

Marriage Prep

Marriage

1. What

- a. FC 11-15¹
- b. Sacrament is a visible reality which has deeper meaning
 - i. Mystery
 - ii. Additional graces
- c. Love of Christ for his Church
 - i. Marriage is an ecclesial act and forms the domestic Church.
 - ii. At the nucleus of all vocations is the gift of self for the good of the other.
- d. Covenant not a contract
 - i. Contract is word. (conditional, good or services exchanged, prostitution)
 - ii. Covenant is an oath. (unconditional, selves are exchanged, unconditional self gift.(Definition))
 - iii. Old Testament – faithfulness
 - iv. Marriage is exclusive, permanent, and open to life.
- e. Ephesians 5: 21_32
 - i. *21 * Be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ. * 22 Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of his wife just as Christ is head of the church, he himself the savior of the body. 24 As the church is subordinate to Christ, so wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her 26 to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, 27 that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 So (also) husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave (his) father and (his) mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. 33 In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband.*
 - ii. What does this mean?
 1. Lay down lives for each other
 2. Practical ways
 3. Need the grace to live this therefore need God so he should be at the center of their marriage
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Mass
 - c. Confession

2. Why

- a. A vocation which God is calling to which will help both reach God
- b. Both the Church and couple want the marriage to succeed

3. How

- a. Prepare

Marriage Prep

- i. Can. 1065 §1. Catholics who have not yet received the sacrament of confirmation are to receive it before they are admitted to marriage if it can be done without grave inconvenience.
§2. To receive the sacrament of marriage fruitfully, spouses are urged especially to approach the sacraments of penance and of the Most Holy Eucharist.
- b. Canon Law
 - i. Can. 1056 The essential properties of marriage are unity and indissolubility, which in Christian marriage obtain a special firmness by reason of the sacrament.
 1. Unity means one spouse and no more either simultaneous or successively.
 2. Indissolubility is that the spouses say they will uphold the marriage, a moral obligation to do this.
 - ii. Can. 1057 §1. The consent of the parties, legitimately manifested between persons qualified by law, makes marriage; no human power is able to supply this consent.
§2. Matrimonial consent is an act of the will by which a man and a woman mutually give and accept each other through an irrevocable covenant in order to establish marriage.
 - iii. Can. 1136 Parents have the most grave duty and the primary right to take care as best they can for the physical, social, cultural, moral, and religious education of their offspring.
- c. Vows
 - i. N. and N., have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage?
 - ii. Will you love and honor each other as man and wife for the rest of your lives
 - iii. Will you accept children lovingly from God and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?
 - iv. Then declare consent
 1. I N take you N for my lawful wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, fore better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.
 2. (Consent - Matrimonial consent is an act of the will by which a man and a woman mutually give and accept each other through an irrevocable covenant in order to establish marriage.)
- d. Signs
 - i. N. 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
 - ii. Rings
 1. Love
 2. Fidelity/faithfulness
 - iii. Unity candle (optional)
- e. Consummation

Marriage Prep

- i. Sex is beautiful
 1. God made it and it is good
 2. Helps unify the couple, strengthens bond.
 3. Expression of love which is creative and fruitful
 4. Open to creating another you
- ii. Contraception
 1. Rejects the fertility of the other person and hence rejects the person.
 2. Tears marriages apart
- iii. NFP
 1. When it can be used?²
 - a. “serious motives to space out births, which derive from the physical or psychological conditions of husband and wife, or from external conditions” (HV #16)
 - b. “it is then licit to take into account the natural rhythms immanent in the generative functions, for the use of marriage in the infecund periods only, and in this way to regulate birth without offending the moral principles” (HV #16)
 2. Why?³
 - a. It can actually help the marriage
 - i. self mastery
 - ii. more communication
 - iii. ways to show love in other ways (refreshes sex)
 3. It is much more reliable now because understand a woman’s cycle and the signs
- iv. Children
 1. The greatest gift in marriage
 2. Help parents grow and better understand themselves.
- f. Support
 - i. Church
 - ii. Other good couples
 - iii. Family/friends
- g. Continue to learn/grow
 - i. Get involved in parish
 - ii. Life is not easy – there will be struggles
4. Who
 - a. Man & Woman
 - i. Each is different yet when together compliment each other
 - ii. Use this and work together
 - b. They are called to be a witness for the Church
5. When
 - a. Couple is ready to enter the sacred covenant with each other after much prayer and preparation.
 - b. A time in which a representative of the Church can witness it.

