



Servants' Meeting
March 9, 2014
(Departure of Pope Kyrillos)



HOW TO RELATE TO YOUTH?



Overview

- What to Know About Them?
 - How to Deal with Them?
 - What to Focus on?
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What to Know About Them?

- **Desire for Belonging**

- “The teenager is looking to be accepted, loved, and treated as a mature person. He or she usually follows the fashion of others in hair styling or clothing. He or she may also play certain music or go to specific parties in order to feel a sense of belonging. Other activities may include smoking, taking drugs, or premarital sexual relations. These acts are not committed out of conviction, but rather to prove his or her existence in the world of adolescents.” (Fr. Tadros Malaty, *Let Me Grow*)

What to Know About Them?

- The Body and Sex

- “Young people suffer from the pressures exerted by the feelings and demands of the body. In a questionnaire conducted among 305 adolescents in the U.S.A., 304 stated, ‘premarital sexual relations are one of the three most important issues occupying today’s youth.’ A teenager wrote that young people spend 17 seconds in every minute, occupying themselves with thoughts of their bodies, and sexual feelings.”
(Fr. Tadros Malaty, *Let Me Grow*)

- Neglecting the spirit

What to Know About Them?

- **Inferiority and Loneliness**

- “One of the ways of denying these feelings is by forming relationships with the other sex so that they might feel better about themselves, whatever the consequence. They do this not for the desire of mere physical contact, but the assurance to themselves and others that they are beautiful, intelligent, attractive and worthy of love.”
(Fr. Tadros Malaty, *Let Me Grow*)
- “Eighty percent of teenagers are dissatisfied with some features of their bodies that make them feel ugly or unattractive.” (Dr. James Dobson)

What to Know About Them?

- Freedom

- “One of the pressures that destroy the lives of youth, especially in the period of adolescence is their wrong view concerning religion. Many think that religion is deprivation, repression, and a bond that destroys the pleasure of freedom and joyful living for the sake of uncertain future matters. In addition, they see religion as duties and formalities. Thus, they escape religious life to lead a permissive sexual life without control and without feelings of guilt.” (Fr. Tadros Malaty, *Let Me Grow*)
- Rebellious and often questions norms and rules

What to Know About Them?

- Freedom

- "A youth often becomes bored with reality because it somehow binds him from the side: it ties him down and encloses him too much with definite limits, whereas he is seeking a kind of freedom. Thus he often tears himself away from reality and goes off into a world he has created for himself, and there he begins to act in glory."

(Theophan the Recluse, *Raising them Right*)

- Rebellious and often questions norms and rules

What to Know About Them?

- **Swings in Maturity**

- Sometimes act like adults, but sometimes silly
- Adults need to perceive this and react accordingly
- **A teenager said,** "Some parents... put pressure on their young person, and don't realize they are doing it. When a parent tells a young person to be mature, 99 % of the time he does not take the time to explain what he considers a mature person to be. So, the young person turns to his peer's definition of 'mature,' in other words, engaging in sex. Teens today need parents who will explain the differences between maturity and sexual relationships."

What to Know About Them?

- **Swings in Maturity**

- Unrealistic expectations
- Because they are in between, adults/parents might employ either extreme:
 - Treat them totally as an adult to the point of being too hard on them
 - Still treat them as children
 - Make decisions for them
 - Choose clothes for them to wear daily
 - Do homework and projects for them
 - Always defend them even if they were wrong
 - All in an effort to protect them from any pain
- Balance is needed; a time for patient training

What to Know About Them?

- “Thirst for impressions”
 - “You can look for him wherever there is glitter for the eyes, a harmony for the ear, an open space for movement. He wishes to be under an uninterrupted stream of impressions, always new and therefore various. He does not like to sit at home, stay at one place, does not like to concentrate on only one activity. His element is enjoying himself.”
(Theophan the Recluse, Raising them Right)

How to Deal with Them?

- Be Yourself

- Self-Confidence

- King David

- Goliath: "This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you." (1 Sam 17:46)
 - "He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved." (Psa 62:2)

- The Lord Christ

- "and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way." (Luke 4:29-30)

How to Deal with Them?

- Be Yourself

- Secure

- The Lord Christ

- "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." (Matt 12:24)

- St. John the Baptist

- "And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified --- behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!" (John 3:26)
 - "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:30)

- Reflect an inner strength and spirituality

- Fr. Benjamin: "Keep it real"

How to Deal with Them?

- Be an Adult

- Need an adult friend
- Need correction and guidance even if they will never admit it
- “Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me” (Job 40:7)
- “Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.” (2 Sam 12:10)
- Sometimes adults try too hard to be liked

How to Deal with Them?

- Be a Listener

- Two ears and one mouth
- The Lord Jesus was a great listener:
 - “So He asked the Father, ‘How long has this been happening to him?’” (Mark 9:21)
 - “Do you want to be made well?” (John 5:7)
 - “What did Moses command you?” (Mark 10:3)
 - Samaritan Woman

How to Deal with Them?

- **Be Vulnerable**

- Show weaknesses, confess when wrong, express emotions
- Helps them identify with you
- Makes it easier for them to do the same with you
- Preserves us from hypocrisy
- Reveal a humanity
- St. Paul:
 - “For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.” (Gal 1:13)
 - “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Rom 7:24)
- The Lord wept

How to Deal with Them?

- Be a challenger

- “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” (Matt 5:48)
- Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.” (Matt 18:21-22)

- Be Available and Accessible

- “When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.” (Luke 4:40)

How to Deal with Them?

- Be able to laugh
 - “A time to weep, And a time to laugh” (Eccl 3:4)
 - Value of trips and social time
 - Again, reveal a humanity
- Pray for them
 - “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men” (1 Tim 2:1)

What to Focus on?

- Their potential, not their past mistakes
 - “forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead” (Phil 3:13)
 - Matthew the tax collector
 - Choosing fishermen
 - Visiting Zacchaeus
 - Choosing Moses
- Their talents
 - St. Paul
 - Prophet Jeremiah
 - “Do not say, ‘I am a youth. For I am with you to deliver you.’” (Jer. 1:7, 8)

What to Focus on?

- Their energy
 - Involve them with tasks
 - Allow them to participate, even if the outcome is imperfect
 - Filling their time with positive and beneficial activities
 - “An idle mind is the devil’s workshop”

Rich Young Ruler: Matt 19

- 16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"
- 17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."
- 18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'
- 19 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "
- 20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"
- 21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."
- 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.



Rich Young Ruler

- How would you describe this young man?
 - What do you think about his response saying that he has kept ALL this from his youth?
 - What would he say “these things”?
 - What did the Lord not say to him?
 - Did the Lord tell him what he wanted to hear or what he needed to hear?
 - When the young man left sorrowful, what did the Lord do?
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Checklist

- Be Yourself
 - Be an Adult
 - Be a Listener
 - Be Vulnerable
 - Be a Challenger
 - Be Available and Accessible
 - Be Able to Laugh
 - Pray for them
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