

# THEOLOGY OF THE BODY

*According to the Teaching of Saint John Paul II*



Heart of Mary  
Women's Fellowship



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We hope that you'll dive in, grow in the Lord, and share with others what beauty God reveals to you through it. If you are doing this study independently, know that we at HOM are here for you & that you also have a LARGE community of women through our website and social media that are participating too! You are truly never alone!

If you are completing this study in a group setting - we are excited that you have found a local community to grow with, on top of our online sisterhood. Please use this study journal for your reference, resource, and more during your meetings and the personal time leading up to it.

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Note: All written content has been reviewed by a Catholic spiritual director to cross check that all statements align with the teachings and tenants of the Roman Catholic Church.

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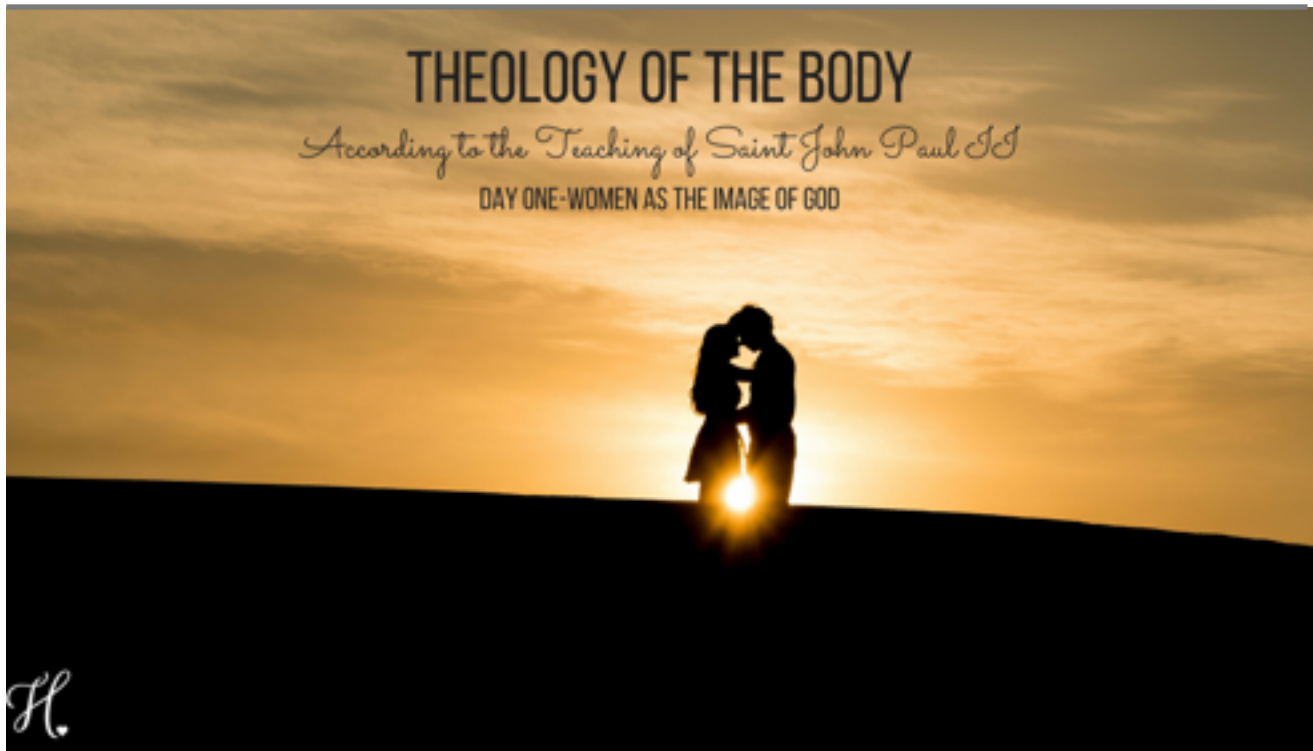
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Genesis 1:26-28 Genesis 2:18-23

Women are funny, I think. One minute, our nurturing nature goes overboard and we are whispering behind the backs of our neighbors, outraged by this or that, insisting that we know what is best for them. The next minute, we are organizing meals for those same neighbors when they hit on hard times. Within hours, our nurturing nature rises to the occasion as emails are sent, text messages exchanged, and Facebook statuses updated on what and how best to serve the family in need.

The philosopher-saint Edith Stein (St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) would likely attribute this dynamic to our soul (see a collection of her essays titled, “*Woman*”). Specifically, our female soul, our “*woman*” soul. I know, the term “*woman*” is often so loaded with meaning. Depending on what crowd utters the term, we might envision a fierce “*bring home the bacon fry it up in a pan*” mantra, or else a sentimental, doting love at our own nature. Sometimes, even within the Church, we stumble upon some notion of what a woman is by a badly interpreted vision of Proverbs 31 crossed with a strict and literal reading of Ephesians 5:22.

But for Edith Stein it was none of those things. Stein looks back at creation - right back to the very beginning of the Bible - and sees where “in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” She sees in this moment what the Catechism confirms, that the “*divine image is present*” in all of us. She recognizes that, for women, the presence of the divine image is made manifest in the nurturing nature of her soul.

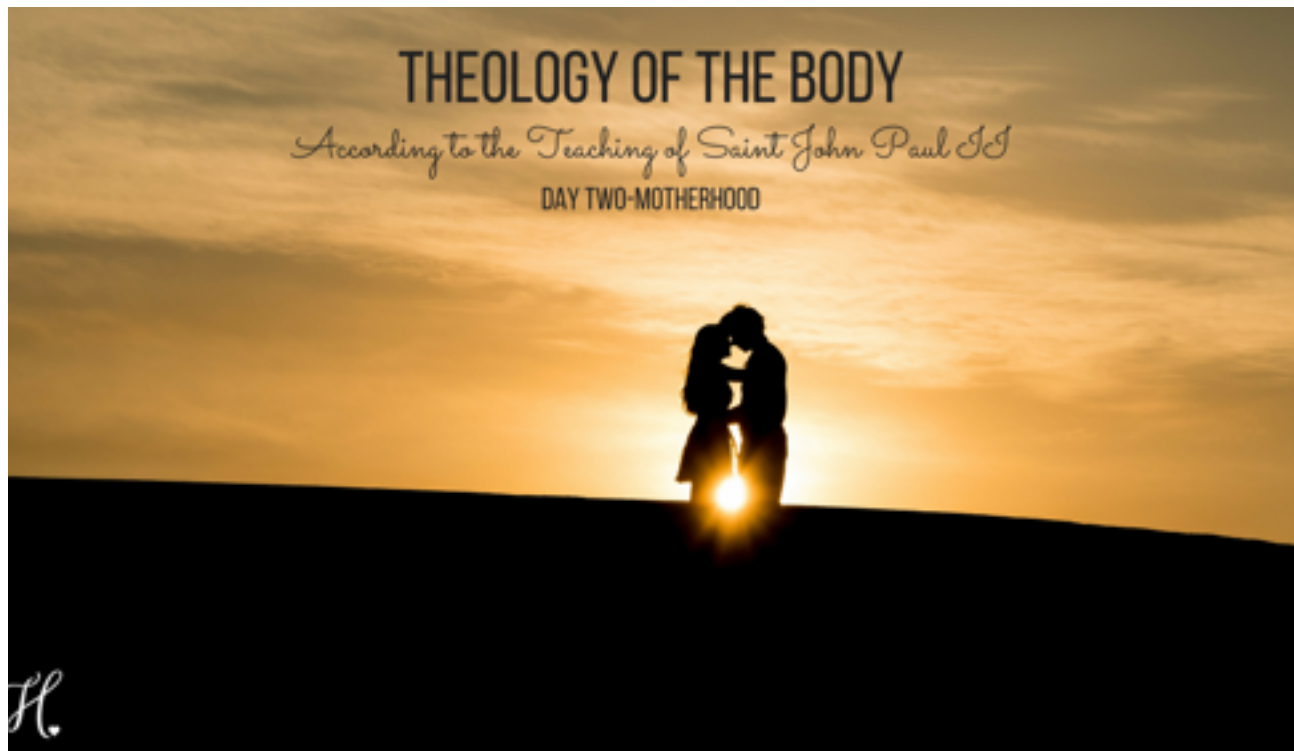
You and me. We are made in his image. Our neighbors - both physical and allegorical - are made in His image. When we become overly involved in their affairs, when we whisper about them and gossip, it is an assault against the divine image present in that person. Just as, when we lend a hand, take a meal, pray for a friend, we are giving aid to the divine image present in that friend.

