

## *Basic Teachings of the Catholic Church on the Gift of Human Sexuality*

- ❖ Endowed with Divine Revelation and with the authority to teach in the name of Christ, the Church is compelled to proclaim life giving truths about the meaning, dignity and purpose of human sexuality.
- ❖ God's gift of sexuality is the sum total of those physical, emotional and spiritual qualities that make us male or female.
- ❖ Created in God's image out of love, each person is endowed with dignity and grace.
- ❖ Our human bodies are to be treasured and treated with respect.
- ❖ Chastity is the virtue which ensures that one's thoughts, words and actions correspond to God's plan for the gift of sexuality.
- ❖ Sexual intercourse is reserved for the union of husband and wife in marriage and for the procreation of children.
- ❖ Heterosexuality is normative. While homosexual inclinations are not in themselves sinful, homosexual activity and behavior is morally wrong.
- ❖ Abstinence outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage are the only two morally acceptable ways of preventing the spread of AIDS.
- ❖ The strength to live a mature, loving and chaste life comes from one's relationship with Christ. Prayer and frequent participation in the sacraments are sources of God's grace.

Lawrence Rilla  
Office for Religious Education  
Archdiocese of Washington