在實踐層面應注意的要求和步驟。

壹 若干基本原則

21. 每一種教育都是基於某種人觀。基督信仰的教育是要藉著發展人的整個存有，發展其精神與肉身、本性的恩賜，以及天主豐沛地賜給人的恩寵，而使人實現自

¹⁴ 同上。

¹⁵ 同上。

我。基督信仰的教育植根於信仰，這信仰「既以新的光芒照耀一切，並顯示天主對人的整個使命所有的計畫。」¹⁶

基督信仰的性觀點

22. 基督信仰的人觀認為身體具有某種特殊功能，有助於揭示生命與人的召叫有何意義。事實上，肉身的現實是人的精神賴以存在和活動的特有方式。這現實首先具有人類學方面的意義：「身體展現人」¹⁷、「表達位格」¹⁸，因此這是天主給人的第一個訊息，可說是一件「原始聖事」，「而這聖事可被理解為一個標記，有實效地在有形可見的世界傳送那自創世以來便隱藏在天主內的不可見的奧祕。」¹⁹

23. 此外，這現實還有與天主相關的意義：身體有助於揭示天主和祂的創造之愛，因為身體展現了人是受造物的現實，而且人必須仗賴一個基本恩賜：愛的恩賜。「這就是身體：見證了受造物是基本的恩賜，因此也見證了奉獻自我的根源乃是愛。」²⁰

24. 具有性特質的身體展現了人的召叫：這召叫就是建

¹⁶ 《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》，11。

¹⁷ 教宗若望保祿二世，公開接見集會，1979年11月14日：《教宗若望保祿二世的教導》，II~2，4，1979年，第1156頁。

¹⁸ 教宗若望保祿二世，公開接見集會，1980年1月9日：《教宗若望保祿二世的教導》，III~I，4，1980年，第90頁。

¹⁹ 教宗若望保祿二世，公開接見集會，1980年2月20日：《教宗若望保祿二世的教導》，III~I，4，1980年，第430頁。

²⁰ 教宗若望保祿二世，公開接見集會，1980年1月9日：《教宗若望保祿二世的教導》，III~I，4，1980年，第90頁。

立相互的關係，亦即彼此相愛和彼此奉獻自我。²¹ 最後，身體呼召男人和女人履行生兒育女的基本召叫，將之看作具有性特質的基本意義之一。²²

25. 性別之分決定了人的身分，但這差異沒有影響人在本性和尊嚴上的平等。²³

人按其本性，需要與他者建立關係，²⁴這是指彼此相愛的關係。兩性是互補的，兩者既有相似之處，也彼此各異。雖然兩性並不等同，但具有平等的位格尊嚴；兩者彼此平等、彼此不同、彼此圓滿。

26. 男人和女人作為受造的人類，構成兩種實現參與天主神聖存有的模式：他們是按照「天主的肖像和模樣」受造的，為圓滿履行此召叫，他們不能只是單獨一個，而是以夫婦的身分，即成為愛的團體。²⁵ 以結合和繁衍生育為目標，已婚男女參與天主愛的創造，藉著對方與天主共融。²⁶

21 「正是藉著這種深層的原初孤獨，人開始活在彼此交付的向度之中。表達這種彼此交付的，就是人的身體，在其具男性或女性特質的身體之原初真理中表達。人因彼此交付而表達出人是位格存有。身體『為』男性特質而表達女性特質，亦『為』女性特質而表達男性特質。這身體顯示了這種人與人的相互關係和位際共融。身體通過交付表達這共融，以交付作為位格的存有的基本特性。」（同上）

22 參閱：教宗若望保祿二世，公開接見集會，1980年3月26日：《教宗若望保祿二世的教導》，III-I，1980年，第737~741頁。

23 參閱：《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》，49。

24 同上，12。

25 同上；此部分講解創一27的社會性意義。

26 同上，47~52。

27. 罪惡損害了人原初清白無罪的狀態，以致人難以了解這些訊息。因此，解讀這些訊息成為一項道德任務，是託付給人的艱鉅工作：「在原罪後，男人和女人失去了原初清白無罪的恩寵。他們發現到，人體的配偶意義不再單純是天主的啟示和恩寵的一個現實。然而，這意義依然是一個責任，並藉著交付的道德意義而賦予人的。身體的配偶意義已銘刻於人心深處，可說是原初無罪模糊的回聲。」²⁷

身體同時是道德召叫的標記和工具。面對身體的這種功能，我們發現身體與聖事性救恩計畫之間的類比關係，因為聖事性救恩計畫正是恩寵與救恩臨於世人的具體途徑。

28. 由於現實世界的人傾向將性貶抑至僅是性交經驗，所以出現了傾向貶低性價值的反應，彷彿性根本不相稱於人。本指引正是要反駁這種貶低性的態度。

29. 「除非在天主聖言降生成人的奧蹟內，人的奧蹟是無從解釋的。」²⁸ 唯有回應天主的召叫而領受祂賦予的生命，人的存在才能獲取圓滿的意義。只有跟隨基督，人才能回應這個召叫，從而成為圓滿的人，逐漸成長，「成為成年人，達到基督圓滿年齡的程度」。²⁹

30. 在基督的奧祕光照下，性對我們來說是一個召叫，為實現聖神傾注在得救者心裡的愛。耶穌基督已藉著婚

27 教宗若望保祿二世，公開接見集會，1980年2月20日：《教宗若望保祿二世的教導》，III-I，2，1980年，第429頁。

28 《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》，22。

29 弗四13。

姻聖事，提升了這個召叫。

31. 耶穌也藉祂的言行，展示為天國持守童貞的召叫。³⁰ 童貞生活是一個愛的召叫，使人心得以更自由地愛天主。³¹ 童貞者不必背負婚姻之愛的責任，因而可以更無私地愛弟兄姊妹。

因此，為天國守童貞更能體現基督為祂的弟兄姊妹向聖父所作的自我奉獻，而且更準確地預示了永生的現實，一個完全以愛德體現的現實。³²

當然，童貞生活意味著捨棄婚姻形式的愛，但捨棄的目的是為更深入體現性的固有動力，亦即願意向他人奉獻自我，並藉著聖神的臨在，堅強和轉化這種生活，讓祂教導我們步武主耶穌，愛我們的聖父和弟兄姊妹。

32. 總而言之，性是為體現那些關係到特定倫理需要的不同價值。性導向位格之間的交流，有助人全面地發展成熟，並使人開放自己，在愛中奉獻自我。性亦與創世工程、生育繁殖和傳遞生命緊密相連，必須忠於這個內在目的。無論如何，愛與生育繁殖都是性的意義和價值，兩者彼此融合，因此不應以為可二擇其一，或以為兩者互相對立。

33. 兩性都各自有其情感生活的特色，體現在不同的生活方式，包括婚姻結合、為天國選擇的獻身獨身生活、尚未作出婚姻承諾或仍然獨身或選擇保持獨身的基督徒的生活。在上述所有情況下，人必須接納和整合其情

³⁰ 參閱：瑪十九3~12。

³¹ 參閱：格前七32~34。

³² 格前十三4~8；參閱：《家庭團體》，16。

感生活。

性教育的本質、目的和方法

34. 性教育的基本目標是充分了解性的本質和重要性，以及人怎樣藉著均衡全面的發展，達至心理上的成熟，同時也要達至所有信徒都必須培養的靈性成熟。³³

為達到這個目標，基督信仰的教育工作者須謹遵信仰的原則和使用不同的教學方法，同時考量當前的教育學對性所作的積極評估。

35. 根據基督信仰的人類學觀點，情感與性的教育必須考慮到人的整體性，並因而堅持整合生物、心理情感、社會和精神等元素。這種整合越趨困難，因為即使是信徒也背負著原罪的遺害。

真正的「培育」不僅在於提供知識，也必須特別注意意志、感受和情緒方面的教育。事實上，為使情感與性的生活發展成熟，必須懂得自我控制，而其前提是培養德行，如謙遜、節制、尊重自己和他人、對近人開放等。

然而，若沒有來自耶穌基督的救恩，這一切都不可能。

36. 即使性在眾人身上以不同的方式體現，教育也必須首先促進人的成熟。這種成熟「不僅關係到接納性價值是整體人性價值的一部分，也關係到交付的能力；那是指奉獻的能力、無私地愛的能力。當這種能力充分實現後，人便能夠隨心所欲地與人接觸，懂得控制自己的情

³³ 參閱：梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議，《教會憲章》，39。

緒，並認真地投入關係之中。」³⁴

37. 基督信仰所啟發的當代教育學認為：受教育者是教育的主體，應考量其整體性和複雜性。他必須獲得幫助，尤其是在信任的關係中接受幫助，讓他發展向善的能力。這一點很容易受到忽視，人們反而過分重視提供簡單的資訊，而忽略性教育的其他方面。事實上，在教育過程中，雖然學習新觀念非常重要，但也要認識相關的價值和深刻地意識到成年期的個人責任，才能使這樣的學習更有意義。

38. 由於性會對整個人產生影響，我們必須注意幾個方面：健康狀況、家庭和社會環境的影響、學生接收的印象和反應、意志的教育、靈性生命在恩寵扶助下的成長進度等。

39. 至目前為止所闡述的內容是為輔助和指導教育工作者塑造青少年的人格。教育工作者必須激勵他們對所接收的印象作出批判思考，而且在傳授價值觀時，必須為真實的靈性生活作證，包括個人和團體的靈性生活。

40. 鑑於倫理道德與性緊密相連，在教授有關倫理規範的知識時，也要清晰講解動機，為使人能夠從心而發地遵守這些規範。

41. 當代教育學充分意識到一個事實：人的生命不斷演變，而個人培育是一個持續的過程。在不同人生階段表現不同特點的性特質也是如此。顯然，性特質在其邁向成熟的每個階段，都會展現其豐饒和顯著的困難。

34 教育部，《司鐸獨身培育教育指南》，22，1974年4月11日。

42. 教育工作者應顧及這個演變過程的各個基本階段：原始本能最初表現為尚未發展完全的狀態，然後在善惡之間舉棋不定。接著，在教育的幫助下，感受穩定下來，責任感也增強了。自私的態度逐漸消除，某種克修精神得以建立，懂得接納和愛他人；生殖力、情慾、愛和愛德等各種性元素獲得整合。即使未必總是達至完美的成果，但那些接近目標的人，比我們想像的更多。

43. 基督信仰的教育工作者深信：以信仰為背景才能施行完備的性教育。基督徒明白到藉著聖洗與復活的基督結合後，他們的身體也因耶穌通傳給他們的聖神，而充滿生命並獲得淨化了。³⁵

復活的基督藉著聖神，在信徒身上實現和延續逾越奧蹟。信徒對復活奧蹟的信仰使他認識到肉身復活的召叫。因著聖神，肉身的復活已經展開了。寓居在義人身上的聖神是復活的保證和種子，使人邁向圓滿和最終的復活。

44. 罪存在於個人身上，也存在於社會特有的文化之中，以其導致的紊亂施加強大的壓力，迫使人以違背基督法律的方式理解和活出性。聖保祿稱之為罪惡的法律。³⁶ 有時候，經濟結構、國家法律、大眾媒體、大都市的生活模式都是對人產生負面影響的因素。基督信仰的教育注意到這一點並提供指引，指出怎樣以負責任的態度抗衡這些影響。

45. 藉著以信德領受的天主聖言，藉著祈禱和領受聖

35 參閱：格前六15、19~20。

36 參閱：羅七18~23。

事，我們獲得天主的恩寵支持，因而有可能不斷作出努力。首要的是聖體聖事，這聖事讓我們藉著基督的犧牲與祂共融結合。在這聖事中，年輕信徒領受生命之糧，作為他們的「天路行糧」（viaticum），幫助他們面對和克服在世旅途的各種障礙。和好聖事藉其特有的恩寵和神修指導的輔助，不僅增強我們抵抗邪惡的能力，亦使我們有勇氣在跌倒後重新站起來。