Let's become the women we were meant to be. Let's say “yes” today so that it's an echo of that “yes” given so many years ago. If we can do that - if we can nurture those around us and care for them - we, too, will be bringing Jesus to those who need him. -Christine

**Reflect:** The nurturing nature of women has a downside. Too often, we insert ourselves too deeply into other people's lives, “caring for them.” Is there a situation in your life where you are too involved? Do you need to step back?

**Reflect:** Conversely, is there someone in your life that could benefit from the love that flows through you from the Divine Heart? How might you bring Jesus to this person or persons? Through a smile? A home cooked meal? Conversation about a good book?





### Genesis 1:27-28

About 7 years ago, I had, it seemed, a flurry of medical issues. Finally, a diagnosis was delivered to me, and with it, the devastating knowledge that it would be difficult to have children. My husband and I were newly married. Prior to the wedding, we talked excitedly about growing our family. This was a blow neither of us saw coming. That day, something inside me just died. My husband was supportive and loving, but I could tell deep down he felt the same way. Because of God's grace, we now have two beautiful babies. They have completed our family and brought me a sense of purpose I hadn't know before.

This "new purpose" is found through motherhood, and referred to as the mystery of femininity in Pope John Paul II "Theology of the Body. Both sexes, male and female, are finally able to see their full potential through procreation. Whilst creating another being, both man and woman, once seen as husband and wife, become more than that, they become parents. Unfortunately, conjugal love in our society is often distorted into something perverse. It is

hardly ever portrayed as the true gift it was meant to be. Because of free, unhindered giving of one's self, the couple has the opportunity, in conjunction with Christ's will, to *"be fruitful and multiply."* (Gn 1:28).

Each child born is created in the image of Christ (Gn1:27). I remember looking at each of my children's faces and thinking, *"God made this face. This child has seen Christ."* And just kissing their sweet faces over and over again knowing that God had touched that sweet face as well. Think of the Holy Trinity for one moment. Each is it's own separate entity, yet, all are one at the same time. This relationship can reflect the family as well. Man, woman, and child are separate, yet, husband and wife join together to create a child. That child reflects the very best qualities from each parent. (Although, I have seen my son pick up some of my not so good qualities. Those are reflected back as well!)

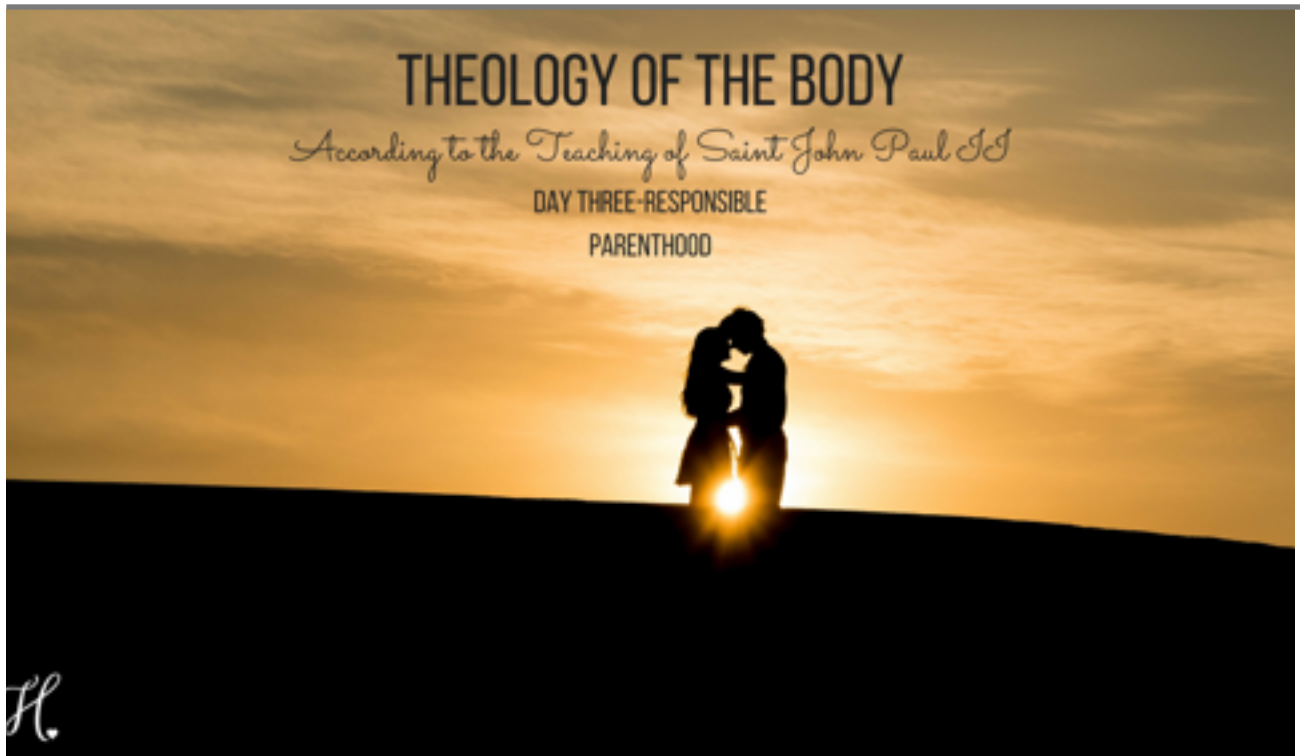
After the fall, God told Eve child bearing would be painful and difficult. For every mother out there who has given birth, I'm sure they wish Eve had made a different decision, and having babies wasn't absolutely excruciating. However, we can also see that while a mistake was made, while original sin is carried over time and again, God still allows us to create beautiful babies in His image (Gn 1:27).

