

We are persons

who experience same-sex attractions.

We are honest with ourselves about the existence of our attractions, but we first and foremost strive to grow in Christian virtue (in chastity and humility, among others). We do this out of our love for Christ, and the joy that we today experience as a result of our conscious decision to pursue fulfillment in this way. It is heartbreaking to know that many are prevented from hearing our voice, and many more steer people away from pursuing a deeper understanding of what the Catholic Church upholds, and why.

... our journeys have revealed to us the love that Christ and the Catholic Church has for all of us.

In facing the reality of our attractions, we have come to grow deeper in our Catholic faith. We have come to know that the Catholic Church is a place where we belong,

and that it is a place where we can call home – alongside every other person who is striving to walk with Christ into deeper Christian virtue. It breaks our hearts that some judge us to be dishonest with ourselves, and judge that we are somehow living in a state of self-deception. We are often “pitied” by the mainstream culture, and are made out to be seen as miserable, or even hateful, because we are pursuing chaste lives and inviting others to do the same. With that, we emphasize that Chastity is a Christian virtue *for all persons*, not just those of us who experience same-sex attractions.

The reality that our voice is so rarely heard speaks volumes about the state of our world, and about how much our world has elevated sexuality to god-like status. Many try to undermine, discredit, and silence us, because our journeys have revealed to us the love that Christ and the Catholic Church has for all of us. Out of our love for Christ, while being completely honest with ourselves about the existence of our attractions, we simply choose *specifically* to see ourselves first and foremost as He sees us – as His beloved brothers and sisters.

Today, we speak to defend the very church the world taught us to reject. In the name of fair and open dialogue, we invite you to open your hearts to understand our journeys.

Closing Words from Our Hearts to Yours

We all struggle with putting Christ first. However, no matter what we have done in our lives, He waits for us with His infinite love. We strive to grow in fidelity to Him, and by the grace of God, we have grown in our desire to seek Him above all else. Today, our hearts overflow with joy – a joy we were able to discover most profoundly through the Sacraments of the Catholic Church – the last place the world taught that we should look. Today we simply invite you to come to know our journey, and know that for us, the Catholic Church *is not* the enemy, but rather *the best secret this world had ever kept*.

We prayerfully ask that you please consider walking with us, and permit us to walk with you, as we all strive to grow in our understanding of one another, especially on this topic which touches us all.

For more information please email
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We invite you to share our voice with others.

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Sexuality

and the Catholic Church

We pray your heart might be open to hearing our voice...



Here are the truths we have discovered along our journeys. We sincerely invite you to open your hearts to the significance of these truths.

1. Regardless of who we are or where we have been

- We are loved by Christ and the Catholic Church
- We belong to Christ and in the Catholic Church
- And we walk together with Christ in the Catholic Church

As one unified family – as brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The Catholic Church invites all of us

- To be honest with ourselves about the existence of our sexual attractions
- To let go of shame or guilt internalized on account of the existence of our attractions
- To be open to growing in the virtue of Chastity (among other virtues)

Regardless of our sexual attractions or our state in life (married or single).

3. Chastity is not the same as Abstinence or Celibacy. Below are simplified key distinctions.

- Abstinence – simply “not doing something”
- Chastity – abstaining with a purpose – to offer our sacrifice for the Glory of God
- Celibacy – the commitment to Chastity with regards to sexuality, for persons who are single

Chastity is a virtue that involves intention and purpose that is beyond ourselves.

Note 1: Acts of abstinence, the virtue of Chastity, and the self-discipline of celibacy are transformative and take on new meanings when they are pursued for the glory of God above self.

Note 2: We *all* experience sexual temptation, regardless of our sexual attractions and or inclinations, and regardless of our state in life – whether we are married or single. We are all called to strive to joyfully exemplify the virtue of Chastity in our lives. True Chastity is a strength - *it is self-mastery.*

4. Chastity is a virtue that forms how we live our lives

- Emotional Chastity – seeking Christ’s love first and foremost at any state of the heart
- Physical Chastity – seeking Christ’s strength so we may be in control of our sexual desires
- A Chaste Identity – wholeheartedly seeing ourselves first and foremost as Christ sees us; as His beloved brothers and sisters.

To be closed to any one of these facets of Chastity is to willfully inhibit the virtue of Chastity, and thus is to wilfully inhibit Christ from being reflected from within us.

IMPORTANT: A Chaste Identity leads to a Chaste Self-Concept, and a Chaste Self-Concept leads to seeking fruition within a Chaste Self-Concept, and seeking fruition within a Chaste Self-Concept leads to a “letting go” of that which counters the virtue of Chastity – whether it be physically, emotionally, or in how we see ourselves and others. This is the summation of the role and significance of the identities we specifically choose to embrace.

In short, how we specifically choose to self-identify and define ourselves influences what we perceive to be fulfilling.

We can anchor our journeys towards fulfillment on *finite* creation (of which our sexuality is a part) or *infinite* Creator. How we specifically choose to wholeheartedly self-identify and define ourselves, *defines that anchor.*

The Catholic Church invites us to recognize that *the infinite* is greater than *the finite*. However, that truth reveals that if our journeys towards fulfillment are anchored on the infinite, we will be able to experience a greater degree of fulfillment along that trajectory, than if we were to choose to anchor our journeys towards fulfillment on the finite. The Church simply invites us to uphold and reflect this truth by inviting us to wholeheartedly place *that which is infinite* (God, and our relationship with Him) at the center of our lives – with regards to how we self-identify and wholeheartedly define ourselves. When we *wholeheartedly* embrace a Chaste Identity (which leads to us embracing a Chaste Self-Concept), we are being more completely honest with ourselves about who we are and how we fit into this world, for the Chaste Identity elevates infinite Creator to be greater than finite creation.

When we wholeheartedly embrace identities that properly order *infinite Creator* to be greater than *finite creation*, it manifests itself *in how we live our lives*. It reveals itself through the transformation of our hearts, such that we come to desire to grow in virtue more than we desire to reject it.

5. We Do Have a Choice – a Specific Choice

Though we do not specifically choose our attractions, we do specifically choose how to self-identify and define ourselves – we specifically choose where to place Christ in our lives via the identities we specifically choose to wholeheartedly embrace. As well, we are able to specifically choose whether or not to be open to growing in the virtue of Chastity (physically, emotionally, and in identity). *We are all invited to grow in that virtue, but we are still free to either accept or reject that invitation.*

