

# Family Life and Virtue

## Scope and Sequence in *The Body Matters*

# the **BODY MATTERS™**

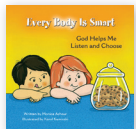
A Theology of the Body Program

Saint John Paul's Theology of the Body (TOB) is a beautiful, orthodox Catholic vision of the human person made in God's image and likeness. Based on TOB, *The Body Matters* program for Pre-school through 8th grade interweaves the truth of the human person—Christian anthropology—that is wholesome and age-appropriate for all levels.

TOB is often misunderstood to deal only with sexuality—actually it unfolds an awe-inspiring vision of the complete person. In these books, sexuality is not addressed directly until Level 7. Catholic schools and Faith Formation programs use *The Body Matters* both to promote family life issues and to develop virtue.

*Note: We trust educators to present the positive virtues first, before Family Life / Safe Environment issues are covered.*

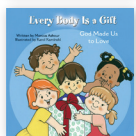
## Level Pre-K *Three board books*



### Book 1 **The Body Is Smart**

**VIRTUE** We can learn from our bodies what we need. However, patience is very important when needs can't be met right away.

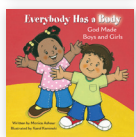
**FAMILY LIFE** Touch is a basic need for everybody. Parents hug us and kiss us and that means, "We are family."



### Book 2 **The Body Is a Gift**

**VIRTUE** The Body is a gift, which means the virtue of being a gift (love) is essential to life.

**FAMILY LIFE** We receive gifts good gifts from our parents. Parents can help children know if they should receive gifts from others.



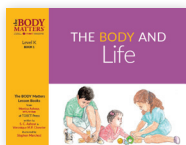
### Book 3 **Everybody Has a Body**

**VIRTUE** It's good to know and accept God's gift of the body.

**FAMILY LIFE** Somebody with a boy body is a boy, like Dad; somebody with a girl body is a girl, like Mom. Note: With Transgender Ideology, this concept alone is a Family Life issue.

## Level K

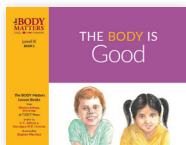
*Two 48-page softcover books*



### Book 1 **The Body and Life**

**VIRTUE** Loving the family God gave us.

**FAMILY LIFE** The family is where we belong. Parents help guide children to the truth.



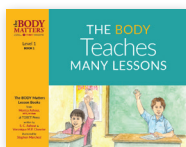
### Book 2 **The Body Is Good**

**VIRTUE** Our bodies are good; thanks to our bodies, we enjoy life!

**FAMILY LIFE** By observing the human body, we know human persons are higher than animals, for we have spirits. Observing parents interacting with other body-persons helps children see safe boundaries.

## Level 1

*Two 48-page softcover books*



### Book 1 **The Body Teaches Many Lessons**

**VIRTUE** All virtues are based on doing the right thing at the right time in the right way at the right place.

**FAMILY LIFE** When one of these guidelines (right thing, time, way, or place) is missing, then something is amiss. Children should tell their parents or trusted educators.



### Book 2 **The Body Tells a Story**

**VIRTUE** God's design of salvation history includes hard times, but Jesus helps us personally; that is why each of us has a story of the power of love from God.

**FAMILY LIFE** Since the body tells us the ultimate story of love (we are made to be gifts), we know something is amiss when it goes against this Love Story.

### Level 2

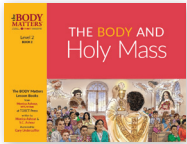
Two 48-page softcover books



#### Book 1 **The Body Is a Gift**

**VIRTUE** EveryBODY we see says, “I am a gift.” We practice the virtue of the gift of self by not only giving, but also by receiving, and also by being open to others.

**FAMILY LIFE** We should only receive good gifts from those we trust. When somebody tries to force us to receive a “gift,” it is not really a gift. Children should tell parents and trusted adults right away.



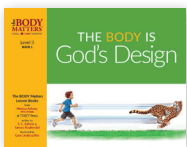
#### Book 2 **The Body and Holy Mass**

**VIRTUE** Seeing the world sacramentally means that good things which are visible (things that relate to our senses) have a deeper meaning that lead us to God, especially those things at Mass.

**FAMILY LIFE** When families worship God together, they are with not only each other, but also with those around the world, those in purgatory, and those in heaven. EveryBODY is made to love each other. (This establishes the opposite of *love is use*.)

### Level 3

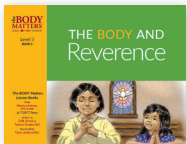
Two 48-page softcover books



#### Book 1 **The Body Is God's Design**

**VIRTUE** A good virtue to have is to accept God-given limits. To think we can violate our bodies' limits (e.g. I don't need to breath air; I drink poison; I can disobey gravity) harms us.