教會在教會團體內施行和慶祝這些聖事。積極投入團體的信友從聖事汲取力量，得以按其生活方式實踐貞潔的生活。

46. 個人和團體的祈禱是不可替代的方式，使我們得以從天主獲得必要的力量，以信守聖洗的承諾，抵抗受罪惡傷害的人性衝動，並平衡環境的負面影響所引發的情緒。

代我們轉求的聖神幫助我們在日常工作和關懷近人的行動中，貫徹地實踐忠信與真誠、神貧與謙遜等福音價值。內修生活帶來基督的喜樂，使我們戰勝邪惡，其力量遠勝任何道德主義和心理援助。

藉著與主頻繁和親密地接觸，每一個人——特別是青少年——都能夠獲得實踐純潔生活所需的力量和熱忱。此外，他們將能平安地控制自己和慷慨地獻身他人，從而履行生而為人和基督信仰的召叫。

誰都不應漠視這一切情況的重要性。事實上，今天有許多人默認或明認他們對人性履行終生承諾的能力感到悲觀，特別是婚姻承諾。基督信仰的教育必須加強青少年

的信心，讓他們在認識終生承諾並為此作好準備的過程中，抱有一個信念：天主會以祂的恩寵扶助他們，使每一個人都能夠實現祂的計畫。

47. 聖人實踐了效法基督並與基督結合的生活，將之傳留給我們，成為我們盼望度貞潔生活的最深層動機。貞潔生活是崇高的理想，單憑人性的力量無法實現。

童貞瑪利亞是基督信仰生活的卓越模範。多個世紀以來，教會一直深信敬禮聖母有助信友實現這個理想，對年輕信徒尤其有助益。

貳 實施性教育的責任

家庭的功能

48. 教育主要是家庭的責任。「家庭是最富於人性的學校。」³⁷ 因此，家庭是履行教育責任並提供循序漸進的性教育的最佳環境。家庭有其情感色彩，因而能夠接受最敏感的現實而不會產生創傷，並將這些現實和諧地整合於豐富而均衡的人格。

49. 為使孩子自誕生後得以均衡地成長，在家庭中體驗的情感和互信是必要條件。父母與子女的關係有賴本性上的情感連繫。如要讓這種連繫發揮最正面的效果，父

37 《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》，52；參閱：《家庭團體》，37。

母應在性方面保持安寧和平衡的態度，並因應子女的年齡和發展階段，與子女建立基於信任與對話的關係。

50. 為有效指導子女解決當下的問題，成年人在提供理論知識之前，必須以其行為建立榜樣。基督徒父母必須明白他們的榜樣是對教育子女最有效的貢獻。這一切使我們確信：基督信仰的理想是一個在家庭內體驗的現實。

51. 父母應開放自己，與共同負責培育的教育工作者合作。這將對青少年的成長過程產生正面影響。父母的理論知識和經驗將幫助子女認識男女現實的價值和特有角色。

52. 婚姻生活的圓滿實現可促致家庭的聖善和穩定，但這取決於父母在其整個培育過程中，所接受的良心培育和所學習的價值。在家庭內活出的倫理價值更容易傳遞給子女。³⁸ 在這些倫理價值中，尊重自母胎開始的生命，並尊重任何年齡和任何狀況的人非常重要。我們必須幫助青少年了解、欣賞和尊重這些基本的生命價值。

鑑於這些價值對基督信仰生活的重要性，而且對子女認識司鐸或獻身生活的聖召也很重要，因此性教育也有其教會的層面。

教會團體

53. 信徒藉著聖洗由慈母教會誕生。教會作為信徒的母親，也肩負著基督賦予她的教育使命。教會履行這個使

38 參閱：《家庭團體》，37。

命的方式是宣講福音、與天主和弟兄姊妹圓滿共融、自覺和積極地參與感恩祭和各種使徒活動等。³⁹ 教會團體對生命開放，成為適合學習基督信仰倫理觀的環境，讓信友在其中學習為福音作證。

54. 在家庭內施行性教育往往遇到困難，因此基督信仰團體必須更加努力與家庭合作教育已受洗者，司鐸尤其要作出努力。在這方面，天主教學校、堂區和其他教會機構都必須與家庭合作。

55. 由於信仰有其教會面向，因此基督信仰團體須共負責任，協助已受洗者在生活中言行一致，認清他們在聖洗中承擔的責任。主教有責任因應個別教會團體的需要，提供合適的規範和指引。

要理講授與性教育

56. 要理講授是可革新整個教會團體的肥沃土壤。因此，為幫助信眾培養成熟的信德，教會必須在基督和教會的奧祕光照下，闡明性的正面價值，將這些價值整合於童貞生活和婚姻。

要理講授應強調基督徒的首要召叫是愛，而愛的召叫是藉兩種不同的途徑實現：婚姻或為天國獨身。⁴⁰ 「婚姻與童貞生活是體現和活出同一奧蹟的兩種途徑，而這個奧蹟就是天主與其子民所締結的盟約。」⁴¹

39 參閱：《天主教教育宣言》，3~4；參閱：教宗碧岳十一世，《主的導師》通諭，第53頁及其後、第56頁及其後。

40 參閱：《家庭團體》，11。

41 《家庭團體》，16。

57. 為使家庭能夠確定要理講授完全沒有偏離教會訓導，牧者須致力甄選和培訓負責人員，以及釐定要理講授的內容和方法。

58. 基於第48號所述，有一個事實總是正確的：對於最切身的事宜，不論是生理或情感方面的事宜，應施行個別的教育，最理想是在家庭內進行。

59. 在家庭內實行的要理講授有其重要地位。若父母感到未有足夠能力履行這個責任，他們可以求助於他們信任的人。明智、審慎和符合年齡需要的教學可避免對子女造成創傷，並有助於子女更容易解決性方面的問題。無論如何，正規課程並不足夠。為整合這些課程，有必要善用日常生活的各種機會。

婚前要理講授

60. 青年婚前培育的基本內容在於講解基督信仰倫理觀有關性的觀點。要理講授教導我們從婚姻的角度審視性。可是，成功的要理講授必須持續不斷地以合適的方法進行，形成一個真正的慕道期，並致力支持和堅強準夫婦持守貞潔，讓他們作好準備以符合基督精神的方式度婚姻生活，履行夫婦在天主子民當中的特殊使命。

61. 準夫婦必須認識婚姻的深層意義，明白婚姻是愛的結合，目的是夫婦的自我實現和生育。穩定的婚姻和夫妻之愛有其不可或缺的條件，必須要：貞潔與自制、品格的培育與犧牲的精神。婚姻生活會經歷一些困難，而且在我們這個時代的環境下，這些困難更是嚴峻。若在青少年時期培養貞潔，為婚姻生活的貞潔作好適當的準

備，將會對夫婦極有助益。他們也要學習教會訓導宣講的神律，作為良心培育的必要內容。⁴²

62. 婚姻聖事為夫婦指明聖洗的恩寵和召叫。當基督徒夫婦學習婚姻聖事的價值和偉大，會懂得如何自覺地實踐倫理生活的特別價值和責任，將之看作恩寵和聖神的行動的要求和果實，「並藉著這件特別的聖事獲得堅強和祝聖，以滿全相稱於其身分的尊嚴和責任。」⁴³

63. 此外，為按照天主的計畫活出性特質和履行其責任，⁴⁴ 夫婦必須認識調節生育的自然方法。如若望保祿二世所說：「……必須盡其所能，使所有的夫婦——尤其是準備結婚的青年——都可藉著夫婦、醫生和專家所提供的清晰適時的資訊和教育，獲得這樣的知識。」⁴⁵ 值得注意的是，今天人們經常吹捧的避孕措施有違這些基督信仰的理想，也違反教會以導師身分教導的倫理規範。因此，教會更有迫切需要向適齡的青年傳授有關人工避孕法的教會訓導和講解背後的理據，幫助他們作好準備，以負責任的態度締結充滿愛並向生命開放的婚姻結合。

給成年人的指引

63. 應讓成年人就人性愛情的課題，接受扎實的要理培

42 參閱：教宗保祿六世，《人類的生命》通諭，17及其後，1968年7月25日；《宗座公報》60（1968），第493頁及其後。

43 《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》，48。

44 參閱：《人類的生命》，10。

45 《家庭團體》，33。有關目前廣泛傳播的阻孕宣傳，參閱：《人類的生命》，14-17。

育，藉此為子女的性教育奠定基礎。如此，成年人的人性得以在信仰光照下發展成熟，並在他們與新一代建立對話的過程中，讓這成熟的人性發揮關鍵的作用。這種要理講授不僅指明適用的方法，也就特定問題促成適當的交流，介紹適用的教材，並允許專家的參與，讓專家就困難的個案提供實用的協助。

公民社會的責任

64. 個人在社會中看到人們所實踐和體驗的價值，而這些價值在培育過程中發揮著重大的影響。因此，由於這關係到共同福祉，公民社會有其責任，⁴⁶ 須確保學校提供健全的實體和倫理環境，以及締造合適的條件，以回應父母提出的正面要求，或獲得他們的認同。

65. 政府的責任是保護公民不要遭受不義和道德淪喪的情況所害，如虐待兒童和各種形式的性暴力、衣著墮落、恣情縱欲、色情物品，以及操控人口統計資訊等。

教育使用社會傳播媒體的責任

66. 在今日世界，社會傳播媒體因其滲透性和暗示效果，對青少年產生影響，特別是在性教育的領域影響他們，持續不斷地提供可形成條件反射的資訊和訓練，而且比家庭所提供者更有影響力。

對於兒童受各種社會傳播媒體影響的情況，若望保祿二世指出：「面對這個世界和成年人，他們感到著迷但毫

⁴⁶ 參閱：《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》，26；參閱：《人類的生命》，23。

無防禦能力，自然而然地接受這些媒體給他們的一切，不懂辨別善惡……他們受『小屏幕』所吸引，模仿媒體展示給他們的各種行為，並先於其他人和比其他人更敏銳地經驗到所引發的情感和感受。」⁴⁷

67. 然而，必須強調的是：因著同一的技術發展，我們再不能那麼輕易和適時地作出必要的監控。因此，為施行完善的性教育，有迫切需要「特別注意媒體的年輕受眾，讓他們學習在使用這些媒體時懂得節制和自律。此外，也要讓他們努力更深入了解所見、所聞、所讀，與教育工作者和熟悉有關課題的專家討論，並學習怎樣作出正確的判斷。」⁴⁸

68. 為捍衛兒童在這個領域的權利，若望保祿二世促請所有負責任的基督徒秉持良心行事，而為人父母者和社會傳播媒體經營者尤應如此。他們不應以中立和尊重兒童的自然發展為藉口，因為這實際上是一種令人憂慮的冷漠態度。⁴⁹

「為了共同福祉，政府當局對此事當負起特殊責任。」⁵⁰ 那些規管社會傳播媒體的法規，特別是規管雜誌、電影、廣播和電視節目、展覽、表演和廣告的法規，應致力保護社會的道德風氣，尤其要注意青少年的道德觀。

⁴⁷ 教宗若望保祿二世，《第十三屆世界傳播日文告》，1979年5月23日：《宗座公報》71（1979-II），第930頁。

⁴⁸ 梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議，《大眾傳播工具法令》，10；參閱：宗座社會傳播委員會，《共融與發展》牧靈指引，68：《宗座公報》63（1971），第619頁。

