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Truth and Charity:

Christian Anthropology and Gender Ideology

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St Raymond's Parish

May 2, 2026



Escalation in our culture

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Anthropology

Philosophy of the person

- “A correct anthropology is the criterion for shedding light on and verifying every historical form of culture.”
- “The Christian commitment in the field of culture is **opposed to all reductionistic and ideological perspectives of man** and life.”
- (Compendium of Social Doctrine 558)

Christian Anthropology

and natural law

Lovingly created by God: “male and female” (Genesis creation accounts: “Givenness” of creation)

Identity: Son/daughter of the Lord

Dignity: created in God’s image + likeness

Integral: Unity of body and soul

Human Nature – Natural Law

Body: Gift; Meaning; express self-giving love (Theology of the Body)

Marriage: Covenant of one man, one woman

Sex: Life-giving, love-giving (M/F)

Family: Mother, father, child

Inclined to sin but **Redeemed** by Jesus Christ.



Pixabay Image by [Lawrence Crayton](#)

The human person.
The family.
Fulfilled in self-gift.

Age of Postmodernity

- Our age has been termed by some thinkers the age of “postmodernity”.
- the time of certainties is irrevocably past, and the human being must now learn to live in a horizon of total absence of meaning, where everything is provisional and ephemeral.
- *Fides et Ratio 91*



Post-modern culture:

Rejection of:

truth;
nature;
meta-narratives;

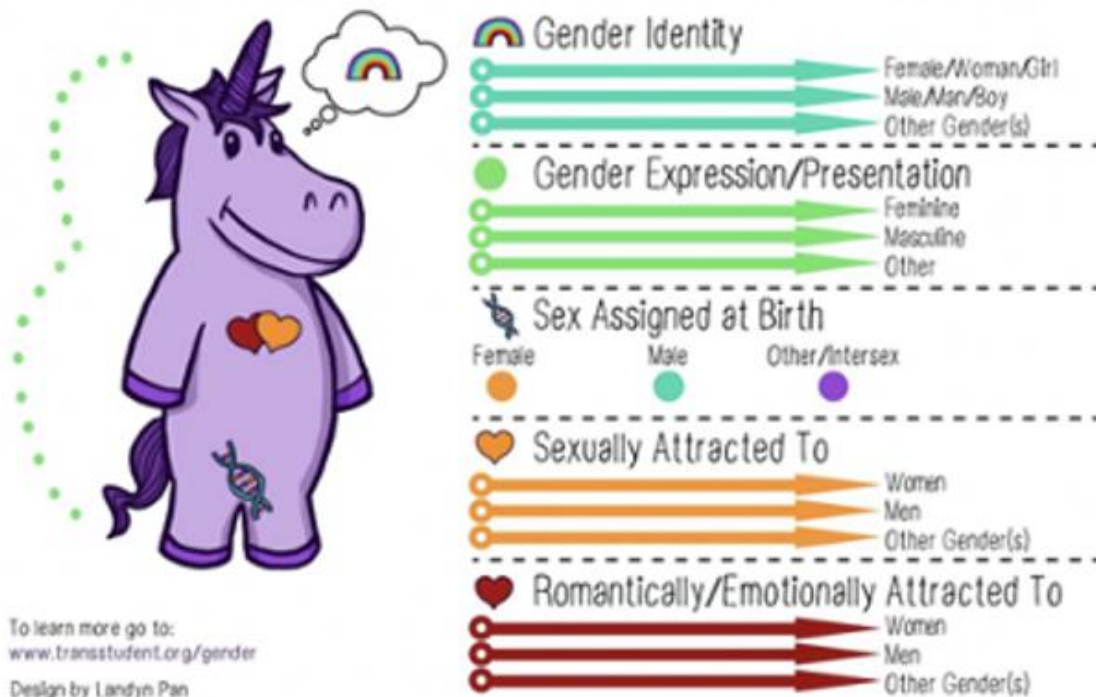
Importance of desires;
performative culture

• **Includes Elements of:**

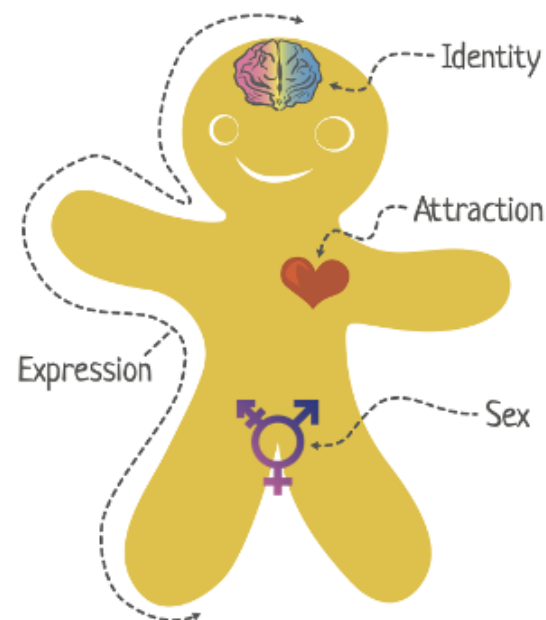
- **Gnosticism** (duality mind/body)
- **Materialism** (consumer)
- **Marxism/Marxist feminism** (power)
- **Individualism** (unbridled autonomy)
- **Moral relativism** (will, pleasure)
- **Nihilism** (pointless existence)
- **Scientism** (science as authority)
- **Psychological lens** (feelings, desires)
- **Tech —transhumanism:**
 - (manipulation of reality, human nature as frontier to be transcended)

