

# Sex, Marriage, and God

## ***Marriage***

- God is the Author of Marriage
- The bible begins and ends with marriage

### **Genesis 2: 18-25**

### **Revelations 19: 7-9**

- Man and woman created for each other
  - Equal in dignity
  - United in marriage in an unbreakable bond
- Fidelity to God's plan for unity and indissolubility of marriage came gradually to Israel
- Kings and Patriarchs - several wives
- Moses - allowed divorce

### **Matthew 19: 8-12**

- The prophets in the old testament prepared for Jesus renewal of God's plan for marriage, comparing marriage to the fidelity of God's covenant with Israel

### **Hos 3**

### **Ezekiel 16: 59-63**

### **Ruth**

### **Tobit**

- These verses describe the fidelity and tenderness of spouses.
- Song of Solomon - human love mirrors God's love which "many waters cannot quench".
- Christ's teaching on marriage includes the 1st miracle at Cana.

**CCC # 1613 "The Church attaches great importance to Jesus' presence at the wedding at Cana. She sees in it the confirmation of the goodness of marriage and the proclamation that thenceforth marriage will be an efficacious sign of Christ's presence."**

**Matthew 19: 3-6** - Marriage is indissoluble

**Corinthians 7: 10-11** - St. Paul's teachings

### **Ephesians 5: 31-32**

- Thus the love of husband and wife reflects the love between Christ and the Church.
- By Christ's will, marriage is one of the seven sacraments.

## ***Covenant and Liturgical Act***

- By their marriage, the couple witnesses Christ's spousal love for the Church.
- Husband and wife enter into a covenant which is also a sacrament.
- Covenant is more than a contract. A contract is broken if one party doesn't deliver. A covenant expresses a relationship between two persons that can not be broken.
- The marriage covenant is a relationship between husband and wife. It is a permanent union of persons capable of knowing and loving each other and God.
- Celebration of marriage is a liturgical act, held in a public liturgy at Church

## ***The Celebration of Marriage***

- In the Latin tradition, the spouses as ministers of Christ's grace confer upon each other the sacrament of Matrimony by expressing their consent before the Church.
- By Church law, when two Catholics marry they must give consent in the presence of the Church, minister, two witnesses, and congregation.
- Priest or deacon asks for consent in these words: "Since it is your intention to enter into marriage, join your right hands and declare your consent before God and his Church."
- There are many formulas of consent:
  - I \_\_\_\_\_, take you \_\_\_\_\_, to be my (wife/husband). I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.
  - In the Eastern Churches the Sacrament is conferred by the blessing of the priest after receiving the couple's consent.
  - The Consent is further symbolized in the Latin Church by the blessing and exchange of rings. "Take this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

## ***The Purposes of Marriage***

### **CCC # 1660**

- Christ's grace protects the essential purposes of marriage (good of the couple and the generation and education of children). These are protected and fostered by the permanence of the marriage bond and the fidelity of the spouses.

### **Mark 10: 9**

- Marital intimacy and the good of the children require total fidelity and conjugal love.
- This flows from Christ's fidelity to the Church: He laid down His life for her.
- By their mutual fidelity, spouses make present to each other the love of Christ and lead each other to greater Holiness through the grace they receive from the sacrament.
- Married love is ordered to:
  - Unitive — (good of the spouses)
  - Procreative — (generation and education of children)

**CCC # 1652 "By its very nature, the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory."**

- The fruitfulness of married love includes the moral, spiritual, and faithful love the parents hand on to their children.
- Parents are the principle educators of their children.
- Parents and children are the domestic church. The Church lives in the daily life of families, in their faith and love, prayers and mutual care.

**CCC # 1657 "All the members of the family exercise the priesthood of the baptized in a privileged way."**

**CCC # 1654 "Spouses to whom God has not granted children can nevertheless have a conjugal life full of meaning... can radiate a fruitfulness of charity, of hospitality, and of sacrifice."**

### ***Effects of the Sacrament***

- The gift of the bond between spouses:

**CCC # 1640 "The marriage bond has been concluded and consummated in such a way that a marriage concluded and consummated between baptized persons can never be dissolved."**

- The grace of the sacrament perfects the love of husband and wife, binds them together in fidelity, and helps them welcome and care for children.
- Christ is the source of this grace.
- Grace dwells with the spouses.
- Spouses experience a foretaste or foreshadowing of the wedding feast of the lamb.