One last thought-mothers are able to obviously carry a child in their womb. While this is certainly miraculous without a doubt, I want to point out that a mother also carries a child in her heart and soul unlike anyone else. There a times when mothers do not physically carry their children. However, the love and affection "carried" for that child, is unprecedented. Whether biological or not, a woman's love for her child is truly a gift for God.

Being parents has truly transformed our lives. Each day, we a blessed to witness the fruit of our love, and the true power of Christ. While it is certainly exhausting, overwhelming, and downright hard, (I think my instruction book was lost!) as I







### Ephesians 6:4

When I was in tenth grade, our local church's [former] Religious Education director told an auditorium full of public school parents that their kids would be having sex, so the responsible thing to do was to provide the condoms. I was on birth control at the time to regulate my periods so I could ~~lazily~~ 'easily' monitor my cycle to excel at cross country and track. It is very clear to me now how misguided, and perhaps even brainwashed I was into accepting society's version of responsibility when in reality, it is so much more. The Lord really has a sense of humor, as I signed up to pen this article before I knew I was pregnant (again) and have had a few subtle (and not so subtle) questions about my family's fertility choices.

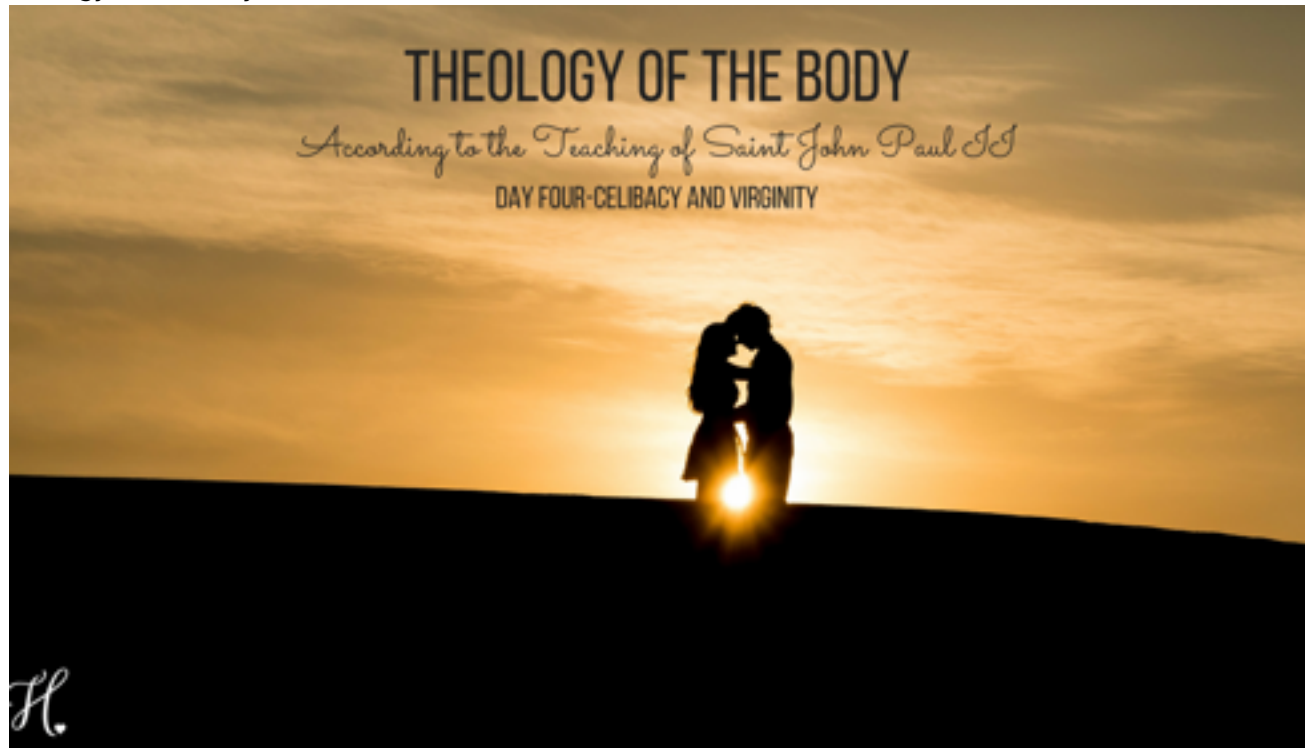
If I had to answer 'why' to the above question in one line, I would quote Pope John Paul II, "It arouses in them a consciousness of their responsibilities.\*" *OUR* responsibility: not to simply provide the basics to our children, but a constant reminder of our marital

vows, and how we are supposed to be raising our family. Let me be blunt: Natural Family Planning is the only type of fertility awareness supported by the Catholic Church. Responsibility, in this sense, does not always mean what is best for your wallet, for your job, or even for yourself. Choosing to practice responsible parenthood is, as Pope John Paul II writes, “*a continual effort and commitment...at the cost of a precise self-denial\**”. Every single day we are challenged to lift our burdens up and bask in the freedom that this Christian life provides for us. But God’s grace and forgiveness are always a choice. Responsible parenthood is no different. We cannot be picky about the graces that our Catholic faith allows us; Jesus did not die on the cross for that.

Paul writes to the Ephesians, “*Parents, do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead, raise them with Christian discipline and instruction*” (6:4). Something that always frustrated me as a child was watching the adults in my life practice blatant hypocrisy. How can we expect our children to respect us if we don’t respect ourselves? Because all hypocrisy is, is the choice to disrespect what you claim to believe in. Of course, if this life was easy all the time, everyone would have no problem doing it. But alas, this path is certainly narrow and at times I feel like I’m on a balance beam with only my big toe!

When married couples choose to stay open to the possibility of new life, they gain moral maturity which Pope John Paul II believes go hand in hand. Natural Family Planning is not simply meant to be “*Catholic contraception*” because we do not believe in limiting life ‘*just because*’. There is always a moral component in human sexuality and certainly in married life. If there wasn’t, we would be no different than animals. It encourages my husband and me to have meaningful conversations about the spiritual direction that we are charged with providing our children. It snuffs out the flame of self-love of our outward image and our finances, and





Matthew 19:10-12 | Corinthians 7:8-9

You've probably heard that when it comes to being in a relationship, *"everybody's doing it."* Secular society tends to make fun of people who are inexperienced, or \*gasp\* virgins. Sex is valued by the world as the be-all and end-all, with marriage being just a *"bonus"* that focuses more on the wedding and where the couple goes for a honeymoon than on making the marriage work.

Love is not about how good you are in bed. It's not about having the most lavish wedding, or going on an exotic honeymoon, or even about being with somebody until you can't take it anymore. Love and marriage are about sacrifice. Love can manifest in a million different ways that have nothing to do with relationships. One of those ways that love can manifest is through celibacy and virginity.

Being a virgin isn't a disease or something to be ridiculed. At the same time, people shouldn't put such an emphasis on *"purity"* that they basically pressure women into roles they may not want to take on. Being a virgin means simply to embrace a life of chastity,

which goes way beyond whether or not you “do it” before you’re married.

