

You are
beautiful
and loved.

“Who can find a woman of worth?
Far beyond jewels is her value.”

Proverbs 31:10

Introduction

You are dearly loved and cherished by the Father!

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

The purpose of this booklet is to explore the beauty of your entire self and what plan God has for you.

*He created you as a woman
for love, adventure, and beauty.*

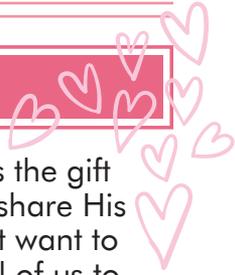


**"THE WORLD
DOESN'T NEED
WHAT WOMEN
HAVE, IT NEEDS
WHAT WOMEN
ARE."**

- EDITH STEIN (ST. TERESA
BENEDICTA OF THE CROSS)

Introduction

HOW AM I MADE?



You are made by Love, for love, and to love. Love is the gift of oneself. 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 beautiful life.

HE GAVE EACH OF US A BODY AND SOUL.

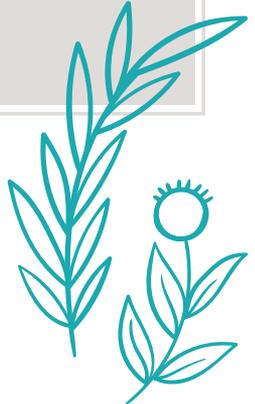
Our body is beautifully created by God. Written in our body is our purpose in life. We desire love, acceptance, friends, joy, truth, and beauty. These desires are all written in our bodies because God placed them there to show us the way to Himself.



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 beautiful gift your body is given to you by God himself.

- How do you love like God loves?
- How is your body connected to God?



MY THOUGHTS:

I Know the Plans...

PUBERTY IS THE TIME DURING WHICH YOUR BODY GOES THROUGH CHANGES TO TURN A GIRL INTO A YOUNG WOMAN.

It is part of God's plan to prepare you for your future as a spiritual or biological mother. We are going to give you a little peek into how amazing God made your female body!



Female hormones, chemical substances produced by your glands inside your body, are released and are the cause of all these changes.

Puberty is completely normal and happens to everyone!

shsnap

**“FOR I KNOW THE
PLANS I HAVE IN
MIND FOR YOU...
SO AS TO GIVE
YOU A FUTURE
OF HOPE.”**

- JEREMIAH 29:11



Introduction

For girls, this process can start anywhere from the ages of eight to sixteen years old. Every girl is different, so some will develop earlier than others.

These changes can be exciting and overwhelming all at the same time, so it is important that you find a trusted adult to help you and answer any questions you may have.



EVERY GIRL IS DIFFERENT,

SO SOME WILL DEVELOP EARLIER THAN OTHERS.

Your body will go through many physical changes. Some of the changes include:

- Growing taller
- Oil and sweat glands become active
- Breasts develop and get bigger
- Hips widen
- Hair grows under arms and in pubic (genital) region
- Vaginal discharge
- Menstrual periods

What are these changes?

When you grow taller, you may feel like you grow inches over night! Your oil and sweat glands start to become more active. You will notice that your face or hair may be greasy, and you will start to sweat and have body odor.



Your breasts will begin to develop. This is one of the most noticeable changes a young woman will go through. This development happens differently for each girl.

Just remember that every woman will develop at her own time, and the size of your breasts does not make one woman more feminine than another.



You will grow hair in your pubic region, the triangle shaped area between your legs, to protect your genitals from germs.

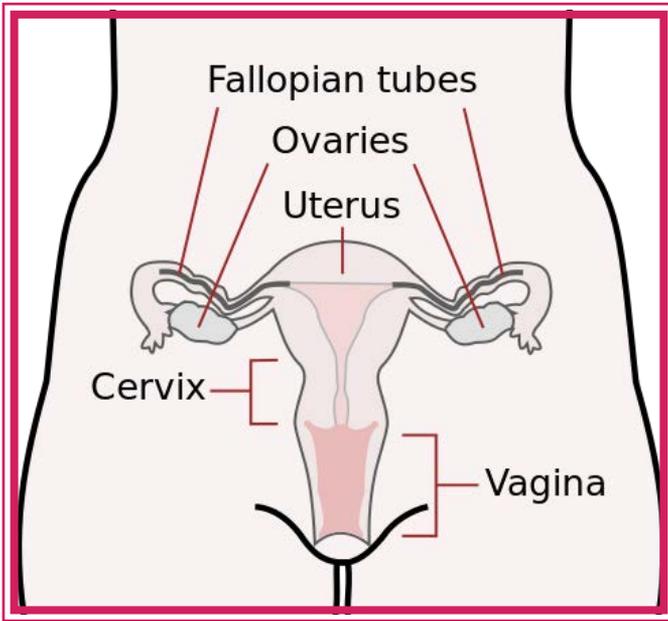
Be sure to keep the pubic area clean and dry to protect yourself from germs and bacteria. The menstrual period is important and is discussed on page 6.