⁴⁹ 參閱：教宗若望保祿二世，《第十三屆世界傳播日文告》，第930~933頁。

⁵⁰ 《大眾傳播工具法令》，12。

學校在性教育方面的責任

69. 在不影響前文所述由家庭負起主要責任的情況下，學校的角色是輔助和補足父母的工作，協助兒童和青少年對性培養正確的態度：「性是關係到整個人——按天主的肖像受造的男性或女性——的價值和責任。」⁵¹

70. 性教育必須包含彼此對話，這有助於在學生心裡培養一種能夠激勵和引導個人行為的傾向。這種態度密切關係到生命觀所啟發的價值。性教育不能被看作一般的科目或理論知識而已，也不僅是一個循序漸進的課程。性教育有其特定的目標：讓學生的情感發展成熟、學習自我駕馭，並在人際關係中作出正確的行為。

71. 學校可以運用各種不同的方式，為達到這個目標作出努力。所有話題都可成為討論性問題的良機；教師應時常積極而審慎地善用這些機會，並對這些機會和教學方法作出具體的評估。

個別的性教育始終有其優先價值，不能隨意交給學校團體的任何成員負責。事實上，正如下文所述，除了正確的判斷力、責任感、專業能力、情感成熟和羞恥感外，這樣的教育要求教育工作者具有特別敏銳的觸覺，以鼓勵兒童和青少年探討有關愛情和性的問題，而不會擾亂他們的心理發展。

72. 即使教育工作者具備施行群體性教育所必需的條件，也有必要考慮有關群體的具體情況，尤其要注意男女混合的群體，在處理這類群體時要特別審慎。無論如

⁵¹ 《家庭團體》，32。

何，主管當局必須與家長一起審視施行性教育的場合。鑑於問題的複雜性，理想的做法是安排時間與學生進行個人面談，讓他們有機會尋求建議或澄清，因為如有其他人在場，學生或會出於羞怯而不敢發問。只有學校與家庭密切合作，才能確保家長與教師能夠進行富有成效的經驗交流，讓學生受益。⁵²

主教應考慮學校的規例和當地的情況，提供有關施行群體性教育的指引，特別是有關男女混合群體的指引。

73. 有時候，學校生活可能發生某些事件，有需要及時介入。在這類情況下，學校當局應基於合作原則聯絡有關家長，協定適當的解決方案。

74. 學校可邀請能力勝任且人格均衡、並獲家長信任的人與學生進行個人面談，以幫助他們的情感發展成熟，並協助他們的人際關係循正確方向發展。當遇到較棘手的個案，這種以個人指導的方式所作的介入尤為重要；要是情況嚴重，必須向有關方面的專家求助。

75. 為培養和發展均衡的人格，必須營造安定的氛圍，負責人員亦要彼此諒解、互相信任和一起合作。為此，應尊重各教育工作者特有的才能、責任和他們選擇的不同方法。

適當的教材

76. 為提供完善的性教育，適當的教材會有所幫助。為準備合適的教材，有必要請倫理和牧靈神學方面的專

⁵² 參閱：上文，58。

家、傳道員、教育家和天主教心理學家提供協助。對於學生接觸到的資料，應特別留神。

有些以性為題材的教科書因其自然主義的特色，對兒童和青少年有害。要是所採用的圖片和視聽資料毫不掩飾地展示學生未作好準備面對的性現實，所造成的遺害更大，會給學生留下產生創傷的印象，或是喚起不良的好奇心，誘使他們行惡。對於這個需要審慎處理的課題，教育工作者須認真考慮到不負責任的態度會對學生造成多嚴重的傷害。

青少年群體

77. 在教育方面，除了家庭和學校的行動，還有一個不可忽視的因素，而且這因素往往對個人培育產生更深影響。這因素就是在閒暇時間組成的青少年群體。這類群體深深影響青少年的生活。人類科學認為「群體」是培育的正面因素，因為要是缺乏有效的人際關係，便不可能發展成熟的人格。

參

性教育的要求和方式

78. 這個任務既複雜又敏感，因此要求教育工作者作好充分準備、在行動上符合特定的水準，並特別關注特定的目標。

教育工作者的培育

79. 教育工作者的成熟人格、他們接受的培訓和心理方面的平衡對學生有很大影響。為施行有助益的教育，他們必須對性的意義和價值抱有正確而全面的認識，並平安地將之整合於其人格之中。他們的能力源於成熟的情感多於理論知識。儘管如此，鑑於教育工作現今尤其困難，他們也要學習有助實行這工作的科學知識。此外，與家長會面亦很有幫助。

80. 教育工作者應具備的素質來自全面性的培育。這種培育須基於正面、專業和積極的生命觀，並為實現這生命觀而不斷努力。這種培育不只是必要的專業培訓，也會正視人格上較為個人的層面，包括信仰和靈性層面。重視信仰和靈性層面的培育可確保他們採納基督信仰的原則，藉此在超性層面支持教育工作。

81. 在家庭環境以外履行任務的教育工作者須在心理教育學範疇，接受合適和嚴謹的培訓，使他們有能力處理那些需要特別關注的特殊情況。他們也必須有能力向家長提供意見，特別是在其子女需要心理學家時提供協助。

82. 除了一般的課題和病理個案外，現實中還有許多或多或少患有嚴重和長期問題的個人。儘管他們確實需要援助，但這些患者經常未能獲得合適的治療。在這些情況下，除了醫學治療外，他們也需要教育工作者不斷的支持和指導。

教育方法應有的條件

83. 應對情況有透澈的認識，因為所採用的方法不僅會深深影響這種敏感的教育成效，而且也會影響各負責方之間的合作。實際上，所提出的批評通常是針對部分教育工作者採用的方法，而非他們的教育行動本身。教學方法必須符合明確的條件，不僅要有助於學生和教育工作者，也要有助達成教育的目標。

學生的需要與教育行動

84. 情感與性方面的教育比其他方面的教育更要顧及學生的身心發展，因此必須時常按個人的需要作出調整。在某些情況下，必須對學生採取積極行動，在預計到學生將面對特別困難的情況時，協助他們作好準備，或預先告誡他們提防迫在眉睫或永久性的危險。

85. 然而，必須尊重這種教育循序漸進的特性。教育行動應按部就班，注意身心發展的不同階段，明白到身心發展需要更仔細的準備和較長的成長時間。有必要確保學生理解所教導的價值、知識和動機，並明白他們在自己身上觀察到的變化和演變，而教育工作者也要適當地指出其成因、關聯和目的。

教育行動應有的條件

86. 為有效幫助青少年和諧均衡地發展，教育工作者必須按他們肩負的特殊角色來調整他們的教學行動。

學生並非以劃一方式從不同的教育工作者認識或接受所

傳授的訊息和動機，因為不同的教育工作者以不同方式接觸學生最個人的一面。這些教育行動必須保持客觀明智。

87. 教育工作者在循序漸進地傳授訊息時，要逐步作出解說，但總要符合真理。不要讓這些解說因緘默或缺乏坦率而受到扭曲。然而，為審慎行事，教育工作者不僅要因應學生的期望適當地調整課題，還要選擇合適的語言、方式和時機來施行教學。這需要顧及孩子的羞恥感。此外，教育工作者也要注意父母的影響：父母對性教育的關注、家庭教育的特點、他們的生命觀、他們對其他教育環境有多開放等。

88. 首先，我們必須堅持性在人性和基督信仰方面的價值，並教導學生欣賞這些價值，激發他們渴望在個人生活和人際關係中將之實現。教育工作者應對教育行動充滿信心，而不會忽視性發展所涉的各種困難，也不要形成過分執著的態度。當教育工作者以堅定的信念展示真正價值，並以生活的見證給予肯定，青少年心裡必會產生共鳴。

89. 鑑於性教育對個人的全面培育非常重要，教育工作者考慮到性的各方面及其對整個人格的影響，應特別致力不要讓知識與相關的價值割裂，因為是價值使生理、心理和社會層面的資訊具有意義和方向。因此，在講解倫理規範時，必須指出其理據及所伴隨的價值。

有關羞恥感和友誼的教育

90. 羞恥感是人格的一個基本組成部分，在倫理層面上

可被視為捍衛人性尊嚴和真愛的警誡心。

羞恥感傾向於對某些態度有所反應，並遏制使個人尊嚴蒙羞的行為。羞恥感是必要和有效的途徑，有助控制本能、使真愛開花結果、將情感與性方面的生活融合於人的均衡發展。羞恥感在教學上相當重要，必須獲得重視。因此，兒童和青少年須學會尊重他們的身體，將之看作天主的恩賜、基督的肢體和聖神的宮殿。他們須學會抵抗周圍的邪惡，擁有清晰的觀念和想像力，在人與人的情感關係中尋找和表達真正的人性愛情及其所有的靈性元素。

91. 為此，應展示具體和吸引的德行典範，培養審美意識，激發對美的追求，包括大自然、藝術和倫理生活展現的美。此外，應教導青少年學習以無私的信仰熱忱和愛來體驗情感和靈性的價值。

92. 友誼是情感成熟的頂峰，有別於普通志同道合者的情誼。兩者的分別在於友誼有其內在特性、朋友的互相交流可促成真正的共融，以及朋友之間會彼此慷慨相待，且關係穩定。對人格培育的個人和社會面向來說，友誼的教育可成為非常重要的因素。

93. 友誼使年輕男女連繫起來，而且當友誼停留在普通朋友的情感表達時，有助於雙方彼此認識和互相尊重。另一方面，要是友誼發展為性關係或是有此傾向，便失去成熟友誼的真正意義，而危害相關的關係和未來可能締結的婚姻，也會使人忽略獻身生活召叫的可能。

肆 若干特別的問題

教育工作者在履行其使命時，或要面對下文所述的若干特別問題。

94. 性教育必須引導青少年意識到性的不同表達和動力，並認識須予尊重的人性價值。真愛有能力向他人開放、慷慨待人、為他人的益處而獻身於他人；真愛懂得如何尊重對方的人格和自由；真愛並不自私，不會在對方身上尋求己益；⁵³ 真愛會奉獻自我，不求占有對方。另一方面，性本能如不加約束，則會淪落至僅為發生性行為而已，並傾向於占有對方，尋求即時的個人滿足。

95. 親密關係必須僅限於婚姻之內，因為只有這樣才能按天主的旨意，使這種關係的結合意義和生育意義建立不可分割的連繫。性關係的目的是維繫、確認和表達一個終生的生命共融：結為「一體」。⁵⁴ 這是藉著實現「人性」、「完全」、「忠貞」、「生育繁殖」的愛，亦即婚姻之愛，而達至的共融。⁵⁵ 因此，婚姻之外的性關係是嚴重的錯亂，因為這種性關係是在服務一個尚未存在的現實，⁵⁶ 是一種未能在兩人的生活中客觀反映的語言，還沒有存在於一個終生的團體內。這團體是必須獲得公民社會認可和保障的結合；對於天主教夫婦而

53 參閱：格前三三5。

54 瑪十九5。

55 《人類的生命》，9。

56 參閱：《人的位格》，7。

言，也要獲得教會團體的認可和保障。

96. 越來越多青年全身投入男女關係，但在這關係尚未發展圓滿便發生性行為，而且這個情況越來越普遍。這類性行為是道德錯亂，因為這是在婚姻外發生的性行為。

97. 性教育有助青少年發現愛的深層價值，明白到上述的行為有礙他們的情感成熟發展，因為這些行為導向一種出於本能的交往，而非建立以位格為中心的關係，而且往往被有所保留的態度和自我中心的計算所削弱，因而缺乏真正的位格關係應有的特質，更非終生的關係。真正的教育會引導青少年走向成熟和控制自我，而這是自覺的選擇和個人努力的成果。

