

## Family Life/Chaste Living Policy

### *Overview*

“The family is ... a school of deeper humanity.” Second Vatican Council  
(*Gaudium et Spes*, 52)

“Chastity is not a matter of repression of sexual feelings and temptations but is the successful integration of the gift of sexuality within the whole person.” (*Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living*, p. 7, no. 23)

Human sexuality is a gift from God, a gift to be respected and revered. All formation in family life will honor parents as having the primary role for forming the faith of their children. Formation in family life will assist parents and their children in forming their consciences and leading lives consonant with the Beatitude: Blessed are the Pure in Heart.

While the focus of this policy is on family life and honoring the gift of human sexuality, these efforts will only be truly effective if the full context of Catholic morality and the demands of living the Gospel are presented. The primary purpose of Catholic faith formation is to prepare people to follow their call to be disciples of Jesus Christ and to witness to Christ’s compassionate love in their daily lives. “Moral formation involves a journey of interior transformation that deepens one’s personal conversion to Christ.” (*Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living*, p. 5, no. 11) Thus, the practice of moral living should be seen as a life-long journey of faith, a pilgrimage to holiness. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) teaches, “The education of the conscience is a lifelong task” that “guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart.” CCC 1784

The Archdiocese identified the need to support parishes and schools in the task of helping Catholics form their consciences by more fully integrating Pope John Paul II’s Theology of the Body<sup>1</sup> into both the Church’s moral and social teaching. This integration (along the lines laid out in Servais Pinckaers’ *Morality: The Catholic View*) provides a broad context and is responsive to the 2008 USCCB *Chaste Living* guidelines. In his book, Fr. Pinckaers presents three stages of moral development: (1) children must learn rules (e.g., Ten Commandments) and the value of self-discipline; (2) adolescents begin exercising independent mastery of moral virtues and the Beatitudes; and (3) adults continue the life-long striving in moral decision-making and the resulting enjoyment of the freedom for excellence.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Theology of the Body (TOB) is the term that has been attached to a series of weekly catechetical talks delivered by Blessed John Paul II intermittently between 1979 and 1984. In this teaching, Pope John Paul invited Catholics to realize the spousal meaning of the body.

To illustrate how Catholic social teaching can be integrated with our teaching on morality and human sexuality, the Archdiocese has developed a table that aligns the seven key themes of Catholic social teaching with the principles of Catholic morality, including human sexuality (see appendix 1).

Placing education in chaste living within the fuller context of the formation of conscience also helps with discerning one's vocation in life. Catechists and teachers will support parents and their children in developing a sense of the giftedness of life and how each of us is called to respond to God by dedicating our lives to following Jesus. In partnership with parents, teachers and catechists aim to create schools for discipleship and virtuous living within each family.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Family Life/Chaste Living Policy for the Archdiocese of Seattle**

Each parish, school, and diocesan youth program will offer ongoing formation in chaste living as part of moral formation.

\*\*\*\*\*

## School Guidelines on Family Life/Chaste Living for PreK-12

### (CSD Policy 2.1)

#### *Guiding Principles for Catholic Schools*

1. Because parents are the primary educators of their children, school educators will work collaboratively with parents to help them carry out this responsibility. (*Chaste Living*, p. 21)
2. Catechetical formation in chaste living must be presented according to the doctrinal and moral teaching of the Church. (*Chaste Living*, p. 20)
3. Catechetical formation in chaste living is best taught in stages according to each child's age and maturity. (*Chaste Living*, p. 22)
4. Education for chastity is more than a call to abstinence. It requires: (*Chaste Living*, p. 22)
  - a. Understanding the need for a family environment of love, virtue, and respect for the gifts of God;
  - b. Learning the practice of decency, modesty, and self-control;
  - c. Guiding sexual instincts toward loving service of others;
  - d. Recognizing one's embodied existence as male or female as a gift from God; and
  - e. Discerning one's vocation to marriage, to chaste single life, to celibate priesthood, or to consecrated religious life.
5. Catechetical formation in chaste living will include teaching marriage as a sacrament and vocation.
6. Formation in family life is to be included in the Catholic Identity accreditation standards for all PreK-12 Catholic schools.

### *Guidelines for Implementation in the Schools*

1. Formation in family life is to be included in the Catholic Identity accreditation standards for all PreK-12 Catholic schools.
2. Family life formation is integrated within the Archdiocesan K-8 Religious Education Curriculum.
3. Ongoing assessment measures for family life formation will evaluate the extent to which each school has implemented the following (also see Appendix 3):
  - a. Articulate Archdiocesan policy on family life in writing annually to parents of children receiving the family life program.
  - b. Offer a meeting each year with family life teachers and parents of children receiving the family life program to acquaint parents with the subject matter and afford opportunity for dialogue. It is very important to engage parents in their role as first teachers of their children and share with them the Church's teaching on family life (as articulated in the USCCB guidelines, *Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living* (2008)).
  - c. Articulate Archdiocesan policy on family life in writing annually to teachers teaching family life. Teachers are also presented with developmentally appropriate guidelines, resources for integrating chaste living across academic subjects and approved materials for family life formation.
  - d. Send family life teachers to a continuing formation opportunity in family life (at least two clock hours) every three years.
  - e. To assist with implementing the above steps, CSD/OCFF will collect exemplary policies/letters and make them available for use by others (refer to [See, Celebrate & Live website](#)).

