

Our Bodies Have Meaning

PRO TIP
Download other
grades for alternate
activities!

CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CCC 221
CCC 355–358
CCC 369–372
CCC 1766

MATERIALS

- ▶ Bible
- ▶ Song available at [SophiaOnline.org/LiketheDawn](https://www.sophiaonline.org/likethedawn)
- ▶ Lyrics available at [SophiaOnline.org/DawnLyrics](https://www.sophiaonline.org/dawnlyrics)
- ▶ [Like the Dawn](#)
- ▶ [The Imago Dei](#)

SUGGESTED TIME

30 Minutes

CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY STANDARDS

8.5.1 TOB Compare how the loving communion of man and woman is like that of the Trinity, a communion of persons who are love and who in giving and receiving are fruitful. (TOB 9:1–3, 10:4, 14:6, 15:1; CCC 355–357)

8.8.1 TOB Explain that living out the spousal meaning of the body can be through marriage or virginity for the sake of the Kingdom. (TOB 15:5, 81:6; CCC 915, 916, 922, 923, 926, 1640, 1646)

8.11.1 TOB Describe the idea of a vocation and how it is the way one makes a total gift-of-self. (TOB 78, 86; CCC 915–916, 929, 932, 1579, 1603, 1605, 1618–1620)

Teacher Background

God is a Trinity of Persons in an eternal exchange of love: the Father loves the Son, the Son receives and reciprocates that love, and the Holy Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son personified. Human beings are made in the image and likeness of God. Ultimately, we are made for communion with God and each other. God is love, so we are made by love, in love, for love, and to love. We are given an invitation to enter into the community of the Trinity and the Love of God, and to form a loving communion with each other.



HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

While gender ideology asserts that our sex is simply “assigned” at birth, the truth is that our sex is determined at conception, observed in utero or at birth, and never changes. God created us male and female in His image. Being made male or female comes with a certain complementarity to in giving and receiving of love. This complementarity of the sexes is written in our very bodies. Being made in the image of God, or the imago Dei, means that we are literally made in the image of Love Himself. image, and this dignity is ours by nature. It can never be taken away.

Activity

- A. Begin by brainstorming as a class all the famous love poems you can think of. Write down some of the famous lines or lyrics (songs are poems set to music!) on the board.
- B. Spend a few moments talking about what the love poems had in common.
- C. Ask a student to recall the creation of Adam and Eve. If students are not familiar with the Scriptural account, read aloud Genesis 2.
- D. Then distribute the [Like the Dawn](#) worksheet and play the song “Like the Dawn” by the Oh Hello’s found at [SophiaOnline.org/LiketheDawn](#). While listening to the song, students should answer the reflection questions on their worksheet. Lyrics to the song can be found at [SophiaOnline.org/DawnLyrics](#).
- E. Give the students a few minutes after the song is over for them to finish their answers, and invite any volunteers to share their responses.

Like the Dawn

Directions: As you listen to the song and follow along with the lyrics, answer the following questions.

1. What is your first reaction to this song? What do you like about it? Why?

2. What is happening in this scene?

3. Who are “I,” “you,” and “he” in the song?

4. How do you think the author of the song feels about what is happening?

5. What event do the last two lines refer to?

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F. Explain to your students that in one of the most important documents from the Second Vatican Council, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, the council fathers proclaim that “[Man] cannot fully find himself, except through a sincere gift of himself” (GS 24). We are created to give ourselves to another— to give love and to receive love.

G. Explain that God has ordained that when we make a selfless gift of ourselves (when we are thinking only of how to help others), we feel more “fully alive” than ever before. Pope St. John Paul II called this the “spousal meaning of the body.” This is the capacity within a human being to give him or herself to another.

H. Continue to explain that this love is like the life of the Blessed Trinity: the Father gives Himself to the Son, and the Son offers Himself to the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the both. We have within ourselves this capacity to give ourselves to one another. For someone who is married that gift is to their spouse. For a priest or religious, their spouse is the Church.