98. 性教育的任務是提升對個人衝動的駕馭，並在這方面不斷進步，以便在適當時候投入真正的和自我奉獻的愛。我們可能要面對一個特別複雜和難以處理的問題：手淫及其對個人整體成長的影響。根據天主教的教義，手淫「構成嚴重的道德錯亂」，⁵⁷ 主要原因是手淫以本質上違反目的之方式運用性官能，而不是按照天主的計畫，為愛和生命服務。⁵⁸

99. 富有洞見的教育工作者和輔導員必須致力識別這種偏差行為的成因，以幫助青少年克服這種習慣背後的不成熟狀況。從教育的角度，應注意手淫和其他形式的自體性行為是更深層次問題的症狀，是這些問題驅使人試圖借助這類行為克服由性而產生的緊張。因此，教學行

57 同上·9。

58 同上。

動必須更看重成因，而非直接遏抑現象。⁵⁹

在考量手淫的客觀嚴重性時，必須審慎評估個人主體的責任。⁶⁰

100. 為幫助青少年在愛德共融之中感到獲得接納，並擺脫自我封閉的態度，教育工作者「不應誇大手淫的事實，同時保持他對有關學生的尊重和關愛。」⁶¹ 此外，必須幫助學生融入社交生活，開放自己，對他人感興趣，以便能夠擺脫這種自體性行為，而培養成熟的情感所表現的自我奉獻的愛。與此同時，教育工作者應鼓勵學生借助基督信仰的克修傳統所提倡的方法，如祈禱和領聖事，並參與踐行公義和愛德的工作。

101. 同性戀妨礙個人在性方面發展成熟，包括個人或人際關係方面的成熟。遇上這類個案時，學生與教育工作者必須完全客觀地面對這個問題。

「在牧靈上，這些同性戀者必須獲得諒解和支持，以期克服他們的個人困難和社會調適不良的情況，也要審慎判斷他們的罪責；可是，即使認為同性戀行為符合當事人本身的狀況，任何牧靈方法也不得對此等行為給予道德辯解。

根據客觀的道德秩序，同性戀關係並非本質性和必不可少的行為。⁶²

59 同上。

60 同上。

61 《司鐸獨身培育教育指南》·63。

62 《人的位格》·8。

102. 家庭和教育工作者的首要任務是致力識別激發同性戀的因素，找出到底是生理或心理因素使然，還是錯誤教育或缺乏正常性發展的結果，或是後天養成的習慣或壞榜樣的影響，或是由其他因素所致。⁶³ 更具體地說，家庭和教育工作者在識別這種錯亂的成因時，必須考慮教會訓導當局建議的判斷標準，並善用不同學科的貢獻。事實上，他們也要評估另一方面的因素：缺乏關愛、有欠成熟、強迫性的衝動、誘惑、社交孤立、衣著墮落、淫褻的節目和刊物等。然而，更深層次的因素在於人性固有的軟弱。那是原罪的遺害，致使人失去對天主和他人的觸覺，並在性方面帶來影響。⁶⁴

103. 當家庭和教育工作者能夠識別和了解背後的成因後，應為全面成長的過程提供有效的協助：以諒解的態度接納他們；營造信任的氛圍；鼓勵個人的解放和加強自我控制的能力；提倡在道德方面作出真正的努力，轉化為對天主和近人的愛；如有必要，應建議他們向那些認識和尊重教會訓導的人尋求醫療與心理方面的援助。

104. 要是在一個放縱的社會，當中沒有可讓生命建基其上的價值，那麼這會促成逃避現實的態度，特別會影響青少年。他們的理想與殘酷的生活產生矛盾，因而形成張力；要是意志薄弱，可能導致以毒品逃避現實，並摧毀自己。

這是一個越來越嚴重的問題，為教育工作者帶來重大挑戰。有些精神藥物會加強性快感，而且普遍來說會降低

⁶³ 參閱：同上。

⁶⁴ 參閱：羅—26~28；參閱：照此類推，《人的位格》，9。

自我控制的能力，從而削弱防禦能力。長期濫用藥物會導致身心受到摧殘。毒品往往關係到被曲解的自主和性功能紊亂。濫藥者的心理狀況，以及他們所處的孤立、被遺棄和反叛的生活，都會形成容易導致性侵犯的環境。

105. 矯正式介入的目的是讓個人的內心和外在行為經歷深入的轉化。這是一個勞累和漫長的過程，因為這種介入必須協助當事人重建人格、人際關係和價值觀。較為有效的措施是預防性的行動，致力避免深層次的情感缺陷。我們應藉著愛與關懷，教導學生認識價值和尊嚴，以及重視生命、身體、性和健康。公民社會和教會團體必須懂得如何及時接納那些處於困境、孤獨無靠，缺乏安全感的青年，幫助他們投入學習和工作，讓他們善用空閒時間，為他們提供健康的場所聚會交流、喜樂生活和積極投入活動，並給他們機會培養新的情感關係和團結精神。

其中，為人服務的體育運動富有教育意義，不僅可強身健體，也是健康的休閒活動，讓青少年藉著鍛鍊自己，放下自私的態度，並與人交流。只有真正的、受過教育的、獲得幫助的、有所提升的自由，才能保護青少年不尋求毒品和性帶來的虛幻自由。

總結

106. 我們可以從上文的反思總結說：在當前的社會與文化處境中，有迫切需要依照梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議的教導，以積極有序的方式，為兒童和青少年提供情感與性

方面的教育。在這個問題上，沉默並非有效的行事方式，特別是因為目前有許多擅於運用暗示語言的「隱形說服者」。他們在今天的影響無容置疑，因此父母不僅要致力彌補那些不當和有害的介入所造成的傷害，而且最重要的是要妥善保護他們的子女，為子女提供積極和令人信服的教育。

107. 應捍衛兒童和青少年的基本權利，使他們的人格以符合天主子女的尊嚴的方式，均衡和完整地發展。這主要是父母的任務。事實上，個人如要發展成熟，必須在獲得愛與信任保護的教育過程中，持續接受教育，而這正是家庭環境的特色。

108. 教會在履行其使命時，有責任和權利關心已受洗者的倫理培育。

學校的整個教育事業必須與家庭的行動一致。對於這個敏感課題，尤其要與家庭合作。

這要求教育工作者和那些公開或幕後參與教育的人，對其行動目的有正確認識，而且獲得適當培訓，能夠以審慎的態度並在充滿信任和平安的環境中行事。

109. 為使情感與性方面的資訊和教育發揮成效，應配合及時的行動、審慎的態度和適宜的表述，而且最好是以個人形式施行。這種教育的成果將非常取決於教育工作者在講解有關生命與愛的價值時，是否抱有符合人性和基督信仰的理念。

110. 這任務需要細心、原則、耐心和勇氣，也要求對教育事業抱有獻身的精神，但基督信仰的教育工作者，無

論是家庭的父親或母親、教師、司鐸，還是任何在這方面負有責任的人，在今天特別容易受到誘惑，試圖將這任務委託給別人。因此，在本文件的最後部分，有必要重申這方面的教育工作對基督信徒來說，首先是信德的工作，必須依靠恩寵行事：事實上，性教育的各方面都受到信仰的啟迪，並從信仰和恩寵獲取不可缺少的力量。聖保祿致迦拉達人書指出：自制和節制是聖神的效果，唯獨聖神能夠在信徒身上成就這樣的事。是天主賜予光明，是天主賜予足夠的力量。

111. 教育部呼籲各地主教團促成父母、基督信仰團體和教育工作者的團結，讓他們在這個對青年的未來和社會福祉那麼重要的領域，攜手合作。聖部邀請我們互相信任，尊重各方特有的權利和能力，一起肩負這個教育使命，以推行全面的基督信仰培育。

羅馬

1983年11月1日——諸聖節

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SACRED CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN HUMAN LOVE

Outlines for sex education

INTRODUCTION

1. The harmonious development of the human person progressively reveals in each of us the image of a child of God. “True education aims at the formation of the human person with respect to his ultimate goal”.¹ Treating Christian education, Vatican Council II drew attention to the necessity of offering “a positive and prudent sex education” to children and youth.²

The Congregation for Catholic Education, within the sphere of its competence, considers it proper to make its contribution for the application of the Conciliar Declarations, as some Episcopal Conferences have done already.

2. This document, drawn up with the help of educational experts and submitted to wide consultation, sets itself a precise objective: to examine the pedagogic aspect of sex education, indicating appropriate guidelines for the integral formation of a Christian, according to the vocation of each.

Also, though it does not make explicit citations at every turn, it always presupposes the doctrinal principles and moral norms

¹ Vatican Council II: Decl. *Gravissimum educationis*, n. 1 .

² Ibid.

pertaining to the matter as proposed by the Magisterium.

3. The Congregation for Catholic Education is aware of the cultural and social differences existing in different countries. These guidelines, therefore, should be adapted by the respective Episcopates to the pastoral necessities of each local Church.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SEXUALITY

4. Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being, of manifestation, of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love. Therefore it is an integral part of the development of the personality and of its educative process: “It is, in fact, from sex that the human person receives the characteristics which, on the biological, psychological and spiritual levels, make that person a man or a woman, and thereby largely condition his or her progress towards maturity and insertion into society”.³

5. Sexuality characterises man and woman not only on the physical level, but also on the psychological and spiritual, making its mark on each of their expressions. Such diversity, linked to the complementarity of the two sexes, allows thorough response to the design of God according to the vocation to which each one is called.

Sexual intercourse, ordained towards procreation, is the maximum expression on the physical level of the communion of love of the married. Divorced from this context of reciprocal gift - a reality which the Christian enjoys, sustained and enriched

³ S. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics, *The Human Person*, 29th. December, 1975, AAS 68 (1976) p. 77, n.1 .

in a particular way by the grace of God it loses its significance, exposes the selfishness of the individual, and is a moral disorder.⁴

6. Sexuality, oriented, elevated and integrated by love acquires truly human quality. Prepared by biological and psychological development, it grows harmoniously and is achieved in the full sense only with the realisation of affective maturity, which manifests itself in unselfish love and in the total gift of self.

THE ACTUAL SITUATION

7. One can see - among Christians, too - that there are notable differences with regard to sex education. In today's climate of moral disorientation a danger arises, whether of a harmful conformism or prejudice which falsifies the intimate nature of being human, ushered whole from the hands of the Creator.

8. In order to respond to such a situation one looks for a suitable sex education from every source. But if the conviction of its necessity is fairly widely held in theory, in practice there remain uncertainties and significant differences, either with regard to the persons and institutions who must assume the educational responsibility, or in connection with , the contents and methodologies.

9. Educators and parents are often aware of not being sufficiently prepared to impart adequate sex education. The school is not always in a position to offer that integral vision of the matter which would remain incomplete with the scientific information alone.

4 Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris consortio*, 22nd. November, 1981, AAS 74 (1982) p. 128, n. 37: cf. infra n. 16.

10. Particular difficulties are found in those countries where the urgency of the problem is not recognised, or where perhaps it is thought that it resolves itself without specific education.

11. In general, there is need to recognise that one treats of a difficult undertaking by reason of the complexity of the diverse elements (physical, psychological, pedagogic, socio-cultural, juridical, moral and religious) which come together in educational action.

12. Some catholic organisations in different parts - with the approval and encouragement of the local Episcopate - have begun to carry out a positive work of sex education; it is directed not only to help children and adolescents on the way to psychological and spiritual maturity, but also and above all to protect them from the dangers of ignorance and widespread degradation.