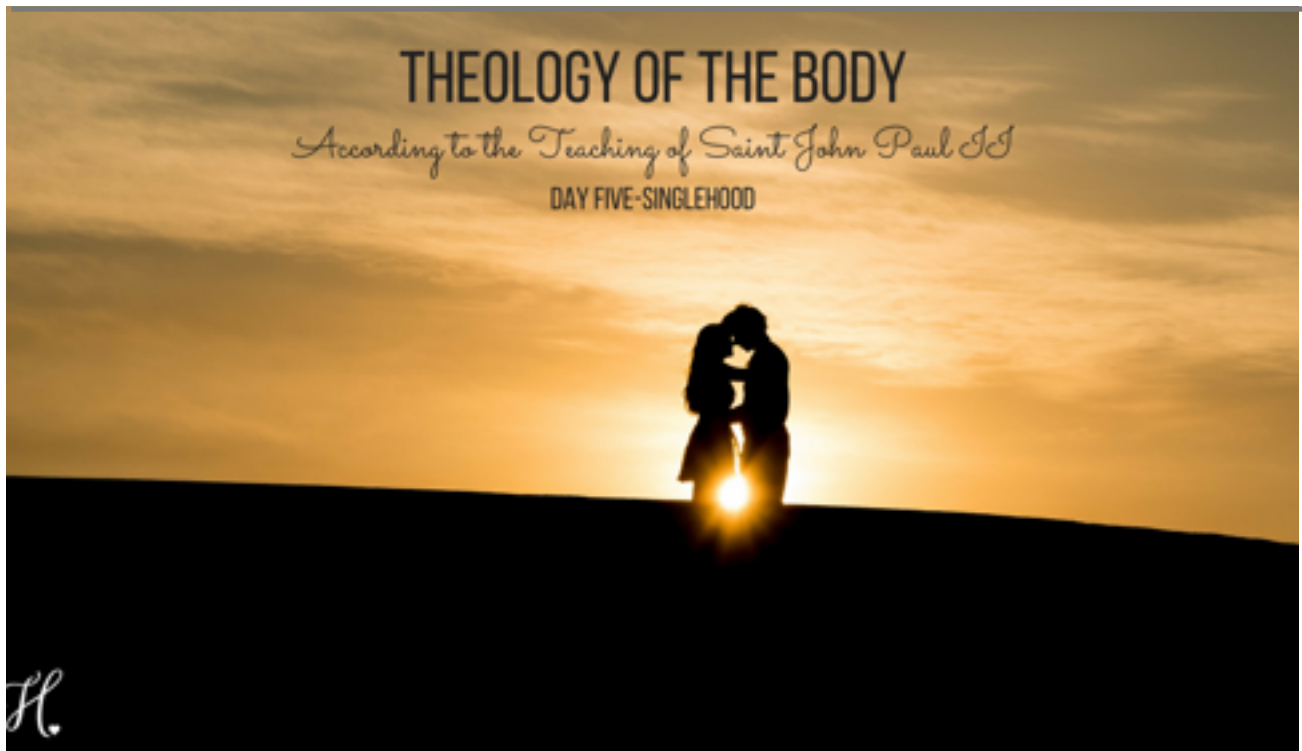
Arleen Spenceley, author of *Chastity is for Lovers*, says that *“Chastity infuses sex with love and love with sacrifice...Chastity never trivializes sex, and it refuses to use or objectify people. It says we can have what we want when we want what is good for us and it equips us to discern whether it is.”* Chastity is not exactly the same as virginity or abstinence. Abstinence is merely the act of refraining from having sex. According to The Catechism of the Catholic Church: *“Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being.”*—Monique

**Reflect:** In order to practice chastity, we need to acknowledge that our sexuality is only a part of ourselves and not define our entire identity around it.

Chastity provides a middle ground. Being a “*chaste*” person means practicing authentic love. When we practice chastity, we aren’t defined by our sexuality alone, nor are we considered “*impure*” for not being a virgin. Chastity gives those who want to reform a chance to start over and helps those who are still virgins maintain their integrity. Chastity gives us the dignity to be women, regardless of whatever careers we decide to have or what vocation we are called to.

**Act:** There are way too many people who do so, whether they devote their lives to being “*pure*” for all the wrong reasons or being a “*slut*” with pride for the sake of “female empowerment.” Both of these mindsets are extremes that we can lose ourselves in.





[Jeremiah 16:1-4 | Corinthians 7:29-35](#)

Most people see being single as the longest wait, the long prologue before really “*starting*” your life in marriage or in a religious order. What a lot of people tend to forget, though, is that there are many saints who stayed single and devoted their lives to Christ. We do not need to be in a relationship or be part of a religious order in order to be better Christians. The best thing we can do, if we are single, is to make the most of our lives while we’re waiting to see what vocation God calls us to pursue.

Some saints, such as Gemma Galgani and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, never joined a religious order, but were instead part of what’s called a “lay ministry.” Some religious orders have what is called a “*third order*,” which invites laypeople to adapt the spirituality of the order into their lifestyles. For example, there are many lay Dominicans and Franciscans. The lay orders have group meetings and provide a sense of community for the everyman. Elizabeth Scalia goes into detail about third orders



here. If you feel like you want to be part of a religious community, but may not have the time or the commitment, figure out what kind of spirituality you're drawn to and look for lay orders in your area.

