Lesson 23 Opening Thoughts on Chastity:

Webster's definition: the quality or state of being chaste: as
a : abstention from unlawful sexual intercourse
b : abstention from all sexual intercourse
C: purity in conduct and intention
d: restraint and simplicity in design or expression

Synonyms: chasteness, immaculacy, innocence, modesty, purity

The Latin root for the word chastity is castu, meaning morally pure, unstained. Chastity is about being whole and pure, like Christ.

Chastity is the virtue that moderates the desire of sexual pleasure according to the principles of Faith and Right Reason, which is reason in conformity with God's eternal law and not secular worldly reason.

The two prior fruits/virtues we have just studied, self control or self mastery and modesty are complementary virtues which are needed to live out the virtue of chastity.

Chastity does mean purity of mind, soul and body. We are temples of the Holy Spirit and we must build these temples into a place fitting for Jesus and the Holy Spirit to reside.

Chastity leads to freedom. It creates an inner unity of body and spirit - remaining chaste is what it means to be truly human! If someone continues to live an un-chaste lifestyle they will ultimately become a slave to it. they will seek and use others more and more until it becomes something they cannot control. First, they thought it would bring them freedom but in the end it left them in bondage. Unhappy and looking for a way out. God wants us to remain chaste and thus live in happiness?

Historically chastity has been defined as abstaining from sexual conduct according to one's state in life: the practice of courtship love and romantic friendship. Cleanliness through cultivated good health and hygiene, and maintained by refraining from intoxicants. To be honest with oneself, one's family, one's friends, and to all of humanity. Embracing of moral wholesomeness and achieving purity of thought-through education and betterment. The ability to refrain from being distracted and influenced by hostility, temptation or corruption.

When you ask a person today what chastity means they most often think of sexual abstinence, and specifically sexual abstinence before marriage. Chastity in a marriage means complete fidelity to a husband and wife. The word chastity has become synonymous with and is often used interchangeably with sexual abstinence. But as you can see the definition encompasses so much more.

It refers not only to remaining sexually pure but also pure in thought and body. in the Catholic Church chastity as a virtue is the remedy to the deadly sin of lust Those who are chaste are morally clean in their thoughts, words, and actions Chastity means not having any sexual relations before marriage It also means complete fidelity to husband or wife during marriage

In Benedictine spirituality, chastity is defined as having a "right relationship" with people in consideration of God, others, and self. In other words it is how you love God, others, and yourself. Love is a powerful and often misinterpreted word It can be used to deceive or it can unite Chaste love is pure love, it is love for the sake of love Chastity is about a relationship of love and respect
Lesson 23 Closing Thoughts on Chastity:

Chastity turns love into a new creation of both body and soul for the married couple and in the body and soul of their children.

Contraception turns love into the deadly sin of lust and the vice or promiscuity.

We must realize what we lose when we live an unchaste life.

The opposite of chastity is promiscuity. Contraception, especially the Pill has brought out the worst in us. Instead of purity and sex being kept part of a sacred marriage, it has created immorality and a second market for recreational sex, without responsibility or commitment. The pill has created a "new right" for us, the right to recreational sex now trumps all rights, including the right of the unborn to life.

The so called sexual education taught today is encouraging us to yield to our inclinations (appetites) and to become promiscuous. Every form of sex and contraception is explained except chastity. A promiscuous person is not preparing for marriage and a lifetime commitment. They are preparing for many partners and divorce.

Contraception and recreational sex has led to fewer and delayed sacramental marriages and the right to a "no fault" divorce (talk about insanity, how can there be no fault). This leaves the nation with single mothers who live in some form of economic, emotional and spiritual poverty. The final step of contraception leads to abortion. The secular eugenics movement promises that if we just have more contraception we won't need abortions. The reality is the more contraceptive we become the more we kill off our society. Abortion is the remedy to failed contraception and promiscuity.

Promiscuous sex leads to pornography being needed for entertainment. Pornography is reordering our society. It is endangering our children and leading to the growth in sex trafficking of both sexes and all ages.

