

**You are  
strong  
and loved.**

**“Be on your guard, stand firm in the  
faith, be courageous, be strong.”**

**1 Corinthians 16:13**

# Introduction

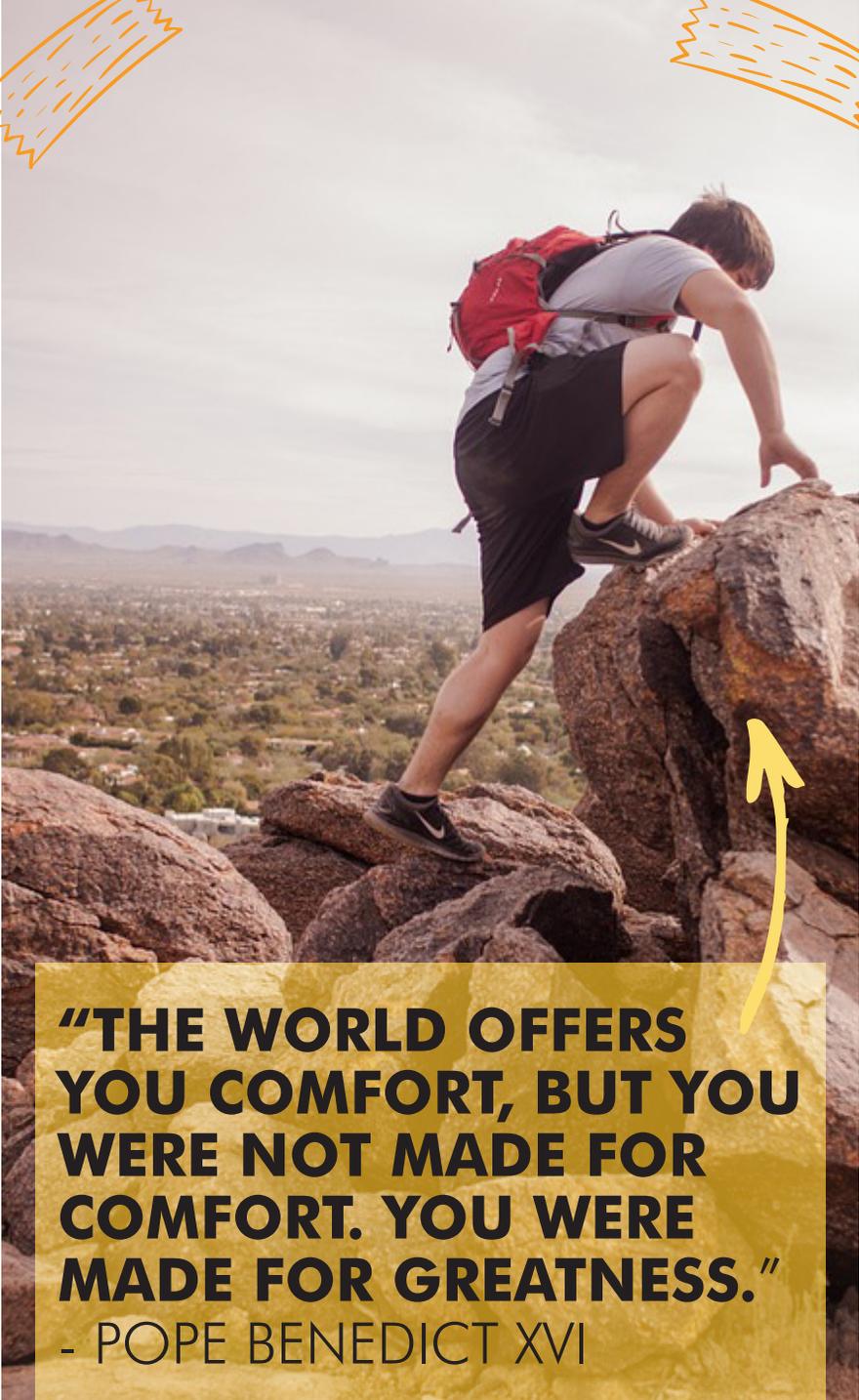
**YOU ARE CREATED FOR GREATNESS.**

God created you, your body, and all of it's complexities.

The purpose of this booklet is to explore the purpose and gift of your masculinity and to uncover God's plan for you in your life.

He created you as a man to pursue adventure, to love, and to unleash the great strength that lies within you.