13. Also praiseworthy are the efforts of many who, with scientific seriousness, dedicate themselves to study the problem, moving from the human sciences and integrating the results of such research in a project which conforms with human dignity, a project by the light of the Gospel.

DECLARATIONS OF THE MAGISTERIUM

14. The Magisterium's declarations on sex education mark out a course which satisfies the just requirements of history on the one hand and fidelity to tradition on the other.⁵

5 Pius XI, in his Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*, of 31st. December, 1929, declared erroneous the sex education which was presented at that time, which was information of a naturalist character, precociously and indiscriminately imparted. (AAS 22 (1930) pp. 49-86). The Decree of the Holy Office of 21st. March, 1931 (AAS 23

Vatican Council II in the “Declaration on Christian Education” presents the perspective in which sex education must be set,⁶ affirming the right of young people to receive an education adequate to their personal requirements.

The Council states: “With the help of advances in psychology and in the art and science of teaching, children and young people should be assisted in the harmonious development of their physical, moral and intellectual endowments. Surmounting hardships with a gallant and steady heart, they should be helped to acquire gradually a more mature sense of responsibility towards ennobling their own lives through constant effort, and toward pursuing authentic freedom. As they advance in years they should be given positive and prudent sex education”.⁷

15. The Pastoral Constitution “*Gaudium et spes*”, in speaking of the dignity of marriage and the family presents the latter as the preferential place for the education of young people in

(1931) pp. 118-119) must be read in this perspective. However, Pius XI considered the possibility of an individual, positive sex education “on the part of those who have received from God the educational mission and the grace of state”. (AAS 22 (1930) p. 71) . This positive value of sex education indicated by Pius XI has been gradually developed by successive Pontiffs. Pius XII, in his discourse to the Vth. International Congress of Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology, 13th. April, 1953 (AAS 45 (1953) pp. 278-286) and in his allocution to Italian Women of “*Azione Cattolica*”, 26th October, 1941 (AAS 33 (1941) pp. 450-458) defines how sex education should be conducted within the ambit of the family. (Cf. also, Pius XII; to the Carmelites: AAS 43 (1951) pp. 734-738; to French Parents: AAS 43 (1951) pp. 730-734) The Teaching of Pius XII prepared the way to the Conciliar Declaration *Gravissimum educationis*.

6 Cf. *Gravissimum educationis*, n. 1.

7 Ibid.

chastity.⁸ But since this is an aspect of education as a whole, the co-operation of teachers with parents is needed in the accomplishment of their mission.⁹ Such education, therefore, must be offered within the family to children and adolescents in a gradual manner, always considering the total formation of the person.¹⁰

16. In the Apostolic Exhortation on the mission of the Christian family in the world as it is, John Paul II reserves an important place to sex education as valuable to the person. “Education to love as self giving, says the Holy Father, also constitutes the indispensable premise for parents called to offer their children a clear and delicate sex education. Faced with a culture which largely reduces human sexuality to the level of something commonplace, since it interprets and lives it in a reductive and impoverished way by linking it solely with the body and with selfish pleasure, the educational service of parents must aim firmly at a training in the area of sex that is truly and fully personal: for sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person - body, emotions and soul - and manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love”.¹¹

17. The Holy Father immediately goes on to speak of the school, which is responsible for this education in service of and in harmony with parents. “Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must also be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it

8 Cf. Vat. II: Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 49.

9 Cf. *Gravissimum educationis*, n. 5.

10 Ibid., n. 3; cf. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 52.

11 *Familiaris consortio*, n. 37.

cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents”.¹²

In order for the value of sexuality to reach its full realisation, “education for chastity is absolutely essential, for it is a virtue that develops a person’s authentic maturity and makes him or her capable of respecting and fostering the “nuptial meaning” of the body”.¹³ It consists in self control, in the capacity of guiding the sexual instinct to the service of love and of integrating it in the development of the person. Fruit of the grace of God and of our cooperation, chastity tends to harmonise the different components of the human person, and to overcome the frailty of human nature, marked by sin, so that each person can follow the vocation to which God has called.

In the commitment to an enlightened education in chastity, “Christian parents, discerning the signs of God’s call, will devote special attention and care to education in virginity or celibacy as the supreme form of that self giving that constitutes the very meaning of human sexuality”.¹⁴

19. In the teaching of John Paul II, the positive consideration of values, which one ought to discover and appreciate, precedes the norm which one must not violate. This norm, nevertheless, interprets and formulates the values for which people must strive.

“In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the person and his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of and respect for the moral norms as the necessary and highly valuable guarantee for responsible

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *Familiaris consortio*, n. 37.

personal growth in human sexuality. For this reason the Church is firmly opposed to an often widespread form of imparting sex information dissociated from moral principles. That would merely be an introduction to the experience of pleasure and a stimulus leading to the loss of serenity - while still in the years of innocence - by opening the way to vice”.¹⁵

20. This document, therefore, starting from the Christian vision of man and woman and appealing to the principles enunciated recently by the Magisterium, desires to present to educators some fundamental guidelines for sex education and for the conditions and mode of presenting it at the operative level.

I. SOME FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

21. Every type of education is inspired by a specific conception of man and woman. Christian education aims to promote the realisation of man and woman through the development of all their being, incarnate spirits, and of the gifts of nature and of grace by which they are enriched by God. Christian education is rooted in the faith which “throws a new light on all things and makes known the full ideal which God has set for man”.¹⁶

CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF SEXUALITY

22. In the Christian vision of man and woman, a particular function of the body is recognised, because it contributes to the revealing of the meaning of life and of the human vocation. Corporeality is, in fact, a specific mode of existing and operating proper to the human spirit: This significance is first of all of an

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ *Gaudium et spes*, n. 11.

anthropological nature: the body reveals man,¹⁷ “expresses the person”¹⁸ and is therefore the first message of God to the same man and woman, almost a species of “primordial sacrament, understood as a sign which efficaciously transmits in the visible world the invisible mystery hidden in God from all eternity”.¹⁹

23. There is a second significance of a theological nature: the body contributes to revealing God and his creative love, in as much as it manifests the creatureliness of man and woman, whose dependence bestows a fundamental gift, which is the gift of love. “This is the body: a witness to creation as a fundamental gift, and so a witness to love as the source from which this same giving springs”.²⁰

24. The body, in as much as it is sexual, expresses the vocation of man and woman to reciprocity, which is to love and to the mutual gift of self.²¹ The body, in short, calls man and woman to

17 John Paul II: General Audience, 14th. November, 1979, Teaching of John Paul II, II-2, 1979, p. 1156, n. 4.

18 John Paul II: General Audience, 9th. January, 1980, Teaching of John Paul II, III- I , 1980, p. 90, n. 4.

19 John Paul II: General Audience, 20th. February, 1980, Teaching of John Paul II, III-I, 1980, p. 430, n. 4.

20 John Paul II: General Audience, 9th. January, 1980, Teaching of John Paul II, III-I, 1980, p. 90, n. 4.

21 “Precisely by traversing the depth of that original solitude, man now emerges in the dimension of the mutual gift, the expression of which - and for that very reason the expression of his existence as a person - is the human body in all the original truth of its masculinity and femininity. The body, which expresses masculinity ‘for’ femininity and, vice-versa, femininity ‘for’ masculinity, manifests the reciprocity and communion of persons. It expresses it by means of the gift as the fundamental characteristic of personal existence” . Ibid.

the constitutive vocation to fecundity as one of the fundamental meanings of their being sexual.²²

25. The sexual distinction, which appears as a determination of human being, is diversity, but in equality of nature and dignity.²³

The human person, through his or her intimate nature, exists in relation to others, implying a reciprocity of love.²⁴ The sexes are complementary: similar and dissimilar at the same time; not identical, the same, though, in dignity of person; they are peers so that they may mutually understand each other, diverse in their reciprocal completion.

26. Man and woman constitute two modes of realising, on the part of the human creature, a determined participation in the Divine Being: they are created in the “image and likeness of God” and they fully accomplish such vocation not only as single persons, but also as couples, which are communities of love.²⁵ Oriented to unity and fecundity, the married man and woman participate in the creative love of God, living in communion with Him through the other.²⁶

27. The presence of sin obscures original innocence, rendering less easy to man and woman the perception of these truths: their decipherment has become an ethical task, the object of a difficult engagement entrusted to man and woman: “After original sin the man and the woman will lose the grace of original innocence. The discovery of the nuptial meaning of the body will cease

22 Cf. John Paul II: General Audience, 26th. March, 1980, Teaching of John Paul II, III-I, 1980, pp. 737-741

23 *Gaudium et spes*, n. 49.

24 Ibid. n. 12.

25 Ibid., in which comment is made on the social sense of *Gen. 1, 27*.

26 Ibid., nn. 47-52.

to be for them a simple reality of revelation and of grace. This meaning will remain as a commitment given to man by the ethos of the gift, inscribed in the depths of the human heart, as a distant echo of original innocence".²⁷

Faced with this capacity of the body to be at the same time sign and instrument of ethical vocation, one can establish an analogy between the body itself and sacramental economy, which is the concrete means through which grace and salvation reach us.

28. Since men and women in their time have been inclined to reduce sexuality to genital experience alone, there have been reactions tending to devalue sex, as though by its nature men and women were defiled by it. These present guidelines intend to oppose such devaluation.

29. "It is only in the Mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear",²⁸ and human existence acquires its full meaning in the vocation to the divine life. Only by following Christ does man respond to this vocation and become so fully man, growing finally to reach the perfect man in the measure approaching the full maturity of Christ.²⁹

30. In the light of the Mystery of Christ, sexuality appears to us as a vocation to realise that love which the Holy Spirit instills in the hearts of the redeemed. Jesus Christ has enriched such vocation with the Sacrament of Marriage.

31. Furthermore, Jesus has pointed out by word and example the vocation to virginity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.³⁰

27 John Paul II: General Audience, 20th. February, 1980, Teaching of John Paul II, III-I, 1980, p. 429, n. 2.

28 *Gaudium et spes*, n. 22.

29 Cf *Eph.* 4, 13.

30 Cf. *Mt.* 19, 3-12.

Virginity is a vocation to love: it renders the heart more free to love God.³¹ Free of the duties of conjugal love, the virgin heart can feel, therefore, more disposed to the gratuitous love of one's brothers and sisters.

In consequence, virginity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven better expresses the gift of Christ to the Father on behalf of us and prefigures with greater precision the reality of eternal life, all substantiated in charity.³²

Virginity, certainly is a renunciation of the form of love which typifies marriage, but committed to undertaking in greater profundity the dynamism, inherent in sexuality, of self-giving openness to others. It seeks to obtain its strengthening and transfiguring by the presence of the Spirit, who teaches us to love the Father and the brethren, after the example of the Lord Jesus.

32. In synthesis, sexuality is called to express different values to which specific moral exigencies correspond. Oriented towards interpersonal dialogue, it contributes to the integral maturation of people, opening them to the gift of self in love; furthermore, tied to the order of creation, to fecundity and to the transmission of life, it is called to be faithful to this inner purpose also. Love and fecundity are meanings and values of sexuality which include and summons each other in turn, and cannot therefore be considered as either alternatives or opposites.

33. The affective life, proper to each sex, expresses itself in a characteristic mode in the different states of life: conjugal union, consecrated celibacy chosen for the sake of the kingdom, the condition of the Christian who has not yet reached marriage, or

31 Cf. *I Cor.* 7, 32-34.

32 Cf. *I Cor.* 13, 4-8; cf. *Familiaris consortio*, n. 16.

who remains celibate, or who has chosen to remain such. In all these cases the affective life must be gathered and integrated in the human person.

