

Can Catholic girls talk about sex?

By CARA NISSMAN

Torn between your cravings and your catechisms? Get enlightened with the new "The Catholic Girl's Guide to Sex" (Broadway, \$9.95).

This hilarious and genuinely helpful tome aims to tame the fears of Catholic women who wish they could get it on guilt-free and still get to the big soiree

BY THE WAY

in the sky. With chapters touching on everything from SSL: Sex as a Second Language (a naughty glossary) to Dropping the L-Bomb (saying "I love you") to Taking Matters Into Your Own Hands (Self-love 101), this comprehensive book will hit home with Catholics plagued by self-doubts as strong as their sexual yearnings.

"I think we first targeted young women just like us," said Melinda Anderson, 29, who wrote the book with gal pal Kathleen Murray, 26. "But if my mother's response is any indication, then this book can reach women of any age. The guilt lasts through marriage."

Among the book's zingers are wordplay blurbs, including "Impregdate: Many Catholic couples' engagement day." The chapter on Catholic "number-crunching" playfully explains why "recycling" an ex-boyfriend doesn't count. Another section demystifies the Catholic schoolgirl's uniform. And pop quizzes peppered throughout ask beauts such as "Are You Ready to Do It?" and help decipher whether your dad knows you've done the deed.

Anderson said Catholic women shouldn't feel ashamed of their sexuality.

"We're not suggesting you go out and become totally slutty to embrace your freedom and feminism," Anderson said. "We just want women to make choices and feel OK about them. Sexuality is a gift."

The authors want women to drop their rosaries as leashes, but not ditch their faith.

"Don't let the men who run the church dictate your life," said Anderson, "but let your relationship with God dictate your choices."