

SEXUAL FREEDOM AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH



Dear Padre,

Our society and media seem to give the impression that marriage is out and sex is in. What about this sexual freedom and what's a parent to do?

Kyle

Dear Kyle,

The Church promotes the understanding that sexuality and commitment must go hand in hand. The Church encourages us to make the marriage commitment first and then engage in the sexuality. Pope John Paul II addressed much of his encyclical *Familiaris Consortio* ("On the Family") to this issue of commitment. This document emphasizes that sexuality must be interwoven into the fabric of spouse, family, and marital commitment. The dedication to loving and respecting the unique power and pleasure of sexuality has the best chances of occurring inside a healthy marriage and family structure.

If you are just starting your family, you have an excellent chance of instilling these Catholic values of marriage, family, and individual worth in each of your children. You do it both by telling your children how important marriage and commitment are to you and by living this value through your own relationship with your wife and family.

What can you do if you find your children are developing sexual attitudes or practices contrary to your values? Some simple rules are:

- Do not encourage them in any lifestyle that is not a value you hold about marriage or family. This might mean some parental control over television, movies, and music.
- Remind them of your love for them and speak to them of your own commitment to marriage and family.

Many people believe that the sexual freedom promoted by our society is on the rise. This demands a strong stance by Catholic families to balance this trend by instilling healthy sexual values in their children. The family values of the twenty-first century are planted by your actions and words today.

The Padre
Father Paul Coury, C.S.S.R.