NATURE, PURPOSE AND MEANS OF SEX EDUCATION

34. A fundamental objective of this education is an adequate knowledge of the nature and importance of sexuality and of the harmonious and integral development of the person towards psychological maturity, with full spiritual maturity in view, to which all believers are called.³³

To this end, the Christian educator will remember the principles of faith and the different methods of educational aid, taking account of the positive evaluation which actual pedagogy makes of sexuality.

35. In the Christian anthropological perspective, affective-sex education must consider the totality of the person and insist therefore on the integration of the biological, psycho-affective, social and spiritual elements. This integration has become more difficult because the believer also bears the consequences of sin from the beginning.

A true “formation”, is not limited to the informing of the intellect, but must pay particular attention to the will, to feelings and emotions. In fact, in order to move to maturation in affective-sexual life, self control is necessary, which presupposes such virtues as modesty, temperance, respect for self and for others, openness to one’s neighbour.

All this is not possible if not in the power of the salvation which

³³ Cf. Vat. II: Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 39.

comes from Jesus Christ.

36. Also, if the modes are diverse which sexuality assumes in single people, education must first of all promote that maturity which “entails not only accepting sex as part of the totality of human values, but also seeing it as giving a possibility for “offering”, that is, a capacity for giving pure love, altruistic love. When such a capacity is sufficiently acquired, an individual becomes capable of spontaneous contacts, emotional self control and commitment of his free will”.³⁴

37. Contemporary pedagogy of Christian inspiration sees in the person being educated, considered in all his or her totality and complexity, the principle subject of education. He or she must be helped to develop capacities for good, above all in a trustworthy relationship. This is very easily forgotten when excessive weight is given to simple information, at the expense of other dimensions of sex education. In education, in fact, a knowledge of new notions is of utmost importance, but enlivened by the assimilation of corresponding values and by a lively grasp of understanding of the personal responsibilities associated with entry into adulthood.

38. Given the repercussions which sexuality has in the whole person, it is necessary that multiple aspects be kept in mind: conditions of health, the influence of the family and the social environment, impressions received and the reactions, of the pupil, education of the will, and the degree of development of spiritual life sustained with the help of grace.

39. All that has been stated so far serves educators in helping and guiding the formation of personality in the young. They must

³⁴ S. Congregation for Catholic Education: *A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy*, 11th. April, 1974, n. 22.

stimulate them to a critical reflection on received impressions, and, while they propose values, must give testimony of an authentic spiritual life, both personal and communal.

40. Having seen the close links existing between morality and sexuality, it is necessary that the knowledge of moral norms be accompanied by clear motivation, so as to bring a sincere personal adherence to maturity.

41. Contemporary pedagogy has full consciousness of the fact that human life is characterised by a constant evolution and that personal formation is a permanent process. This is also according to age true for sexuality, which expresses itself with particular characteristics in the different phases of life. It evidently brings riches and notable difficulties at every stage of maturation.

42. Educators will have to bear in mind the fundamental stages of such evolution: the primitive instinct, which in the beginning is manifested in a rudimentary state, meets in its turn the ambivalence of good and evil. Then with the help of education, the feelings are stabilised and at the same time augment the sense of responsibility. Gradually selfishness is eliminated, a certain asceticism is stabilised, others are accepted and loved for themselves, the elements of sexuality are integrated: genitality, eroticism, love and charity. Also if the result is not always fully attained, they are more numerous than may be thought who come near the goal to which they aspire.

43. Christian educators are persuaded that sex education is realised in full in the context of faith. Incorporated by Baptism into the Risen Christ, the Christian knows that his or her body, too, has been vivified and purified by the Spirit which Jesus

communicates.³⁵

Faith in the mystery of the Risen Christ, which through his Spirit actualises and prolongs in the faithful the paschal mystery, uncovers in the believer the vocation to the resurrection of the flesh, already begun thanks to the Spirit who dwells in the just as pledge and seed of the total and definitive resurrection.

44. The disorder provoked by sin, present and operating in the individual as well as in the culture which characterises society, exercises a strong pressure to conceive and live sexuality in a manner opposed to the law of Christ, according to that which St. Paul called the law of sin.³⁶ At times, economic structures, state laws, mass media and systems of life in the great metropolis are factors which negatively impinge on people. Christian education takes note of this and indicates guidelines for responsibly opposing such influences.

45. This constant endeavour is sustained and rendered possible by divine grace through the Word of God received in faith, through prayer and through participation in the sacraments. In first place is the Eucharist, communion with Christ in the same act as his sacrifice, where effectively the young believer finds the bread of life as viaticum in order to face and overcome the obstacles on his or her earthly pilgrimage. The Sacrament of Reconciliation, through the grace that is proper to it and with the help of spiritual direction, not only reinforces the capacity for resistance to evil but also gives the courage to pick oneself up after a fall.

These sacraments are offered and celebrated in the ecclesial community. Those who are vitally involved in such community

³⁵ Cf. *I Cor.* 6, 15, 19-20.

³⁶ Cf. *Rom.* 7, 18-23.

draw from the sacraments the strength to realise a chaste life, according to their state.

46. Personal and community prayer is the indispensable means for obtaining from God the necessary strength to keep faith with one's baptismal obligations, for resisting the impulses of human nature wounded by sin, and for balancing the emotions provoked by negative influences in the environment.

The spirit of prayer helps us to live coherently the practice of the evangelical virtues of faithfulness and sincerity of heart, of poverty and humility in the daily effort of work and of commitment to one's neighbour. The interior life gives rise to Christian joy which wins the battle against evil, beyond every moralism and psychological aid.

From frequent and intimate contact with the Lord, everyone, especially the young, will derive the strength and enthusiasm for a pure life and they will realise their human and Christian vocation in peaceful self control and in generous giving to others.

The importance of these considerations can escape no one. Today, in fact, many people, implicitly or explicitly, hold a pessimistic interpretation of the capacity of human nature to accomplish a life-long commitment, especially in marriage. Christian education should raise the confidence of the young so that their understanding of and preparation for life-long commitment be secured with the certainty that God will help them with His grace to accomplish His purposes.

47. Imitation of and union with Christ, lived and handed on by the saints, are the most profound motivation for our hope of realising the highest ideal of a chaste life, unattainable by human

effort alone.

The Virgin Mary is the eminent example of Christian life. The Church, through centuries of experience is convinced that the faithful, especially the young, by devotion to her, have known how to realise this ideal.

II. RESPONSIBILITY IN PUTTING SEX EDUCATION INTO EFFECT

FUNCTION OF THE FAMILY

48. Education, in the first place, is the duty of the family, which "is the school of richest humanity".³⁷ It is, in fact, the best environment to accomplish the obligation of securing a gradual education in sexual life. The family has an affective dignity which is suited to making acceptable without trauma the most delicate realities and to integrating them harmoniously, in a balanced and rich personality.

49. The affection and reciprocal trust which exist in the family are necessary for the harmonious and balanced development of the child right from birth. So that the affective natural bonds which unite parents to children be positive in the highest degree, parents are in pride of place in realising a peaceful sexual balance, and in establishing a relationship of trust and of dialogue with their children in a manner appropriate to their age and development.

50. In order to be able to give efficacious guidance, which is necessary for resolving the problems which arise, prior

³⁷ *Gaudium et spes*, n. 52; cf. *Familiaris consortio*, n. 37.

to any theoretical knowledge, adults are to be exemplary in their conduct. Christian parents must know that their example represents the most valid contribution in the education of their children. These, in their turn, can come to certainty that the Christian ideal is a reality experienced within the family itself.

51. Openness and collaboration of parents with other educators who are co-responsible for formation, will positively influence the maturation of young people. The theoretical preparation and the experience of parents will help their children to understand the value and specific role of the reality of man and woman.

52. The full realisation of conjugal life and, in consequence, the sanctity and stability of the family, depend on the formation of conscience and on values assimilated during the whole formative cycle of the parents themselves. Moral values seen in the family are transmitted to the children more easily.³⁸ Among these moral values, respect for life in the womb and, in general, respect for people of every age and condition have great importance. The young must be helped to understand, appreciate and respect these fundamental values of existence.

In view of the importance of these elements for Christian life, and also in the perspective of a divine call to the children to the priesthood or consecrated life, sex education acquires an ecclesial dimension.

THE ECCLESIAL COMMUNITY

53. The Church, mother of the faithful born of her to the faith in Baptism, has an educative mission entrusted by Christ, which is realised especially through proclamation, full communion with

³⁸ Cf. *Familiaris consortio*, n. 37.

God and one's fellows, conscientious and active participation in the Eucharistic liturgy and through apostolic activity.³⁹ By being open to life the ecclesial community constitutes an environment adequate to the assimilation of the Christian ethic in which the faithful learn to witness to the Good News.

54. The difficulties which sex education often encounters within the bosom of the family solicit a major commitment on the part of the Christian community and, in particular, of priests to collaborate in the education of the baptised. In this field, the catholic school, the parish and other ecclesial institutions are called to collaborate with the family.

55. From the ecclesial character of the faith derives the co-responsibility of the Christian community in helping the baptised to live coherently and knowledgeably the obligations taken on with baptism. It is the responsibility of the Bishops to establish norms and guidelines adapted to the necessities of the individual churches.

CATECHESIS AND SEX EDUCATION

56. Catechesis is called to be the fertile field for the renewal of all the ecclesial community. Therefore, in order to lead the faithful to maturity of faith, it must illustrate the positive values of sexuality, integrating them with those of virginity and marriage, in the light of the mystery of Christ and of the Church.

This catechesis should bring into relief that the first vocation of the Christian is to love, and that the vocation to love is realised in two diverse ways: in marriage, or in a life of celibacy for love

³⁹ Cf. *Gravissimum educationis*, n. 3-4; cf. Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., pp. 53f., 56f.

of the kingdom.⁴⁰ “Marriage and virginity are the two modes of expressing and living the one mystery of the Covenant of God with His people”⁴¹

57. So that families may be certain that catechesis is by no means apart from the Magisterium, pastors are to be involved both in the selection and preparation of responsible Magisterium personnel and in the determination of content and method.

58. From what has been said above in n. 48, the fact remains ever valid that with regard to the more intimate aspects, whether biological or affective, an individual education should be bestowed, preferably within the sphere of the family.

59. It being understood that catechesis realised in the family constitutes a privileged form, if parents do not feel able to perform this duty, they may have recourse to others who enjoy their confidence. A wise initiative, prudent and adapted to age and environment, can avoid traumas for children and render to them more easy the solution of sexual problems.

PRE-MARRIAGE CATECHESIS

60. A fundamental aspect of the preparation of the young for marriage consists in giving them an exact vision of the Christian ethic regarding sexuality. Catechesis offers the advantage of facing sexuality in the immediate prospect of marriage. But for its full success, this catechesis must be conveniently continued by developing a true and proper catechumenate. It aspires therefore to sustain and strengthen the chastity proper to the engaged in preparation for conjugal life viewed in a Christian

⁴⁰ Cf. *Familiaris consortio*, n. II.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, n. 16.

manner, and to the specific mission which the married have amongst the People of God. ,

61. Future spouses must know the profound significance of marriage, understood as a union of love for the realisation of the couple and for procreation. The stability of marriage and of conjugal love requires as indispensable conditions: chastity and self control, the formation of character and the spirit of sacrifice. With regard to certain difficulties of married life, rendered more acute by the conditions of our time, chastity during one’s youth as an adequate preparation for marital chastity will be a decisive help to the married. They will need therefore to be informed about the divine law, declared by the ecclesiastical Magisterium, necessary for the formation of their consciences.⁴²

62. Instructed in the value and greatness of the Sacrament of Matrimony, which specifies for them the grace and vocation of baptism, Christian spouses will know how to live conscientiously the values and specific obligations of their moral lives as requirement and fruit of the grace and action of the Spirit, “fortified and, as it were, consecrated for the duties and dignity of their state by a special sacrament”⁴³

Therefore, in order to live their sexuality and to carry out their responsibilities in accord with God’s plan,⁴⁴ it is important that spouses have knowledge of the natural methods of regulating their fertility. As John Paul II has said, “every effort must be made to render such knowledge accessible to all married people and also to young adults before marriage, through clear, timely

⁴² Cf. Paul VI, Encyc. Letter, *Humanae vitae*, 25th. July, 1968, AAS 60 (1968) p. 493 ff., n.17 ff.