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Equality Resources



The Genderbread Person v4 by its pronounced METROsexual.com



⊗ means a lack of what's on the right side



Identity ≠ Expression ≠ Sex
Gender ≠ Sexual Orientation

Sex Assigned At Birth
□ Female □ Intersex □ Male

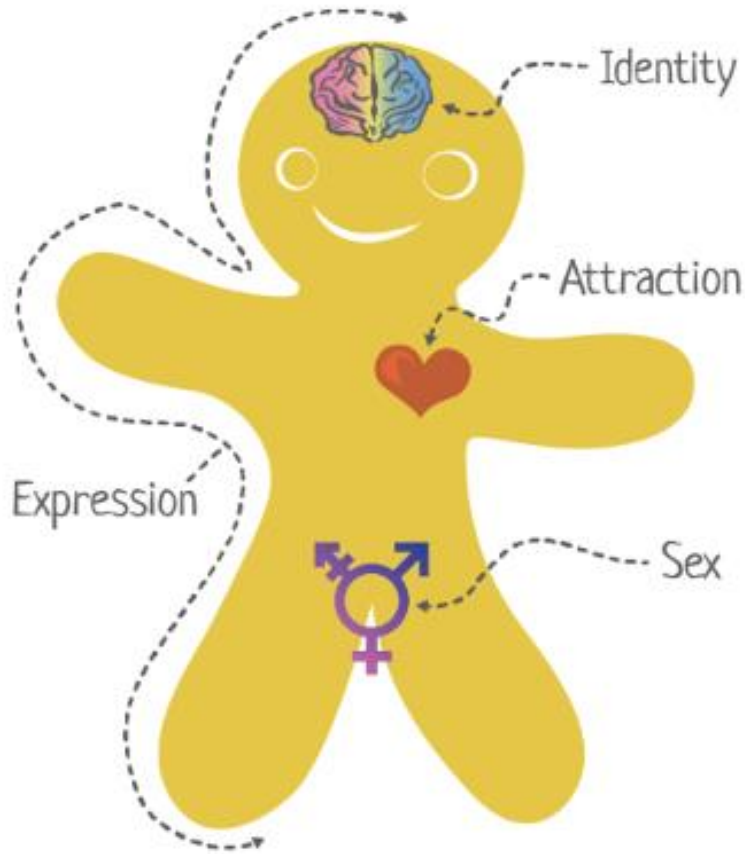


The anthropology of
post-modern culture

The Lie: Gender Ideology

false anthropology

- Atheistic. Self-creating.
- Dignity based on affirmation of others
- No human nature.
- Dualism.
- Self-determined identity. “I decide.”
 - “gender identity”
- Body is a tool. No meaning. “My choice.”
- Sex, marriage, family for adult gratification
- My desires. My pleasure.
- Oppressor or oppressed.
- Purpose: Pleasure. Utopia.



The Genderbread Person v4 by its pronounced **METRO**sexual

Image: www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com





Christianity < A Clash of Anthropologies > Gender Ideology

Created by God – “male and female” (Gen)
Identity: Son/daughter of the Lord
Dignity: Loved/created God’s image + likeness
Destiny: Supernatural. Eternal life w God
Design: Human nature ordered to good/end
Integral: Unity of body and soul
Body: Meaning, express self-giving love (ToB)
Sex: Life-giving, love-giving (M/F)
Marriage: Covenant (self-gift) –M/F
Family: Mother, father, child – fruitful love
Broken: Imperfect, inclined to sin
Redeemed and revealed by Christ (Vat II)

Self-creating. Infinite spectrum of identities
Identity: Self-defined, fluid, variable
Dignity: Depends on recognition, validation
Destiny: Self-actualization, here and now
No human nature (design). Autonomy
Dualism: Person = mind/will. Body = tool
Body: No intrinsic meaning. Canvas
Sex: Pleasure. Solo or with others
Marriage: Contract, fulfill adult desires
Family: Chosen. Consent. Any configuration
Oppressed: Power struggle
Explore, express “authentic self”

Attraction

Sex

Female/Woman
Male/Man/Boy
Other Gender

n/Presentation

Feminine
Masculine
Other

Birth

Other/Intersex

Sexually Attracted To

Postmodern Project:
Queering the culture



Resist Cis-Hetero-Normativity,
Subvert, problematize, disrupt,



Gender Ideology Undermines Catechesis

Gender ideology rejects:

