

More TODS

Homosexuality

Homosexuality is described as the lifelong orientation of being sexually attracted to a person of the same sex. This is not the same as the occasional passing feeling that a young person might feel toward a person of the same sex. Such passing feelings are often a normal part of growing up.

Research seems to support the belief that one's sexual orientation is a matter of a person's development, and not simply a matter of his or her choice. The Catholic Church teaches that people who have a homosexual or lesbian orientation have the same human dignity as all human beings. Homosexuals and lesbians are not to be stereotyped or rejected as "bad" people. However, choosing to engage in sexual activity with a person of the same sex differs from having a homosexual or lesbian orientation.

The Catholic Church teaches that sexual activity between people of the same sex is against God's Law. This moral principle of the Catholic Church is based on its belief that genital sexual activity is reserved for a man and a woman who are married.

- ♦ *Can a Catholic support a law that discriminates against people because they have a homosexual or lesbian orientation? Explain.*
- ♦ *If you owned a business, would you hire people who told you they were homosexuals or lesbians? Why or why not?*

Diseases Associated with Sexual Activity

STDs

Sexually Transmitted Diseases, or STDs, include syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and herpes type II. Also called VD or venereal disease (from "Venus," the goddess of sexual love), they are transmitted through sexual contact.

STDs are found most often in unmarried people who have sexual intercourse with many partners, and in married people who have sex with others who are not their spouses. The reported cases of people suffering from STDs are on the rise, especially among youth.

Most STDs can be successfully treated. But if left untreated, they can have lasting harmful effects on the person with the disease, on his or her sexual partner, and on a baby born of a mother who has an STD.

AIDS

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, or AIDS, is a disease that cripples the body's immune system—that part of our bodies that resists germs and viruses. The AIDS virus is found in blood, semen, and vaginal secretions.

You cannot get AIDS from casual contact, such as from tears or saliva, from drinking from the same glass, from hugging or touching or kissing. The AIDS virus is transmitted through sexual intercourse with a person infected with AIDS or through a blood transfusion or the sharing of an infected drug needle. A pregnant woman can also infect her unborn child with AIDS.

- ♦ *Does your parish have an AIDS outreach program? Why is this so?*
- ♦ *Why do you think the church community is so deeply involved in ministering with people suffering with AIDS?*