**"THE WORLD OFFERS  
YOU COMFORT, BUT YOU  
WERE NOT MADE FOR  
COMFORT. YOU WERE  
MADE FOR GREATNESS."  
- POPE BENEDICT XVI**

# Introduction

## HOW AM I MADE?

You are created for a specific mission. You are made by love, for love, and to love. Love is the gift of oneself to another. God created you because he wanted to share His goodness, joy, and his entire self with you. He didn't want to keep these things to himself - he desired to invite all of us to share in this adventure we call life.

## HE GAVE EACH OF US A BODY AND SOUL.

Our body is created by God. Written in our body is our purpose in life. We desire honor, strength, love, acceptance, joy, truth, friends, and beauty. These desires are all written in our bodies because God placed them there to show us the way to Himself.



**WRITTEN IN OUR BODY  
IS OUR PURPOSE IN LIFE.**

# Introduction

**GOD GAVE US A BODY  
SO THAT WE CAN LOVE LIKE HE LOVES.**

God is allowing your body to develop so that you can be everything God desires you to be! Through this process of maturation, you are able to see the powerful gift your body is which is given to you by God himself.

- Why were you created by God?

## MY THOUGHTS:

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## SPACE TO SKETCH:



# Introduction

**WE WERE CREATED BY LOVE, FOR LOVE, TO LOVE.**

In the beginning, God showed us this through Adam and Eve. God made Adam and Eve as two distinct persons - one male and one female - and both were made out of love.

In Genesis, we realize that only when we trust God and live in love do we truly live life the way God intended. From the very beginning, God gave us our bodies to lead us to ultimate joy and happiness.

- How do our bodies lead us to happiness?
- Remember the story in Genesis of Adam and Eve. What happened when they didn't trust God?
- After Adam and Eve disobeyed God, were they any happier?



## I know the plans...

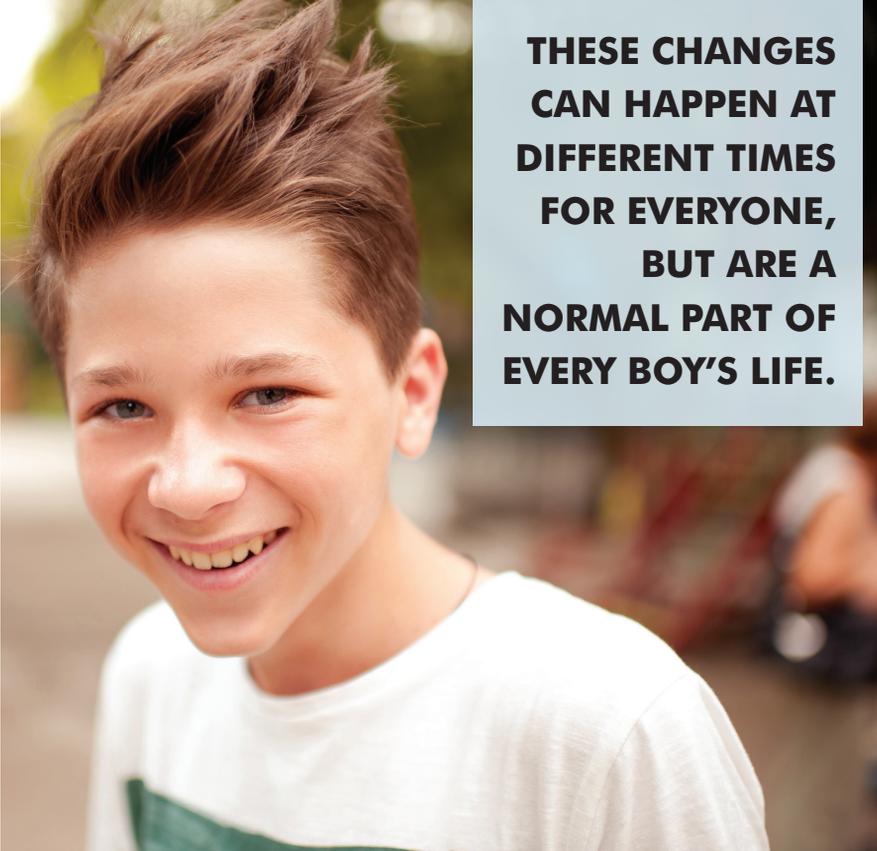
Puberty is the time during which your body goes through changes to turn a boy into a young man. It is where certain characteristics change inside and out.