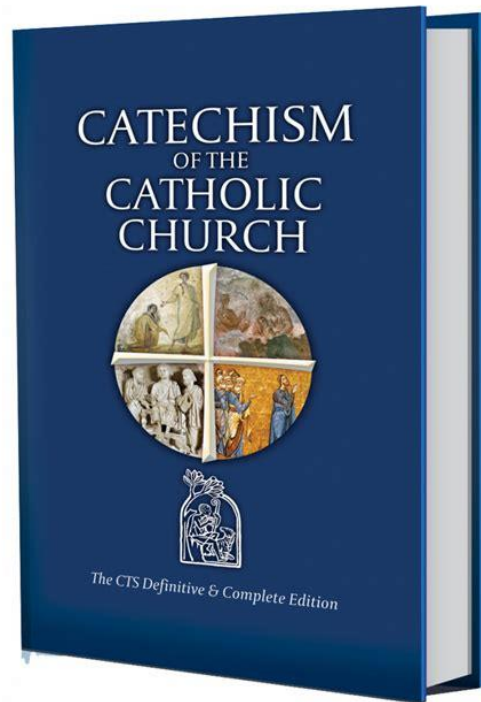
God the Creator

Unity of human person

Human nature

Christian anthropology

Catholic teaching on marriage and family, parents' role

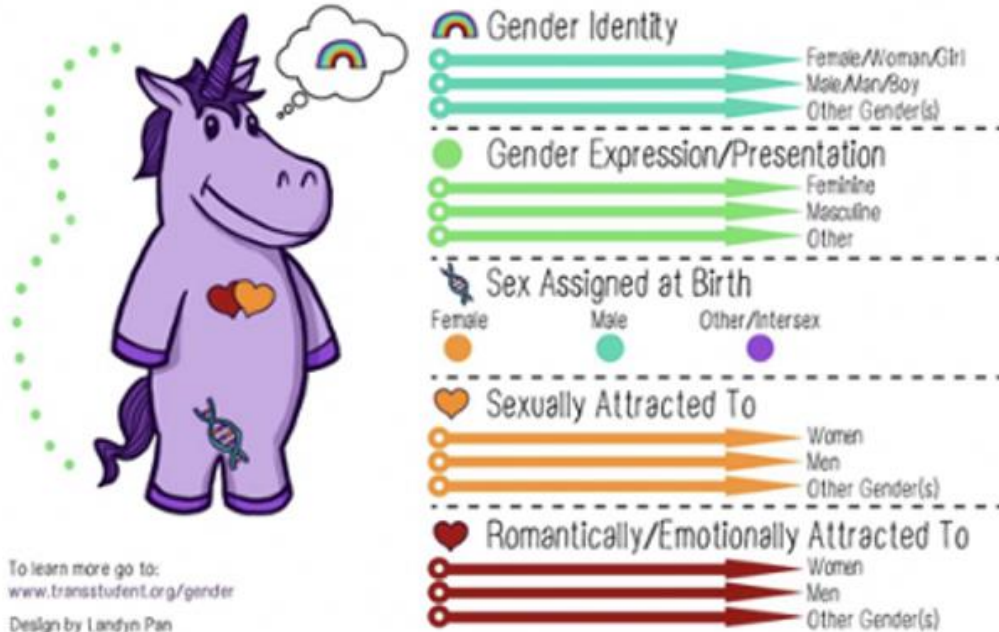


Undermines core beliefs:

Incarnation/ Christology; Divine Fatherhood; Trinity (relationship, family); Moral theology: Actions of body affect soul; Account of virtue; Remote preparation for marriage; Catechesis on human sexuality; Human life issues – contraception, reproductive technology; Conscience

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Equality Resource



Anyone who commits mortal sin loves himself more than God.
He offends God very much.
One whose soul is dead in sin has no power to love God.
He cannot please God.



Grace in the Soul

GRACE is the life of Christ in us.

Mortal sin kills this life.

It **CRUCIFIES** **CHRIST** in us.



Mortal Sin in the Soul

Images used in catechesis

“Trans” ideology challenges natural truths about humanity Catechesis becomes more difficult.

“The transgender issue presents a particular challenge to the handing on of the faith. So much of our faith rests on the natural truths of the human person, body/soul unity, and the complementarity of man and woman.”

“The rejection of core natural truths regarding our humanity damages the ‘template’ that God uses to reveal Himself to us and to manifest His salvific plan for us.”

---Catechesis on the Human Person, Arl Diocese



Unity of body and soul?

Gender ideology changes assumptions

Renders hearts, minds less receptive

Due to the pervasiveness of gender ideology, you can **no longer assume** your audience holds **an explicitly Christian view** of life, love and the family.

Instead, **anticipate gaps** in foundational concepts for catechesis, resistance to perceived injustice

Identify unspoken assumptions that contradict the Christian view of the person

Caricatures of Catholic teachings

AMERICAN NEWS May 16, 2024

EXCLUSIVE: Parents lead students in LGBTQ protest against Washington state Catholic school after lesbian teacher's contract not renewed

"Part of the pastor's role is to determine whether a minister's public life might not be in alignment with Church teaching, such that the situation poses an insurmountable difficulty to convey the Faith with clarity."