End Notes

Marriage Prep

¹ 11. God created man in his own image and likeness:[20] calling him to existence through love, he called him at the same time for love.

God is love[21] and in himself he lives a mystery of personal loving communion. Creating the human race in his own image and continually keeping it in being. God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the vocation, and thus the capacity and responsibility, of love and communion[22]. Love is therefore the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being.

As an incarnate spirit, that is, a soul which expresses itself in a body and a body informed by an immortal spirit, man is called to love in his unified totality. Love includes the human body, and the body is made a sharer in spiritual love.

Christian revelation recognizes two specific ways of realizing the vocation of the human person, in its entirety, to love: marriage and virginity or celibacy. Either one is in its own proper form an actuation of the most profound truth of man, of his being "created in the image of God."

Consequently sexuality, by means of which man and woman give themselves to one another through the acts which are proper and exclusive to spouses, is by no means something purely biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such. It is realized in a truly human way only if it is an integral part of the love by which a man and a woman commit themselves totally to one another until death. The total physical self-giving would be a lie if it were not the sign and fruit of a total personal self-giving, in which the whole person, including the temporal dimension, is present: If the person were to withhold something or reserve the possibility of deciding otherwise in the future, by this very fact he or she would not be giving totally.

This totality which is required by conjugal love also corresponds to the demands of responsible fertility. This fertility is directed to the generation of a human being, and so by its nature it surpasses the purely biological order and involves a whole series of personal values. For the harmonious growth of these values a persevering and unified contribution by both parents is necessary.

The only "place" in which this self-giving in its whole truth is made possible is marriage, the covenant of conjugal love freely and consciously chosen, whereby man and woman accept the intimate community of life and love willed by God himself,[23] which only in this light manifests its true meaning. The institution of marriage is not an undue interference by society or authority, nor the extrinsic imposition of a form. Rather, it is an interior requirement of the covenant of conjugal love which is publicly affirmed as unique and exclusive in order to live in complete fidelity to the plan of God, the creator. A person's freedom, far from being restricted by this fidelity, is secured against every form of subjectivism or relativism and is made a sharer in creative wisdom.

12. The communion of love between God and people, a fundamental part of the revelation and faith experience of Israel, finds a meaningful expression in the marriage covenant which is established between a man and a woman. For this reason the central word of revelation, "God loves his people," is likewise proclaimed through the living and concrete word whereby a man and a woman express their conjugal love. Their bond of love becomes the image and the symbol of the covenant which unites God and his people.[24] And the same sin which can harm the conjugal covenant becomes an image of the infidelity of the people to their God: Idolatry is prostitution,[25] infidelity is adultery, disobedience to the law is abandonment of the spousal love of the Lord. But the infidelity of Israel does not destroy the eternal fidelity of the Lord, and therefore the ever faithful love of God is put forward as the model of the relations of faithful love which should exist between spouses.[26]

13. The communion between God and his people finds its definitive fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the bridegroom who loves and gives himself as the savior of humanity, uniting it to himself as his body. He reveals the original truth of marriage, the truth of the "beginning,"[27] and, freeing man from his hardness of heart, he makes man capable of realizing this truth in its entirety.