### *List of Appendices*

1. Correlation of Catholic Social and Moral Teaching
2. Foundational Documents, Approved Instructional Materials, Additional Resources, and Recommended Reading
3. Suggested Rubric/Measurement Tool for Self-Assessment of Family Life/Chaste Living Formation in the Catholic School

**Appendix 1**

## **Correlation of Catholic Social and Moral Teaching**

offered by the Office of Catholic Faith Formation and the Catholic Schools Department

<i>Catholic Social Teaching</i>	<i>Catholic Morality</i>	<i>Catholic Sexual Morality</i>
Dignity of the Human Person	Dignity of the Human Person	Dignity of the Human Person
Call to Family, Community and Participation	The Understanding of Moral Acts	Call to Relationship and Family as School of Deeper Humanity
Rights and Responsibility (Freedom for Society)	Responsible Practice of Freedom	Freedom of the Human Person
Option for the Poor & Vulnerable (Common Good)	Lifelong Formation of a Good Conscience	Reverencing the Gift of Procreation
Dignity of Work & Rights of Workers (Human Flourishing through Work)	Cultivate and Practice Virtue (Human Flourishing through Marriage and Family)	Complementarity of Male and Female
Solidarity	Life for Others	Love as Sincere Gift of Self
Care for God's Creation	Care for Human Ecology	Temple of the Holy Spirit

## **Appendix 2**

### **Foundational Documents:**

- [WCEA Catholic Identity Standards and Rubrics](#) (K - 8)
- [2010 Catholic Identity High School Standards](#)
- Archdiocese of Seattle K-8 [Religious Education Curriculum](#)
- 2008, USCCB guidelines, *Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living*. ([www.usccb.org/education/chasteliving.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/education/chasteliving.pdf))
- 2005, USCCB *National Directory for Catechesis* (NDC, especially pp. 157-168 and pp. 177-178) (not yet available online)
- 2000, Archbishop Brunett, *Formation for Love and Chastity*. ([www.seattlearchdiocese.org/familylife](http://www.seattlearchdiocese.org/familylife))
- 1995, Pontifical Council for the Family. *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education within the Family*. ([http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/family/documents/rc\\_pc\\_family\\_doc\\_08121995\\_human-sexuality\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_08121995_human-sexuality_en.html))

### **Approved Instructional Materials:**

- [Approved PreK - 8 / 9-12 Religion Textbooks](#) - Archdiocese of Seattle
- 2010, RCL - Benziger *Family Life K-8* program.

### **Additional Resources:**

- Library Media Center - [Resources for Chaste Living & Family Life](#) (Annotated Bibliography)

### **Recommended Reading:**

- *On the Family (Familiaris Consortio): Apostolic Exhortation*. John Paul II. 1982.
- *The Gospel of Life (Evangelium Vitae): Encyclical Letter* (especially sections 92-97). John Paul II. 1995.
- *Morality: The Catholic View*. Servais Pinckaers, O.P. South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2001.
- *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*. John Paul II (translation and introduction by Michael Waldstein). Boston: Pauline, 2006.
- *The Human Person: According to John Paul II*. J. Brian Bransfield. Boston: Pauline, 2010.
- 2011 CCCB *Pastoral Letter to Young People on Chastity*. ([www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/chastity\\_en.pdf](http://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/chastity_en.pdf))

**Appendix 3**

**Suggested Rubric/Measurement Tool for Self-Assessment of  
Family Life/Chaste Living Formation in the Catholic School**

	<b>Highly Effective</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Somewhat Effective</b>	<b>Ineffective</b>
<b>Family Life Policy</b>	Family life policy is clearly articulated in the school’s written materials and website. Parents receive this information as part of the registration process. The policy is reviewed annually and updated as needed.	Family life policy is clearly articulated in school documents. Families receive this information as part of the registration process. The policy is reviewed and updated at least once every three years.	A family life policy does exist, but has not been routinely updated or publicized.	There is not a policy regarding family life.
<b>Parents as Primary Educators *</b>	Parents are expected to attend family life meetings. They receive information and resources on moral formation/chaste living on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.	Parents are encouraged to attend family life meetings. Information and resources on moral formation/chaste living are made available to parents at least once a year.	Parents are invited to family life meetings. Resources on moral formation/chaste living are available upon request.	Family life/moral formation is not a component of parent meetings. Parents receive little or no information on chaste living resources.
<b>Developmental</b>	Family life formation is designed to be developmentally sensitive for each grade level (PreK – 12) and coordinates with religion topics taught for the grade.	Family life formation is designed to be developmentally sensitive for elementary, middle or high school age groups.	Family life formation materials are reviewed for developmental sensitivity, but not necessarily offered as such.	Family life formation materials are not reviewed for age appropriateness /developmental sensitivity.

	<b>Highly Effective</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Somewhat Effective</b>	<b>Ineffective</b>
<b>Integrated Curriculum</b>	Formation on chaste living is integrated within academic classes. Schools meet or exceed Catholic identity Standard related to moral formation.	Formation on chaste living is integrated within religion classes and meets Catholic Identity Standards.	Formation on chaste living is offered as a stand-alone curriculum.	Formation on chaste living is not included offered as a school program.
<b>Instructional Materials</b>	Family life formation materials are on the approved archdiocesan list and information from primary Church documents on moral formation/chaste living are also used.	Family life formation materials on chaste living are all on the approved archdiocesan list.	Some of the family life materials on chaste living are on the approved archdiocesan list.	Family life materials on chaste living are not on the approved archdiocesan list.
<b>Continuing Education</b>	Family life teachers complete at least two hours of continuing education on chaste living annually.**	Family life teachers complete at least two clock hours of continuing education on chaste living every three years.	Family life teachers have completed some continuing education on chaste living in the last five years.	Family Life teachers have not attended continuing education classes on chaste living.

\* Highly Effective: = 80%+ of families have one or more parent/guardians attending the meeting; Effective = more than 60%; Somewhat Effective = more than 40%; Ineffective = less than 40%

\*\* Chaste living continuing education is not part of the CCP requirement for Catholic school teachers, but can be used as part of CCP renewal hours.