Church Statements on Gender Ideology

Clear teaching

- **Catechism** of the Catholic Church
- **Pope Benedict** – 2008, 2012 Christmas addresses; address to German parliament
- **Pope Francis** – numerous addresses to Bishops
- **Amoris Laetitia** 56
- **Laudato si** 155
- **Con. for Catholic Education** (*Male and Female* 2019)
- **DDF** (*Dignitas Infinita* 2024)
- **USCCB** Doctrinal Note (2023)
- **Bishops** – Diocesan teaching/guidance documents
- Nordic bishops, Ukrainian
- **The Church teaches that gender ideology is incompatible with Catholic doctrine + harmful**

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Created male and female, equal in dignity. Accept **sexual identity** as a gift.

2334 **Created “male and female” with “equal personal dignity”**

- 362 The human person [is] created in the image of God, a being at once **corporeal and spiritual**
- 371 God created man and woman together and **willed for the other.**
- *“bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.”*

2333 **Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his**

- **[or her] sexual identity.** *Physical, moral, and spiritual difference and*
- *complementarity are ordered to the goods of marriage and flourishing of family life.*



JP11: culture of death

Papal warnings: “person” & “family” under attack

- **Pope Benedict XVI** - “This is the age of sin against God the Creator...”
- To deny the “pre-ordained duality of man and woman,” is to deny “the family” as “a reality established by creation.”
- **Pope Francis** - Gender ideology is “a global war” against the family...The “enemy of marriage”...
- “society without sexual differences...eliminat[es] the anthropological basis of the family” - 2016

“Male and Female He Created Them” **(CCE 2019)**

- **Listen:** Science tells us: **sexual difference is real** ... sexual identity is immutable, from conception
- **Reason:** Fundamental principles ---respect for the person, centrality of the body, importance of sexual difference, Equal dignity of men and women;
- **Medicine and Philosophy both support Christian anthropology**
- **Propose:** Christian Anthropology, Human and integral ecology, reaffirm the meaning of the body, defend role of the family
- **Action:** Form teachers, catechists to be able to respond to questions about gender ideology in light of faith

Dignitas infinita (DDF) 55-60

- Restates Church teaching on gender ideology : Importance of sexual difference, gratitude for gift of body, importance of human nature
- 60.humans are **inseparably composed of both body and soul**. In this, the body serves as the living context in which the interiority of the soul unfolds and manifests itself, as it does also through the network of human relationships. Constituting the person's being, the soul and the body both participate in the dignity that characterizes every human.[\[107\]](#) Moreover, the body participates in that dignity as it is endowed with personal meanings, particularly in its sexed condition.[\[108\]](#) ...**any sex-change intervention, as a rule, risks threatening the unique dignity the person has received from the moment of conception.** (April 2024)

Pope Leo: Church Teaching will not Change

- Reiterates: Church teaching not changing (response to Germans)
- Marriage between one man, one woman
- Prior to election as Pope
- The sympathy for anti-Christian lifestyle choices that mass media fosters is so brilliantly and artfully ingrained in the viewing public that when people hear the Christian message, it often inevitably seems ideological and emotionally cruel by contrast to the ostensible humaneness of the anti-Christian perspective.
- Fr. Robert Prevost: The Counterculture of the New Evangelization CNS Videos



USCCB Doctrinal note

There is a natural order and finality about the body that must be respected.

Natural order reflects God's design for Creation including human beings, which is always good;

Finality reflects the fact God creates us as male or female for unitive and procreative purposes --- ultimately ordered toward the good of the family.

We are called to respect our bodies, created as male or female, as gift.



Catholic health care may not cooperate with gender transitions

- 1. They do not repair a defect in the body: These are children with normal and healthy bodies
- 2. They do not sacrifice a part of the body to restore health to the rest of the body – there is no serious threat to the health of the body.
- Instead, “these interventions are intended to transform the body so as to make it take on as much as possible the form of the opposite sex, contrary to the natural form of the body. They are attempts to alter the fundamental order and finality of the body and to replace it with something else.” p.11



USCCB note

- USCCB note: Catechesis, general principles applicable to all, not just health care:
- “Any technological intervention that does not accord with the fundamental order of the human person as a unity of body and soul, including the sexual difference inscribed in the body, ultimately does not help but, rather, harms the human person.” (p. 12)
- In particular, children must be protected from this – they are incapable of giving informed consent (p.13)



Diocese of Arlington: Catechesis on the Human Person and Gender Ideology

- *The Church teaches that a person is created male or female. No one “is” transgender. A person who identifies as transgender may experience troubling feelings, confusion, or a mistaken belief that he or she is or can “become” someone different. The Church does not teach that people who experience gender dysphoria or confusion are immoral or bad. At the same time, a person who deliberately rejects his or her given identity or the sexed body and seeks harmful medical or surgical interventions is pursuing a path that is objectively wrong and harmful on many levels.*

A CATECHESIS ON
THE HUMAN PERSON
— and —
GENDER IDEOLOGY

También en español

A Pastoral Letter

MOST REVEREND MICHAEL F. BURBIDGE
BISHOP OF ARLINGTON

Pastoral Response: Pro-active

Teach the faith

B16: Creation, Christology, Eschatology

- Christian anthropology (explicit teaching/implicit formation)
- Theology of Body (age accessible!)