Forty percent of all babies are born to single mothers (75% in the African American community). The percentage of married households has been in a steady decline. One out of six men has been sterilized. The divorce rate among contracepting married couples is 50%. The divorce rate among NFP married couples is 5%.

How can be teach chastity to our children when most of their parents and grandparents are practicing contraception. We have lost our way and our sense of sin.

A national society is only as strong as its family life. The family came first and preceded the formation of societies and states. The state exists for the family; the family doesn't exist for the state.

Look to Jesus He is the model of chastity. Chastity involves apprenticeship in self-mastery. It's gradual True chastity blossoms in friendship Make the decision to live a chaste life and earnestly seek God's help For it is from Him that you will find your strength It is by His grace alone that will sustain you Trust that He desires the best for you Take little steps each day to rid yourself of disordered or sinful passions Start a journal and document your progress and you'll be amazed if you truly desire chastity! Have an accountability partner. Someone whom you trust. Someone whom you can call on at anytime of the day whenever you feel weak.

The sexual relationship between husband and wife is a gift from God; it is the binding expression of the great unitive value of love. It is given as a gift from God, primarily for the transmission of life, and secondarily for the joy of the couple. The man and the woman should treat their bodies with due respect, remembering that they are temples of the Holy Spirit Lust is a disorderly passion that can creep into the relationship of the couple, therefore it is advisable that they practice chastity during certain periods.
Virginity is the most excellent gift that the couple can offer to one another on their honey moon; it proves to them that they were truly made for one another.

Unfortunately these values have been lost nowadays, there are so many false teachings and so much bad example on television and the media; what can we say to our children? We are responsible before God for their conduct, because if we don't alert them to the dangers of unchastely behavior and impurity, we will be held guilty for our negligence.

Love and Chastity involves the purification and healing of desire. It asks us to become selfless givers rather than selfish takers.

Personal Meditation: How often do you let your own personal desires take control of your life? Are you overweight? Are you addicted to cigarettes or alcohol or drugs or erotic pleasure or video games or sports etc.? You may have prayers on your lips, but where is your true desire?

**Will you allow the Spirit to control your passions or will you allow your passions to control your spirit?**

Virtue is when we submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit. Vice occurs when we resist Him and do not ask for Chastity.

Remember, it is impossible to produce genuine Christ like Chastity by ourselves. A new, converted and transformed heart is required. Then a slow growth process follows which can only take place as we submit to and obey the Holy Spirit. He nurtures those positive character changes that are reflected in our relationships. So let the Holy Spirit put off our old selves and put on the new and virtuous heart of love by growing in Chastity.

GO MAD - Go Out and Make A Difference by being Chaste and Pure in our actions with all our brothers and sisters.
The sin of willful Denial of God's teaching is worse than a sin of weakness in the face of temptation.

1. Teaching Our Children about Chastity

Since chastity is also defined as cleanliness through cultivated good health and hygiene, and maintained by refraining from intoxicants. We can teach our children that their bodies are a temple of the Lord and as such should be maintained pure. We maintain this purity by not putting bad things in our body, no unfit food, we bath regularly, we practice healthy habits.

2. Chastity encompasses Moral Wholesomeness, How do we embrace moral wholesomeness? It means knowing right from wrong and promoting a healthy mind and spirit. In other words, keeping yourself pure in word, thought and deed. We keep ourselves and our children pure in thought by not exposing them or ourselves to media that would tempt us into impure behavior. Certain magazines, TV shows and movies. Much of our modern media promotes a life style that is not wholesome.

3. Much of remaining chaste involved avoiding temptation. What does this mean? Males are visual creatures Even if a woman is dressed modestly a male must keep their thoughts pure. The man must take care to guard his thoughts.

We can teach them how to take care of their bodies with proper nutrition and exercise. To teach them how to dress from the beginning. You teach them the appropriateness of dress for an occasion. You teach them to have respect for all people. You teach them manners. You teach them to respect and love their own bodies. If they respect themselves, then others will too. Don't teach them chastity through shame. Negative teaching methods don't work and often backfire.

