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# **LIFE NIGHT:** FORTIFIED

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

Think about the time you bought your first car. Whether or not this was a used car or a brand-new car, there was something about it that was special. The "new car" smell, the color of the paint, the way the tires and wheels shined in the sun, the first moment you pulled it into the driveway – it was all incredible. There was perhaps a process that you went through in which you washed that car weekly, cleaned it out frequently, or enforced rules of no eating or drinking for your passengers. You may have even serviced it often, making sure that there was always the correct amount of fluids in the engine, air in the tires, and the oil was changed every 3,500 miles. Over time, however, the washes became a little less frequent, the rules became a little more lenient, and the nice new smell of the interior faded away. What used to be a shiny new car in which you once had a lot of pride in, perhaps turned into a banged-up, dirty, not-too-shiny vehicle that you eventually replaced with another new car.

When we acquire something valuable or meaningful in life, whether it's a car, house, new clothes, new puppy, etc., we do our best to maintain it, protect it from harm, and keep it functional. We are given the responsibility of taking care of it. The same is true for our bodies. Our bodies are a gift from God. And, no matter what condition we currently think our bodies are in, we are called to care for and maintain our bodies in the same way that we would care for and maintain a new car. We are given brand new bodies at the beginning of our life. Over time, we do our best to care for these bodies, but sometimes, like a new car, we fall short in maintaining them as we should.

Saint Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, calls our bodies "dwelling places" of the Holy Spirit. Our bodies, therefore, are a dwelling place in which God resides. Because of this, we must learn to care for our bodies, taking care of the wonderful gift that God has entrusted to us. In our world, it seems like we are constantly bombarded by the next current diet or exercise trend. We read about new theories on what we should or should not eat; what exercises we should or should not do; and constantly make resolutions to work out more. But diet and exercise go beyond the need to just be healthy or look good. Diet and exercise are both great ways in which we care for our bodies.

Temperance is a virtue that can help us take care of our bodies. Temperance means knowing and choosing to avoid every kind of excess; caffeine, sweets, unhealthy foods (CCC 1809, 2290). Temperance allows us to realize that we are consuming something to the extent in which it is having a negative effect on us, and choosing to remove that from our life. In doing so, we care for our bodies, which, in turn has a direct effect on our souls, just as we would care for anything else in our lives that hold value, just like that brand new car!

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. Do you consider yourself a "healthy" person, meaning, do you get enough exercise and maintain a good diet?
2. What are some ways that we, as a family, can exercise temperance? (Example: changing what we have for dinner, eliminating certain food from our house, etc.)
3. Is there anything that we can do that would promote a healthy lifestyle in our family?