What are these changes?

FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

The reproductive organs are located in your abdomen below your belly button. The reproductive system is a gift from God because it makes you fertile. If someone is fertile, they have the ability to conceive children.



The reproductive system is made up of two ovaries, two fallopian tubes, a uterus, vagina, and cervix. Responding to signals from your brain, this system helps to release some of the important hormones and chemicals once puberty starts.

Hormones also help to produce mucus which allows a man and woman to conceive a child. God planned this system so perfectly to make sure a woman's body is ready to have a baby.

What are these changes?

OVARIES

The ovaries are two small round almond-sized organs that hold a woman's eggs. You are born with all of your eggs already in the ovaries. These ovaries also release hormones into the body.

Once a month, an egg matures in the ovary and then is released through the fallopian tube, and into the uterus. This is called ovulation.

Normally, the egg will go through the vagina and out of the body during menstruation. But, when the egg is fertilized by a man's sperm, the egg attaches inside the uterus and a baby begins to grow.

FALLOPIAN TUBES

The fallopian tubes are connected to the uterus and end near the ovaries. When an egg is released from the ovaries, the fallopian tubes guide it down into the uterus. Without these tubes, the eggs would never make it into the uterus.

UTERUS

The uterus (also called a womb) is a pear-shaped organ that is hollow in the middle. The lining of the uterus is where the menstrual flow comes from each month. Also, this is where the fertilized egg grows into a baby.

CERVIX

The cervix is the muscular opening from the uterus to the vagina. In God's impressive plan, it stretches and opens during childbirth to let the baby pass through.

It also produces an essential fluid called mucus that allows sperm to find the egg in human reproduction. Without cervical mucus, none of us would be here!

VAGINA

The vagina is the passageway from the uterus (womb) that leads to the outside of the body. This also stretches during childbirth to let the baby pass through during birth.

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. 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.

- In what ways do you see fertility as a gift?
- When did God intend this gift of fertility to be given to another person?

Menstruation

The menstrual period, sometimes just called your “period” are the 5-7 days each month (usually every 25-40 days) when a small amount of fluid flows from your uterus and out through your vagina.

Most girls start having their period a year or two after their breasts and pubic hair start to grow. The inside of the uterus grows extra layers of tissue each month.



Menstruation happens because the uterus prepares itself to care for an embryo, the earliest stage of a baby's development. If the egg is fertilized a baby begins to grow. This is when life begins!

The extra tissue gives the new baby nutrients and oxygen, and is how the baby survives inside the mother until it is time to be born. The layers inside the uterus grow, which takes about a month to happen.

If the extra layers are not needed to support a new life, then the layers will break down and shed off the uterus. This is what happens in most cycles. This shedding causes your period. The extra tissue will travel out of the body.

What comes out of your body during your period once a month is blood, fluid, and extra tissue. The amount will differ from woman to woman. It can also be different shades of red, from bright red to a deep red or brownish. You might also notice clots of blood, and that is completely normal!

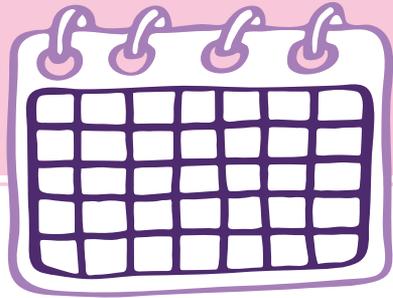
The Gift of Your Period

Your period will last around 5-7 days, but can be shorter or longer. You may also notice cramping right before or during your period. This happens as the extra layers are shedding off. You may feel this discomfort in your abdomen or your lower back.

Your period might not be predictable or “regular” the first few years. This is normal, as your body is still just getting used to all these new hormones. It will eventually become more regular, and you will have a better idea when to expect your period.