I. Explain that when Adam was alone, in “original solitude,” he was not able to give of himself in this way. He looked for a suitable partner among the animals, but none were good enough. It wasn’t until Eve was created out of Adam’s rib, that he exclaimed, “At last, bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh!” This was the first love poem and one of the most romantic scenes in all of salvation history, so much better than the cheesy pick-up lines that we hear in movies, or the love poems we brainstormed earlier as a class. Those are all just shadows of the first love between Adam and Eve, the first husband and wife.

J. Have students skim over the **Imago Dei** worksheet, and discuss the questions with their parents.

The Imago Dei

A sunset over the ocean is one of the most beautiful sights in the world. It is a sight that is both awe-inspiring and majestic, but can they wonder about philosophical questions? Your dog might be the most loyal dog on the planet, but can he reflect on his life? No. Humans are different from everything else because we have a soul created by God in His image and likeness.

What does it mean to be made in someone's image and likeness? Perhaps you have been told that you look like your mother or father, or maybe you've been told that you're a spitting image of another relative. When someone is in someone else's likeness it means that they have some of their characteristics.

So when we say that humans are made in the image of God, we mean that we share some of His characteristics: being made in the image of God, or the Imago Dei, means that we are literally made in the image of love Himself. God is love, so we are made by love, in love for love, and made to love. But note that this love is not merely affection or a feeling of contentment. The love of God is that sacrificial love that He chose to give of Himself for the good of another. “His love is to will the good of another” (CCC 1766). Jesus Christ reveals the true meaning of this self-gift to us.

The human body also shares in the dignity of being made in God's image because it is animated (brought to life) by a spiritual soul. Pope St. John Paul II wrote, “the body, in fact, and only the body is



capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It has been created to transmute the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it.” Together, soul and body make up who we are as a unique human person. In fact, this soul created made or formed by God at the moment of conception, is immortal. There is a beautiful unity between body and soul, which cannot be separated until death itself. This means the soul does not die even when our earthly bodies do. Our souls will be reunited with our bodies at the final resurrection.

God invites us to enter into the community of the Trinity and enter into the love of God. This love is life-giving. The Father loves the Son, the Son receives and reciprocates that love, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the both, the personification of the eternal exchange of love.

Similar to parents who adopt a son or daughter into their family, God adopts us into His family and calls us His son!

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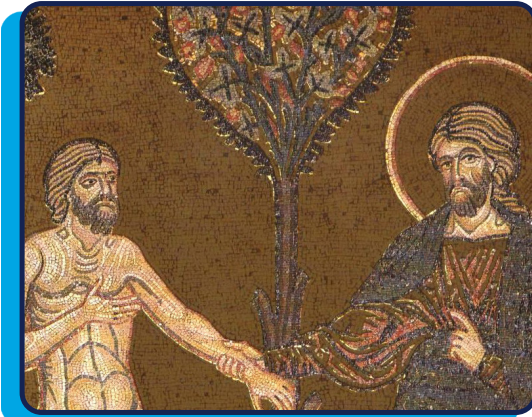
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STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

daughter at our Baptism. When a son or daughter is adopted into a family, they start to take on characteristics of that family, and become heirs of their parents, while still retaining their own identity. Each

day, they are loved by the family and taught how to love in return. As Christians, this is our true identity that no one can change or take away from us: we are each a son or daughter of God.

Discussion Questions

- 1 Our sex is determined at conception, observed in utero or at birth, and never changes. When did your parents learn that you were a boy or a girl? What special preparations did they make? When and how did they choose your name?

Students will discuss this question with their parents.

- 2 When were you baptized? What are some things your family did to celebrate? In what ways is your Baptism day important, even more important than your birthday?

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- 3 Men and women are equal in dignity, but we are different in terms of how we are made to give and receive love. The Church calls this relationship "complementarity." Each sex completes the other in marriage. Being made in the image of God, or the *imago Dei*, means that we are literally made in the image of Love Himself. What are some ways your parents, or grandparents, aunts and uncles, and/or other married couples in your life make a gift of themselves to their spouses? (Can you remember what Pope St. John Paul II called the ability to make this gift?)

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