



# LOVE VERSUS LUST

## Clergy sexual abuse crisis, part 3 of 4

BY SR. PATRICIA M. MCCORMACK, IHM

**EVERYTHING THAT GOD CREATES IS GOOD.** When we use creation according to God's purpose, the side effects include peace with our decision, joy, and a sense of well-being. We are calm if our choices become public. However, if we misuse God's creation, a predictable side effect is shame and the fear of being found out. And there's a temptation to keep our behavior secret.

This is true of every part of creation, including the human body and sexual expression. God chose to give humankind the ability to co-create. God intended sexual sharing to be pleasurable, to be open to producing new life, and to increase the unity of the two souls. God intended this gift to be shared tenderly and respectfully within a marriage where two mature adults are committed to each other in all ways and are ready to care for new life if a baby results from their sexual sharing. This sexual intimacy is sacred and private, but it is not a secret.

On the other hand, when humans engage in sex outside of marriage or for selfish reasons, practice promiscuous behavior, or sexually abuse another person, they misuse God's gift. They damage themselves and the other person. For them, secrecy is always preferred.

I once heard musical artist Sebastian Temple recite a poem that highlighted the difference between sexual choices that respect God's purposes and sexual choices that misuse God's gifts. The poem contrasted *love* with *lust*. It suggested that love is quiet, respectful,

and satisfied, whereas lust is loud, greedy, and always wanting more.

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**Love** wants the best for another person, treats the other person as precious, and is willing to sacrifice personal desires in order to do the loving thing for the other person. **Lust** desires something to



an unhealthy degree or cares more for self-pleasure than the good of the other person. Sexual lust easily leads to treating another person as an object to be used, abused, or thrown away.

Lust is desire taken to the extreme. It shows itself as envy, covetousness, or a desire to possess someone, some thing, or some ac-

**T** Read our online coverage of developments in the Church's actions regarding the sexual abuse scandal: 📍 [todayct.us/2VjiSe8](http://todayct.us/2VjiSe8)

tivity solely for selfish pleasure and, often, at the expense of the other person.

Talk through these ideas with your child. Differentiate between the concept of life-giving secrets versus life-blocking secrets. Secrets such as planning a surprise birthday party, making a treat for dessert, or deciding with siblings to surprise their parents by completing the family laundry are all life-giving secrets. They bring smiles and laughter, shared satisfaction, and bonding. They are a cause of celebration!

On the other hand, life-blocking secrets alienate parents and children from each other, often making children feel dirty, unloved, broken, or fearful. This is contrary to God's will. Establish as a family motto this expression based on John 8:32: "The truth will set us free." 📖

SR. PATRICIA M. MCCORMACK, IHM, EdD, is an international consultant and public speaker on issues of whole-person formation.