It is part of God's plan to prepare you for your future as a father if you are called to the vocation of marriage, to the single life, or to priesthood.

Usually between the ages of nine and sixteen, every boy goes through puberty. These changes can happen at different times for everyone, but are a normal part of every boy's life.



**THESE CHANGES  
CAN HAPPEN AT  
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EVERY BOY'S LIFE.**



# What are these changes?

## PHYSICAL CHANGES

Hair usually begins to grow on various parts of the body. It is typically seen on a young man's face, underarm area, abdomen, chest, arms, legs, and buttocks. There may be a sparse growth of hair that grows underneath the underpant area usually around age 12.

In certain areas of your body such as your face, you will need to begin looking at shaving your hair.

Hair grows differently for every man, so the age you begin shaving might be different than your friends.

The scrotum holds the two testicles (testes) that makes sperm. Sperm are the male cells needed for human reproduction.

When a male's sperm combines with a woman's egg, a new human being develops.



# What are these changes?

## PHYSICAL CHANGES

Your body takes on a more muscular and angular shape because of the hormone testosterone. Testosterone tells the body to increase muscle mass so you might see your upper chest and shoulder muscles increase.

Testosterone also causes bones to lengthen, giving young men a heavier bone structure and longer arms and legs.

Another result of increased testosterone is that vocal cords become longer and thicker. Because of this, the voice becomes lower and deeper.

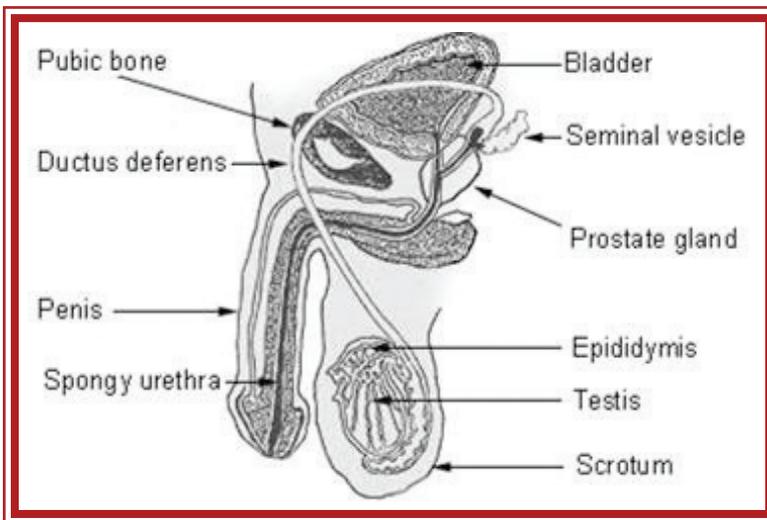
It is not unusual for your voice to change pitch or crack at times. The voice usually starts to lower around ages 13 or 14 and is usually finished changing around 14 or 15.



# What are these changes?

## MALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

The reproductive system is a gift from God because it makes you fertile. If someone is fertile, they have the ability to conceive children. Most of the male reproductive system is located outside of the body. The external structures of the male reproductive system are the penis, the scrotum and the testicles.



### PENIS

The organ where urine and semen are discharged; is made of two parts - the shaft and tip.

### SCROTUM

Contains the testicles and epididymis and hangs under the penis.

### TESTES

The two testes produce sperm and testosterone.

# We possess a beautiful Gift!

**FERTILITY, OR THE ABILITY TO CONCEIVE A CHILD, IS A GREAT GIFT FROM GOD.**

God allows man and woman to be a gift to one another in marriage. The combination of a man's sperm and a woman's egg allows for a child to develop. Just like a lock and key, a husband and wife exchange their gifts of fertility with one another in the holy act of being husband and wife.



There is a time and a place for this exchange. Just like you give presents on Christmas and birthdays, so too is this gift of fertility to be given only at a specific, special, and sacred time and place.

- God might be calling you to offer your fertility as a gift to him as a priest. Have you ever thought of being a priest?
- Why is marriage the best time for people to have children?

# Personal Hygiene



Oil glands in the skin become more active and this can cause acne. Care of the skin through frequent washings may help. Especially if you are playing sports, it's important that you shower every day to keep your skin nice and clean. Many people will have problems with acne into adulthood.