4. Contrary to what some may believe today, chastity is a two way street. We must teach our young boys and men to respect women of all ages, and treat them as individuals, not as sexual objects. Since chastity involves more than physical sex and involves keeping our thoughts pure it is important to teach our children about the beauty of pure love.

As your child grows it is important to reinforce what you taught them when they were younger. That they are important, reinforce the lessons in dress. Remind them that men and women are different and teach them to respect that difference. Explain that sex is something that happens between married couples as an expression of love.

As your child enters into the teenage years, You can help them to remain chaste. My parents gave me the perfect out for anything I did not want to do when I was young. I could simply say "My parents won't let me" or "My parents would kill me if I did that" They took the heat for me, and took the peer pressure off. It may be hard for teenagers to avoid temptation if they put themselves in certain situations. It sour responsibility to keep our children from being placed in situations where they will be tempted.
Lesson 23 Questions and Answers

Why do we need the virtue of chastity?

*If we do not ask the spirit to purify our minds and help us control our sexual appetites, then we will be enticed by all our temptations and our passions will reinforce our desire to do our will and not the will of the Spirit.*

Who is the source of chastity, and how can we nurture this gift?

*The Holy Spirit is the source of our chastity. We can not control our sexual passions without his grace. We have received the Holy Spirit at our baptism and confirmation but it is up to us to continually ask for more of his grace and then we need to co-operate with it by being obedient to His will for us.*

What is chastity?

*Chastity is a virtue that purifies and moderates the desire of sexual pleasure according to the principles of Faith and Right Reason, which is reason in conformity with God’s eternal law and not worldly or our own reason.*

What is the difference between absolute and relative chastity?

*Absolute chastity is enjoined on the un-married. Relative chastity is incumbent on those within the married state.*

What is the difference between perfect and imperfect chastity?

*Perfect chastity is for the person who resolves to refrain perpetually from the licit pleasures of the marital state, when made by someone who has never known the gratification allowed in marriage. It is called the virtue of virginity in that it is both absolute and perfect.*

*Imperfect chastity is that which is proper to:*

1. *Those who have not as yet entered wedlock; without however, having renounced the intention of doing so.*
2. *Those who are joined in bonds of legitimate marriage.*
3. *Those who have outlived their marital partners.*

What are the grave offenses against the virtue of chastity?

*Lust, Masturbation, Fornication, Adultery, Pornography, Prostitution, Rape, and Homosexual acts.*

What are the two fold ends of a chaste marriage?

1. *The Good of the spouse. We need to be faithful to and supportive of each other.*
2. *The transmission of life We need to be open to fecundity and God's gift of life)*

What is continence?

*Continence may be defined as abstinence from even the licit gratifications of marriage. It is a form of the virtue of temperance. Continence, it is seen, has a more restricted significance than chastity, since the latter finds place in the condition of marriage. The abstinence we are discussing, then, belongs to the state of celibacy, though clearly the notion of this latter does not necessarily involve that of continence.*
What is chaste behavior and how can we live chastely?

Chaste behavior starts from within oneself. The sexual function only finds its true meaning and moral rightness in true marriage. We need to ask the Holy Spirit for the grace of chastity and combined our will and our growth in a strong spiritual life. We need to spend at least 15 minutes per day in meditation on scripture or the rosary, frequent daily mass attendance and reception of the sacraments.

We must remove ourselves from the temptations of our senses, especially sight and touch. We need to replace impure thoughts with thoughts of beauty and goodness. We must not deny our sexual appetite exists but we must understand the values we gain by living a chaste life.

What are the values we receive by living a chaste life?

1. It strengthens our relationship of love and communion with our saviour, Jesus Christ.
2. It upholds the sacredness of sex and doesn't trivialize or objectify the person. Instead, it brings intimacy and unique bonding.
3. It upholds our human dignity as a person created in God's image and likeness.
4. It helps us understand the value of the person as equal and worthy of love and as whole rather than an object for pleasure.
5. It develops a self-giving love, as well as a friendship love and an affectionate love needed to form and hold spouses together in a marriage. It enables us to know that love doesn't have to move into sex to be fulfilling.