

Tackling Tough Topics — HOMOSEXUALITY

What's a parent to say?

The Archdiocese of Washington's *Catechesis on Human Sexuality* provides parents with helpful guidelines for discussing homosexuality with their children.

? Distinguish between the homosexual and heterosexual orientation

Heterosexual - The attraction of a man or a woman to the opposite sex is called a **heterosexual** orientation. This is the plan of God for a man and a woman (Grade Six).

Homosexual - Some persons have a sexual attraction for others of the same sex. This is called a **homosexual** orientation. A man with this orientation is sometimes called gay; a woman is sometimes termed a lesbian (Grade Six).

? Define sexual attraction

Sexual Attraction - The attraction to the other sex which is felt so strongly at puberty is normal and healthy. Strong sexual desire is controllable with self-discipline and the grace of God (Single Sex Setting - Grade Eight). *Catechesis on Human Sexuality*

? Discuss sexual arousal and homosexual activity?

Sexual Arousal - Affection is appropriate for dating, but passion belongs in marriage. Affection is the casual and sincere expression of caring for another person, such as kind words and hand holding. Passion refers to the **sexual arousal** which prepares a person for sexual intercourse. To deliberately cause **sexual arousal** in oneself or in another person outside of marriage is destructive of our power to love and is morally wrong. This includes dressing or speaking immodestly, looking at pornographic or sexually arousing literature, magazines, movies or videos, listening to sexually suggestive music, sexual fantasizing, and passionate kissing or petting outside of marriage (Single Sex Setting - 8th) *Catechesis on Human Sexuality*

Homosexual activity between persons of the same sex is not part of God's plan (Grade Seven). Some adolescents and adults may experience a sexual attraction to persons of the same sex. Being attracted to someone in this way is referred to as a homosexual orientation. When this happens the virtue of chastity helps one to avoid sexual acts which would be against God's plan (Grade Eight). *Catechesis on Human Sexuality*

? Discuss what LOVE is and how God can help us to truly love another person?

Love - Falling in **love** is a feeling that can just happen to a person, but **love** itself is a commitment to do what is right and good for another person, regardless of how one feels.

The **loving** and mature person can withstand pain when it is necessary and can forgo pleasure when it is harmful. The grace of God enables us to do the good that we would be unable to do on our own effort. (Grade Eight).