Sweating and body odors also become more noticeable at this time. You will need to shower or bathe more often and begin to use deodorant. There are many products you can purchase in the store to help control your acne if needed.



You may occasionally wake up to discover you have had a wet dream. This is when you release fluid from your penis during your sleep but you weren't aware it happened at the time. This is completely normal and it is not something to be concerned about.

# Emotional Changes

**PUBERTY BRINGS MANY CHANGES  
BUT ARE ALL WITHIN GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU  
AS YOU MATURE AS A MAN.**

It is part of bringing you from childhood into manhood and is for the purpose of getting you ready for whatever God is calling you to. You will experience new challenges, including the need to make decisions and accept responsibilities.

You might find your emotions harder to control at this time. You may occasionally “blow up” and become angry at family members and others. You may lose your temper or become aggressive more easily. This is normal.

However, practicing self-control and thinking before you act are ways to make good decisions. Ask God to give you patience during those moments that are especially challenging. Keep in mind that your family loves you and wants what is best for you.

It may help to remember that puberty is only a transitional stage in your physical and emotional development. The discomfort and confusion you may experience from time to time are only temporary as your body makes these essential changes. Try to be patient with yourself and others.



# Making Good Decisions

## A PART OF BECOMING A YOUNG MAN IS MAKING GOOD DECISIONS.

Your body is God's gift. You should cherish it, care for it, and keep it a temple for the Holy Spirit. This means you should take care of yourself, keep your body healthy, exercise, and wait until marriage to share yourself in a sexual way with another person.

Self-control is an important virtue to help you be ready to fulfill God's plan, which may include the Sacrament of Marriage and the creation of a loving family.

Self control helps you to control your actions and habits for the good.

Purity is another virtue which helps us be all who God created us to be. To remain pure, we must want to do the will of God even if it is difficult at times.

This includes not watching bad TV shows or movies, looking at bad images, not listening to impure music, or using bad language.



# Making Good Decisions

**GOD GIVES MEN A GREAT GIFT OF STRENGTH WHICH SHOULD BE USED FOR THE GOOD OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS AROUND YOU.**

You possess that strength to do good even when you are tempted or desire to do something that you know is not right or good. Trust in the strength that God gives you and rely on God to get you through times that are difficult.

Your private body parts (what is under a bathing suit) are private and sacred.

If you feel uncomfortable or are not sure of something, you should say no, leave immediately, and tell a trusted adult who shares the faith as soon as possible. If anything makes you feel uncomfortable, tell an adult.

God gave each person their own body to care for but certain parts are to remain private only for you, a doctor, and a parent to see at this time. We protect parts of our body because they are sacred and special.



# Making Good Decisions

Touching the special parts of our body should only take place within marriage because it is only meant for someone you are vowing to spend the rest of your life with. Why should very personal, intimate touches only happen within marriage?

Most importantly, your body is sacred. It was given to you by God to keep as a gift. If God is calling you to marriage, keeping your body pure for the person you marry will be a special gift you save for that person. Maybe God means for you to offer your body in a special way through service as a single man or as a priest one day.

God loves nothing more than to be close to us, but sometimes, we choose to move away from him which is called sin. Sexual touches are meant to unite a husband and wife. Any sexual touches outside of marriage go against God's plan for us.

A sin damages or breaks our relationship with God. God is the one who loves us the most. The more we love God, the more we will follow his will for our lives as it makes us joyful and ultimately, allows us to be welcomed into our heavenly home!



# Introduction

## DECISIONS MATTER AND IMPACT OUR LIVES.

Sexual touches are part of the way human reproduction works and sometimes results in a pregnancy (conception of a new baby) before you are mature enough physically and emotionally.

Also, you could contract diseases and infections that will not go away on their own if the other person is carrying those germs.

Remember, God has given your body to you for great and holy things. Being able to care for your body by making good decisions is a great gift!



# Joseph and the Saints

**AS BOYS AND EVENTUALLY MEN,  
WE ARE NOT ALONE.**

There are hundreds of men who show us what it means to be a man of God. One of these men is Joseph, the father of Jesus. Joseph was a man of great strength, prayer, and virtue. He was chosen by God to a great role that no other man would possess - to be the foster father of the Son of God.

The Bible doesn't record one word spoken by Joseph, but highlights over and over again the ways he listened to God by taking Mary as his wife, moving his family when there was a threat to kill Jesus, and caring for his family through good and bad times.