Live the faith

- Build, prioritize relationships
- Parents over peers
- Network of families
- Positive environment
- Physical health





Why are young Catholics drawn to gender ideology?

- Perceived “Cure” for distress
- Search - belonging, meaning
- Identity – “Who am I?”
- Autonomy – “I decide”
- Authenticity – “my true self”
- Solution – to pain, struggles
- Compassion – “transition” as “cure” for struggling peers
- Same-sex marriage “settled”



Teach kids about their emotions.
Emotions: where the body + soul meet

Humans naturally seek “good” and avoid evil, but make mistakes about what is good.

Acknowledge Emotions:
They are morally neutral

But Emotions don’t define reality.

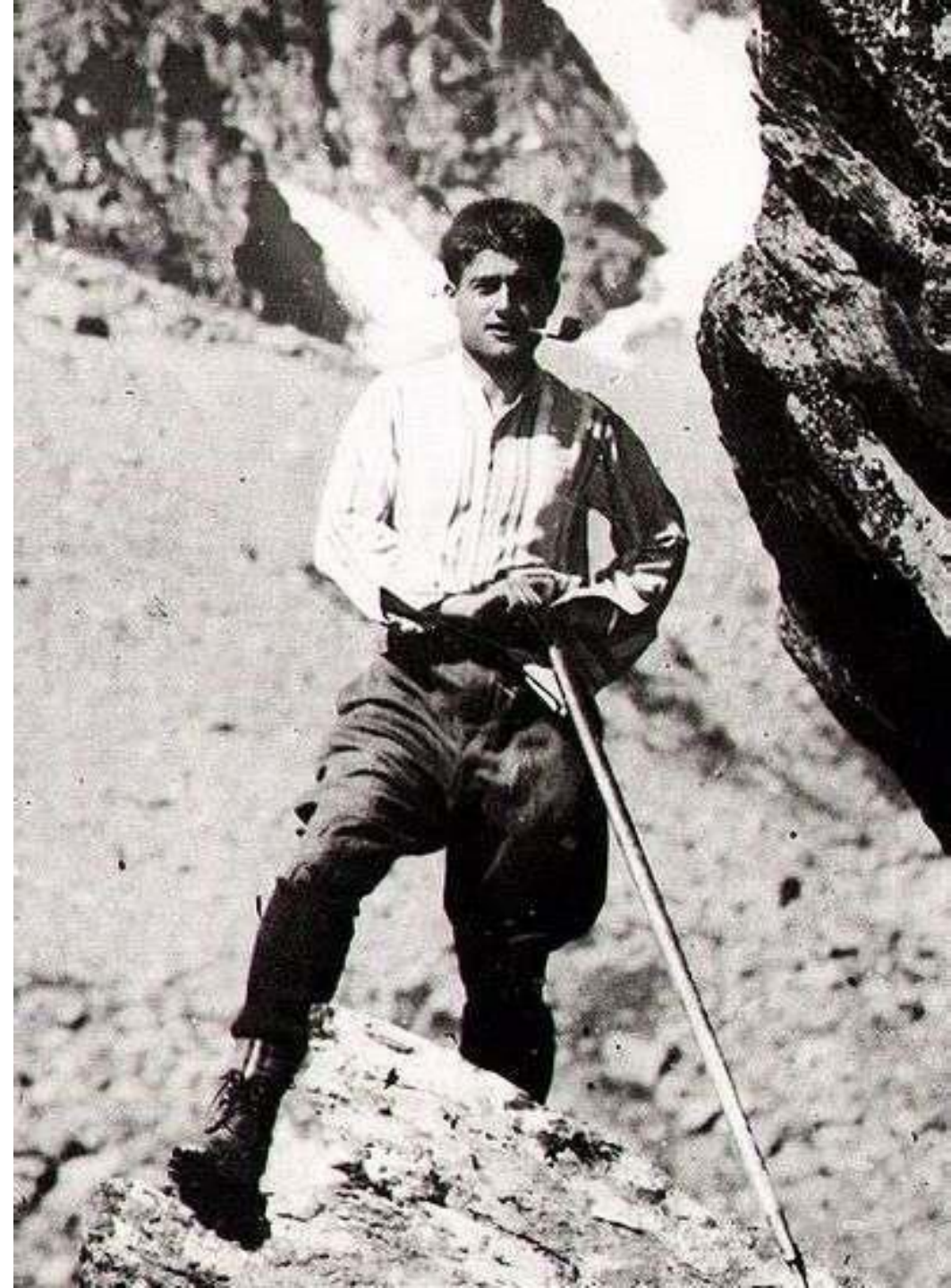
Actions in response = moral choice.

Use Reason > channel emotions towards the good.