**FAMILY LIFE** Having established the virtue above, an educator can speak to good boundaries in the context of safety. He or she also might subtly bring up the limits of being male or female, emphasizing the magnificent limit of being either a boy or a girl. (Note: This obviously contradicts the transgender ideology that is beginning to inculcate children at a very young age.)



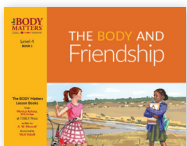
#### Book 2 **The Body and Reverence**

**VIRTUE** Reverence is a combination of wonder (being drawn to somebody or something) and awe (holding oneself back at a respectful distance so as to respect someone or something).

**FAMILY LIFE** This concept is a crucial foundation upon which to build (for educators of older children) since St. John Paul speaks of sexual desire as being a “vector of aspiration” but it needs to be moderated by awe of the person so that it is expressed toward the right person, at the right time, in the right way, at the right place (i.e. marriage).

### Level 4

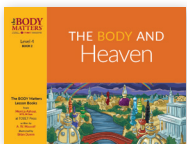
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#### Book 1 **The Body and Friendship**

**VIRTUE** The virtue of friendship ultimately is based on common good things/goals that are shared by two or more people. Friendship is a communion of persons who give, receiving, and are open to others in a healthy way.

**FAMILY LIFE** Bullying is the opposite of friendship since one person makes himself or herself above the other by demeaning one or more persons, the opposite of reverence. A person bullied ought to tell his or her parents and other trusted adults.



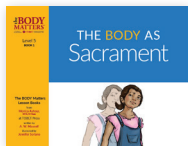
#### Book 2 **The Body and Heaven**

**VIRTUE** To have grace, God's infused virtue of His very life within the person (begun at Baptism), means participating in eternal life starting now. The fullness of participating in God's life of Love is what heaven is all about.

**FAMILY LIFE** Anything that helps us to expand grace (like a balloon) in our hearts will be for our good. When things or persons take us away from the life of Christ, that will do damage to our ability to love rightly. Children should tell their parents and/or a trusted adult when they see something/someone pull them away from virtue toward vice.

### Level 5

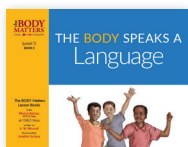
Two 48-page softcover books



#### Book 1 **The Body as Sacrament**

**VIRTUE** Seeing everyBODY rightly—as a gift—is based on Matthew 5:8, the beatitude (emphasized in TOB), “Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.” That means, when we see a human body, we see a person, and the only proper response to a person is love.

**FAMILY LIFE** Having established the positive aforementioned sacramental vision of everyBODY, educators can speak to this age group about the complexities of life. For instance, even the person who is mixed up or sinful is STILL a person and deserves love. BUT, help Level 5 students explore what does a response of love look like in this context. For instance, perhaps it is telling one’s parents and a classroom educator that one’s friend is doing something wrong (like pornography, drugs, cheating, stealing). Perhaps it is putting up hard boundaries. Love doesn’t always mean nicety; tough love exists.



#### Book 2 **The Body Speaks a Language**

**VIRTUE** Telling the truth—with the language of words or the language of the body—is vital virtue. Telling a lie—with the language of words or the language of the body—is a vice/sin. Certain bodily actions mean certain things can assist children in seeing that the body does indeed “speak” a language.

**FAMILY LIFE** Having established things like what a smile means or a punch means or cheating means, an educator might have an organic opening into which he or she might bring up more sensitive topics such as kissing or hugging or nakedness. Always promote the positive. Kissing parents, aunts, uncles with small kisses of affection mean “we are family.” Hugging means “we are close.” Nakedness means “we are married” or “I’m at a doctor’s office with my parent and getting a physical.” Those are telling the truth with the body in the proper context. Then, an educator might speak of violations of the truth of the body in such sensitive areas. For example, the reason it is wrong for an adult who is a stranger (or who has groomed a child) to kiss a child is because it is a lie—that adult is not family. Even more complex is if an adult is a family member, but the kiss is more than the small, aforementioned sign of affection (a lingering kiss), then it is a lie and a violation of the child. (Note: ALWAYS emphasize it is NOT the child’s fault. It is ALWAYS the predator’s fault, and the child needs to have the courage to tell his or her parents and trusted adult, like a school counselor.) Similar things can be said about hugging. Cuddling with a parent when watching a movie shows the truth of the context of the relationship. When an older teen or adult does that and especially when touching is involved, it is a lie (and not the child’s fault.) He or she should yell out, “STOP that!”, get out of the situation, and tell a parent.”