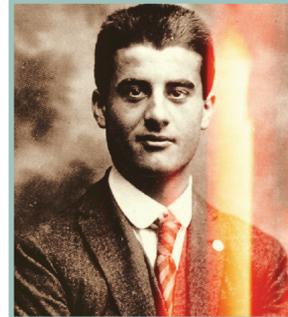
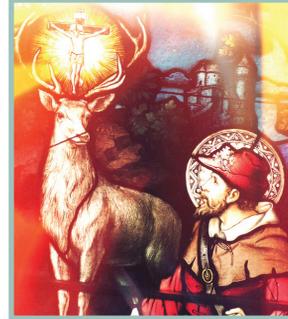
Dear St. Joseph, I ask for your intercession.  
You are a man who understands the temptations  
and joys of being a man.  
Strengthen me as I grow into the man God is calling me to be.  
Give me courage, patience, and love  
as I try to remain close to God.  
And ask your Son, Jesus, to bless me as I grow closer to Him.  
Amen.

# Introduction

Although Joseph was a sinful man, he always turned to God for guidance and strength.

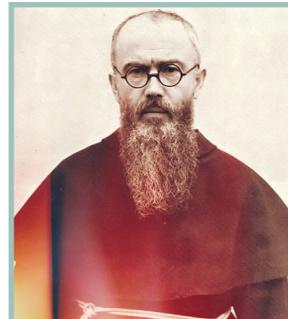
Other men who might inspire you:

- St. José Sánchez del Río
- St. Maximilian Kolbe
- St. Michael the Archangel
- St. Hubert
- Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati
- St. Pope John Paul II



**"THE WAY JESUS SHOWS YOU IS NOT EASY. RATHER, IT IS LIKE A PATH WINDING UP A MOUNTAIN. DO NOT LOSE HEART! THE STEEPER THE ROAD, THE FASTER IT RISES TOWARDS EVER WIDER HORIZONS."**

- ST. JOHN PAUL II



**"LET US REMEMBER THAT LOVE LIVES THROUGH SACRIFICE AND IS NOURISHED BY GIVING...WITHOUT SACRIFICE THERE IS NO LOVE."**

- ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

**"FOOLISH IS HE WHO FOLLOWS THE PLEASURES OF THIS WORLD, BECAUSE THESE ARE ALWAYS FLEETING AND BRING MUCH PAIN. THE ONLY TRUE PLEASURE IS THAT WHICH COMES TO US THROUGH FAITH."**

- BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI



# Alessandro Serenelli

Alessandro Serenelli was a young man who lived in Italy. At an early age, Alessandro lost his mother and brother who both endured many mental hardships. His father struggled with alcoholism and the family was very poor.

In order to make money, Alessandro and his father moved frequently to find work. Alessandro's father met Luigi Goretti, another man who was working to provide for his family. Both families ended up moving to Le Ferriere di Conca, a city about 40 miles south of Rome in order to work for a wealthy man. The families lived together - Alessandro and his father on one side of the house, and Luigi and his family on the other.

The two families worked the land as sharecroppers. Two years after they moved there, Luigi died of malaria. Luigi left his wife and children behind who continued to life in the house and work. Alessandro had a particular liking for Luigi's daughter, Maria. When he was 18, Alessandro tried to use Maria for his own pleasure and she resisted. Alessandro got upset and killed Maria and was imprisoned for 30 years. Alessandro wanted to use Maria, not love her.



At first, he was not sorry for what he did, but one day in prison, Maria Goretti appeared to him in a vision and she forgave him for what he did to her. Ever since that day, Alessandro was a new man. He said that "Maria's forgiveness saved me."

Once he was released from prison, he went to Maria's mother and asked for her forgiveness. Later on, he joined the Franciscans as a lay brother working in the gardens and manning the doors. He died in 1970 in Italy after completely turning his life around by the grace of God.

# Alessandro Serenelli

Alessandro made some poor choices and didn't know how to love the way God intended. However, God worked in his life and brought great hope to him.

Sometimes, we can make mistakes too, and we want to try our best to avoid any sin that leads us from God. However, it's important to remember that there is always hope because Christ heals our sin if we allow him to do so.

When we are tempted to use people in a way that is against God, we must remember that we are meant to love people. To love people means to want what is best for them and want what God desires for them. Even when we sin, God still wants us to come to him and receive great forgiveness and hope!