Habit of Virtue > choose the good

Pastoral Response: Protective

- Speak directly, age-appropriate ways, about gender ideology
- Ask questions (what do they believe/know?)
- Assess influences (minimize or maximize)
- CCD: know what is taught in public school
- Assess personal vulnerabilities – strengthen/ treat / help
- Deepen their confidence: real skills
- Disconnect from social media – Nature





Parents and Students need to Know:

- Gender ideology: incompatible w Christianity
- Gender ideology: affects all Catholics
- Social media, porn, schools, peers, and healthcare promote gender ideology to kids
- **False claims of gender ideology:**
 - False: “gender identity” (feelings) = reality
 - False: “change” sex (become opposite sex)
 - False: escape old self, invent new “identity”
 - False: “transition” solves suffering
 - False: “chosen family” can replace parents who oppose “transition”
 - False: few “regret” transition
 - False: failure to transition causes suicide

- **Personal:**
- Notice the kid who is struggling – socially, sadness, anxiety, behavioral issues
- Get to know parents, include them in discussion, build trust
- Pay attention to harassment, bullying, isolation
- Affirm the dignity of the person – everyone has unique gifts and talents
- Listen. Smile, sense of humor,
- Build a relationship (then can propose truth)
- Set boundaries.
- Help them have perspective



Specific Challenge:



Formation of Catholic youth:

40.5 hours of RE

1200 hours public education

2500+ hours on phone

**Most (85-90%) Catholic kids in
Public school**

**3% Hispanic children in Catholic
school**

Approx 50% return for confirmation

Mental Health Crisis

Persistently sad, withdrawn

57% of teen girls

40% teens overall

Suicide attempts, sexual violence

1/3 girls considered suicide

1/5 “LGBTQ” attempt suicide

1/5 girls: victim sexual violence

- Religiosity (protective) declining
- Social media use linked to depression, anxiety

CDC Feb 2023
(2021 data)

Image: CNN, Adobe Stock

Porn: Reshaping youth understanding of sex

- **The influence of Porn on the trans trend**
- **Porn: “trans” 4th highest search term on Pornhub in 2021.**
- **Use of porn leads to greater acceptance of same sex activity-normalizing trans?**
- **Dating apps promote elastic sexuality**
- **Sexualization of American youth**
- **Decline in relationships – gen Z loneliest generation on record**





Personal Approach with Youth....

- **Love** Lead with love and commitment:
“I love you. I’m here for you, no matter what.”
- **Ask** “Tell me your story.” “I’d like to understand.” “You say you feel like..., can you tell me more about that?”
“Where did you find information?” “What do your friends think?”
- **Listen.** Empathize. Acknowledge pain, fear, etc. (but not the “trans” – maladaptive – solution) “We’ll get through this together.”
- **Guide.** Information, yes. Arguments, no. Be truthful. Set boundaries. “I love you so much, I cannot say yes to things that will harm you.” Go slow. Enlist help. Offer hope.
“There’s a better way.”
- **Pray** unceasingly. Trust God.

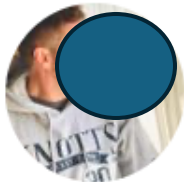
What does genuine accompaniment look like?

- **Although it sounds obvious, spiritual accompaniment must lead others ever closer to God, in whom we attain true freedom.**
- Some people think they are free if they can avoid God; they fail to see that they remain existentially orphaned, helpless, homeless. They cease being pilgrims and become drifters, flitting around themselves and never getting anywhere.
- **To accompany them would be counterproductive if it became a sort of therapy supporting their self-absorption and ceased to be a pilgrimage with Christ to the Father.**

Evangelii Gaudium 170



Source: USCCB media



Murphy

@it[redacted]



With everything I've been going through, I'm at the point where I wish my life had gone differently & I'd stayed a girl. I wish I'd had someone to help me love myself as I was, because none of this is worth the hell I'm living in now.

2:58 PM · Mar 27, 2023 · **637** Views

A man and a woman are sitting on a wooden bench outdoors. The man, on the left, has a beard and is smiling while holding a grey mug. The woman, on the right, is also smiling and holding a grey mug. A small pug dog is sitting between them. The background is a rustic wooden wall.

The Truth is...You are “wonderfully made.”

Male and female
Your body. Your identity.
God’s gift to you.