⁴³ *Gaudium et spes*, n. 48.

⁴⁴ Cf. *Humanae vitae*, n. 10.

and serious instruction and education given by married couples, doctors and experts”.⁴⁵ Evidently, contraception, insistently propagated today, contrasts with these Christian ideals and these moral norms of which the Church is teacher. This fact renders still more urgent the necessity of transmitting to the young at an appropriate age the teaching of the Church on artificial means of contraception, and the reasons for such teaching, so that the young may be prepared for responsible marriage, full of love and open to life.

GUIDELINES FOR ADULTS

63. A solid catechetical preparation of adults on human love establishes the foundations for the sex education of children. Thus the possession of human maturity illumined by faith is secured, which will be decisive in the dialogue which adults are called to establish with the new generations. Further to indications concerning methods to be used, such catechesis will favour an appropriate exchange of ideas on particular problems, will make the teaching aids for use better known, and will permit eventual encounters with experts, whose collaboration could be particularly useful in difficult cases.

TASK OF CIVIL SOCIETY

64. The person should find in society existing expressions and experiences of values which exercise an influence not secondary on the formative process. Therefore, it will be the task of civil society, in as much as it treats the common good,⁴⁶ to be

⁴⁵ *Familiaris consortio*, n. 33. On actual contraceptive propaganda widely diffused cf. *Humanae vitae*, nn. 14-17.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 26; cf. *Humanae vitae*, n. 23.

watchful so that a wise physical and moral environment be secured in schools, and conditions which respond to the positive requests of parents, or receive their free support, be promoted.

65. It is the task of the State to safeguard its citizens against injustices and moral disorders, such as the abuse of minors and every form of sexual violence, degrading dress, permissiveness and pornography, and the improper use of demographic information.

RESPONSIBILITY IN EDUCATION IN THE USE OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

66. In the actual world, the instruments of social communication, by their intrusiveness and suggestion, display to youth and the very young - also and above all in the field of sex education - a continuous and conditioning stream of information and training, which is very much more trenchant than that of one's own family.

John Paul II has indicated the situation in which children find themselves confronted by the instruments of social communication: “Fascinated and devoid of defence before the world and adults, children are naturally ready to accept whatever is offered to them, whether good or bad... They are attracted by the “small screen”, they follow each gesture which is portrayed and they perceive, before and better than every other person, the emotions and feelings which result”.⁴⁷

67. It is therefore to be noted that by the same technological evolution, the necessary control is rendered less easy and

⁴⁷ John Paul II, *Message for the XIII World Communications Day*, 23rd. May, 1979, AAS 71, (1979-II) p. 930.

opportune. There is an urgency - for proper sex education, too – that “those who are at the receiving end of the media, and especially the young, should learn moderation and discipline in their use of them. They should aim to understand fully what they see, hear and read. They should discuss them with their teachers and with experts in such matters and should learn to reach correct judgements”.⁴⁸

68. In defence of the rights of the child in this area, John Paul II stimulates the consciences of all responsible Christians, especially parents and operators of the instruments of social communication, so that they do not hide behind the pretext of neutrality and respect for the spontaneous development of the child, since in reality this is behaviour of preoccupying indifference.⁴⁹

Particular duties “in this matter are incumbent on civil authority in view of the common good”,⁵⁰ which requires the juridical regulation of the instruments of social communication to protect public morality, in particular the world of youth, especially with regard to magazines, films, radio and television programmes, exhibitions, shows and publicity.

TASK OF THE SCHOOL WITH REGARD TO SEX EDUCATION

69. It being understood from what has been said on the primary

48 Vat. II: Dec. *Inter mirifica*, n. 10; cf. Pontifical Commission for Social Communications: Past. Inst. *Communio et Progressio*, AAS 63 (1971) p. 619, n. 68.

49 Cf. John Paul II: *Message for the XIII World Communications Day*, 23rd. May, (1979) AAS 71 (1979-II) pp. 930-933.

50 *Inter mirifica*, n. 12.

duty of the family, the rôle of the school should be that of assisting and completing the work of parents, furnishing children and adolescents with an evaluation of “sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God”.⁵¹

70. Interpersonal dialogue required by sex education, tends to kindle in the pupil an interior disposition suited to motivating and guiding personal behaviour. Such a point of view is strictly connected to the values inspired by the concept of life. Sex education is not reducible to simple teaching material, nor to theoretical knowledge alone, nor does it consist of a programme to be carried out progressively, but it has a specific objective in view: that affective maturation of the pupil, of self control, and of correct behaviour in social relationships.

71. The school can contribute to the realisation of this objective in various ways. All matters can offer an opportunity to treat themes in their relation to sexuality; the teacher will do so always in a positive key and with great delicacy, concretely evaluating the opportunity and the methods. Individual sex education always retains prior value and can not be entrusted indiscriminately to just any member of the school community. In fact, as will be specified in what follows, as well as right judgement, sense of responsibility, professional competence, affective and decent maturity, this education requires from the teacher outstanding sensitivity in initiating the child and adolescent in the problems of love and life without disturbing their psychological development.

72. Also, though the teacher possess the necessary qualities for sex education in groups, it is necessary always to consider

51 *Familiaris consortio*, n. 32.

the concrete situation of such groups. This applies above all in mixed groups, since these require special precautions. In each case, the responsible authorities must examine with parents the propriety of proceeding in such a manner. Given the complexity of the problem, it is good to reserve for the pupil a time for personal dialogue in order to accommodate the seeking of advice or clarification - which a natural sense of decency would not allow to arise in front of others. Only a strict collaboration between the school and the family will be able to guarantee an advantageous exchange of experience between parents and teachers for the good of the pupils.⁵² It is the responsibility of Bishops, taking account of school legislation and local circumstances, to establish guidelines for sex education in groups, above all if they are mixed.

73. It can sometimes happen that particular events in the life of the school render a timely intervention necessary. In such cases, the school authorities, in accordance with the principle of collaboration, will contact parents interested in agreeing on an appropriate solution.

74. Persons particularly suited by competence and balance, and who enjoy the trust of parents, can be invited to hold private conversations with pupils to help them to develop their affective maturity and to give the right balance in their social relationships. Such interventions in personal guidance belong in particular to the more difficult cases, at least when the gravity of the situation makes necessary recourse to a specialist in the matter.

75. The formation and development of an harmonious personality require a peaceful atmosphere, fruitful

⁵² Cf above n. 58.

understanding, reciprocal trust and collaboration between persons in charge. It is obtained with mutual respect for the specific competence of the various members of the educational staff, their responsibilities and the choice of the differentiated means at their disposal.

APPROPRIATE TEACHING MATERIALS

76. In order to offer correct sex education, appropriate teaching materials can be of assistance. The elaboration of such materials requires the contribution of specialists in moral and pastoral theology, of catechists, of educationists and catholic psychologists. Particular attention is to be paid to the materials to be used by the pupils themselves.

Some school text-books on sexuality, by reason of their naturalist character, are harmful to the child and the adolescent. Graphic and audio-visual materials are more harmful when they crudely present sexual realities for which the pupil is not prepared, and thus create traumatic impressions or raise an unhealthy curiosity which leads to evil. Let teachers think seriously of the grave harm that an irresponsible attitude in such delicate matters can cause in pupils.

YOUTH GROUPS

77. There exists in education a not negligible factor which goes side by side with the action of the family and the school and which frequently has an even greater influence in the formation of the person: these are youth groups, constituted in leisure time, which impinge intensely on the life of the adolescent and young adult. The human sciences hold that "groups" are

a positive condition for formation, because the maturation of the personality is not possible without efficacious personal relationships.

III. CONDITIONS AND MODE OF SEX EDUCATION

78. The complexity and delicacy of the task requires accurate preparation of teachers, specific qualities in the way the matter is treated and particular attention to precise objectives.

PREPARATION OF TEACHERS

79. The mature personality of the teachers, their training and psychological balance strongly influence their pupils. An exact and complete vision of the meaning and value of sexuality and a peaceful integration within the personality itself are indispensable for teachers in constructive education. Their training takes shape according to environment. Their ability is not so much the fruit of theoretical knowledge but rather the result of their affective maturity. This does not dispense with the acquisition of scientific knowledge suited to their educational work, which is particularly arduous these days. Meetings with parents can be of great help.

80. The dispositions which must characterise the teacher are the result of a general formation, founded on a positive and professional constructive concept of life, and of constant effort in realising it. Such a formation goes beyond the purely necessary professional training and addresses the more intimate aspects of the personality, including the religious and the spiritual. This last will be the guarantee of a recourse to Christian principles,

which, by supernatural means, must sustain the educational enterprise.

81. The teacher who carries out his or her task outside the family context needs a suitable and serious psycho-pedagogic training which allows the seizing of particular situations which require a special solicitude. A high degree of this is needed when, in consultation with the parents, a boy or girl needs a psychologist.

82. Beyond the normal topics and pathological cases, there is a whole range of individuals with problems more or less acute and persistent, which risk being little cured, yet are truly in need of help. In these cases, in addition to therapy at the medical level, constant support and guidance on the part of teachers is needed.

QUALITY OF TEACHING METHODS

83. A clear vision of the situation is required because the method adopted not only gradually conditions the success of this delicate education, but also conditions cooperation between the various people in responsibility. In reality, the criticisms normally raised refer more to the methods used by some teachers than to the enterprise itself. These methods must have definite qualities, both in the same teachers and in the end to which such education is proposed.

NEEDS OF THE PUPIL AND EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

84. Affective-sex education, being more conditioned than others by the degree of physical and psychological development of the pupil, must always be adapted to the individual. In certain cases it is necessary to advise the pupil in preparation for particularly

difficult situations, when it is foreseen that the pupil will have to encounter them, or forewarn him or her of imminent or permanent dangers.

85. It is necessary therefore to respect the progressive character of this education. A proper gradual progress of initiatives must be attentive to the stages of physical and psychological growth, which require a more careful preparation and a prolonged period of maturation. One needs to be assured that the pupil has assimilated the values, the knowledge and the motivation which has been proposed, or the changes and the evolution which he or she could observe in him or herself and of which the teacher opportunely indicates the causes, the connections and the purpose.

QUALITY OF THE TEACHER

86. In order to make a valid contribution to the harmonious and balanced development of the young, teachers must regulate their teaching according to the particular rôle which falls to them. The pupil neither perceives nor receives in the same manner from different teachers the information and motivation which they give, because different teachers affect his or her intimacy in a different way. Objectivity and prudence must characterise such teaching.

87. Progressive information requires a partial explanation, but always according to truth. Explanations must not be distorted by reticence or by lack of frankness. Prudence therefore requires of the teacher not only an appropriate adaption of the matter to the expectations of the pupil, but also a choice of language, mode and time in which the teaching is carried out. This requires that the child's sense of decency be taken into account. The

teacher, moreover, remembers the influence of parents: their preoccupation with this dimension of education, the particular character of family education, their concept of life, and their degree of openness to other educational spheres.

