



Dedicated to excellence

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April 22, 2010

To: All parents of students in grades 5th and 6th
RE: "Family Life" Human Development Program

Dear Parents,

This letter is to inform you that St. Croix Catholic School will begin teaching the family life unit in the 5th and 6th grades in May. The school's philosophy for our family life program is:

Family Life encourages parents to be the primary educators. Each child is unique and individual needs will be respected. Education of virtues within Catholic Doctrine will be emphasized. The school's task is to assist and help complete the work of parents.

Purpose of the program

Family Life is based on five key themes of Catholic education in relationships, family life, and human sexuality. All five themes are taught at each level of the program, focused through the lens of one particular age-appropriate theme.

In November of 1972 the US Conference of Catholic Bishops released "To Teach As Jesus Taught, A Pastoral Message On Catholic Education." In that document they reaffirmed "*the value and necessity of wisely planned education of children in human sexuality*" and acknowledged our "grave obligation" to assist parents, who are "primarily responsible for imparting to their children an awareness of the sacredness of sexuality." They further stated, "*In all programs proper emphasis must be given to the spiritual and moral dimensions of sexuality. The child's reverence for God-given dignity and beauty of sex is an effective safeguard of purity; it should be cultivated from the earliest years.*"

Following the traditions of the Catholic faith this program allows us to create a partnership with parents to assist our children in learning to respect themselves through making wise decisions including a commitment to abstinence before marriage.

The five themes of the program include:

1. God's Gift of Family
2. God's Gift of Self
3. God's Gift of Life
4. God's Gift of Love
5. God's Gift of Community

We will begin the program the beginning of May and teachers will be covering the material in seven to ten lessons. Each grade level is different and there is some overlap with religion. As a result, a particular grade level may not need all ten lessons. Also, teachers have the flexibility to teach in a variety of formats (i.e. one lesson each day or possibly one each week).

In an ideal world parents have the ability to discuss each lesson with their child. We encourage parents to participate in the program by talking with your child about the lessons, and by reading

the Parent Connection Pamphlet being sent home. Discussing the connection between spirituality and sexuality with your child can be very rewarding and can bring you closer with increased mutual respect. It is important to create an open dialogue that will allow for easier conversations when the children run head on into adolescence and puberty. Our main goal with the program is to support you as parents and to assist in creating that open dialogue.

Program Resources Include

- Teachers Manual that matches the student textbook and includes strategies for instruction and resources for effective lessons.
- Student Textbook – Chapter by chapter coverage of the five themes based on age appropriate material.
- Parent Connection– This booklet contains about 16 pages of introductory parent education.
 - There are many ideas for spending time with your child
 - There are also suggestions for talking with your child about a variety of topics and suggestions for answering your child’s questions
 - The chapters are designed to spur discussion. While much of the information can be very instructional, the program is designed to increase communication between parent and child.
 - There are also suggested resources for each chapter.
- These booklets are on loan to the parents and the students. If you wish to purchase the parent booklet (\$2) or the student booklet (\$4) please let us know.

Naturally, as parents, you are the primary educators of your children and have the option of participation or non-participation in this program. The material that will be covered will be available for parent perusal in the school office during the week of April 26th – 30th.

If a parent wishes that their child not participate, please check the appropriate box below and return it to your child's teacher by Friday, April 30th, 2010.

Sincerely,

SCCS Teachers & Administration
cc: Fr. Michael Miller

_____ I do not wish that my child to participate in the "Family Life 'instruction at St. Croix Catholic School.

_____ (Printed Name)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)