

## Session Theme: Sexting Catechist Guide

Grades 9 – 10

### Overview

There are three parts to this session on sexting:

PART I: God’s love; the Trinity; relationships

PART II: Created in God’s image and likeness; sexual identity; living as integrated human beings

PART III: Moral character; sexting

Plan and set aside sufficient time to read and reflect on the resources related to the lesson, particularly those topics you may be less familiar with or uncomfortable talking about with a group of teens. It is essential that you be prepared to present and discuss the topics related to relationships, sexuality, and sexting with a solid understanding of and appreciation for the dimensions of our Catholic faith that inform our approach to these topics.

The session is not intended to be an in-depth presentation on morality. Rather, it is a supplemental lesson implementing the U.S. Bishops’ *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*.

The session is intended to be an interactive presentation of key points found in §2331 – 2350 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (see Catechist Resources) and includes some very basic principles of morality, particularly “relationship.” Keep in mind throughout the entire session that the starting point of Christian morality is who we are, sons and daughters of God.

Be sure to include in the session as many ways as possible that help you, the catechist, know the adolescents are coming to a fundamental understanding of and a maturing level of clarity about “Love,” “Made in God’s image and likeness,” “Sexual Identity,” and “Vocation to Chastity.”

### Catechetical Session

#### Vocabulary

**Chastity:** Connected to purity of heart, this is a virtue that moves us to love others with generous regards for them. It excludes lust and any wish to exploit them sexually. It helps us see and put into practice God’s plan for the body, person, and sexuality. All people are called to pursue and live the virtue of chastity according to one’s state in life. (United States Catechism for Adults, p. 506)

**Cyberbullying:** Using technology to bully others.

Vocabulary terms are provided to assist the catechist in preparing for this lesson. There is no need to read these aloud to the teens unless they request clarification.

**Instagram:** An online, mobile social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos to send to friends or share them on a social networking site, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr.

**Modesty:** A modest person dresses, speaks, and acts in a manner that supports and encourages purity and chastity and not in a manner that would tempt or encourage sinful sexual behavior. (USCCA, p. 520)

**Morality:** In one sense, this is the goodness or evil of particular actions. For a Catholic, it also refers to the manner of life and action formed according to the teaching laid down by Christ Jesus and authoritatively interpreted by the Church. (USCCA, p. 520)

**Selfie:** A photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically with a smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website

**Sexting:** Sending nude or semi-nude pictures or videos of oneself via cell phone text messaging or forwarding this type of message to others.

**Sexual identity:** The physical, moral and spiritual differences of being male and female. (CCC, §2333)

**Sexual Integrity:** Being honest with yourself and others about how committed you are to a relationship. Rationalizing or leading people on for the purpose of sexual pleasure is deceptive. The Church's term for sexual integrity is chastity. (Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, pp 265 – 275)

**Sexuality:** Affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of his body and soul. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to love and to procreate, and in a more general way the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others. (CCC §2332)

**Skype:** Having a conversation over the internet using an application (“app”) or webcam that allows users to see each other.

**Snapchat:** A photo messaging app that allows users to take photos, record videos, add text and drawings, and send them to a controlled list of recipients (“friends”). The sent messages ‘self-destruct’ in a set amount of time (1-10 seconds) after the recipient views them. Because of this, some Snapchat users may believe that it is safe to send risqué or inappropriate photos. However, the photos can be saved if the recipient takes a screen shot of them.

**Social Networking Site:** An online community that brings people together to blog, share photos and videos, and make new friends. The sites usually require members to set up a profile, which may include information such as name, location, email address, phone number, age, and gender. Some popular social networking sites are Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter.

**Virtue:** A habitual and firm disposition to do good. (USCCA, p. 531)

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## **Introduction**

Choose what you will use and how you will segway into the presentation.

## **Presentation**

Read and reflect on paragraphs § 2331 – 2350 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

(*Appendix A*)

Read through the whole session (Parts I, II and III) to become comfortable with the content.

Be alert to news and stories related to sexting in the media and on social networks.

Be familiar with statistics and consequences of sexting (*see Resources*).

## **Closing Prayer**

Prepare copies of the suggested Closing Prayer, or other appropriate prayer, for each participant.