- Even though Alessandro struggled with self-control, how did God help him turn his life around?
- How do you love people?
- How can your sacrifices help others?

## MY THOUGHTS:



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# St. Michael the Archangel

## **MEN IN PARTICULAR HAVE A POWERFUL SENSE - THEIR VISION.**

Good vision is a great blessing especially when you take up interests such as reading, hunting, fixing projects, building structures, driving, playing an instrument, or participating in a sport.

Vision is an important sense that men possess in order to develop habits and hobbies. You are and will be particularly interested in images that appear on television, magazines, computers, and phones. It is important to remember that good images are meant to inspire you to become the best man you can be.

If you are ashamed, secretive, or embarrassed about the images you see on your computer or phone, for example, it is God telling you that these aren't good for you. If you sense that a picture or image is not pure, quickly change the screen or look away if it is on the television.

It's important to remember this particular prayer when you are feeling tempted to look at images that you know will not allow you to become a better man:

**ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL,  
DEFEND US IN BATTLE.  
BE OUR DEFENSE AGAINST THE WICKEDNESS AND  
SNARES OF THE DEVIL.  
MAY GOD REBUKE HIM, WE HUMBL Y PRAY,  
AND DO THOU,  
O PRINCE OF THE HEAVENLY HOSTS,  
BY THE POWER OF GOD,  
THRUST INTO HELL SATAN,  
AND ALL THE EVIL SPIRITS,  
WHO PROWL ABOUT THE WORLD  
SEEKING THE RUIN OF SOULS.  
AMEN.**



# Authentic Masculinity

**TRUE MASCULINITY COMES FROM  
THE CHARACTER YOU POSSESS.**

Masculinity is not defined by what sports you play, grades you receive, job you perform, or personality you have.

A man with good character values God and even though he might be tempted, prays to God for strength and direction in his life.

A man of character is a man of God because he values people around him and strives to daily reflect God in what he says and does.



# A Source of Trust

**YOUR DAD IS YOUR BEST RESOURCE WHILE GOING THROUGH THESE CHANGES.**

If you and your dad have a close relationship, that is a great blessing. It is important that you continue talking and remaining close.

If you and your dad do not have a close relationship, are there small ways to get closer by talking together or by praying for or with your dad?

If your dad isn't a part of your life, is there a close male adult that you trust who can help you as you go through these changes?

TV, music, and our friends can teach us many things, but God specifically gave us our fathers as a gift to walk alongside of us and guide us.



# Conclusion

**BECOMING A YOUNG MAN  
AND GOING THROUGH PUBERTY CAN BE  
A CONFUSING AND EXCITING TIME!**

It is good to have someone to spend time with and talk who has gone through these changes already so they can answer your questions. This could be your father, a trusted adult, teacher, doctor, or nurse. Puberty is a journey that should be taken one day at a time.

Remember, if you fail to do what is right, prayer, regular participation in the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation can give you strength to try harder. God loves you and wants what is best for you. He desires to walk with you on this crazy adventure!

**HE GAVE YOU THE GIFT OF MASCULINITY  
TO BE A GIFT TO THE WORLD!**

Don't forget to ask Joseph and the saints to pray for you as you mature to be the man God created you to be.



**"IT IS JESUS THAT YOU  
SEEK WHEN YOU DREAM OF  
HAPPINESS; HE IS WAITING  
FOR YOU WHEN NOTHING ELSE  
YOU FIND SATISFIES YOU; HE  
IS THE BEAUTY TO WHICH YOU  
ARE SO ATTRACTED; IT IS HE  
WHO PROVOKED YOU WITH  
THAT THIRST FOR FULLNESS  
THAT WILL NOT LET YOU SETTLE  
FOR COMPROMISE; IT IS HE  
WHO URGES YOU TO SHED THE  
MASKS OF A FALSE LIFE."**

- ST. JOHN PAUL II -



## PRAYER FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Through the intercession of Our Lady of Good Help,  
I humbly ask you, Lord, for the guidance, strength, and  
wisdom to serve as a parent or guardian of this young  
man.

You have entrusted him to me so that I can teach him and  
accompany him throughout these changes and beyond.

Give me patience.

Give me prudence.

Give me love.

May all that I say and do reflect You and your Mother  
Mary so that this man can grow into the saint you  
destined him to be.

Amen.



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### YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL AND STRONG BOOKLET

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