You can also keep track of your period on a calendar.

If you mark the days when you get your period, you will soon be able to see how long it lasts and how many days are in your cycle.



The Gift of your Period

PADS

As you get your period, you might notice that the pad may not be big enough to absorb the fluid from your period. It might also be too big for you. You should then get a bigger or smaller size to better fit your needs.

If you have questions about this, talk to your mother or a trusted female adult.

You need to change your pad at least every four to eight hours. This is to keep your body clean and free from moisture and bacteria.

Also, if the pad is kept on too long, you might notice an odor coming from it. If you notice this, you should change your pad.

TAMPONS

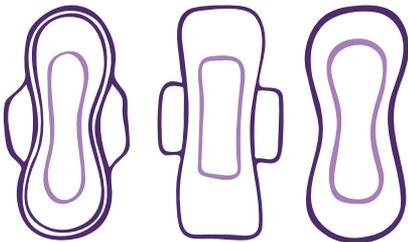
Tampons are a little different from pads because they are inserted into the vagina. These may be used in place of pads.

They are good for girls who are active in sports because they fit inside the body and will not get wet or bunched up.

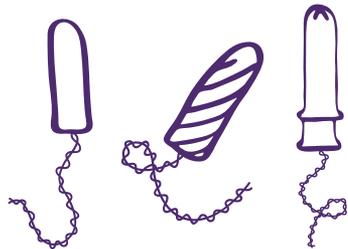
If you are thinking about using tampons, ask your mother or a trusted female adult for help. The box comes with a list of instructions to help you insert the tampon correctly and easily.



Pads



Tampons



General Hygiene



Keeping yourself clean is an important part of going through puberty and becoming a woman. As you go through puberty, you will notice the physical changes such as body odor and sweat. Regular showers will keep these odors away, as well as any harmful germs. If you are active in sports, it's probably best to shower more often!



Deodorant/antiperspirant is a product that is applied under the arms to control sweating and odor. Usually it is put on once a day, and comes in a variety of scents and types. Also, deodorant needs to be washed away each day so it does not clog your pores underneath your arms.



You may notice the glands on your face begin to secrete sweat and oil. Washing your face daily with a face cleanser will help keep your skin clean. Because of your new hormones you might even develop pimples or "zits," which is called acne. Acne occurs in many boys and girls going through puberty and can disappear during different stages of your life. There are many products you can buy from the store that will help with your acne.

General Hygiene

Your genital area, which is the area covered by your underwear, is another important area to keep clean. The pubic hairs that will begin to grow keep germs and dirt out of the vagina.

The dirt and germs have to be washed out each day with soap that is free from strong scents or perfumes. Make sure to change your underwear every day so that the area can be kept clean!

Along with keeping your genital area clean, when you use the bathroom, be sure to wipe from the front to the back. This is because bacteria can get into your vagina or the tube that leads to your bladder (urethra) and cause an infection otherwise.

- When do you take time to clean yourself?
- Why is it so important to keep your body clean?



Emotional Changes

Along with making physical changes, the hormones in your body will affect your emotions. You may start to feel “mood swings.” This is where your feelings change very quickly, so you may be happy one minute, and then sad or angry the next. It is important to realize that these mood swings are normal, and you can try to control them.



JOURNALING,
TALKING WITH
FRIENDS,
EXERCISING,
AND PRAYER
CAN HELP YOU
MANAGE YOUR
UP AND DOWN
MOODS.

Emotional Changes

“PRAYER IS BEING ON TERMS OF FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD, FREQUENTLY CONVERSING IN SECRET WITH HIM WHO, WE KNOW, LOVES US.”

- ST. TERESA OF AVILA

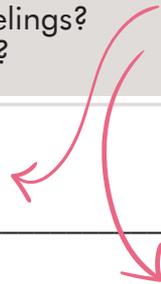


Take time to slow down and be with God who can help you in those times where you might feel agitated, sad, or frustrated. God knows your worries, fears, and joys - he wants to help you and be there for you.

Don't forget to ask Mary to pray for you! She is a lady too and understands the joys and challenges of these emotional changes!

- What do you do when you feel negative feelings?
- How does God help you with your feelings?

MY THOUGHTS:



Making Good Decisions

A PART OF BECOMING A YOUNG WOMAN 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 (1 Corinthians 6:19). Exercise is one way to keep your body healthy, for example!

