

**April
Challenge**
Teach your
children
about love
and life .



Teaching the Way of Love

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 8

APRIL, 2015

PLEASE PRAY THAT

- Parents will be open to learning about and God's plan for love and life.
- Parents will model the beauty and the benefits of a God's plan for love and life.
- The Catholic Church will be a sign of trust and hope in the world.
- Young people may have the courage to forge life-long, faithful commitments.
- The Catholic Church is recognized by all as faithful to God and trustworthy .
- Children will trust their parents and approach them with their questions and concerns about love and life.
- Parents are able to provide for the health and well-being of their family.

Springtime: Ready to talk about love?

Why is it that the arrival of spring is associated with an increase in romance? Though the answers to that question are varied and interesting, none of them help prepare parents to deal with the behaviors that can happen when a young person's fancy turns to love.



We all know that love is one of the most powerful emotions known to humankind. The Catechism tells us that love is the most fundamental passion. It is aroused by an attraction to the good. People in love sense a desire for the missing good (in this case, the good is romantic love) and the hope of obtaining it. Love + Hope + Desire create an emotionally powerful cocktail that

can motivate a young person to do almost anything to possess the good.

When children awaken to the reality of "the good" that another has they become a bucket of feelings. Often they experience the chemistry part of attraction; the nervous excitement and giddiness that overwhelms their senses. These feelings convince them that the other feels the same way and that a lasting bond has formed between them. Because of this bond, they believe that they must commit everything to the other. Before you know it, they can lose all sense of reality and logic. They are convinced that they have found true love even though you know it is their first crush.

Children who are convinced they have found their prince charming or sleeping beauty are in need of intentional guidance by their parents. They should become keen observers of their children's interests and behaviors. They can ask good questions about what is going on at school, in the neighborhood and during extracurricular activities. They should also heighten their awareness of their child's social media involvement, becoming more mindful of on-line interactions. And, they should strive to be more present at home; especially after school and in the evening. Most importantly, parents should get ready to share the beauty and awe of God's plan for love and human sexuality. That's right. Parents need to prepare themselves to share God's plan for life and love with their offspring.

Because humanity passes by way of the family...

If you are like most parents, the thought of teaching your children about human love and God's gift of fertility may be terribly frightening or confusing. With no experience from which to draw, you may find yourself feeling totally incompetent. Your dread may even drive you to think that anyone other than you is better suited to talk with your children.

Take a breath and relax. In God's eyes, you are the one that needs to talk with your children about love, relationships and the physical changes that every person goes through as they move from childhood into adulthood. Because you are the parent, you are the one best suited to share the truth and beauty of human sexuality with your kids. No one can replace you. And preparing yourself to have a knowledgeable and wise discussion about these matters is easier than you think.

Believe this; your children want to hear about love and life from you and not from their teachers or from some website. They want to be able to come to you with their questions and their concerns. They long to hear the truth from you even if they roll their eyes and seem to shy away from these conversations.

To help you in your mission as the primary educator for your children, we suggest a simple three-fold process. First, take the time to learn about God's plan for love and life. Secondly, pay attention to your children so that you will know when the time is right to begin talking with them. Finally, commit to talking with your child over the course of several conversations rather than having just one big talk.

Here is your April Challenge

The April TWL challenge is structured to help you with each of these steps. The first part of the challenge involves logging into the TWL website, watching videos that will give you the basics on human growth and development according to God's plan and completing a packet of basic information. The second step is to log or journal your observations about your children as they interact with their peers in order to identify what information your children will need at this time. And the final measure is to determine when and how you will begin talking with your kids using the guidelines that we suggest. If you follow these steps in this month's challenge, you can empower yourself to be the primary educator of your children in matters of life and love. Click here for the challenge. You can find the challenge at www.twl4parents.com/april-challenge-activity.



Are you ready to meet this month's challenge? Give it a try! You'll find that this activity can really empower you to guide your children toward God's plan for their sexuality and their relationships. This challenge is just a small part of good Catholic parenting. Visit www.twl4parents.com for more strategies that will help you become the best parent you can be. And for the best systematic approach to parenting, consider purchasing the Teaching the Way of Love program, which can be found at the same website.

This article series is brought to you by Alice Heinzen and Jeff Arrowood, authors of the Teaching the Way of Love home study series for parents. Find out more at www.twl4parents.com.