



ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

January 9, 2019

Prot. N. 2019-0005 A

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I am writing to you about an established apostolate called TeenSTAR (Sexuality Teaching in the Context of Adult Responsibility), which specializes in teaching youth the Church's understanding of sexuality, an awareness of their own fertility and the virtue of self-mastery. TeenSTAR was originally founded by Sr. Hanna Klaus, M.D., in 1980 to educate young people about the value of sexual abstinence.

Within my pastoral letter "Family: Become What You Are," I shared a letter I received from an engaged woman in my previous diocese of Fargo. She shared her experience of learning about the Theology of the Body and about how to chart her cycle. She wrote: "At first I was angry that I had to take the course...But now, Bishop, while I am deeply grateful for what I have learned, I am angry, and I ask you, 'Why was I not taught this much earlier, in high school?' I would have been saved much hurt and heartache in college if I had been taught this earlier and not listened to the voice of the world."

In response to these kinds of interactions I have had over the years, I am encouraging the use of programs and curricula within the archdiocese that equip our youth in the meaning, truth and dignity of human sexuality. I support programs like TeenSTAR that instruct our teens on the meaning of their bodies, how to understand them, and to present this knowledge in the context of the virtue of chastity.

Additionally, I encourage Catholic schools, parishes, and youth programs to further the depth of their curriculum on the Theology of the Body with programs like TeenSTAR that include an introduction of fertility awareness for girls and bodily changes and reactions for boys. This kind of self-understanding leads young people to a more wholesome experience of their sexuality and increases their ability to resist peer pressure.

Finally, I acknowledge that parents are the first and principal educators of their children and play a vital role in instructing their children in this area of formation. I encourage parents and faith educators to work together in this important mission through programs like TeenSTAR.

Mrs. Carrie Keating, our Marriage and Natural Family Planning Specialist, is helping introduce TeenSTAR to the archdiocese with my permission. Please contact her at 303-715-3259 or carrie.keating@archden.org with any inquiries.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila, S.T.L.
Archbishop of Denver