88. One must insist first of all on the human and Christian values of sexuality, so that pupils can appreciate them, and so that the desire to realise them in one's personal life and relationships may be roused. Without disregarding the difficulties which sexual development involves, but without creating an obsessive state, the teacher may have confidence in the educational enterprise: it can rely on the resonance which true values strike in the young, when they are presented with conviction and are confirmed by testimony of life.

89. Given the importance of sex education in the integral formation of the person, teachers, taking account of the various aspects of sexuality and of their incidence in the global personality, are urged in particular not to separate knowledge from corresponding values, which give a sense and orientation to biological, psychological and social information. Consequently, when they present moral norms, it is necessary, that they show how find their *raison d'être* and value.

EDUCATION FOR MODESTY AND FRIENDSHIP

90. Modesty, a fundamental component of the personality, may be considered - on the ethical level - as the vigilant knowledge which defends the dignity of man, woman and authentic love. It tends to react to certain attitudes and to curb behaviour which stains the dignity of the person. It is a necessary and effective means of controlling the instincts, making authentic love flower, integrating the affective-sexual life in the harmonious picture

of the person. Modesty has great pedagogic weight and must therefore be respected. Children and young people will thus learn to respect the body itself as a gift from God, member of Christ and temple of the Holy Spirit; they will learn to resist the evil which surrounds them and to have a vision and clear imagination to seek to express a truly human love with all its spiritual components when they meet people in friendship.

91. To such an end, concrete and attractive models of virtue are to be presented, the aesthetic sense be developed, inspiring a taste for the beauty present in nature, in art and in moral life; the young are to be educated to assimilate a system of sensible and spiritual values in an unselfish impetus of faith and love.

92. Friendship is the height of affective maturation and differs from mere camaraderie by its interior dimension, by communication which allows and fosters true communion, by its reciprocal generosity and its stability. Education for friendship can become a factor of extraordinary importance in the making of the personality in its individual and social dimensions.

93. The bonds of friendship which unite the young of both sexes contribute both to understanding and to reciprocal respect when they are maintained within the limits of normal affective expression. If however they become or tend to become manifestations of a genital character, they lose the authentic meaning of mature friendship, prejudice the relationships involved and the future prospects with regard to an eventual marriage, and render the individuals concerned less attentive to a possible call to the consecrated life.

IV. SOME PARTICULAR PROBLEMS

The teacher may find that in carrying out his or her mission, he or she may be confronted by several particular problems, which we treat here.

94. Sex education must lead the young to take cognisance of the different expressions and dynamisms of sexuality and of the human values which must be respected. True love is the capacity to open oneself to one's neighbour in generosity, and in devotion to the other for the other's good; it knows how to respect the personality and the freedom of the other,⁵³ it is self giving, not possessive. The sex instinct, on the other hand, if abandoned to itself, is reduced to the merely genital, and tends to take possession of the other, immediately seeking personal gratification.

95. Relationships of sexual intimacy are reserved to marriage, because only then is the inseparable connection secured - which God wants - between the unitive and the procreative meaning of such matters, which are ordained to maintain, confirm and express a definitive communion of life - "one flesh"⁵⁴ - mediating the realisation of a love that is "human" "total" "faithful" "creative"⁵⁵ which is marital love. Therefore, sexual relations outside the context of marriage constitute a grave disorder, because they are reserved to a reality which does not yet exist;⁵⁶ they are a language which is not found in the objective reality of the life of the two persons, not yet constituted

53 Cf. 1 *Cor.* 13, 5.

54 *Mt.* 19, 5.

55 *Humanae vitae*, n. 9.

56 Cf. *The Human Person*, n. 7.

in definitive community with the necessary recognition and guarantee of civil and, for catholic spouses, religious society.

96. It seems that there is a spread amongst adolescents and young adults of certain manifestations of a sexual kind which of themselves tend to complete encounter, though without reaching its realisation: manifestations of the merely genital which are a moral disorder because they are outside the matrimonial context of authentic love.

97. Sex education will help adolescents to discover the profound values of love, and to understand the harm which such manifestations do to their affective maturation, in as much as they lead to an encounter which is not personal, but instinctive, often weakened by reservations and egoistic calculations, without therefore the character of true personal relationship and so much less definitive. An authentic education will lead the young towards maturity and self-control, the fruit of conscientious choice and personal effort.

98. It is the task of sex education to promote a continuous progress in the control of the impulses to effect an opening, in due course, to true and self giving love. A particularly complex and delicate problem which can be present is that of masturbation and of its repercussions on the integral growth of the person. Masturbation, according to catholic doctrine constitutes a grave moral disorder,⁵⁷ principally because it is the use of the sexual faculty in a way which essentially contradicts its finality, not being at the service of love and life according to the design of God.⁵⁸

99. A teacher and perspicacious counsellor must endeavour

⁵⁷ Cf. *The Human Person*, n. 9.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

to identify the causes of the deviation in order to help the adolescent to overcome the immaturity underlying this habit. From an educative point of view, it is necessary to consider masturbation and other forms of autoeroticism as symptoms of problems much more profound, which provoke sexual tension which the individual seeks to resolve by recourse to such behaviour. Pedagogic action, therefore, should be directed more to the causes than to the direct repression of the phenomenon.⁵⁹

Whilst taking account of the objective gravity of masturbation, it is necessary to be cautious in evaluating the subjective responsibility of the person.⁶⁰

100. In order that the adolescent be helped to feel accepted in a communion of charity and freed from self enclosure, the teacher “should undramatise masturbation and not reduce his or her esteem and benevolence for the pupil”.⁶¹ The teacher will help the pupil towards social integration, to be open and interested in others; to be able to be free from this form of autoeroticism, advancing towards self giving love, proper to mature affectivity; at the same time, the teacher will encourage the pupil to have recourse to the recommended means of Christian asceticism, such as prayer and the sacraments, and to be involved in works of justice and charity.

101. Homosexuality, which impedes the person’s acquisition of sexual maturity, whether from the individual point of view, or the inter-personal, is a problem which must be faced in all objectivity by the pupil and the educator when the case presents itself.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ *A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy*, n. 63.

“Pastorally, these homosexuals must be received with understanding and supported in the hope of overcoming their personal difficulties and their social mal-adaptation, their culpability will be judged with prudence; but no pastoral method can be used which, holding that these acts conform to the condition of these persons, accord them a moral justification.

“According to the objective moral order, homosexual relations are acts deprived of their essential and indispensable rule”.⁶²

102. It will be the duty of the family and the teacher to seek first of all to identify the factors which drive towards homosexuality: to see if it is a question of physiological or psychological factors; if it be the result of a false education or of the lack of normal sexual evolution; if it comes from a contracted habit or from bad example;⁶³ or from other factors. More particularly, in seeking the causes of this disorder, the family and the teacher will have to take account of the elements of judgement proposed by the ecclesiastical

Magisterium, and be served by the contribution which various disciplines can offer. One must, in fact, investigate elements of diverse order: lack of affection, immaturity, obsessive impulses, seduction, social isolation and other types of frustration, devaluation in dress, license in shows and publications. In greater profundity lies the innate frailty of man and woman, the consequence of original sin; it can run to the loss of the sense of God and of man and woman, and have its repercussions in the sphere of sexuality.⁶⁴

103. The causes having been sought and understood, the

⁶² *The Human Person*, n. 8.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Cf. *Rom.* 1, 26-28; cf., per analogia, *The Human Person*, n. 9.

family and the teacher will offer an efficacious help in the process of integral growth: welcoming with understanding, creating a climate of hope, encouraging the emancipation of the individual and his or her growth in self control, promoting an authentic moral force towards conversion to the love of God and neighbour, suggesting - if necessary - medical-psychological assistance from persons attentive to and respectful of the teaching of the Church.

104. A permissive society which does not offer valid values on which to found one's life promotes alienating escapism, to which the young are subject in a particular way. Their idealism encounters the harshness of life, causing a tension which can provoke, because of the frailty of the will, a destructive escape in drugs.

This is one of the problems which is getting worse and which assumes dramatic tones for the teacher. Some psychotropic substances raise the sensibility for sexual pleasure and in general diminish the capacity for self control and thereby for defense. The prolonged abuse of drugs leads to physical and psychological destruction. Drugs, mistaken autonomy and sexual disorders are often found together. The psychological situation and the human context of isolation being such, many people give up, addicts living in rebellion, creating conditions which easily lead into sexual abuses.

105. Remedial intervention, which calls for a profound transformation of the individual from within and without, is laborious and long, because it must help to reconstruct the personality and relationships with the world of people and values. Preventative action is more efficacious. It secures the avoidance of deep, affective decline. It is love and care which

educate towards value, dignity, respect for life, for the body, for sex, for health. The civil and Christian community must know how to timely welcome the young who are abandoned, alone, insecure, helping them to be included in study and in work, to occupy their free time, offering them healthy places for meeting, happiness, activity, furnishing them with occasions for affective relationships and for solidarity.

In particular, sport, which is at the service of man and woman, possesses a great educative value, not only as bodily discipline, but also as a healthy relaxation in which young people are encouraged to renounce their egotism and to meet other people. Only a freedom which is authentic, educated, aided and promoted offers protection from the quest for illusory liberty of drugs and sex.

CONCLUSION

106. From these reflections one can conclude that in the actual socio-cultural situation there is urgent need to give positive and gradual affective-sex education to children, adolescents and young adults, paying attention to the dispositions of Vatican Council II. Silence is not a valid norm of conduct in this matter, above all when one thinks of the “hidden persuaders” which use insinuating language. Their influence today is undeniable: it is up to parents, therefore, to be alert not only to repair the harm caused by inappropriate and injurious interventions, but above all to opportunely inform their own children, offering them a positive and convincing education.

107. The defense of the fundamental rights of the child and the adolescent for the harmonious and complete development of the personality conforms to the dignity of the children of God, and

belongs in first place to parents. Personal maturation requires, in fact, a continuity in the educative process, protected by love and trust, proper to the family environment.

108. In accomplishing her mission the Church has the duty and the right to take care of the moral education of the baptised.

The contribution of the school in all education, and particularly in these matters which are so delicate, must be carried out in agreement with the family.

This presupposes in teachers and in others involved, whether implicitly or explicitly, a correct criterion for the purpose of their contribution, and training in order to be able to treat these matters with delicacy and in a climate of serene trust.

109. So that information and affective-sex education may be efficacious, it must be carried out with timely prudence, with adequate expression, and preferably in an individual form. The outcome of this education will depend largely on the human and Christian vision in which the educator presents the values of life and love.

110. The Christian educator, whether father or mother of the family, teacher, priest or whoever bears responsibility in this regard, can be tempted, today above all, to demand, from others this task which needs such delicacy, principle, patience and courage, and which requires committed generosity in the pupil. It is necessary, therefore, before concluding, to reaffirm that this aspect of education is firstly a work of faith for the Christian, and of faithful recourse to grace: each aspect of sex education, in fact, is inspired by faith, and draws indispensable strength from it and from grace. The Letter of St. Paul to the Galatians puts self-control and temperance within the ambit which the

Holy Spirit, and He alone, can establish in the believer. It is God who bestows light, it is God who grants sufficient strength.⁶⁵

111. The Congregation for Catholic Education turns to Episcopal Conferences so that they promote the union of parents, of Christian communities, and of educators for convergent action in such an important sector for the future of young people and the good of society. The Congregation makes this invitation to assume this educational commitment in reciprocal trust and with the highest regard for rights and specific competences, with a complete Christian formation in view.

Rome, November 1st, Feast of All Saints

WILLIAM Card. BAUM
Prefect

Antonio M. Javierre, Secretary
Titular Archbishop of Meta

65 Cf. Gal. 5, 22-24.

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