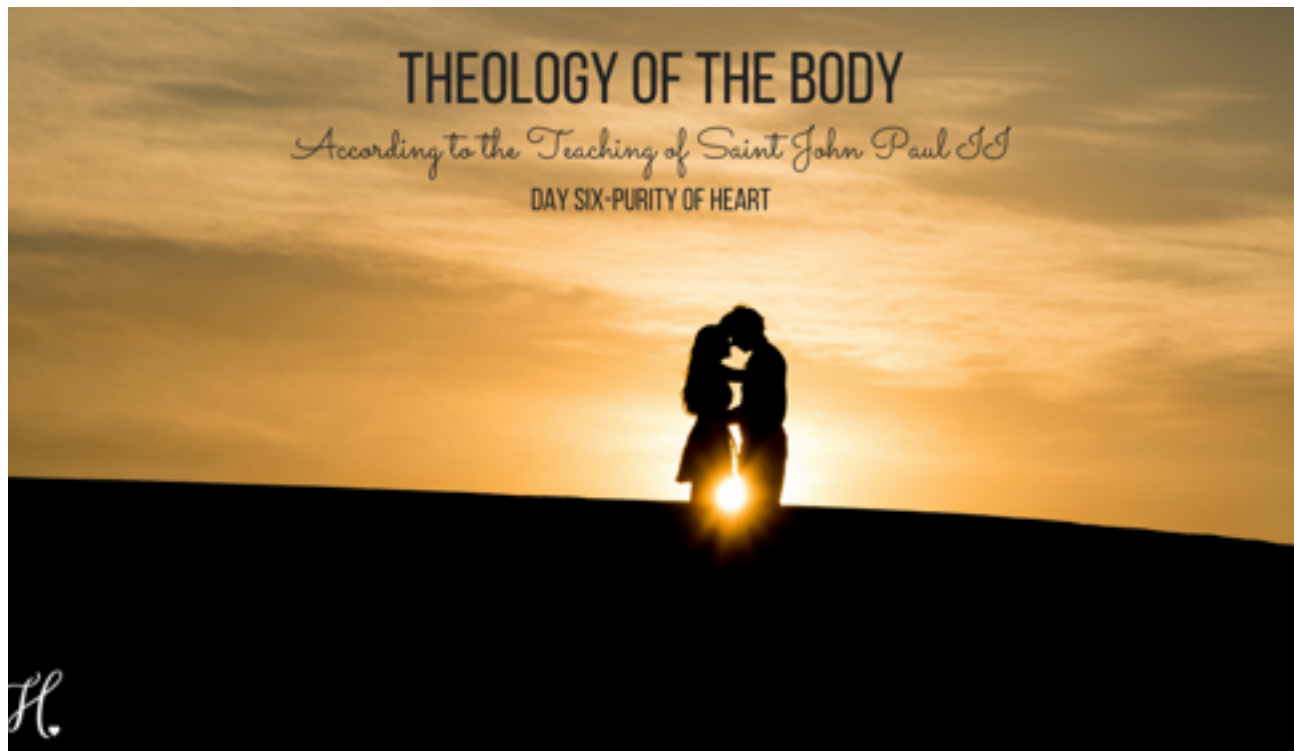
If you're someone that God has called for married life, my best advice is to work on the things you want to have if and when you enter into the role of "*wife and mother.*" Learn how to take care of yourself and maintain a clean house. Teach yourself how to balance a checkbook and how to use spreadsheets. Know how to cook, how to sew, and other life skills. If you want to have kids someday, volunteer to babysit or do some work in child care. There are so many things in life that you can't just learn from reading a book or taking a class. You have to learn as you go. And if there are any guys out there reading this, this all applies to you, as well.

Entering into the married state won't automatically transform you into the perfect spouse. And if you want to be a part of a religious order, it's important that you take care of your spiritual welfare. Being married or being in a religious order won't fix the problems you have and they won't completely fulfill your emotional needs. We need to allow God to fill up those empty spaces in our hearts because He is the one who calls us to serve Him. -Monique

**Reflect:** Paul says, in 1 Corinthians 7:34 "*An unmarried woman or a virgin is anxious about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy in both body and spirit.*"

**Act:** Saint Paul never married and his writings on staying single most likely came from experience. If you





[Matthew 5:8](#) [Matthew 5:27-28](#) [Luke 1:26-38](#)

***“Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.” (Mt 5:8)***

Why would Pope Saint John Paul II devote an entire section of his Theology of the Body to the human heart, specifically this Beatitude about purity of heart, if he was teaching about the body? Well, according to him and many others, the heart is the deepest layer of the human person. Some argue it's where the soul resides, the crossroad between the soul and the body, between inward and outward. It's where our soul and flesh are fused into one, inseparable, to make us human. It is the ultimate battlefield between good and evil, love and lust, purity and blindness (TOB 55:7). So any teaching on the meaning and proper use of the body has to involve the heart.

But this isn't a new idea. It came from Christ himself. If you read further down in the Beatitudes, He says that anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Mt 5:27-28). Instead of only looking on external

actions, Christ “sees in the heart, in man's inner self, the source of purity” (TOB 50:2). This was in direct opposition to the Jewish customs of the time, which placed the emphasis on external purification rituals. Jesus constantly reproached the Pharisees, telling them to “cleanse first the inside of the cup, so that the outside may also be clean.” (Mt 23:26) Jesus came to show us how to take the external law and apply it internally, where it matters more.

**The pure of heart shall see God.**

Purity of heart is so much deeper than just sexual purity - it encompasses all that is good and all that is honorable. It means living in the Light and allowing this Light to allow you to see. Christopher West, in his book *Theology of the Body Explained*, summarizes Pope Saint John Paul II's teaching about purity of heart as follows: “Only the pure man is capable of seeing God. That is the very definition of purity. Hence, impurity can be defined as the inability to see God.”

Adam and Eve had this undivided “harmony of the heart” (TOB 55:6) in the beginning, allowing them to see everything clearly without the fogginess of sin. Particularly, they could see God's image in all of creation, especially in each other's bodies. They had no need to cover themselves because their bodies led them to God. After the Fall, they covered their bodies because their hearts were no longer pure. Instead of seeing each other in the image of God they saw each other through selfishness, lust, and use (TOB 27). This purity of heart is what Christ came to restore in us.

Purity of heart allows us to see God's image in each other, both inside and outside the spousal relationship. What does this mean practically for us? Before marriage it means guarding your heart as well as your body, including emotional chastity. Within marriage, while chastity is no longer required, there still needs to be a purity of heart to keep lust, sin, and selfishness out. It also means guarding against emotional adultery of the heart, which women tend to fall into easier than lust. My relationships with my

male friends had to change when I got married. I need to make sure my husband knows the depths of my heart before any other male (aside from a priest or spiritual director), and that I don't get more emotionally attached to any male friend more than him. This doesn't mean I can't have male friends, but that I need to place them in the proper order in my heart. And above all, whether married or single, purity of heart means living in the Light with all of our thoughts and actions.

