

Chapter 10

Media Ministry

Values Chart *Grades 1–12*

Objective: To have students become aware of what is meaningful in their lives by identifying and evaluating who and/or what shapes their values.

This is an easily adapted exercise for all grades. For younger students, format the activity as a discussion.

1. In their notebooks, ask students to name the key people or groups that influence the shaping of their values. You might want to give a few examples: school, my best friend, my parents, and so on.
2. Write their answers on the board. Choose the four most frequently mentioned answers. (When I did this exercise with my class of seniors, there were only four groups on everyone's list: school, parents, friends, and media).
3. Now have students make a chart in their notebooks. Create four columns—one for each group—across the top of the page. In each column, have the students write down the specific values that they learn from that group.
4. Now back to the board, erase the answers from #2 and create four columns for each of the most mentioned groups. Ask four volunteers to come to the board, choose one of the groups, and write down the values that they learn from their selected group.
5. Discuss the results on the board compared to the individual student's charts. Do you agree or disagree with the each other's results? Why? What is missing? What seems to be the most powerful influence? The most positive? The most negative? What does this exercise reveal about what is important to your generation?

World Watch

Grades 3–12

Objective: To step “outside the box” of American media by experiencing different media perspectives from around the world.

This is an exercise on awareness of diversity in the classroom and in the world. It can be used in conjunction with the “Values Chart” activity to further examine how media shape and reflect values in other cultures.

1. Take an inventory among your students of their countries of origin.
2. How many students remember watching TV in their country of origin? How many students watch television programs from their country here in the USA? Depending on the grade level, you might encourage the students to introduce the class to a new cartoon, commercial, or sitcom from their country. (Perhaps they can show the program to the class.) How are television programs in America different from other countries? How are they the same? Have students give examples. Discuss the messages delivered by the programs. Do they reflect different value systems from culture to culture? How much influence does American TV have in other countries? (For older students, you can assign this exercise as a research project. I suggest that you come up with a short list of prescreened websites that stream international media live. Ask students to view the websites and discuss the media values.)

And Now A Word from Our Church

Grades 6–12

Objective: To introduce the Catholic Church’s perspective of the media culture.

1. Refer to the Vatican website for the pastoral instruction *Aetatis Novae* (1992) at the following link: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_22021992_aetatis_en.html
2. Depending on the age and ability of your students, assign a section of the document for reading and discussion. (Section II: “The Work of the Means of Social Communication” is an excellent overview of how media can serve the world.)
3. Students can respond to the reading in any of the following ways:
 - a. Write a report;
 - b. Lead a discussion; or
 - c. Bring in media that exemplifies a message in the document.

Guide on the Side Experiment

Grades 6–12

Objective: To give both students and teacher an experience of a collaborative learning lesson conducted by students.

Using the comparative table on page 67 of *Catechesis in a Multimedia World* as your guide—but without sharing it beforehand with your students—facilitate a student-organized lesson on the different ways that they learn from image-based media versus print (movies, television, Internet versus books). Encourage students to include examples from media and print in their presentations to the class. At the end of the lesson, share the comparative table and ask the students to assess how the comparison stood up to their own experience. You might want to extend the discussion to how they respond to the experience of “going to church” and “going to the movies.”

Making the Connections

Grades 6–12

Objective: To introduce students to the connections between the world of Gospel and the world of media.

This exercise begins as a discussion regarding the relationship between Gospel and media. What is media? What is Gospel today? Is there a connection? Would media in the classroom help to make the Gospel more relevant to your students’ lives? Do your students find Gospel messages in media? Give examples or encourage students to bring media clips into the classroom that complement Gospel values. (It is important to conduct a parallel conversation about the different media formats and how your students use these formats: television, film, Internet, iPod, cell phones, video games.)

Media in the Classroom

Grades 1–12

Objective: To share the process of integrating media into your curriculum with your students.

This is a good follow-up to the exercise “Making the Connections.” In this activity, you and your students apply specific media to the course. Partner with your students to determine what media best complements the course content and approach. (You can make general applications or agree to collaborate on media integration lesson by lesson.)