



## From the Pastor's Desk:

I have been thinking a lot about our youth and speaking with staff about the need of our young people. I'm excited about the group that is actively involved in fundraising right now so that they can attend "World Youth Day" in August 2011 in Spain. Reading about all the preparations already taking place around the world is exciting and I am excited for our youth who are availing themselves of the opportunity to share their faith as teenagers with teens from every continent and culture around the world.

While the focus of the events of World Youth Day will be the deepening of young people's spiritual lives through in Christ, the intent is also to show them how much they all have in common and how much they are ALL loved by God. The fact that they share in the same Catholic Faith and to experience the global impact of being ONE in the Mystical Body of Christ will be an awesome experience of Church for them.

Our youth are challenged daily by social forces that try desperately and seductively to lure them away from their Faith and the life values that Jesus teaches us in the Gospel and through His Church. Society, and its governmental agencies, only offer "the easy way out". While it speaks of self dignity and self worth on the one hand, on the other hand, it pulls youth apart by encouraging "freedom of expression" in ways that are selfish and do not take into consideration the effects of their actions, both short and long term, in themselves and others. The most out of control area is that of sex and sexuality.

I just read this article about teen abstinence and think you all need to read it too. You know our children are our precious gifts from God and their lives must be protected not only while they are in the womb, but even as they live and breathe in this often toxic world.

### Study Shows Effectiveness of Teen Abstinence

Family Research Council Decries US Government's Indifference

WASHINGTON, D.C., FEB. 3, 2010 (Zenit.org).- In response to a new study demonstrating the effectiveness of abstinence education for teens, the Family Research Council is lamenting the government's rejection of programs that teach this to youth in the United States.

The council released a statement Monday after the publication of a study by John and Loretta Jemmott from the University of Pennsylvania, Geoffrey Fong from the University of Waterloo, and the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research in Waterloo, Ontario.

Tony Perkins, the council's president, explained that the study "tells us clearly that abstinence education, not the promotion of high-risk sexual behavior among teens, is needed."

"The study reports that abstinence education successfully reduced self-reported sexual involvement among African American students in grades six and seven," he added. [The effectiveness is seen even in older student, including High School and College].

"In light of this study and others showing the positive health benefits of abstinence education," Perkins noted, "it is unfortunate that this congress and administration has zeroed out abstinence education."

Instead, he acknowledged, they have favored "sex-ed programs that advocate high-risk sexual behavior" and "it is children and young teens who suffer the consequences."

The council president reported that "despite an enormous amount of money going to comprehensive sex-ed programs dating much earlier than abstinence education programs," the Center for Disease Control data shows that "an alarming 40% of teen girls who are sexually active are infected" with a sexually transmitted disease.

"The government does not promote drug use or underage drinking, and it should not promote high-risk sexual behavior either," Perkins stated. He added, "The evidence shows clearly that sexual abstinence is the healthiest behavior for youth." [END]

Our School and Life Teen Program have brought in experts to speak on the issues of teen sexuality. We believe our children need to hear the truth so that they will make informed choices based on sound moral values and principals as well as clinical statistics. Our children need, not only to be protected from disease, but they need to develop their self-worth and dignity through the most important level of their lives, their SPIRITUALITY.

Being "pure and holy" is a gift, not a burden. Watch your children and yourselves and be aware of how your children are influenced by this society. Summer is here and the way we dress is one example of how we respect our bodies. Dress with an awareness of modesty. Being modest is not being a "prude" rather, it is showing respect for your body (God's gift). Do not be a "temptation or cause for sin" in yourself or another person.

**WHEN YOU COME TO CHURCH, REMEMBER, THIS IS THE HOUSE OF GOD. DRESS WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS. Please remember that all adult need to be examples for our children.**

May God +bless you and yours now and forever,

*Father Anthony*