This means you should take care of yourself, keep your body healthy, and wait until marriage to share the gift of sexual intimacy. Your fertility is a great gift - that is, your ability to conceive a child.

This should be kept for a special time and place within marriage with your husband in the future.

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.



Making Good Decisions

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 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.

Our bodies are so beautiful that we protect parts of our body because they are sacred and special.



Introduction

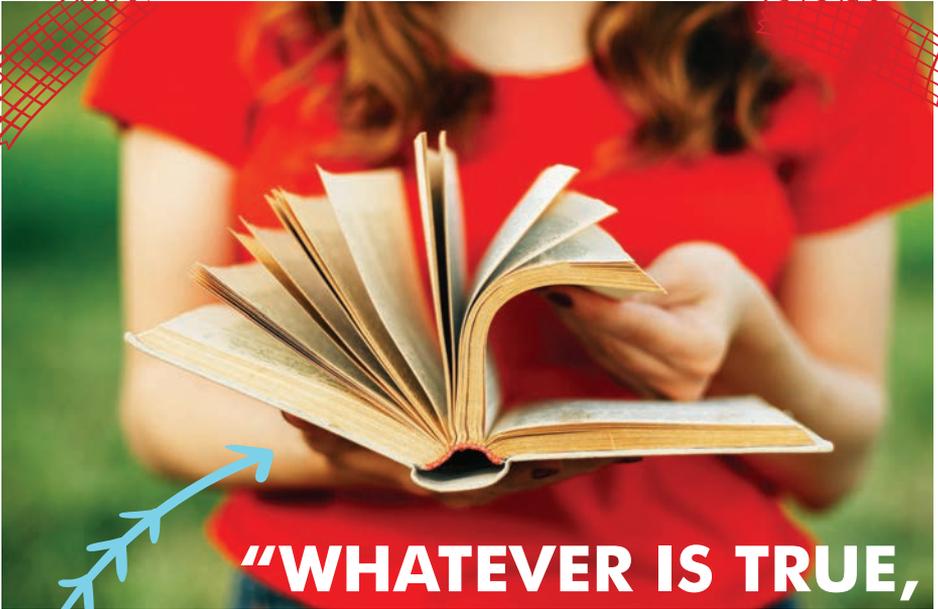
Purity is another virtue which helps us be all who God created us to be. To remain pure, we must want to do the will of God even if it is difficult at times.

This includes not watching bad TV shows or movies, not listening to impure music, not dressing immodestly, or using bad language.

ALL THAT WE DO AND SAY CAN BE
A GIFT TO GOD FOR WHATEVER
OUR FUTURE CALLING MIGHT BE.



Introduction



**“WHATEVER IS TRUE,
WHATEVER IS NOBLE,
WHATEVER IS RIGHT,
WHATEVER IS PURE,
WHATEVER IS LOVELY,
WHATEVER IS ADMIRABLE,
IF ANYTHING IS EXCELLENT
OR PRAISEWORTHY,
THINK ABOUT SUCH THINGS.”**

- PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Introduction

Touching these 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 pure and holy.

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 woman or as a religious sister or nun one day.



“FOR THIS VERY REASON, MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ADD TO YOUR FAITH, GOODNESS; AND TO GOODNESS, KNOWLEDGE; AND TO KNOWLEDGE, SELF-CONTROL; AND TO SELF-CONTROL, PERSEVERANCE; AND TO PERSEVERANCE, GODLINESS; AND TO GODLINESS, BROTHERLY KINDNESS; AND TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS, LOVE.” - PHILIPPIANS 4:8



Introduction



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!

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!

Mary and the Saints

**AS GIRLS AND EVENTUALLY WOMEN,
WE ARE NOT ALONE.**

There are hundreds to thousands of women who show us what it means to be a woman of God.

One of these women is Mary, the Mother of God. Mary is without sin and opened herself up to God's will for her life. She is modest, patient, kind, and gentle. She isn't out for attention.

Mary is the best model we have to live as women.



A prayer to pray to Mary as you mature as a woman:

O my Queen, O my Mother, I love you and give myself to you. I give to you this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my whole self. Since I am yours, keep me and guard me as your daughter forever.

Amen.

Introduction

Most women aren't perfect like Mary. These women have made mistakes, have sinned, but yet still honor God by trying to love him each day.

