



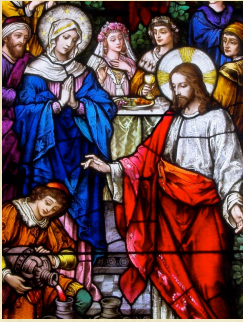
The Gospel of the Family:

*Priests and
the Evangelization of
Engaged and Married
Couples*

Fr. Roger J. Landry

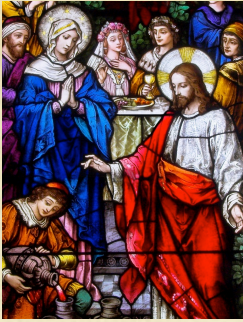
St. John & Assumption Seminary
2018 Alumni Reunion and
Professional Development Day

San Antonio, Texas
October 17, 2018



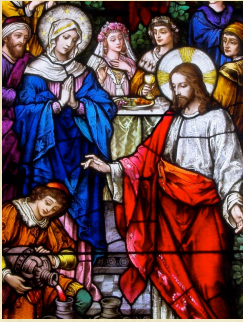
The Situation We Confront Today

- The magnitude of the challenges and problems facing marriage and family today. We can name at least 30 of them:
 1. A failure on the part of many to believe in the indissolubility of marriage.
 2. Growing rates of marital breakdown and divorce and the consequences this has on women, men and children
 3. Declining marriage rates and the increase of cohabitation as a long-term substitute.
 4. The explosion of pornography and the denigration of women, sex, and love.
 5. The prevalence of a hook-up or Tinder culture instead of a dating culture.
 6. The difficulty for many, especially young women, to find eligible men.
 7. The move to redefine marriage from the union of one man and one woman, faithfully committed to each other for life and open to children, to a union of any two adults for as long as they want
 8. A culture –television, public education – that doesn't support raising a family.
 9. Gender confusion and gender ideology, undermining respect for both women and men.
 10. The ongoing scourge of domestic violence



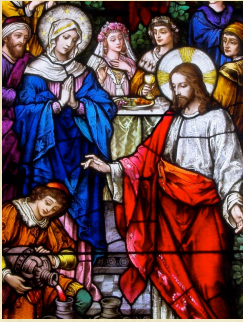
The Situation We Confront Today

- The magnitude of the challenges and problems facing marriage and family today. We can name at least 30 of them (*continued*):
 11. Drug use, alcoholism, gambling and other addictions – like to traditional or social media.
 12. A crisis of trust and infidelity, some coming from family of origin issues, some coming the much higher rates of adultery being facilitated by various social media apps.
 13. A much greater difficulty in forgiving as a result.
 14. An extreme individualism that weakens family bonds.
 15. A hedonism or pleasure-seeking that leads spouses to think that, when one or both no longer feels fulfilled, sufficient reason exists to end the marriage.
 16. A narcissism, or extreme self-centeredness, that makes people incapable of looking beyond themselves, beyond their own desires and needs.
 17. A growing materialism and consumerism that leads us to treat others and relationships the way we treat things, as disposable things that we can just discard.
 18. A culture of the ephemeral and fears about permanent commitments.
 19. The technological revolution in the field of human procreation, which has dramatically impacted conjugal relations, from contraception to in vitro.
 20. The confusion and abuse of surrogacy that has flowed from these immoral reproductive technologies.



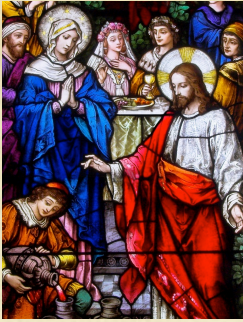
The Situation We Confront Today

- The magnitude of the challenges and problems facing marriage and family today. We can name at least 30 of them (*continued*):
 21. The crisis with regard to hope in the future shown in decreasing total fertility rates. The total fertility rate in the US is now 1.76 births per woman, down from 2.08 a decade ago.
 22. The scourge of present and past abortions.
 23. The confusion of genuine freedom with the idea that each individual can act arbitrarily, as if there were no truths, values and principles to provide guidance, and as if everything were possible and permissible. This can lead to a rejection of moral norms, of chastity, and of real meaning to love.
 24. Greater immaturity, with kids remaining kids long into adulthood
 25. Surrogate motherhood
 26. Social engineering of adoption agencies and insufficient foster care.
 27. The cost of weddings.
 28. Endemic poverty and lack of dignified and affordable homes.
 29. The great difficulties women and families have mixing work and family life.
 30. The mobile aspect of culture, not to mention the millions of families on the move as refugees and forced and economic migrants.