### ***Do All You Can to Strengthen Marriage***

- Remote preparation in family programs in high school and college
- Pre-Cana programs
- More necessary because of cultural changes
  - "Sexual revolution" — sex before marriage
  - Contraception
  - Legalized abortion
  - Casual acceptance of cohabitation before marriage
  - Couples marrying without permanent commitment
  - Same sex unions
- Church's teaching on marriage
  - Total gift of love between spouses — resolve to remain exclusively faithful to death.
  - Promise supported by the continuing presence of Christ in the life of the spouses — The couple does not walk alone.
  - Couple's joyful acceptance of children forming the domestic church.
    - Parents serve as models of Christian commitment
    - Home as a place of prayer — conveys a sense of the sacred
    - So much of Christian life occurs in the home
- Couple has entered into a relationship between persons. They come to each other with two loves:
  - One commanded by Christ
  - One caused by their attraction to each other
- Couples are challenged to unite their personal love with Christ's love.
- Christ's command to love is the "door to the whole supernatural order". Jesus affirms the good of each person. Together, the couple seeks the goals of raising a family and to continue the greater of the growth of their relationship.
- "It can seem difficult, or even impossible, to bind oneself for life to another human being. This makes it all the more important to proclaim the Good News that God loves us with a definitive and irrevocable love, that married couples share in this love, that it supports and sustains them, and that by their own faithfulness they can be witness to God's faithful love. Spouses, who with God's grace give this witness, often in very difficult conditions, deserve

the gratitude and support of the ecclesial community."

### ***Divorce and Pastoral Care***

- Marriages have always had problems as a result of original and actual sin.
- The first sin disrupted the original communion between man and woman
- Despite this, God's plan for marriage continues
- God gives mercy and healing grace to help
- The Church is not insensitive to the pain of individuals who face divorce as their only recourse.
- The Church encourages them to remain close to the Church through frequent reception of the sacraments.
- In the case of those who have divorced civilly and remarried. The Church does not want them alienated from her.

**CCC # 1651 "Toward Christians who live in this situation and who often desire to bring up their children in a Christian manner, priests and the whole community must manifest and attentive solicitude, so that they do not consider themselves separated from the Church, in whose life they can and must participate as baptized persons."**

- They are encouraged to participate in parish activities and attend Mass, though they cannot receive the Eucharist.

### ***Annulment***

- Marriages assumed to be valid until the contrary is proven.
- Examination by Church tribunal
- If annulment granted, it does not mean no civil, sexual or emotional marital relationship existed or that the children are illegitimate.
- Simply means the marriage did not have a sacramental bond
- Reasons for annulment
  - Flaws in the rite
  - Parties did not have the legal capacity to marry
    - Parties did not give full consent
  - One intended to exclude fidelity or commitment to life-long union
  - Placing unacceptable conditions on the marriage
- Once a declaration of nullity granted, if there are no other restrictions, on or both of the parties are free to enter a sacramental marriage in the Catholic Church

### ***Mixed & Interfaith Marriages***

- Mixed marriage — marriage between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic
  - Can be married, with permission, in a Catholic or non-Catholic Church
  - In a Catholic Church, other parties clergyman can be present
  - In a non-Catholic Church a priest may be present with permission of the bishop
- Mixed marriages can have difficulties- they reflect the fact that the differences among Christians have not yet been overcome. But these differences can be lessened when the spouses share what they have received from their respective traditions and learn from each other how they fulfill their fidelity to Christ.
- Interfaith Marriages — marriages between a Catholic and a non-baptized person
- Difficulties can arise, but again, the spouses can be enriched by each of their faiths and through God's grace, become closer to Him.

## Introduction to Theology of the Body

- Teaching on the meaning of embodiment, sexual desire, and married love
- Not just for the married, but also essential for us to understand ourselves
- What is the meaning of life?
- What does it mean to be a man or woman?
- Why are we created male and female in the image and likeness of God?
- What is my ultimate destiny and how do I obtain it?
- Where do I come from?
- Why is there evil in the world and how do I overcome it?
- The call to communion is inscribed in our sexuality
- The relationship between the sexes is the deepest foundation of ethics of culture
- Western Culture — Culture of Death due to misuse of our sexuality
- The family is the fundamental cell of society and it comes into existence through sexual intimacy
- Sex is bound up in our very existence (without sex, we wouldn't exist. Sex is hereditary, if your parents didn't have it, chances are you won't either.)
- Go back many generations — insert one act of contraceptive intercourse, you, and anyone else descended from that act, would not exist. The world would be a different place.

