

Theology of the Body as a Model for Sexuality Education

Theology of the Body (TOB) provides us with a good model on which to build an understanding of human sexuality, i.e. who we are, how we relate to others and our purpose on earth.

In this session we present an example lesson, illustrating how to use TOB concepts and terms, to investigate *Lust versus Love*. We will look at why people are sometimes treated as objects, and explain the resulting suffering and unhappiness. The lesson will be delivered as if to a class of learners. It will include a game and slide presentation. Feedback from real learners indicates that this lesson has helped them to set boundaries that encourage mutual and self respect. These learners have expressed a great sense of relief to have the tools to understand the demands made on them by others in the society at large. They learn that they do not have to be objects for another's pleasure.

The media industry (entertainment, advertising etc.) has correctly identified the "human body" as being of universal interest. We explain why this is the case using TOB concepts and provide tools to analyze such material in a simple way. The media imbalance between the focus on the "body" versus the "inner person" influences behaviour in our society and the consequences are discussed.

The presentation touches on the definition of a few key words and concepts, which facilitates the learners understanding of other material used in all Catholic Sexuality programs including the Pastoral Guidelines for teaching Sexuality in Schools, "Life to the Full". The presentation illustrates in a practical way why the TOB model of human sexuality is particularly useful in assisting learners to understand the many facets of human sexuality.