Personal: Acknowledge pain

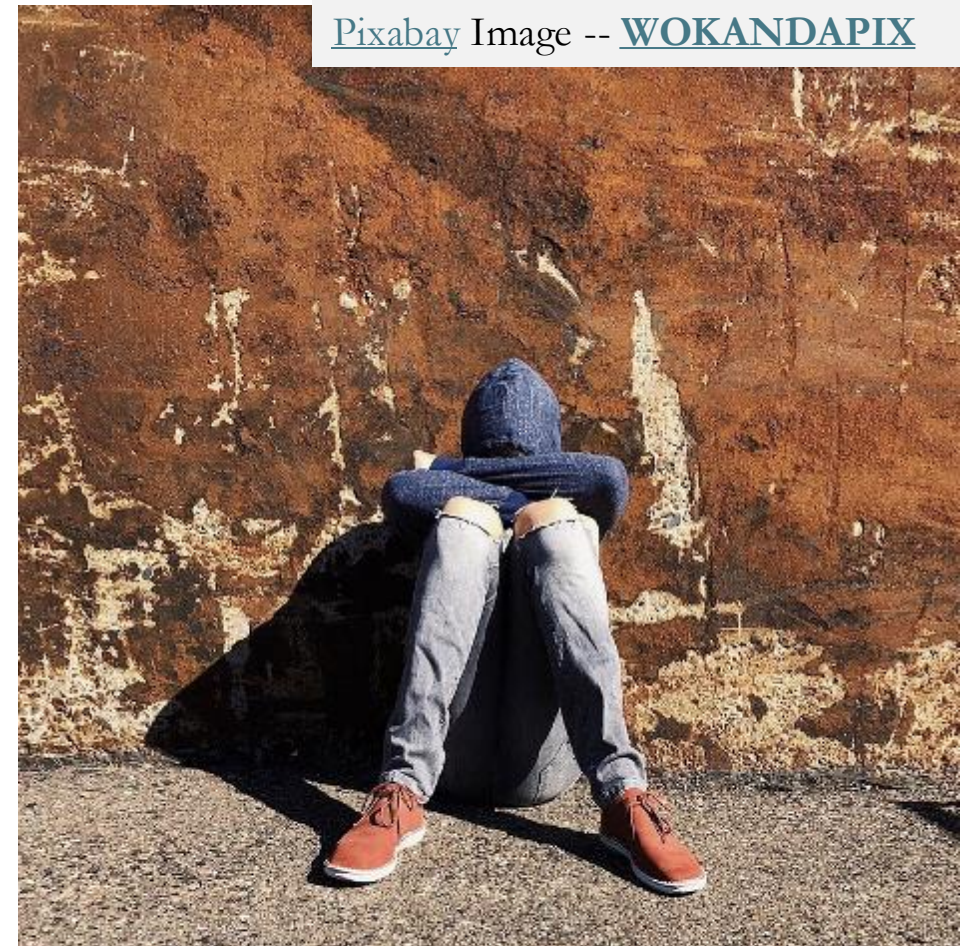
address underlying wounds

Identifying as “transgender” is typically a “maladaptive” response to trauma or psychological wounds. Marcus and Sue Evans, *Gender Dysphoria* 2021

Persons with “gender dysphoria” (Kozłowska 2021)

- 88% pre-existing mental illness
- 4-6x more likely to have autism
- Higher rates of:
 - adverse childhood experiences
 - mentally ill parent or parent substance abuser
 - Parental domestic violence
- More likely:
 - to be adopted
 - to engage in self-harm or be suicidal

See also CASS Review (UK, NHS evidence review 2024)



“Sins and injustices against us can create wounds that make it difficult to recognize the body as a gift.”

– Archbishop Coakley,

On the Unity of Body and Soul (2023)

Protective (Institutions)

- **Teacher and staff formation.** Equip staff, top down, with formation. Hire for mission. Recognize cultural, familial influences on staff
- **Develop Internal Procedures:** Who is notified? Who talks to parents? (always 2!) What do I say? What resources do you have? Etc.
- **Clear consistent policies** (sex not “gender identity”) applied to facilities, programs, communications, and relationships. Eg., uniform, dance, etc.
- **Screen Resources:** internal policies for what digital resources are acceptable
- **Equip parents** with knowledge, resources, and encourage them to set boundaries.. Educate on porn, social media use, social contagion.
- **Address broad range of tough topics with staff first, then students (age appropriate)** SSA, porn, pre-marital sex, trafficking, gender ideology. Pastoral silence is filled by cultural messages.

Personal: Know the facts

“Gender transition” does not prevent suicide



[Pixabay](#) Image by [Alexandra_Koch](#)

Supreme Ct *Skrimetti* 12.4.24: ACLU attorney admits suicide is "rare"

CASS Review (2024): "No evidence" transition prevents suicide

Finland: “dysphoric” youth suicide "rare" (.3%). (Kaltiala 2024)

Finland: Suicide risk due to pre-existing psych issues (Kaltiala 2024)

UK study: No evidence "transition" is “lifesaving” (Appleby 2024).

Suicide occurs at all stages, avg 6+ yrs after begin GAC (Wiepjes 2020)

Suicide = 19x gen pop, after GAC surgery (Dhejne 2011)

ER patients: “trans” w GAC 12x higher suicidality (Straub 2024)

Language: Avoid ideological terms

- **Instead of**

- **1. Gender:** Person's internal sense of self as male, female, both or neither; How individual perceives self compared to stereotypes (also: "gender identity")
- **2. Gender identity: APA:** "An internal, deeply felt sense of being male, female...both or neither." Feelings or self-perception
- **3. Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned...at birth.
- **4. Transgender:** person whose self-perception or "felt" identity doesn't match person's sexed body.
- **5. Sex assigned at birth** – label "assigned" by doctor's glance at external genitalia at birth. Can be discarded/changed at will.

