


THEOLOGY
OF THE BODY
for Teens

MIDDLE SCHOOL EDITION

LEADERSHIP FORMATION
RESOURCE





THEOLOGY OF THE BODY *for Teens*

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This resource serves as the blueprint to a powerful event that will help your team to grow in a clear and unified vision of the Theology of the Body.

What comes with this resource?

- ➔ A 4 part video series to drive the event
- ➔ A brief outline to reinforce and support each segment
- ➔ Small group questions

Gather your team, small group leaders, and anyone else who will be involved in forming the candidates. We recommend scheduling a 3-hour event to take place in advance of using *Theology of the Body for Teens: Middle School Edition*.

Set up a conducive environment where your team can view the videos and comfortably discuss the questions in small groups. (This will vary depending on the size of your team. Aim for groups of 3-8.)

Suggested Session Structure

- Welcome and Introduction . . . (30 min.)
- Session 1 (45 min.)
- Break (15 min.)
- Session 2 (45 min.)
- Session 3 (45 min.)

INTRODUCTION

Recovering Middle Schoolers

Middle school is a critical time for formation. It is a time of life marked by physical, psychological, social, and spiritual change. And, as a recovering middle schooler yourself, you may remember how awkward that can be. Do you remember the kinds of questions you asked? Do you remember the sometimes painful new awareness of others around you? How about getting dropped off at social events? Maybe you don't remember what going through all of that (with a phone in your hand) was like, but this generation will.

Middle school aged youth need mentoring, guidance, solid teaching, and the right kind of attention. The content of St. John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* and an approach consistent with the same saint's pastoral savvy are a great prescription for what ails the early adolescent. Whether you are a parent, teacher, catechist, youth minister or pastor, our resource is meant to equip you and to accompany middle schoolers through formation for their minds and hearts.

More Than Talk

A big part of this is formation in human sexuality, but not as an isolated topic. The formation we are talking about here is not simply a "sex talk" or a "make good choices" guide. Following from St. John Paul II's approach, our program addresses human sexuality in the context of being human. Questions of chastity are preceded by questions about identity and purpose.

"Who Are We? Where Are We Headed? How Are We Going To Get There?"

This leadership formation resource is meant to prepare you to guide middle schoolers through all of this in the most effective way possible. If we want our youth to reflect, then we have to lead the way by being reflective ourselves. If we want to minister to middle schoolers, we have to do the possibly painful work of remembering our own early adolescent selves. Leaders should take time to reflect, discuss, plan, and vision. The resource is step-by-step and easy enough; the hard work is opening our minds and hearts to ask the fundamental questions for ourselves: "Who are we? Where are we headed? How are we going to get there?"

Thank you for your openness to doing this work with the young Church. May God bless you and equip you as you go forward.

Welcome and Introduction

- Thank you
- The importance of your yes
- The urgency of culture and the gift of TOB
- Middle Schoolers as underserved
- A vote of confidence

Small Group Questions

1. Who are you and what inspired you to be a part of this program?

2. What do you hope to learn today?

Session 1 - The Culture of Middle School

- Thinking back to Middle School
- We are all recovering Middle Schoolers. What were your experiences?
- Middle school behavior and brain development
- The urgency of parent involvement
- A plan for parents

Small Group Questions

1. What is the first word that comes to mind when you think “middle schooler?”
Why those words?
2. How is it that you are going to create the right kind of environment for your middle schoolers?
3. How can we effectively engage parents and offer hope and support?

Session 2 - The Theology of the Body

- What the TOB is not
- The background of TOB
 - ▷ A lens, a vision of the Gospel
 - ▷ Informs who we are as male and female
 - ▷ Vocation
 - ▷ Heaven
- Colin's TOB testimony
- Two crucial questions
 - ▷ Who am I?
 - ▷ How shall I live?
- TOB as a deeper vision
 - ▷ Our story
 - ▷ Unity of body and soul (language of the body)
 - ▷ Virtue
 - ▷ Sex and love
 - ▷ Vocation
 - ▷ A way of living
- Where to find out more

Small Group Questions

1. How do you understand the Theology of the Body?
2. Why do you think this message is critical for middle schoolers?
3. Is there some aspect of the TOB that is really sticking out to you today? What and why?

Session 3 - A Closer Look at the Program

- The vision of the program
- The breakdown
- Who am I?
- Virtue (bridge)
- How should I live?
- Components of the program
- A walk through a chapter

Small Group Questions

1. Walk through chapter 1 together. What are you excited about? What are you wondering about?
2. What do you hope to accomplish with your middle schoolers?