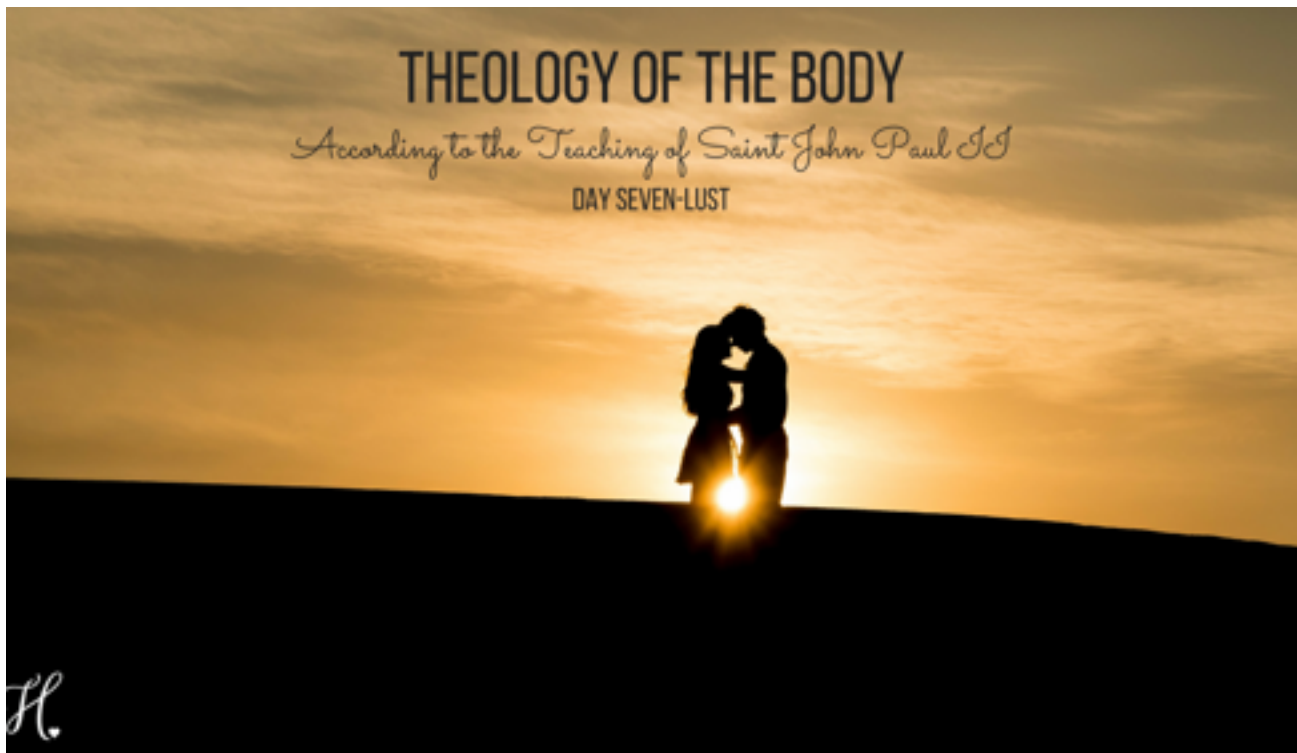
How does purity of heart come? According to Pope Saint John Paul II and Christopher West, it's a gift of the Holy Spirit, not something we can attain on our own. We must be open to receive this freedom and let it be done unto us - much like Our Lady's fiat. Mary, the most perfect human, had the ultimate purity of heart. This means her body was also the most pure and suitable place for our Lord to grow. St. Augustine wrote that she conceived Jesus in her heart before she conceived Him in her womb, through her yes. May she be a model and an intercessor for us, to help us to see.

-Emily

**Reflect:** Do your outer actions match the inner environment of your heart? Is there an area of your life where you need more purity of heart? Do you see God and others clearly, or are you bogged down in the foggy of lust, pride, or woundedness?

**Act:** Christopher West writes that *“regaining purity, then, is not first a matter of ‘doing’, but a matter of ‘letting it be done’.* Like the Immaculate One - that is, the woman totally pure of heart - we must offer our fiat to the Holy Spirit. Only then will Christ be ‘conceived’ in





[Matthew 15:18-20 Psalm 51](#)

Lust is not something I've often heard addressed by speakers at women's conferences or retreats, or even blogs or books. Despite the many forms it could take on—unchastity in relationships or “hooking up,” fornication, contraception, pornography—it is a sin generally associated with men alone. As someone who has struggled with chastity and fought against lust throughout my single and dating years, and shared my struggles with other women, I can promise you that this is a sin that affects both men and women equally. Just like it affected both Adam and Eve.

Pope St John Paul II in his Theology of the Body says that lust (or concupiscence) is the fruit of the breaking of the covenant established by God and Man in Genesis. God's covenant with our first parents is simple enough in its understanding—Adam “gets” God and God “gets” Adam, meaning that humanity and God existed in a total and perfect union with one another. Not only was humanity in perfect unity with God, but because of this they were

able to be in perfect union with the other members of humanity. But this covenant, this unity, was broken when Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil.

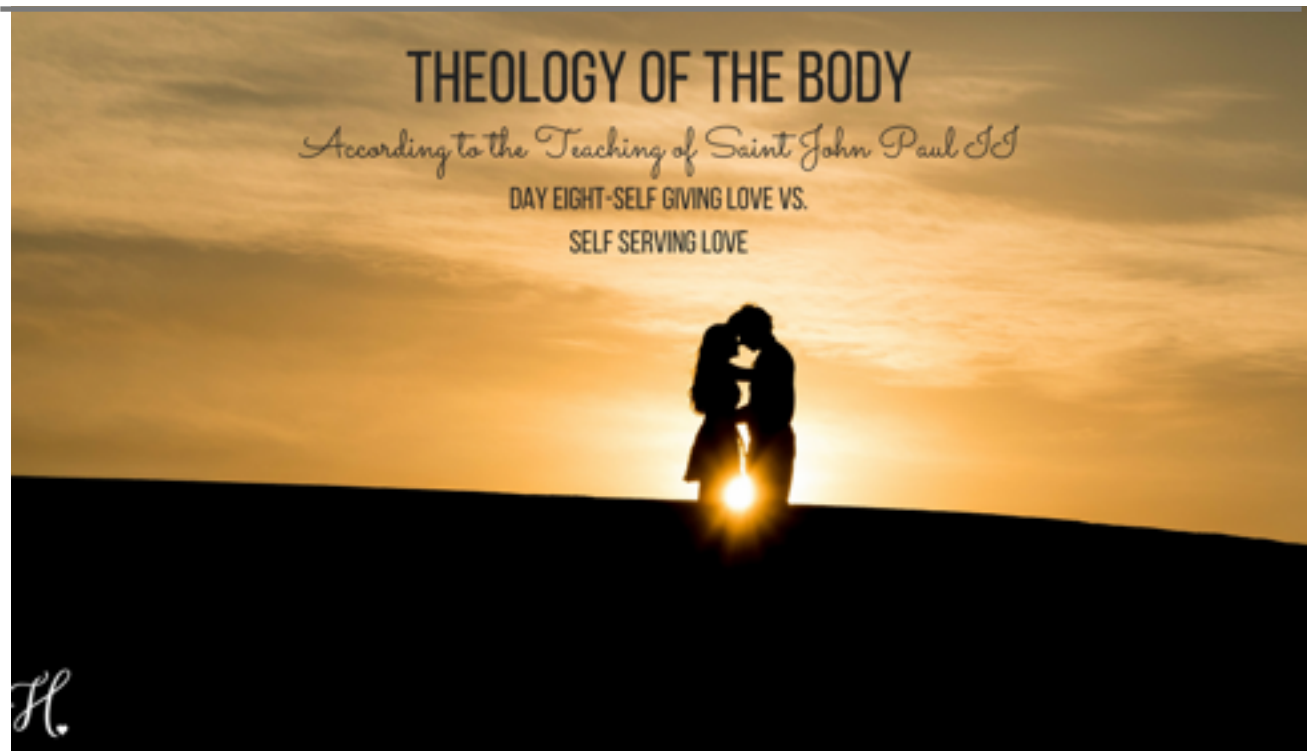
Immediately after eating the fruit of the tree, we see Adam and Eve experience shame of their nakedness. Not only does this indicate a losing of their original innocence, but it also represents the change in the relationship humanity has with God and others. Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together to cover up their nakedness, and Pope St. John Paul II says that this is the moment lust entered the world. Our first parents could no longer stand completely naked without fear; they could no longer give their entire selves perfectly to the other. Where they once stood as subjects, loved for their own sake, they are now in danger of becoming mere objects to the other, something to be used instead of someone to cherish.