## **Catechist Resources**

### **Books**

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, particularly § 2331 – 2350

*The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*, St. Mary's Press,

Chapter 27, "Respecting Sexuality," pp. 265 – 275.

*The Catholic Youth Bible*, Revised, St. Mary Press

*Theology of the Body for Teens, Discovering God's Plan for Live and Life*, Leaders Guide,

Ascension Press, Chapter 6, "Language of the Body," pp. 81 – 96.

*The Way, Living out God's Plan for Your Life as a Disciple of Jesus Christ*, Teacher Edition,

Our Sunday Visitor, Chapter 1, "A Life in Christ," pp. 2 – 11.

*Total Catechesis: Catechetical Sessions on Christian Morality*, St. Mary's Press, Chapters 7,

"Respecting Sexuality: The Gift of Sexuality," pp. 104 – 116.

*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, United States Conference of Catholic

Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2005.

### **Handout**

*Tips to Prevent Sexting For Teens* (from NetSmartz Workshop)

### **Poster**

*Pics Don't Stay Private* (from Child Lures)

## **Web Resources**

### **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**

#### ***“Life and Dignity of the Human Person”***

[www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/life-and-dignity-of-the-human-person.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/life-and-dignity-of-the-human-person.cfm)

#### ***“Morality”***

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/morality>

### **Faith Formation Learning Exchange**

#### ***“Talking about Sex with Teens and Parents”*** by Jolene Roehlkepartain

<http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/blog/talking-about-sex-with-teens-and-parents-jolene-roehlkepartain>

### **Great Schools**

#### ***Sexting Statistics***

[www.greatschools.org/parenting/behavior-discipline/2079-sexting.gs](http://www.greatschools.org/parenting/behavior-discipline/2079-sexting.gs)

### **Netsmartz**

#### ***Sexting Information***

[www.netsmartz.org/Sexting](http://www.netsmartz.org/Sexting)

## **Some Facts and Statistics about Sexting**

Studies from the 2000's report that between 4% and 25% of teens admit that they have electronically sent or posted nude or semi-nude photos of themselves. Younger teens were in the 4% range whereas older teens were in the 25% range.

28% of teens say that they have received this type of message on their cell phone.

61% of all sexters who have sent nude images admit that they were pressured to do it.

Sexting can become a form of bullying (cyberbullying) when people forward the images to others. Students have been embarrassed, harassed, humiliated, and have become depressed and even suicidal after sending pictures to someone they thought would keep them private, but didn't.

Sending these types of images of minors (those under age 18) can be considered child pornography. Those who send or forward these messages could be subject to legal action, arrest, prosecution, and may even be required to register as sex offenders.

Pictures are out of the sender's control once they are sent. Teens often do not think about the fact that the pictures could be forwarded to others.

# Pics Don't Stay Private!



Right now,  
you may not care, but:

- Colleges will.
- Employers will.
- Friends will.
- Parents will.

*Texting & Posting Can't Be Retrieved or Erased*

**TeenLures™ PREVENTION.com**

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National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-422-4453. All calls are anonymous and confidential.

# tips to prevent **SEXTING** FOR **TEENS**

NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

**NetSmartz Workshop**  
A PROGRAM OF THE  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN®



## THINK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES

of taking, sending, or forwarding a sexual picture of someone else, even if it's of you. You could get kicked off of sports teams, face humiliation, lose educational opportunities, and even face a police investigation.



## NEVER TAKE

images of yourself that you wouldn't want everyone—your classmates, your teachers, your family, or your employer—to see.



## BEFORE HITTING SEND

remember that you can't control where this image may travel. What you send to a boyfriend or girlfriend could easily end up with their friends, and their friends' friends, and so on...



## IF YOU FORWARD

a sexual picture of someone without their consent, you are violating their trust and exposing them to potential ridicule. It's not up to you to decide who should see their body, so don't forward the image to anyone.



## IF ANYONE PRESSURES

you to send a sexual picture, don't give in and talk to an adult you trust. Remember that anyone who tries to get you to do something you are uncomfortable with is probably not trustworthy.

Watch Real-Life Stories at **NSTEENS.ORG**

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