



## How to Deliver your Speech

- **Don't read your speech.** I once heard a man say that the last time someone read to him it was his mother, and she was trying to put him to sleep. Not only does this bore an audience, but it makes your presentation look less genuine. Avoid reading from notes, as much as possible. The audience will figure that if you can't remember your talk, how should they? It's fine to have a few notes jotted down to glance at, but the sooner you can do it without notes, the better. Study and practice beforehand, so you know what you want to say.
- **Know your audience.** By talking to the faculty beforehand, you can get an idea about the type of students to whom you'll be speaking. I've been to high schools that reminded me of convents, and to middle schools that resembled college fraternities. You may visit one school where the vast majority of students come from intact families, and then speak at another the same day where two thirds of the students live in single-parent families. If most students come from broken families, they might not see marriage as a goal. Therefore, the idea of "waiting for marriage" may not be as meaningful to them. By having a general idea of your crowd, you'll have a better idea how to present your material.
- **Remember that different ages have different attention spans.** For middle school students, make sure to use props and audience interaction. These are also helpful in the high school talk, but not as essential. As the audience matures to the college level, the students become more interested in your content than your style.
- **Realize that men are motivated differently than women.** Men want a battle to fight. We want to be challenged, and not to be treated as if we're the problem. We want to be the solution. We want to conquer. On the other hand, women are more interested in being understood. Furthermore, girls are judged enough in their daily lives through their peers and the media. The last thing they need is to feel judged by another person. Therefore, avoid making remarks that would make them feel looked down upon. By being aware of these natural desires, you can avoid turning away audience members. For example, if a chastity speaker

makes guys feel as if everything is their fault, the young men will shut out the speaker. The same goes for girls, but there is something in the pride of a man that makes us allergic to the idea that we need to be fixed. We'd rather be told that there's a problem that needs to be solved, and we're just the ones to tackle it.

- **Avoid giving the teens what they expect.** Before attending a chastity speech, most teens expect that the speaker will speak down to them, tell them how to act, and make them feel guilty, afraid, and shameful. Therefore, praise and affirm teens. They thrive on it, and they deserve it. It's essential that they know that you have not come to judge them. They want to know that you are real, that you care about them, and that you want the best for them. It has been said that you cannot change someone unless you love them and they know that you love them. Others say, "They don't care how much you know unless they know how much you care." It also helps when students know that you think they are mature enough to hear this material. Be yourself, but at the same time, do your best to speak like Jesus. His listeners were never afraid to approach him out of fear of rejection. If you say something heavy, balance it with hope. If you praise the virgins, balance it with hope for those who are not. Always put yourself in the shoes of both people for every sentence of your talk.
- **Keep it pure.** Remember that you're giving a chastity talk. There's no need to speak (or dress) in an irreverent or impure manner in order to relate to your audience. This can sometimes be a challenge when discussing sexuality for 60 minutes, but keep in mind the advice of St. Josemaria Escriva, who wrote, "Never talk of impure things or events, not even to deplore them. Look, it's a subject that sticks more than tar. Change the conversation, or if that's not possible, continue, but speaking of the need and beauty of holy purity—a virtue of the men who know what their souls are worth. . . . I have never talked about impurity. . . . But I have spoken many times, as I have to do, about chastity, purity, and the joyful affirmation of love." Keep this in mind, and keep your presentation age-appropriate. No matter the age of the audience, there's never a need to be impure.
- **Use humor.** Humor has countless benefits for a speaker and the audience. Teens learn better while laughing. It also expands their attention span, because they are given a moment to interact with their peers without being disruptive. Furthermore, a chastity presentation could be likened to a spiritual surgery. Just as a doctor uses anesthesia before operating, use humor during your chastity talk before you make your incisions and extractions. The subject of human sexuality is a very sensitive and even painful topic for some. In order to open the hearts and minds of your listeners, it helps to use some laughing gas. If you're not funny, don't even try. A bad joke does more damage than no joke. But it's still possible to be humorous if you're not funny. Audience interaction is the

easiest way to get a laugh and loosen up your audience because they're not focusing on themselves. Have some audience members come up and use them to illustrate a point. Don't choose the audience members at random. Ask them to raise their hands if they want to come up. That way, the most extroverted and hyperactive ones will volunteer, which will make for a more entertaining interaction. I start every talk with such an exchange. It helps them to forget their preconceived ideas about a "boring sex talk."