Some saints that might inspire you:

- St. Maria Goretti
- St. Kateri Tekakwitha
- St. Joan of Arc
- St. Thérèse of Lisieux
- St. Mother Teresa
- St. Teresa of the Cross
- St. Margaret of Scotland
- St. Cecilia
- Blessed Chiara Badano
- St. Bernadette
- St. Gianna Molla



"SPREAD LOVE EVERYWHERE YOU GO. LET NO ONE EVER COME TO YOU WITHOUT LEAVING HAPPIER."

- ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA



"IF EVERY TINY FLOWER WANTED TO BE A ROSE, SPRING WOULD LOSE ITS LOVELINESS."

- ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX



"I AM NOT AFRAID... I WAS BORN TO DO THIS."

- ST. JOAN OF ARC

Blessed Chiara Badano

A MODEL FOR ALL WOMEN

Chiara Badano was born in 1971 in Italy after her parents waited 11 years for a child. She loved to play tennis, sing, listen to music, and be with her friends. She was an ordinary child who loved to find joy in her day to day activities. She, just like us, went through puberty as a girl! At times, she struggled managing her attitudes.

In one particular instance, Chiara didn't clear the table like her mother asked. She returned after leaving the room saying, "How does that story from the Gospel go about the father who asks his son to go to the vineyard? Mommy, help me put my apron on" (Matthew 21:28-31).

She loved to be with her friends and knew that she could be Christlike to them in the ordinary way that she lived "by the way I listen to them, by the way I dress and above all, by the way I love them." She knew she was beautifully made by God and loved by him.



In turn, Chiara was able to show others their beauty and love them through pure actions and loving words. She loved mountain climbing and swimming and wanted to be a flight attendant when she grew up.

However, while playing tennis one day at the age of 17, Chiara experienced an excruciating pain in her shoulder. After going to the doctor, she was diagnosed with osteogenic sarcoma, a painful type of cancer. She had to undergo treatment for her cancer, but she would always say, "For you, Jesus; if you want it, I want it too!"

Blessed Chiara Badano

Even when she lost her hair, she offered that up even though she found it difficult to say yes to the will of God. Suffering is difficult, but our suffering such as mood swings, worries or fears, can be offered up to God just like Chiara offered it to him.

After two years, it was clear that Chiara, after losing the use of her legs, was suffering. Her doctors even said, "Through her smile, and through her eyes full of light, she showed us that death doesn't exist; only life exists." She died in 1990 saying, "I have nothing left, but I still have my heart, and with that I can always love."

- What decisions did Chiara make to honor and glorify God?
- How did Chiara live a pure life?
- Chiara went through many hard times in her life. What are some things you learned from her to help you through hard times?

MY THOUGHTS:



"FOR YOU, JESUS; IF YOU WANT IT, I WANT IT TOO!"



A Source of Trust

YOUR MOM IS YOUR BEST RESOURCE WHILE GOING THROUGH THESE CHANGES.