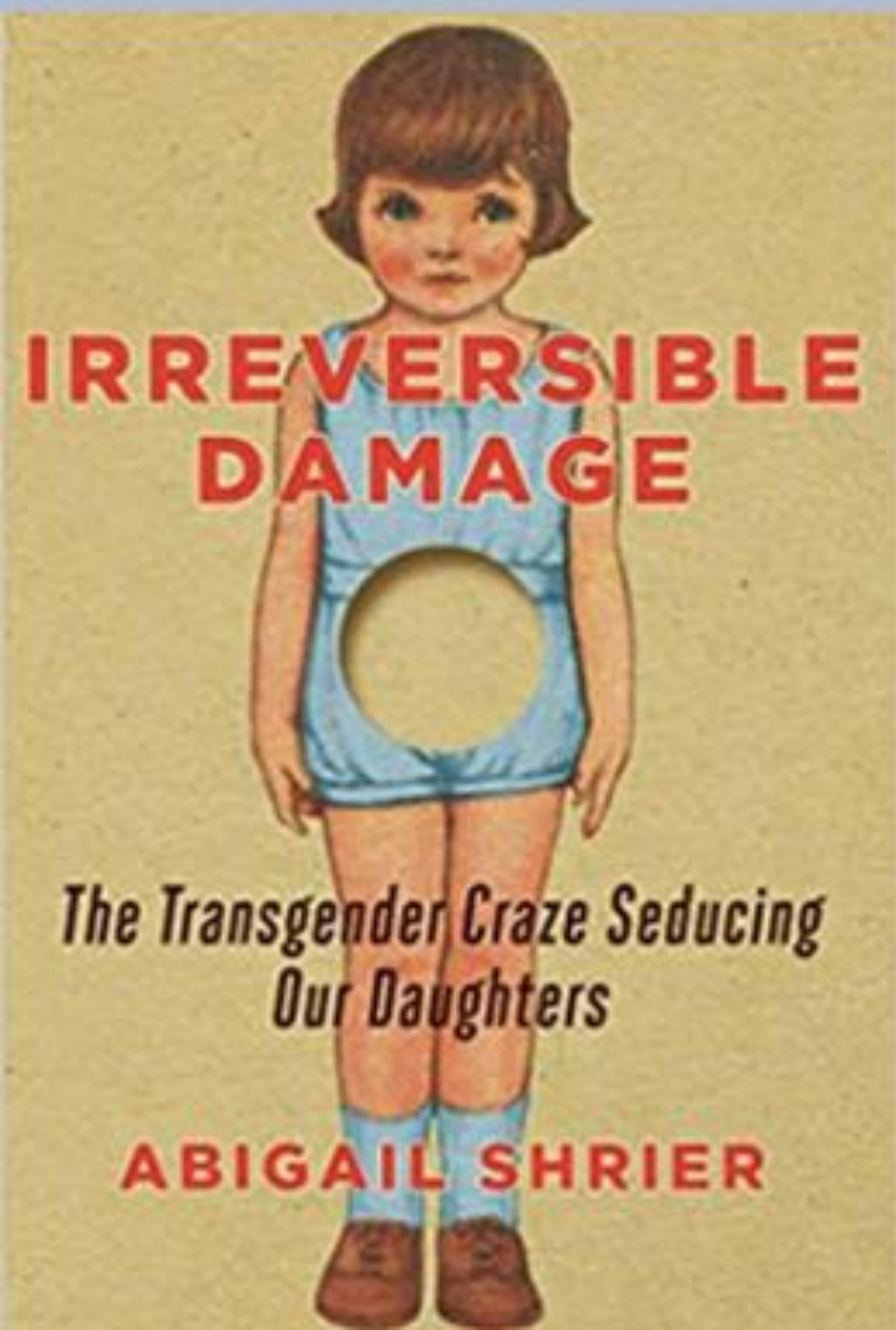
- **Say....**

- **1. Sex:** Male or female (immutable). Determined by reproductive role. Accept the sexed body + identity (M or F) as a given.
- **2. Identity (M/F); Self-perception or asserted identity** (if referring to claimed "gender identity")
- **3. Male or female.** "Cisgender" is an invented term that serves as a foil to normalize "trans."
- **4. Male or female** who identifies as "transgender"
- **5. Sex/biological sex:** Sex is an immutable biological fact - the whole body's organization for a reproductive role. It is determined at conception (not "assigned") and observed in utero or at birth.

Speak the truth. Language matters

“Let us not play with truths. It’s true that behind all this we find gender ideology. In books, kids learn that it’s possible to change one’s sex. Could gender, to be a woman or to be a man, be an option and not a fact of nature? This leads to error. **Let us call things by their names.”** - Pope Francis

““[I]t is an outstanding manifestation of **charity toward souls to
omit nothing from the **saving doctrine** of Christ.”** - Pope Saint Paul VI:



Personal: Be aware of Risk factors

- Precipitators and vulnerabilities
- **Mental health issues**
- Body issues
- **Autism** 2 – 4 x - Some studies over 50%
- Adopted (2x)
- Same-sex attraction (2/3)
- Excessive time online, social media
- Social contagion (peer groups)
- **Trauma**

Source: Lisa Littman studies 2018, 2019, 2021

<https://littmanresearch.com/publications/>

Response to these challenges:

- Phone free schools; meaningful restrictions on phones
- Less tech in schools
- Education of parents on the dangers of smartphones
- Meaningful discussions with kids about the dangers of tech
- In person: Teach social skills
- Connections: Make school/Parish social community for kids
- Creativity to keep kids in religious ed connected