- **Use "I" more than "you."** Some people will speak to teens and say "you need to do this, and you need to do that." Instead, talk about your own testimony. It's better to look back in a story and say, "I needed to start respecting myself, so I..." Teens who are in a similar situation will be able to draw upon your experiences and apply it to themselves without feeling judged or accused. In fact, they will find common ground with you, and will be more likely to approach you afterwards.
- **Use Primary sources.** When quoting statistics or medical facts, do not rely upon secondary sources. It's not enough to say, "I once heard that 50 percent of people who...." Make sure your facts are correct.
- **Smile.** Joy makes an impression.
- **Chastity is good news.** I was once introduced by a student who said, "Our speaker today is Jason Evert, and he's going to talk about sex, and . . . uh . . . how not to have it." A chastity talk is not about "not having sex." It's about planning great marriages and vocations, and having relationships without regret in the meantime. It's about knowing the difference between love and lust. It is good news. You are offering them something, not taking something away from them.
- **Grow in holiness.** A teacher of mine once said to our class, "God is far more interested in your conversion than He is in using you to convert others." Therefore, remember that the best thing you can do for another's conversion is your own holiness. For example, Mother Teresa did not need to say a word in order to inspire others to live godly lives. The witness of her charity and holiness was so palpable that her mere presence was convicting.
- **When counseling, answer questions by asking them.** This helps teens to internalize the solutions to their problems. For example, when a guy asks how far is too far, you can ask him how far he would want someone going with his future wife or little sister. When a girl asks if she should leave her controlling boyfriend, ask her what advice she would give to a friend if she was in the same kind of relationship. This is not dodging the question. It invites the person to look into his own heart, instead of imposing a rule upon him. This challenges teens to use their minds, and it shows them that you care about what they think. In turn, they

are more likely to open up if they know you want to listen to them. This is not to be confused with the false morality known as the “non-directive” approach, where everything is relative and subjective. On the contrary, you are seeking to awaken a person’s conscience to objective truth.

- **Address pornography with the guys and modesty with the girls.** Men are prone to use a woman for the sake of physical gratification, while a woman is prone to allow herself to be used for the sake of emotional gratification. By appealing to their desire to love, one can show that both immodesty and porn harm our ability to give and receive love.
- **Realize the prevalence of sexual abuse.** Massive numbers of young women (and even young men) have experienced sexual abuse that impacts the decisions they make in relationships and the way they view themselves. Speak with compassion, hope, and encouragement, realizing that not all people lose their virginity by choice.
- **Watch your body language.** Don't distract with your hands, or cling to a podium in fear. You can move around as you speak, but don't go overboard. If you can film yourself, this is the best way to critique your own talk.
- **Love is the greatest motivating force.** Some teens are afraid of premarital sex because they witnessed a graphic STD slide show in health class. Others delay sexual activity because they want to attend a prestigious college and have other great dreams that a pregnancy could “ruin.” However, both of these fears are limited in their ability to produce chaste behavior. There is a desire in every person that runs deeper than the desire for self-preservation and personal accomplishment. It is the desire to love and be loved. Our generation has been taught how to avoid venereal infections, but what we really want to know is how to find, build, and maintain a relationship of real love. Everyone wants love. Everyone longs to completely give himself or herself to another. We’re made for love, and that need in us is so deep that many of us would rather take the risk of getting pregnant if it meant that we would have a chance at love. Some would rather risk getting a sexually transmitted disease than live without love. We may be willing to take these risks because the world has told us that sex equals love. Then we see relationships where sex destroyed love, and we wonder what went wrong. The only solution capable of breaking through all this hurt and confusion is the virtue known as chastity. Give it to them.
- **Add a “how to live it out” part in the talk.** Give concrete tips for what the teens should do after your talk to lead a pure life. They need to see that Christ’s grace is sufficient, and that the advice given is practical. Included in this section could be topics such as: going to confession, finding good friends, getting involved in youth group, avoiding occasions of sin, establishing a chastity club, visiting

chastityproject.com, etc. If you'll be giving a chastity presentation in the future, contact us through the "Projects" section of our website, and we may be able to send you free chastity materials for your audience.

- **Follow-up.** After the presentation, suggest the names of other chastity speakers to the administration, and recommend that they bring in speakers annually to address the issue. Continue to pray for your audience long after the assembly is over.