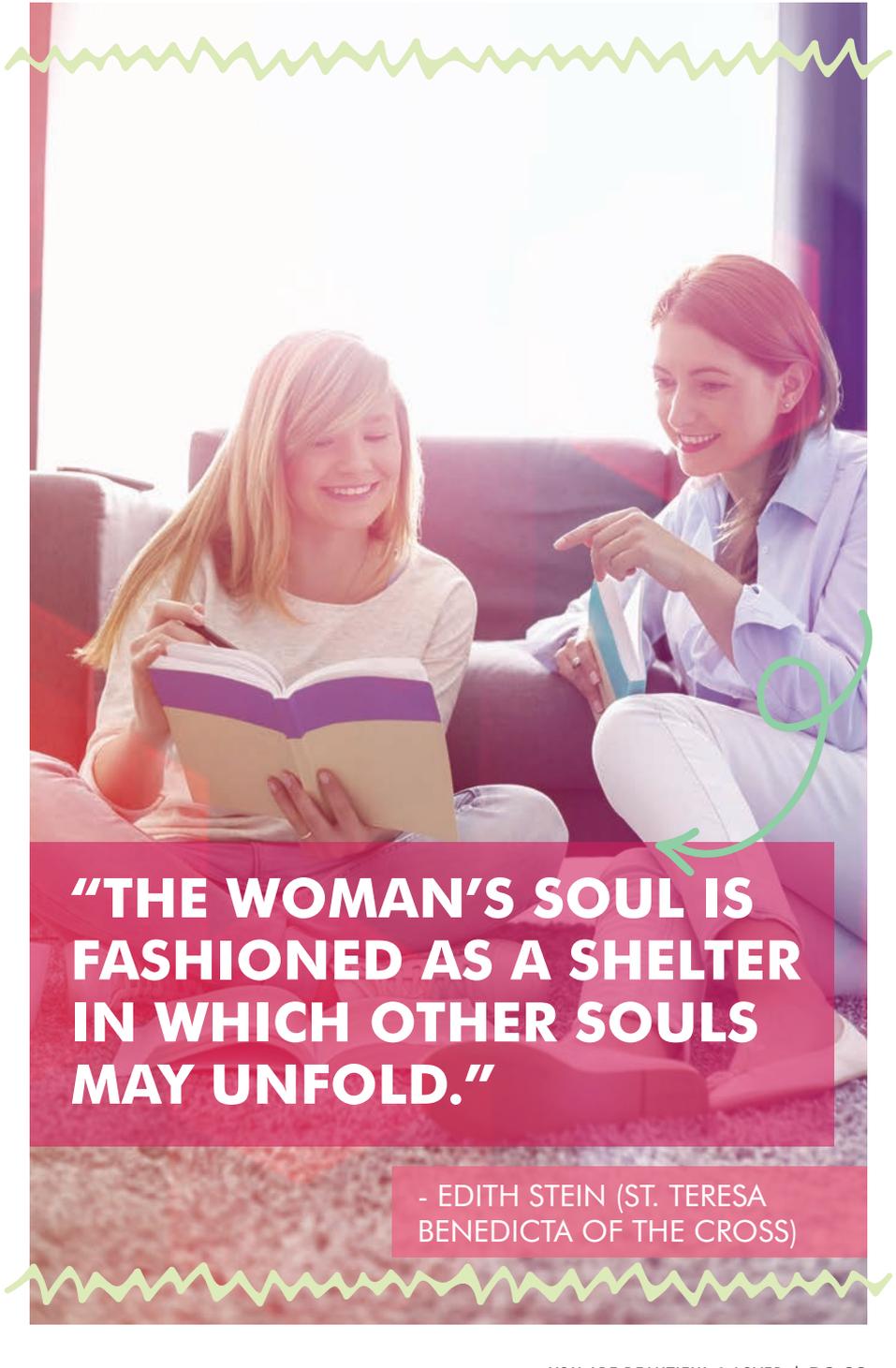
If you and your mom have a close relationship, that is a great blessing. It is important that you continue talking and remaining close.

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

If your mom isn't a part of your life, is there a close female 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 mothers as a gift to walk alongside of us and guide us.



A young girl with long blonde hair is sitting on a dark brown couch, smiling and reading an open book with a purple cover. A woman with reddish-brown hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and white pants, is sitting next to her, also smiling and pointing at the book. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a window in the background. The image is framed by a green wavy line at the top and bottom. A green arrow points from the quote text to the woman's hand.

“THE WOMAN’S SOUL IS FASHIONED AS A SHELTER IN WHICH OTHER SOULS MAY UNFOLD.”

- EDITH STEIN (ST. TERESA BENEDICTA OF THE CROSS)

Modesty

WOMEN ARE CREATED BEAUTIFUL.

Beauty is an incredible gift that women are given by God. Because of this, we are able to shop for clothes that radiate the beauty that the Lord has given us.

Clothes come in all different sizes, colors, cuts, and styles, but some questions to ask yourself as you are selecting what to wear:

- Does this outfit show that I value myself?
- Does this outfit show that I value God?
- Does this outfit reveal parts of me that should be private?
- Is this outfit too tight or too short?
- Does it take the focus off of my value and worth?

Develop deep beauty. There is no more beautiful sight than a young woman who glows with the light of the spirit.



Conclusion

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

It is good to have someone to talk to who has gone through these changes already so they can answer your questions. This could be your mother, 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 DEARLY. HE GAVE YOU THE GIFT OF FEMININITY TO BE A GIFT TO THE WORLD!

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



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 beautiful girl.

You have entrusted her to me so that I can teach her and accompany her 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 girl can grow into the saint you destined her to be.

Amen.



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YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL AND LOVED BOOKLET

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