### Level 6

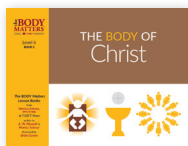
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#### Book 1 **EveryBODY Reveals God**

**VIRTUE** We are MOSTLY made in God’s image and likeness when we love rightly, and that can only be done through the body since we are body-persons. Being a gift is giving, receiving, and being open to others.

**FAMILY LIFE** Many Family Life issues can be addressed here. For instance, helping children to understand that being in a communion of persons (i.e. friendship with others) is a good. However, when “friendship” is one-sided, codependency might be an issue or, worse, a grooming tactic might be used (a “loving/giving” adult keeps giving gifts or being with the person an inordinate amount of times). The child needs to be courageous and tell his or her parents and trusted educator. Also in this book is a picture of a boy showing his dad/trusted adult his cell phone. A dialogue might be drawn from this regarding receiving a naked or provocative picture through social media. (If the person didn’t want such a picture, it is not his/her fault. Since the body is good, not shameful, explain to children how such an action is a lie. Again, it has to do with context and meaning. Nakedness is a sign of vulnerability and intimacy (or is what happens at a physical exam at a doctor’s office) with one’s spouse who is worthy of trust because of the context of marriage. Then, nakedness is a good. So it is not the body that is shameful, but it is a lack of reverence for the person, including the person sending it for he/she is not respecting himself or herself (or the person in the picture). Just like the picture of the boy bravely showing his dad that picture, explain how important it is for students to tell their parents of such things.



#### Book 2 **The Body of Christ**

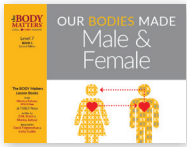
**VIRTUE** Piety for The Body of Christ—Incarnate, Eucharistic, and Mystical—is essential in living our human lives filled with transcendence. When we see our lives rightly (and not as the listed heresies), then we will not be led astray. Piety—which is very close to reverence (see Level 1, Book 2’s explanation)—means proper devotion given to those who deserve it, God Himself and we who are members of God’s family.

*Level 6, Book 2*  
**The Body of Christ**  
*continued*

**FAMILY LIFE** Devotion to God’s family is right and just. We will fully belong to each other in heaven. The complexities occur when we think that members of God’s family never sin. This is a sentimental, utopian view of people that lacks an understanding of Original Sin. The educator can bolster the truth that the Church is made up of saints, sinners, and wounded people who (we hope) are trying to love. This is one reason that students at this age can begin to see the flaws of others and recognize failures, which harm the Mystical Body of Christ. Mother Mary shows that we can love at all times; she symbolizes the Church as it is and can be. Yet, even St. Peter, the first pope, denied Christ. But he and all those who became saints repented and sought to love Jesus more deeply. Educators can help children this age have eyes wide open, without becoming suspicious of all Church leaders and members of the Church.

## Level 7

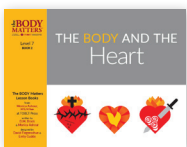
*Two 48-page softcover books*



### Book 1 **Our Bodies Made Male and Female**

**VIRTUE** Probably the most important book of *The Body Matters* because of the culture in which we live, *Our Bodies Made Male and Female* seeks to form children in the virtue of seeing life sacramentally, that things are not mere thing, they have meaning behind them. In such a vision, recognizing archetype is of the utmost importance to counter the vice of seeing things and others in a demeaning, stereotypical that cause confusion. With such a sacramental vision, virtue is promoted and understanding masculinity and femininity according to God’s design is fostered.

**FAMILY LIFE** THE issue of our time is whether human nature exists or not. If it does not exist, then we can do whatever we want (especially with our bodies). This is why *The Body Matters* program is a Christian anthropology (what it means to be human from a sacramental perspective) which upholds the age-old teaching that we all have a human nature, designed by God. Our fulfillment is in the freedom to live as God designed us, particularly regarding our bodies. The educator using this book can help students to contemplate the truth of God designing our bodies made male or female (without falling into stereotypes). Addressing the transgender ideology, the educator is to make sure students know that everyBODY deserves love. Those who may be drawn in by this ideology are not bad; they are persons who deserve as much love as anyone. However, the ideology (not the person who thinks he or she may be “trans”) is dangerous. It’s dangerous because the philosophy undergirding it says there is no human nature—that we can violate the way God made things. This does not lead to human flourishing but deep anguish. We recommend *The Austin Institute* studies regarding data such as the fact that 98% of boys who go through times of gender confusion wind up identifying with their God-given sex, and 86% of girls. We also recommend serious research (for the educator) regarding the harm of sex-change surgeries, despite what mainstream media promotes. This issue is very complex. TOBET is developing more material to assist educators, including parents as the primary educators, regarding this sensitive topic. You may want to have parent signatures before broaching this topic. Moreover, we highly recommend assigning homework/family catechesis whereby the parents read sections of this book with their child to promote dialogue. TOBET now has Parent Guides to assist in this endeavor.



