



We Are Made for Love!

At no time are questions about identity and sexuality more pressing than during the high school years. Your son or daughter will be asking himself/herself a barrage of profound questions, such as: *Who am I? What is the meaning of life? What is love? What do my attractions have to do with my identity? What am I supposed to do with my life?* If they are asking themselves such important questions, it is essential that they be offered sufficient answers.

The following outline provides you with the key points from Session 1 of **YOU: Life, Love, and the Theology of the Body** so that you can have discussions with your son or daughter throughout this important process. Pope Saint John Paul II gave the world the Theology of the Body, which teaches what an amazing gift it is to be a human person, and how important and beautiful is the complementarity between man and woman.

You are encouraged to begin this journey with an open mind and an open heart. This is an invitation to rediscover more deeply your own dignity, goodness and capacity for love.

I. Our deepest yearning is to love and to be loved, for we are not meant to be alone.

- God, who is love, has created us for relationships of love with him and with other people.
- God's love is pure self-gift, and he has created us in his image and called us to mirror that self-giving love. His design is even evidenced in our bodies in our complementarity as male and female.
- Yet, this call to self-gift is true of every vocation, whether married, single, priest or consecrated. It is only in the gift of self that we will find true fulfillment and joy.

II. We live in a fallen world that is confused about love – but there is hope!

- Unfortunately, love is often confused with lust, which is the selfish desire to use another person.
- This confusion and struggle is common in the lives of young people (and adults). But no matter how wounded they may be, deep in the heart of every one of them is the desire for a love that is true, good and beautiful.
- These lessons are designed to teach the path to that authentic love, drawing on the great insights of Pope St. John Paul II.

The First School of Love is the Family

For every child, the love of God is first made visible through the love of a father and mother. Of course, you are not perfect, but do your best to be generous, merciful, patient, affectionate and present, so that your child or teenager will be able to conceive of a God who possesses the same attributes. Although young people often act as if they want to be left alone, they are actually longing for involvement from Dad and Mom. They are searching for love and meaning in their lives. Even if you are raising your son or daughter without the other parent, you are sharing a life-giving love with your children through the sacrifices you make for them on a daily basis. Studies have shown that parents continue to have the biggest influence on their children. To read more, see the *Parent's Guide*, page 12.

Questions to engage with your son/daughter

1. From this session, what stood out for you about your identity, what makes you who you are?
2. Do you believe that God loves you? What are the reasons for your answer?