This revelation reaches its definitive fullness in the gift of love which the word of God makes to humanity in assuming a human nature, and in the sacrifice which Jesus Christ makes of himself on the cross for his bride, the church. In this sacrifice there is entirely revealed that plan which God has imprinted on the humanity of man and woman since their creation,[28] the marriage of baptized persons thus becomes a real symbol of that new and eternal covenant sanctioned in the blood of Christ. The Spirit which the Lord pours forth gives a new heart, and renders man and woman capable of loving one another as Christ has loved us. Conjugal love reaches that fullness to which it is interiorly ordained, conjugal charity, which is the proper and specific way in which the spouses participate in and are called to live the very charity of Christ, who gave himself on the cross.

In a deservedly famous page, Tertullian has well expressed the greatness of this conjugal life in Christ and its beauty: "How can I ever express the happiness of the marriage that is joined together by the church, strengthened by an offering, sealed by a blessing, announced by angels and ratified by the Father?!!! How wonderful the bond between two believers, with a single hope, a single desire, a single observance, a single service! They are both

brethren and both fellow servants; there is no separation between them in spirit or flesh. In fact they are truly two in one flesh, and where the flesh is one, one is the spirit." [29]

Receiving and meditating faithfully on the word of God, the church has solemnly taught and continued to teach that the marriage of the baptized is one of the seven sacraments of the new covenant. [30]

Indeed by means of baptism, man and woman are definitively placed within the new and eternal covenant, in the spousal covenant of Christ with the church. And it is because of this indestructible insertion that the intimate community of conjugal life and love, founded by the creator, [31] is elevated and assumed into the spousal charity of Christ, sustained and enriched by his redeeming power.

By virtue of the sacramentality of their marriage, spouses are bound to one another in the most profoundly indissoluble manner. Their belonging to each other is the real representation, by means of the sacramental sign, of the very relationship of Christ with the church.

Spouses are therefore the permanent reminder to the church of what happened on the cross; they are for one another and for the children witnesses to the salvation in which the sacrament makes them sharers. Of this salvation event marriage, like every sacrament, is a memorial, actuation and prophecy: "As a memorial, the sacrament gives them the grace and duty of commemorating the great works of God and of bearing witness to them before their children. As actuation, it gives them the grace and duty of putting into practice in the present, toward each other and their children, the demands of a love which forgives and redeems. As prophecy, it gives them the grace and duty of living and bearing witness to the hope of the future encounter with Christ." [32]

Like each of the seven sacraments, so also marriage is a real symbol of the event of salvation, but in its own way.

"The spouses participate in it as spouses, together, as a couple, so that the first and immediate effect of marriage (res et sacramentum) is not supernatural grace itself, but the Christian conjugal bond, a typically Christian communion of two persons because it represents the mystery of Christ's incarnation and the mystery of his covenant. The content of participation in Christ's life is also specific: Conjugal love involves a totality, in which all the elements of the person enter--appeal of the body and instinct, power of feeling and affectivity, aspiration of the spirit and of will. It aims at a deeply personal unity, the unity that, beyond union in one flesh, leads to forming one heart and soul; it demands indissolubility and faithfulness in definitive mutual giving; and it is open to fertility (cf. *Humanae Vitae*, 9). In a word, it is a question of the normal characteristics of all natural conjugal love, but with a new significance which not only purifies and strengthens them, but raises them to the extent of making them the expression of specifically Christian values." [33]

14. According to the plan of God, marriage is the foundation of the wider community of the family, since the very institution of marriage and conjugal love is ordained to the procreation and education of children, in whom it finds its crowning. [34]

In its most profound reality, love is essentially a gift; and conjugal love, while leading the spouses to the reciprocal "knowledge" which makes them "one flesh," [35] does not end with the couple, because it makes them capable of the greatest possible gift, the gift by which they become cooperators with God for giving life to a new human person. Thus the couple, while giving themselves to one another, give not just themselves but also the reality of children, who are a living reflection of their love, a permanent sign of conjugal unity and a living and inseparable synthesis of their being a father and a mother.