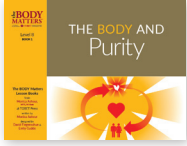
### Book 2 **The Body and the Heart**

**VIRTUE** St. John Paul emphasizes, based on Jesus’ own words, that the heart is a battlefield between love and concupiscence (the tendency to sin). Virtue arises when a person has self-mastery, based on reverence for the body especially in the area of sexuality, and the power of the Holy Spirit working in his/her heart. Holiness, thus, is knowing what is right in the heart, owning that truth, and then living that with bodily actions. Thus, a person has integrity. Maturity begins when the person is aware of and evaluates the “inner movements of the heart,” (“Am I seeing things rightly and/or a person with love and respect?”), so says TOB.

**FAMILY LIFE** “The heart is where sin begins” St. John Paul says in TOB, showing his recognition of our fallenness. Yet, he knows that, with God’s grace poured forth in the power of the Holy Spirit, the heart is also where love can win. The human person is made for greatness (for love), not for sin. The balance and complexity of this vision (humans are made good, yet we are fallen though redeemed) can be ascertained by this age-group with a solid educator. To bring up the topic of sexual predators might be done here. Not only do those predators shun God’s design for real love, they use young people and children for their perverse desires which never satisfy. (Note: As said before, remind the students that it is never their fault, and that transparency—telling their parents and trusted adults—is required for their sake and to stop the cycle of abuse.)

### Level 8

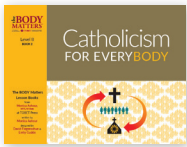
Two 48-page softcover books



#### Book 1 **The Body and Purity**

**VIRTUE** Having set the foundation in *The Body and the Heart* (Level 7, Book 2) regarding holiness being pure heart (a well-formed conscience) followed by truthful bodily actions), and in *The Body Speaks a Language* (Level 5, Book 2) regarding certain bodily actions mean certain things), and in *EveryBODY Reveals God* (Level 6, Book 1) regarding the gift of self (love) as the meaning of life, we recap those and then apply them to the area of sexuality. Thus, a Pure Heart + A Truthful Gift of Self = Sexual Integrity. The virtue of chastity, then, is the proper ordering of one's sexuality according to the context (vocation) of one's life. (Even in marriage, one is to practice chastity.)

**FAMILY LIFE** As always, when speaking of such topics, emphasize forgiveness and healing and the importance of the Sacrament of Confession. Furthermore, helps students to own in the ethos of their heart the truth of God's sacred design of sexuality. It is NOT that sex is bad that it is reserved for marriage; it is because it is so good since the husband and wife see each other (and their bodies) as gifts from God, deserving love. Sexual promiscuity, then, is telling a lie since sex means "I'm married to you and I'm ready to have children with you." Sexual promiscuity detracts from holiness since students know that such actions are wrong, yet with their body they do so. Sexual promiscuity, finally, is use, the opposite of love, the opposite of the gift of self. Again, mercy and forgiveness needs to be brought to the foreground. We highly recommend having parents follow up with this discussion, having them read sections of this book with their child for homework/family catechesis.



#### Book 2 **Catholicism for EveryBODY**

**VIRTUE** LOVE is the central virtue of all (see 1 Cor. 13). Every single teaching of the Catholic Church is given to us to promote and preserve love. And since, as body-persons, we can only love through our bodies, every single teaching of the Church backs up the truth and meaning of God's design for the body. Living the truth of the body means we are prophets of love, we speak on behalf of God who is love. Yet, no virtue can be lived without Jesus' Gift of Self on the Cross and the Church's Marian receptivity of His Gift which brings about the first "fruit of the cross", the uncreated Holy Spirit.

**FAMILY LIFE** The reason we have Family Life subjects and Safe Environment components is because we want to preserve God's greatest command: Love God and love neighbor as yourself. When we do not submit to God's law of love, we cannot experience what God's wants us to experience: real love. And the Realest of Love was shown on the Cross and is meant to be received by all of us (as symbolized by Mary who stands for the Church). Our Sacraments, particularly the Mass, give us (an increase) of Divine Life and Love. When we participate in God's Life and Love, we fulfill our life's meaning, we experience real love, and we will be with God and others eternally. We can do this because the Word was made Flesh—the Body matters. Taking this as our standard and foundation, we can present all Family Life issues in their beauty... and in their (unfortunate) distortions. Anything that goes against the teachings of the Church necessarily lead away from love, for the Church upholds Jesus' law of love. We were made for love by Love. Our bodies show that! Amen.