The sign of the original covenant between God and man was marriage. Marriage, an interpersonal relationship and the union of a man and a woman, was the physical sign of humanity's relationship with God. Lust also implies an interpersonal relationship, but this sin twists the relationship to show only the brokenness of this covenant. Thankfully, what was twisted by sin can be untwisted by grace. Where lust causes disunity, the Lord can create unity once again.

While our gift of self may not be that perfect gift that He originally intended for us, and while our relationship with Him may have been damaged by choosing to sin, God redeemed our relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. He made it not only possible but necessary for us to give ourselves as a gift to another. We are participants in the new covenant, and we were made for heaven. We were made to dwell in perfect union with God and our sisters and brothers for all eternity. To do that, however, we must follow Christ's example. We must continually die to the desires of the flesh, and choose to act with sacrificial love.-Carissa







[John 15:11-17](#)

*“Love one another as I have loved you.”*

Wow. These words that the Lord spoke in the Gospel of John can be so convicting and hard to hear at times. Jesus is asking us to love one another as He has loved us. Think about that for a moment. Jesus loved us so much that He endured suffering after suffering for our sake. Jesus died on the cross out of love for us. That is the kind of love He is asking us to have for one another. This love that we are being called to have is a self-giving love and not a self-serving love.

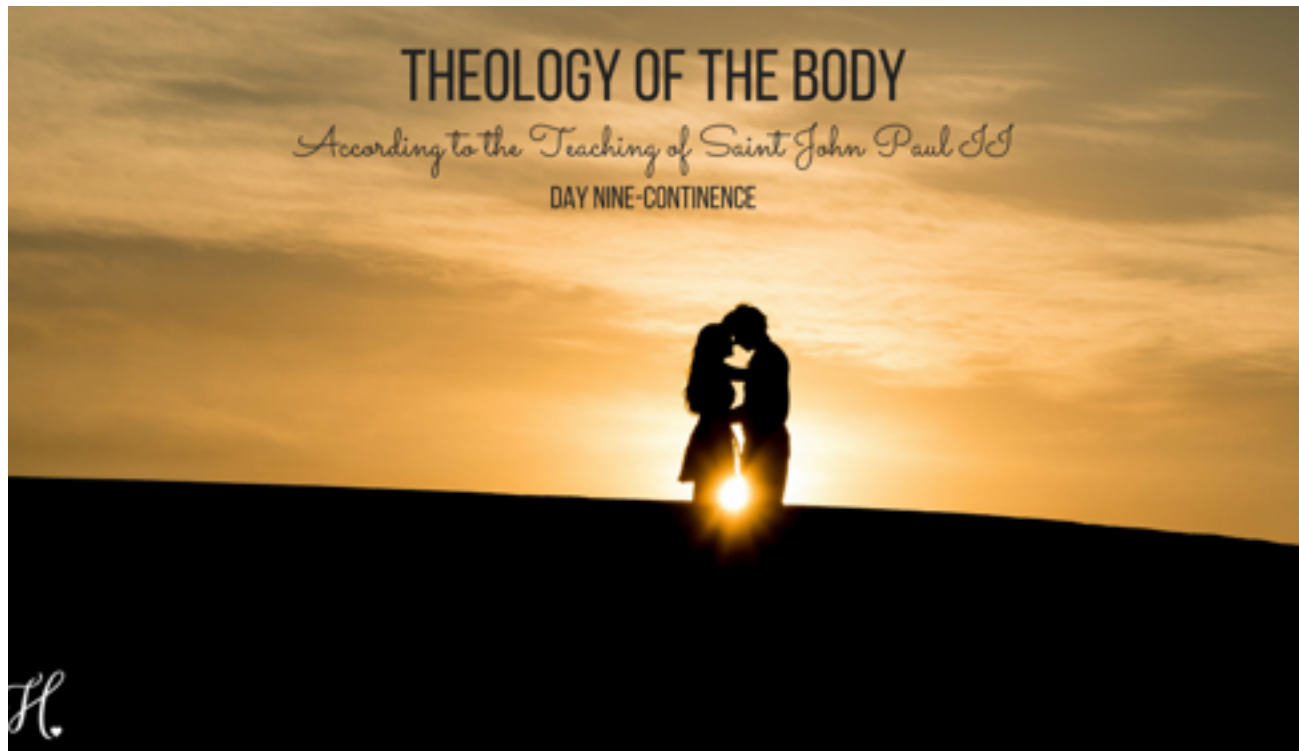
First, we must explore the differences between self-serving and self-giving love before we can fully understand this calling we all have. Self-serving love looks only to love in moments where the person’s own interests and goals are being fulfilled. Someone who loves in this way may seem genuine, but neither sacrifices or sets aside their own interests for another person. Self-giving love contrasts this kind of love by not taking any thought of itself and

does not pursue its own interest. The love that Jesus has for us is self-giving and it is a love we are all called to have. He asks us to lay down our lives for others just as He laid His life down for us. We are called to love until it hurts. Yes, it is definitely easy for us to love our family and those close to our hearts, but this love is even more important and crucial in our relationships with our enemies and strangers. We fully enter into the mystery of Christ's love when we learn to love even in the situations that hurt the most.

In St. John Paul the Great's teachings of Theology of the Body, he reflects on this idea of self-giving love between spouses. *"The man's words (cf. Sg 7:1-8) do not only contain a poetic description of his beloved, of her feminine beauty on which his senses dwell, but they speak of the gift and the self-giving of the person."* (JPII) Here he uses Song of Songs to reflect upon the love that spouses have for each other. This love is a gift of the entire person to their spouse so that they may become one. He states that the gift of husband to wife and wife to husband puts a seal on their entire life. When a man and woman become one in marriage they are literally sealing up their lives with their love for each other.

So whether we are called to marriage, a religious vocation, or singlehood, we are called to live a life that is based on self-giving love. This love will not be easy! The Lord does not call us to a life of comfort, though; He calls us to live a life that will one day bring us to heaven. Take heart children of God, the Lord is calling us to a life of difficulty, but in these moments of suffering and stretching of our hearts, we can fully enter into the mystery and joys of the resurrection. -Marykatherine





### Ephesians 5:1-20

The desire to emotionally connect with someone is a strong desire. Having a relationship can be something that we wish for more than anything. Relationships can seem like fairy tales at first. You meet a charming prince and before you know it, you're on your way to happily ever after. Having emotions and desires, and being in a relationship are all good things. There is nothing wrong with wanting to be in a relationship or having a loving, passionate love in your life.

What we need to keep in mind is that love is not a feeling or a sentiment, but a choice. If we want to be in a good, healthy relationship, we need to love ourselves as much as God loves us. Many of us have had relationships where the fairy tale turned into a tragedy instead. What we can learn, going forward, is how to maintain our integrity and authentic self.

