



“Parents are the first and most important educators of their own children, and they also possess a fundamental competence in this area: they are educators because they are parents. They share their educational mission with other individuals or institutions, such as the Church and the State. But the mission of education must always be carried out in accordance with a proper application of the principle of subsidiarity. This implies the legitimacy and indeed the need of giving assistance to the parents, but finds its intrinsic and absolute limit in their prevailing right and their actual capabilities. The principle of subsidiarity is thus at the service of parental love, meeting the good of the family unit.”

– John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 2 February 1994

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is with joy and gratitude that I begin this year at St. Helen! I would like to take the opportunity to thank you ahead of time for entrusting us with the great responsibility of providing an authentic Catholic education for your child. In keeping with St. Helen’s particular mission of “*educating the whole person to see with Christ’s eyes*”, I want to give you a brief overview of the themes discussed in our Theology of the Body unit for 6-8th grade Religion class.

Theology of the Body began as a series of Wednesday audiences given by Pope Saint John Paul II during his pontificate. Complete addresses were later compiled to put these powerful audiences into a teachable format. Ruah Woods then took these truths and made them accessible to middle school teachers, their students, and the students’ families. Theology of the Body invites us to come to a deeper understanding of how Christ reveals man to himself and clarifies his own unique calling (*Gaudium et Spes*, 22). Themes include the unique creation and dignity of man/woman, a genuine understanding of freedom and its purpose, being made by love and for love, self-gift and vocation. While the curriculum does discuss the complimentary and distinctness of the male and female body in God’s creation, TOB is not a sexual health curriculum and is not used as such. TOB builds upon the natural truths revealed through our bodies and points to the deeper meaning and purpose behind the human person who is both body and soul (CCC, 360).

Since parents are truly the primary educators, I encourage you to learn, read about and discuss Theology of the Body concepts as a family. There are wonderful text and video resources, such as those listed on the website [Cana Vox](#) or written by [Ruah Woods](#), which may be a practical way for your child to learn and discuss with you about the truths of our human nature and our faith. I am happy to point you to more resources and will be keeping your family in my daily prayers!

God bless you,
Sister Mary Consolata Klucik, O.P.