

### **III. Challenges to Growth During Adolescence**

#### **A. Accepting Ourselves**

It is a challenge to accept ourselves when we are in a process of growth. Yet we are made in God's image and likeness, and God loves us as we are. By accepting ourselves in the present helps us to grow into the people God calls us to be.

604, 2167, 2012, 1710

#### **B. Self-Direction**

While much of our growth is the result of biological processes that we cannot direct, there are many aspects of our growth that we can influence.

- Our bodily well-being is fostered by eating healthful foods and exercising regularly, and by refusing to smoke or to abuse alcohol and drugs.  
2290-91, 2289, 1809
- Our spiritual and personal well-being is fostered by prayer and by using our time to develop our talents and share them with others. Avoiding excessive use of television and other entertainments frees us for more creative activities and forms of service.

#### **C. Responsibility**

Our decisions have consequences not only for ourselves, but for others, especially our family and friends.

1905, 1913-14

Learning to accept responsibility for the consequences of our actions is part of growing up.

1734, 1743, 1781

Keeping commitments, even when they cause us inconvenience or when we would rather be doing something else, is a way to grow in responsibility.

2410, 1836

#### **D. Our Need for Others**

Other people can help us in our emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual growth.

2223-26, 2232, 2038

The example and experience of parents, relatives, teachers, older brothers and sisters, and other adults we know and admire can help us to understand what we are feeling or thinking. We are always free to seek out their advice. We are not alone.

1879, 1936-37

#### **E. Our Need for God**

Our relationship with God changes and develops throughout our lives. God is always calling us to a fuller life, always sustaining and supporting us.

2560, 2567, 2591

As we mature, we need to grow in our experience and knowledge of God in Jesus and to find new ways of relating to God, both in prayer and in our life situations.

2650, 2745