A lot of people think that relationships are always about how we feel and what our desires are. While having love is part of being

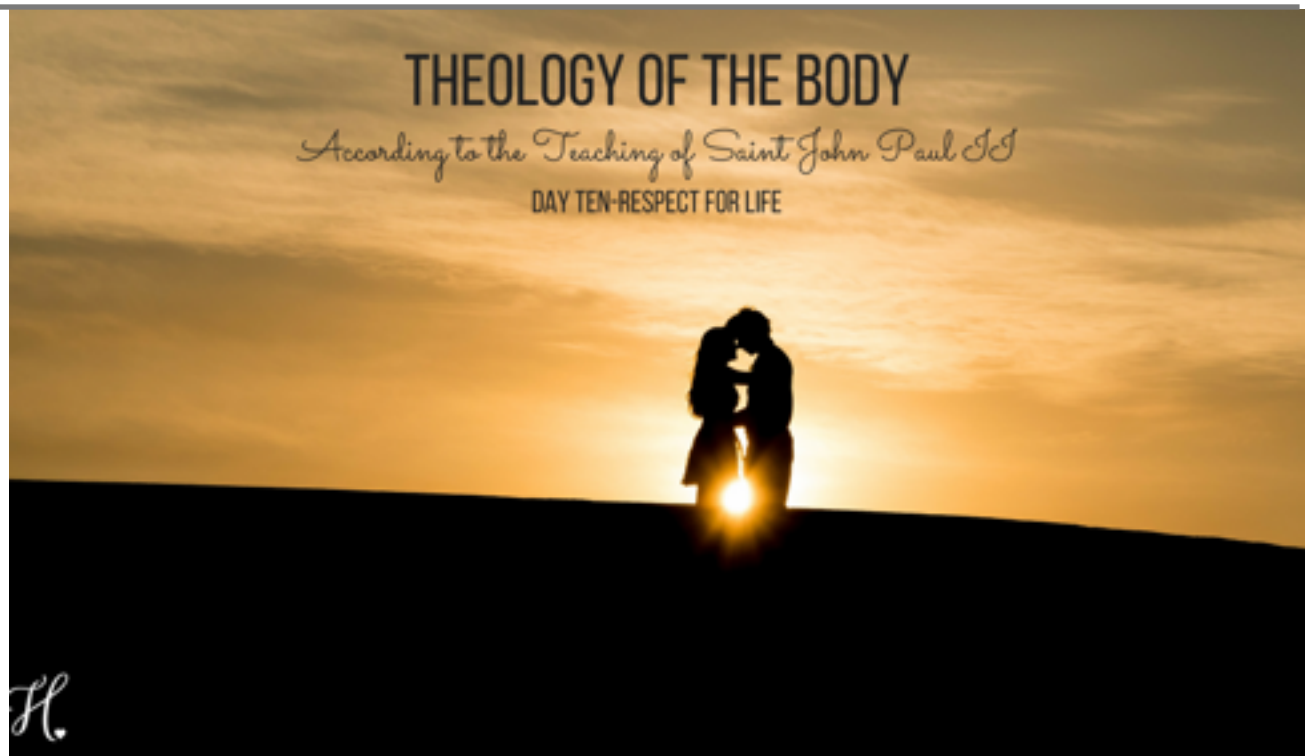
in a relationship, the most important thing we need to know is that we need to look at love from God's perspective. Part of that includes not allowing ourselves be consumed by our emotions and the desire to be in a relationship just for the sake of being in one. Today's passage from Ephesians 5 gives us a guideline on practicing what I call "*emotional chastity*." No matter what kind of lifestyle we lead, practicing emotional chastity gives us an outlet for channeling our love, whether it be through our marriage, our families, or our careers.

Ephesians 5:8-10 says, "*Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.*" The best way we can practice emotional chastity, the ability to discipline ourselves, is to center our lives on pleasing God first. Matthew 6:33 says "*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.*"

When we channel our desires so that we desire to do God's will first, everything else falls into place. God wills us to serve others before tending to our own egos, and calls us to be more considerate and compassionate. At the same time, we can also learn to love ourselves as we are, the way that God loves us, without relying on a relationship or some kind of outside commitment. As long as we remember to love ourselves and remind ourselves that God loves us, we can find our center and not seek love from lesser things. -Monique

**Reflect: Where do we tend to seek our love from?**





Psalm 139:13-14 Jeremiah 1:5

I firmly believe that if anyone needs concrete proof in order to believe in the power of God, then hold a newborn baby. Look at their tiny fingernails, the folds of their ears, the way their eyelashes flutter when they sleep. There is no greater proof of our loving God, the God that creates, then a newborn child. A child that grows inside a woman for nine months, completely relying on that woman for their food and nourishment, then enters the world, takes their first breath, and then become reliant on the air around them. Even after giving birth to three children, I can still say that the pure miracle of life is nothing short of that—a miracle. It never loses its awe, never loses its ability to amaze. That's God. That's His working.

We know that we are all created in the image of God, by God. In 1 Corinthians 12:18 Paul says *“God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose.”* Paul's goal in this specific writing was to show the Corinthians how our body's are all



worthy of honor. We are worthy of honor and respect merely because we were created in the likeness of our Lord. That's exactly why the horrible act of abortion is something that our church will always fight against. The life of the unborn, the innocent children, need protected. Those children are too created in the image and likeness of God, whether or not society chooses to agree with that, they are living, breathing beings. Destined to be saints. Destined to grow up and love and serve our Lord.

I challenge you now to look at your life, your body with that same rationale. It's so easy to understand why the life of unborn babies need protected- they can't fight for themselves. The killing of innocent children is wrong. That's simple. That's so very easy for us to agree with and for us to fight for. But then I ask you, what about your life? What about the life that you are living right now? Why do we often find it so hard for us to respect life after that life is no longer a sweet, innocent baby? What about when it's a not so sweet, not so innocent adult?

I will be the first to admit that I'm hard on myself. Not just hard on myself, I spent years believe that because of past mistakes, past sins, I was unworthy of God's love. Other people, yes, they deserved it, but me, no. I had "*sinned too much*" or "*drifted too far*" and God's love was then reserved for those who didn't fall into that category. Now, sisters in faith, I will also admit that this is something that I still struggle with. I pray for strength every day for God to allow me to see myself as He sees me. Not as a broken object in need of repair, but as His daughter. Someone he created in His image. Someone who is worthy of His love not because I say I am, but because He says we are.

*"You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works! My very self you know."* – Psalm 139: 13-14

**When you doubt just how wonderful you are, read this scripture. Read it out loud and focus on the words. In fact, read all of Psalm 139. Remember that God already knows your entire self. It doesn't matter what you want to hide from Him, or what you want to shield from His view. There's no mountain tall enough and nowhere low enough to escape Him. Which is amazing news for all of us because that means that His love is always there. Our worth to Him does not change. He created us all and He knows our struggles, our weaknesses, as well as our accomplishments and our goals.**

***“ Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.”***  
**Jeremiah 1:5**

**We are all dedicated to Him and His mercy. We are all called to bring ourselves closer and closer to God, respecting the life, the body that He chose for us. Respect for life doesn't end at abortion, it carries on to the respect we should have for all of God's creations, at all stages of life. It means never forgetting who we are. We are daughters of God, we are made in His image and we are asked to lead a life dedicated to Him. -Dana**

**Reflect: Take time today to reflect and act by praying with the two passages mentioned.**