### ***Theology of the Body***

- Spirit good, body bad = a heresy
- Humans are a unity of body and spirit
- We expressed perceived spiritual realities through our bodies
- The body is a sign which communicates a spiritual reality... which Reveals God
- Theology of the Body — study of God as He is revealed in the body.
- "The Word became Flesh"
- We are called to live the truth of our spirit in and through our bodies.
- The Pope's Thesis Statement: "The body, in fact,?? it alone, is capable of making visible what is invisible; the spiritual and divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden since time immemorial in God, and thus to be a sign of it."
- Trinity- an eternal exchange of love — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- God has destined us to share in this mystery of the inner life of God — to know divine love!
- This is what we long for.
- We're all looking for love.
- John Paul says "Jesus Christ is the human face of God and the divine face of man."
- The Bible's most common image of God's love for us is spousal love.
- Heaven — in revelations is described as the marriage of Christ and the Church
- God stamped an image of His plan for union with us by making us male and female and calling us to become one flesh.

### **Ephesians 5, 31-32**

- Eucharist is, in a mystical way, the consummation of the marriage of Christ and His Church
- Mary opened herself so totally to God's love and the spirit that she actually conceived God in her womb and gave birth to Him.

- Union of man and woman gives us a key to understanding God's plan for us.
- We are not talking about sex the way the world understands it, but about God's original plan in making us male or female
- Sexual Love is an icon of the inner life of the Trinity
- Spousal image is, however, only an analogy. God is not sexual, not man or woman. At the same time, there is no other human reality which corresponds more to that divine mystery.
- It is precisely because of the importance of this analogy that the deceiver attacks sexuality, marriage, and sexual union so violently.
- God's plan for the body is union, communion, marriage, bringing life.
- Devil's plan is fracture, rupture, separation, divorce; bringing death.
- Devil twists and plagiarizes God's plan.
- Some Christians try to avoid this by rejecting the body and sexuality. We must reclaim God's plan with His redemptive grace.
- John Paul II "Marriage and the family are placed at the center of the great struggle between good and evil, between life and death, between love and all that is opposed to love."
- The Pope asks 2 questions:
  1. What does it mean to be human?
  2. How am I to live my life in a way to bring true happiness?
- To answer the first question, he looks at our origin, ancestry, and our destiny
- To answer the second question, the Pope begins with the words of Christ, the Word made flesh.

### **Matthew 19: 8 "Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so."**

- Love is difficult, it hurts sometimes.
- In the beginning, it wasn't this way.
- We think this heartache and the problems between man and woman is normal. It is not. It is due to the fall.
- Christ came to redeem us from this.
- Adam and Eve, before the fall, are the model of what sexuality was supposed to be.
- Three basic human experiences, common to all of us:
  1. **Genesis 2: 18-20 Original solitude:**
  2. **Genesis 2: 21-24 Original unity:**
  3. **Genesis 2: 25 Original nakedness**

### **Matthew 5: 27-28 What went wrong? How did we fall?**

- In essence, the original sin is the denial of God's love! - The denial of the gift of love.
- Lust is sexual desire devoid of God's love. It is a result of original sin.
- The opposite of loving is not hatred, but to USE another person for my own selfish end.
- We can experience the redemption of the body.
- St. Paul says in Romans "We groan inwardly as we await the redemption of our bodies."
- Freedom from the law comes when our hearts are changed and we no longer need the commandments.
- God comes to redeem us and change our hearts. He comes to liberate us from lust.

### **Matthew 22: 23-30 Resurrection of the Body is our destiny**

- Marriage exists only as a foreshadowing of the marriage of heaven.

- When the union of Christ and His Church is fulfilled, we no longer need the foreshadowing.
- Marital love, wonderful as it is, is only a glimmering of the joy of heaven.
- All of societies confusion and desire for sex and love is a desire for heaven... gone awry.
- G.K. Chesterton: "Every man who knocks on the door of a brothel is looking for God."
- In eternity, we will see God face to face. This is the only thing which will ultimately satisfy us. Love and the union of man and woman foreshadow this.
- In heaven, we will participate in the interior life of God in the Trinity.
- The Communion of Saints — in heaven, all that is masculine and all that is feminine in humanity will be mysteriously unified, and the Church unified with Christ in one mystical body.
- Christ, the bridegroom, gives Himself to the bride, the Church, who opens herself to Him and gives the gift of herself back to Him.
- In the beatific vision in heaven, we will "see all, and be seen by all. We will know all in all." — St. Augustine
- "The deepest yearning of the human heart is to see another, and to be seen by that other's loving look." St. Augustine

## ***Vocations***

- How am I to live my life in a way that will bring true happiness?

### ***Celibate Vocation***

#### **Matthew 19: 12**

- Celibacy for the sake of the kingdom
- Celibates proclaim to the whole world that marriage is only a foreshadowing of the Kingdom of heaven. They point us to the ultimate marriage.
- Christian Celibacy flows from the redemption of sexuality just as marriage does.
- Celibacy is not a rejection of sexuality. It is a living out of the full truth and meaning of sexuality. We cannot escape the nuptial meaning of the body. The ultimate meaning of the nuptial meaning of the body is the heavenly marriage.
- Celibacy is an embracing of the heavenly marriage on earth.
- If someone approaches the celibate vocation due to fear of marriage or fear of intimacy, that is not an authentic vocation.

