

*The Catholic Vision
of Love*

Student's Lessons for Grade 8

Class 2

**Living in a world that
suffers from AIDS**

Living in a world that suffers from AIDS

Studying what the Lord teaches us about sexuality

Introduction

Christ wants our lives to be richer and better. "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly!" (John 10:10). Those who understand sexuality and wisely try to live as Jesus taught, are more joyful people. They escape the sadness that results from sinful sexual activity and the many physical evils casual sex can cause. We need to challenge ourselves to think intelligently about these matters.

These are the things we will talk about in this second lesson:

AIDS is a fatal condition which can strike *anyone*.

Responsible behavior avoids contracting AIDS.

The HIV virus can be passed *unknowingly* on to others.

"Safe" or "safer" sex is a *false* concept; it is immoral.

Unchaste acts can also lead to the contraction of other sexually transmitted diseases.

Chastity faces sexuality in a good and *intelligent* way.

Chastity is a natural and good way to live.

All persons are able to live the chaste lives to which *Christ* calls them in their state of life.

Compassion is needed in *caring* for victims of AIDS.

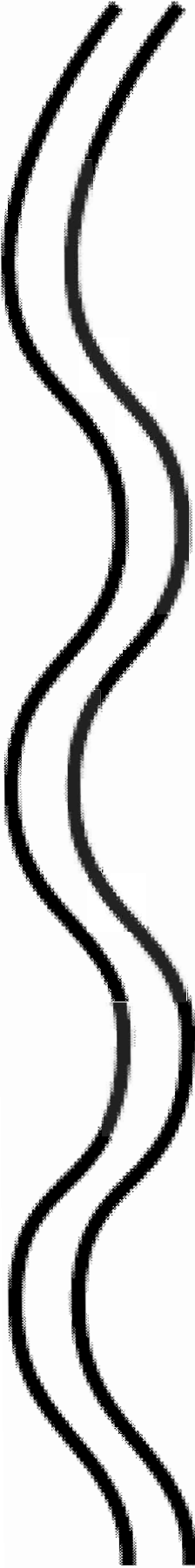
AIDS and the challenge of living intelligently

AIDS is a disease that is always fatal. AIDS shows no prejudice. It can strike anyone.

AIDS means: *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*.

It is caused when HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) attacks

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the body's immune system. Thus it leaves the body unprotected against infections and diseases. There is presently no cure for AIDS.

One out of two hundred fifty persons worldwide now carries the virus. A new person in the world is infected every fifteen to twenty seconds.

This disease is transmitted chiefly in three ways:

1 Through sexual contact with a person who has AIDS or the HIV virus. (Many do not even know they have been infected with the virus as it can be many years before the virus is detected.)

2 By sharing drug-related items (like needles) with people who are infected with the HIV virus.

3 By receiving a blood transfusion from an infected person. (The likelihood of contracting the disease in this way is now almost impossible due to the safeguards instituted by blood banks several years ago.)

The AIDS virus does not travel through the air, nor is it contracted by casual contact with AIDS victims. Simply shaking hands or hugging does not transmit the disease.

How to avoid getting AIDS

- ✓ Refrain from sexual activity before marriage
- ✓ Remain faithful to your spouse in marriage
- ✓ Refrain from illegal drug use

The cost is responsible behavior. You would only be doing what good morality and good sense require anyway.

Note: During surgical or dental treatment in which the blood of one person gets in contact with the blood of an AIDS victim, one could contract AIDS. This situation is not likely since health care workers are taking universal precautions to prevent such situations. This is something *extremely rare*.

Sometimes babies are born with AIDS because their parents contracted the disease. But AIDS normally is caused by irresponsible sexual conduct, and by the use of drugs.

Therefore, if you live a life of self-control that Christ calls you to lead, there is no reason to be fearful.

Who has AIDS?

The HIV virus can live in the body for years before a person becomes ill. Therefore many carriers do not even realize that they are infected. Sadly, they have the potential to pass on the deadly disease to others unknowingly. The only *safe and intelligent* solution is to refrain from casual sex altogether.

God has reserved sex for married people. In married love, each person commits faithfully to one person forever. The fact is that the strongest marriages are characterized by faithful, honest love. Chaste love is necessary for life. Only it can make homes happy.

What is this “safe sex” concept?

Some say: “If you use a condom when you have sex with another person, you will be protected from the HIV virus. You can’t catch AIDS then. It’s safe!”

That is *far* from true or safe! Condoms very often fail! You are playing with your life in this situation. It is like playing Russian Roulette. You could kill yourself.

“Safe” sex is not safe. The only “safe” sex is *NO SEX* until marriage.

Other sexually transmitted diseases

- ▲ *Gonorrhea* — 1.3 million new cases annually in United States.
- ▲ *Herpes* — 500,000 new cases annually in the United States.
- ▲ *Pelvic inflammatory disease* — 1 million new cases annually in the United States
- ▲ *Chlamydia* — 4 million cases occur annually in the United States.

These are tragic diseases that need not be contracted. Often people who suffer from such diseases are unable to have children in later years when they deeply desire them. The consequences of many STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) are severe. A chaste life is the only escape from such tragedy.

Reflection: Is the fear of AIDS or STDs the best reason for being chaste and avoiding illegal drug use?

Fear of AIDS or STDs can motivate people not to engage in

