



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
OF CHARLESTON

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

October 2021

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In an age dominated by confusion, where truth is viewed as relative, individuality is often restricted to a person's perception of their own sexual identity. While sexuality is a principle of God's design for humanity, created male and female, the human person should not be viewed only in terms of sexuality.

We know from the Book of Genesis that we are made in the image and likeness of God. As his children, we are to cherish our nature, body and soul, as a source of dignity bestowed upon us by gift of our heavenly Father. We are gifted with our sex at conception, a biological and spiritual reality affirmed by the Giver of Life. Through this human nature, we can make visible the invisible God.

Therefore, we must not celebrate or condone acts which deface or destroy our bodies; to do so is an active rejection of the path God has ordained for each of us. Acknowledging the need to speak truth in charity, we have created guidance for Catholics of South Carolina with a new document called *Policy on the Human Person, Created Male and Female*. For in God we are fulfilled — he is the source of our joy.

Christ Jesus instructed us that loving our neighbor and ourselves is necessary to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Though fallen by the original sin of Adam, we are sent out into the darkness of the world as bearers of truth and as beacons of Christ's love. Those who are ignorant of God's unchanging plan for humanity, and even persons who actively persecute the Church for its proclamations of truth, are equally worthy of love and called to holiness by our loving Father.

Let us be emboldened, then, by the call to share the truth to a broken world. Through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, the sacred Scripture and Tradition, let us be authentic witnesses to the Gospel, especially to those who have been led astray or do not understand their dignity or true identity in Christ. We must proclaim the Good News of the all-good God by adhering to the faith with our lives, praying for those who reject it, and remaining a comforting source of knowledge for those who seek Him.

May the peace and love of the Lord shine a light into the hearts of all.

In the Lord's peace,

Most Rev. Robert E. Guglielmo, DD
Bishop of Charleston

ENCLOSURE: "Policy on the Human Person: Created Male and Female as a Constitutive Aspect of the Human Person"

Policy on the Human Person:

Created Male and Female as a Constitutive Aspect of the Human Person

The Catholic Church teaches that our differences as male and female are part of God’s good design in creation, that our bodies — including our sexuality — are gifts from God. Because of this, we must seek to care for our bodies as they were created, male or female. In fact, our Catechism teaches that “being man” or “being woman” is a reality which is both good and willed by God (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 369).

The human person is a body-soul union, and the body — created male or female — is a constitutive aspect of the human person. As persons, we should seek to live in conformity with our sex (sometimes called “sexual identity”) as given by God. A person cannot change his or her sex. The Catholic Church teaches that the direct removal or destruction of healthy sexual and reproductive organs constitutes mutilation. It is contrary to divine revelation, Church teaching, right reason, and the sound practice of medicine. Therapies, interventions, and procedures designed to assist a person in “transitioning” his or her sex are morally prohibited and often result as misplaced compassion.

As a Church, we promise to treat all human persons with the dignity and respect gifted to them by God, Creator of all:

- a. No bullying, cyberbullying or harassment of any kind of any persons will be tolerated in our schools, churches, or offices.
- b. Behaviors which denigrate or intentionally cause harm to others is not acceptable, nor is it consistent with the teaching of the Catholic Church, or in the spirit of Christianity.

“The norm for human design is to be conceived either male or female. Every cell in the human body holds either an ‘XY’ or ‘XX’ pair of sex chromosomes, the genetic markers for males and females, respectively. Human sexuality is binary by design to ensure the reproduction and flourishing of our species. The very rare disorders of sex development (‘intersex’ individuals) are medical deviations from the sexual binary norm, and do not constitute a third sex.”¹

Therefore,

1. It is the policy of the Diocese of Charleston that all Catholic parishes, schools, institutions, departments, entities, charities, agencies, juridic persons, or other affiliated entities, and any subdivision thereof shall apply all policies and procedures in relation to that person according to that person’s God-given biological sex:
 - a. *Definition:* “Biological sex is the biological character or quality that distinguishes male and female based on gonadal, morphologic (internal and external), chromosomal, and hormonal characteristics.” *Dorland’s Illustrated Medical Dictionary*, 28th ed., (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, 1994)
2. All employees and volunteers shall conduct themselves in accord with their God-given biological sex both on-campus and when representing the school at off-campus events.
 - a. Any expression of gender identity that causes disruption or confusion regarding the Church’s teaching on human sexuality is prohibited (e.g., the usage of personal pronouns discordant with one’s biological sex).
 - b. Employees and volunteers shall abide by the dress code that corresponds with their biological sex.
 - c. Employees and volunteers shall use bathrooms and locker rooms that correspond with their biological sex.

¹ https://www.cathmed.org/assets/files/Gender_Dysphoria_Treatment_of_Minors.pdf, Catholic Medical Association, 2016.

- d. When applicable, employee and volunteer access to facilities and accommodations during school-related functions shall align with their biological sex.
3. Catholic schools partner with families to educate and form students consistent with the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. Families should seek always to live in accordance with the Gospel and Church teaching, particularly regarding actions and behaviors that are in public. Students shall conduct themselves in accord with school standards applicable to their biological sex at all times, both on campus and when representing the school at off-campus events.
 - a. Any expression of a student's gender identity that causes disruption or confusion regarding the Church's teaching on human sexuality is prohibited (e.g., the usage of personal pronouns discordant with one's biological sex).
 - b. Students shall abide by the dress code that corresponds with their biological sex.
 - c. Students shall participate in competitive athletics in accord with their biological sex.
Note: If no sex-specific athletic team exists (i.e., female football team, male field hockey team), students may participate on an opposite-sex team with administrative approval.
 - d. Students shall use bathrooms and locker rooms that correspond with their biological sex. Students who have been clinically diagnosed with gender dysphoria may request the use of a single-person, unisex facility. Such requests for accommodation will be assessed by the appropriate school administrator on an individual basis.
 - e. When applicable, students' access to facilities and accommodations during school-related functions shall align with their biological sex.

“Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his or her God-given biological sex and the sexual identity that corresponds with that gift. Physical, moral, and spiritual difference and complementarity are oriented toward the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life. The harmony of the couple and of society depends in part on the way in which the complementarity, needs, and mutual support between the sexes are lived out” Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2333.

We must always remember compassion, care and respect for the human person, especially those who have body dimorphism, dysmorphia and other issues. They may need to be referred to a medical professional for care, which should be done with sensitivity and respect for the dignity and humanity given by God to all people.