### ***Marital Vocation***

#### **Ephesians 5: 21-29 A sacrament and a call to holiness**

- The body has a language that is meant to proclaim the love of Christ's love for the church.
- How does Christ love? Free / Total / Faithful / Fruitful
- The questions of Intention to Marry
  - Have you come here freely to give yourselves to one another without reservation?
  - Do you promise to be faithful until death?
  - Do you promise to receive children lovingly from God?
- Spouses are meant to express this love with their bodies by becoming one flesh.
- Sexual union is supposed to be an expression and renewal of their wedding vows.
- Marriage is consecrated by consent (the vows) and perfected by conjugal union.
- The body is prophetic, but we must be careful to distinguish true and false prophets.

- Any question about sexual morality — Does this image God's free, total, faithful, fruitful love?
- Contraception has profound repercussions.
- Divorce rate has climbed in the same proportion as acceptance of contraception.
- Positive facts about natural family planning
  1. The only method of regulating births that requires the man and woman to share responsibility for this aspect of married life — fosters communication.
  2. It removes "barriers of contraception, increasing intimacy.
  3. Because of periods of abstinence, it encourages couples to find nonphysical ways to express love. Also gives honeymoon over and over again.
  4. Eliminates the guilt of going against Church. teaching
  5. Effective rates vary from virtually 0 failures to comparable with the pill depending on rule used.
  6. Safe, reversible, can be used to conceive or avoid pregnancy
  7. Divorce rate for practitioners is 1-3%.
- The Case against Contraception
  - 1. Genesis 38: 9 The Bible is against it:**
  2. The early Church father wrote against contraception.
  3. St. Augustine, in the 5th century wrote: " I am supposing, then, although you are not lying [with your wife] for the sake of procreating offspring, you are not for the sake of lust obstructing their procreation by an evil prayer or and evil deed. Those who do this, although they are called husband and wife, are not; nor do they retain any reality of marriage, but with a respectable name cover a shame. Sometimes this lustful cruelty, or cruel lust, comes to this, that they even procure poisons of sterility. Assumedly, if both husband and wife are like this, they are not married, and if they were like this from the beginning, they come together not joined in matrimony but in seduction.
  4. Martin Luther said "The exceedingly foul deed of Onan, the basest of wretches... is a most disgraceful sin. We call it unchastity, yes, a sodomistic sin. For Onan goes into her, that is, he lies with her and copulates, and when it comes to the point of insemination, spills the semen, lest the woman conceive. Surely at such a time the order of nature established by God in procreation should be followed. Accordingly, it was a most disgraceful crime. Consequently, he deserved to be killed by God. He committed an evil deed. Therefore God punished him."
  5. John Calvin called contraception "monstrous".
  6. John Wesley said that those who commit the sin of Onan dishonor their body and "destroy their own souls".
  7. No Protestant Churches permitted contraception until 1930.
  8. Mahatma Ghandi said: "Man has sufficiently degraded woman for his lust, and contraception, no matter how well meaning the advocates may be, will still further degrade her."
  9. As contraceptives have become popular:
    - An increase in spread of sexually transmitted diseases
    - An increase in pregnancy and abortions in teenagers.
  10. IUDs work exclusively as an abortifacient.
  11. Depo Provera, Norplant, and "the pill", are intended to prevent ovulation but breakthrough ovulation is common. These drugs then work by preventing the implantation of the fertilized egg (abortion).

12. Condoms have a failure rate of 18.4% in people aged 15 to 24.
13. Depo Provera and Norplant frequently cause major disturbances of the menstrual cycle and heavy bleeding. Also cause an increased risk of toxic shock syndrome..
14. IUD
  - Increased risk of infection
  - Some uterine perforations
  - Increased risk of ectopic pregnancy
  - Increased risk of excessive menstrual bleeding
15. The pill: 18 of 20 studies show increased risk of breast cancer (especially when taken before 1st pregnancy). Also, worse prognosis if breast cancer develops.. Weight gain and increased gall bladder disease, liver tumors.
16. Increased risk of heart attack (3 times).
17. Increased risk of thromboembolism (blood clots) by four times.
18. Increased risk of stroke (five times)
19. Increased risk of future infertility
- Tubal ligation — increase risk of tubal pregnancy, but three times as likely to need future hysterectomy.
- vasectomy 2.5 times the increased risk of kidney stones and 85-90% increase risk of prostate cancer.
- Oral Contraceptives are classified by the World Health Organization as a Class I (the worst) carcinogen.