When they become parents, spouses receive from God the gift of a new responsibility. Their parental love is called to become for the children the visible sign of the very love of God, "from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named." [36]

It must not be forgotten however that, even when procreation is not possible, conjugal life does not for this reason lose its value. Physical sterility in fact, can be for spouses the occasion for other important services to the life of the human person, for example, adoption, various forms of educational work, and assistance to other families and to poor or handicapped children.

15. In matrimony and in the family a complex of interpersonal relationships is set up--married life, fatherhood and motherhood, filiation and fraternity--through which each human person is introduced into the "human family" and into the "family of God," which is the church.

Christian marriage and the Christian family build up the church: for in the family the human person is not only brought into being and progressively introduced by means of education into the human community, but by means of the rebirth of baptism and education in the faith the child is also introduced into God's family, which is the church. The human family, disunited by sin, is reconstituted in its unity by the redemptive power of the death and resurrection of Christ. [37] Christian marriage, by participating in the salvific efficacy of this event, constitutes the natural setting in which the human person is introduced into the great family of the church.

Marriage Prep

The commandment to grow and multiply, given to man and woman in the beginning, in this way reaches its whole truth and full realization.

The church thus finds in the family, born from the sacrament, the cradle and the setting in which she can enter the human generations and where these in their turn can enter the church.

² 16. To this teaching of the Church on conjugal morals, the objection is made today, as we observed earlier (no. 3), that it is the prerogative of the human intellect to dominate the energies offered by irrational nature and to orientate them towards an end conformable to the good of man. Now, some may ask: in the present case, is it not reasonable in many circumstances to have recourse to artificial birth control if, thereby, we secure the harmony and peace of the family, and better conditions for the education of the children already born? To this question it is necessary to reply with clarity: the Church is the first to praise and recommend the intervention of intelligence in a function which so closely associates the rational creature with his Creator; but she affirms that this must be done with respect for the order established by God.

If, then, there are serious motives to space out births, which derive from the physical or psychological conditions of husband and wife, or from external conditions, the Church teaches that it is then licit to take into account the natural rhythms immanent in the generative functions, for the use of marriage in the infecund periods only, and in this way to regulate birth without offending the moral principles which have been recalled earlier.[20]

The Church is coherent with herself when she considers recourse to the infecund periods to be licit, while at the same time condemning, as being always illicit, the use of means directly contrary to fecundation, even if such use is inspired by reasons which may appear honest and serious. In reality, there are essential differences between the two cases; in the former, the married couple make legitimate use of a natural disposition; in the latter, they impede the development of natural processes. It is true that, in the one and the other case, the married couple are concordant in the positive will of avoiding children for plausible reasons, seeking the certainty that offspring will not arrive; but it is also true that only in the former case are they able to renounce the use of marriage in the fecund periods when, for just motives, procreation is not desirable, while making use of it during infecund periods to manifest their affection and to safeguard their mutual fidelity. By so doing, they give proof of a truly and integrally honest love.

(HV #16)

³ 21. The honest practice of regulation of birth demands first of all that husband and wife acquire and possess solid convictions concerning the true values of life and of the family, and that they tend towards securing perfect self-mastery. To dominate instinct by means of one's reason and free will undoubtedly requires ascetical practices, so that the affective manifestations of conjugal life may observe the correct order, in particular with regard to the observance of periodic continence. Yet this discipline which is proper to the purity of married couples, far from harming conjugal love, rather confers on it a higher human value. It demands continual effort yet, thanks to its beneficent influence, husband and wife fully develop their personalities, being enriched with spiritual values. Such discipline bestows upon family life fruits of serenity and peace, and facilitates the solution of other problems; it favors attention for one's partner, helps both parties to drive out selfishness, the enemy of true love; and deepens their sense of responsibility. By its means, parents acquire the capacity of having a deeper and more efficacious influence in the education of their offspring; little children and youths grow up with a just appraisal of human values, and in the serene and harmonious development of their spiritual and sensitive faculties. (HV #21)