The Situation We Confront Today

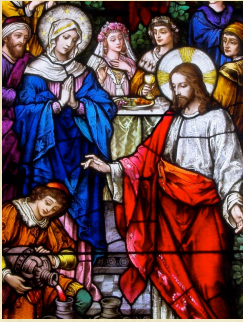
- John Paul II summarized it in his 1994 Letter to Families as a modern rationalism that fails to appreciate mystery, that simply doesn't acknowledge a sacramental vision or way of living, that doesn't acknowledge as truth anything that cannot be empirically verified. As a result they don't admit God's existence and care for married life.
- ““Modern rationalism ‘does not tolerate mystery.’ It does not accept the mystery of man as male and female, nor is it willing to admit that the full truth about man has been revealed in Jesus Christ. In particular, it does not accept the ‘great mystery’ proclaimed in the Letter to the Ephesians, but radically opposes it. It may well acknowledge, in the context of a vague deism, the possibility and even the need for a supreme or divine Being, but it firmly rejects the idea of a God who became man in order to save man. For rationalism it is unthinkable that God should be the Redeemer, much less that he should be ‘the Bridegroom,’ the primordial and unique source of the human love between spouses. Rationalism provides a radically different way of looking at creation and the meaning of human existence. But once man begins to lose sight of a God who loves him, a God who calls man through Christ to live in him and with him, and once the family no longer has the possibility of sharing in the ‘great mystery,’ what is left except the mere ‘temporal dimension of life?’ Earthly life becomes nothing more than the scenario of a battle for existence, of a desperate search for gain, and financial gain before all else. ...
- This kind of critical reflection should lead our society, which certainly contains many positive aspects on the material and cultural level, to realize that, from various points of view, it is a “*society that is sick*” and is creating profound distortions in man. ... The reason is that our society has broken away from the full truth about man, from the truth about what man and woman really are as persons. Thus it cannot adequately comprehend the real meaning of the gift of persons in marriage, responsible love at the service of fatherhood and motherhood, and the true grandeur of procreation and education. ...
- This is the real drama: the modern means of social communication are tempted to manipulate the message, ‘thereby falsifying the truth about man.’ [This is real fake news!] Human beings are not the same thing as the images proposed in advertising and shown by the modern mass media. They are much more, in their physical and psychic unity, as composites of soul and body, as persons. They are much more because of their vocation to love, which introduces them as male and female into the realm of the ‘great mystery.’”



The Situation We Confront Today

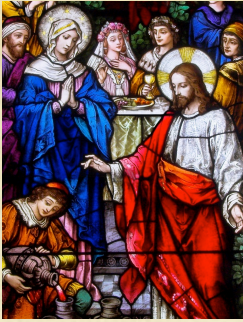
- Even though various aspects of these problems are new, existential challenges for the family are not.
 - Adam and Eve
 - Cain and Abel
 - Isaac and Ishmael
 - Jacob and Esau,
 - Jacob's 12 sons, ten of whom ganged up to try to kill their brother Joseph.
 - Jealousy in David's family.

- Simply put, as the human family “increased and multiplied,” so did sin and the divisions, and pain, and death that flow from sin. So while we can say that there's plenty of bad news for marriage and the family today, we know that there's bad news almost from the beginning. But even combining all of the bad news together, there's a good news that's far more powerful.



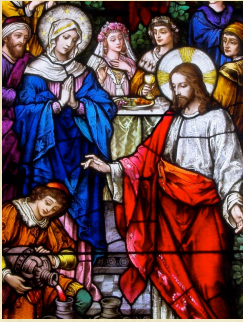
Jesus: The Redeemer of the Family

- Jesus entered the world in a family by divine choice
- All of existence is meant to be familial, in the image of the loving communion of persons who is the Trinity.
- Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia* 63: “Jesus, who reconciled all things in himself, *restored marriage and the family to their original form. Marriage and the family have been redeemed by Christ and restored in the image of the Holy Trinity, the mystery from which all true love flows. The spousal covenant, originating in creation and revealed in the history of salvation, takes on its full meaning in Christ and his Church. Through his Church, Christ bestows on marriage and the family the grace necessary to bear witness to the love of God and to live the life of communion. The Gospel of the family spans the history of the world, from the creation of man and woman in the image and likeness of God, to the fulfillment of the mystery of the covenant in Christ at the end of time with the marriage of the Lamb*”
- Pope Francis similarly comments on what Christ did for the family during his earthly life. “He began his public ministry,” he wrote, “with the miracle at the wedding feast of Cana. He shared in everyday moments of friendship with the family of Lazarus and his sisters and with the family of Peter. He sympathized with grieving parents and restored their children to life” (AL 64). The same Jesus wants to do this with other families, with our families.



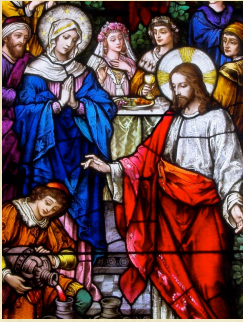
Jesus: The Redeemer of the Family

- Hope for marriage from Church history when Christian couples lived marriage in a sacramental way
- Christians transformed the Jewish mentality of marriage more and more to what it was in the beginning.
- They revolutionized, over the course of three centuries, the pagan approach to marriage, converting the Romans, the Greeks and so many tribes.
- They continue to convert new cultures today in missionary areas, where practices like polygamy, or rape-to-marry practices, or husbands with AIDS insisting on marital relations have been prevalent.
- What's happened before, over and over again, can happen anew, because the same power of the sacrament that worked in couples over the previous 2,000 years still works today. But couples need to unleash that power.



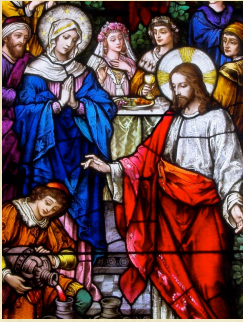
Challenges to Getting Couples to Live Sacramentally

- St. John Paul II wrote in *Familiaris Consortio*, his famous 1981 exhortation on marriage, “The situation in which the family finds itself presents positive and negative aspects: The first is a sign of the salvation of Christ operating in the world; the second, a sign of the refusal that man gives to the love of God.” Christ’s salvation is operating in the world, but are we receiving or refusing the outpouring of his saving love?
- Pope Francis writes about the impact of Christ’s saving love in *The Joy of Love* (72-73), “The sacrament of marriage is not a social convention, an empty ritual or merely the outward sign of a commitment. The sacrament is a gift given for the sanctification and salvation of the spouses. ... *The sacrament is not a “thing” or a “power,” for in it Christ himself “now encounters Christian spouses... He dwells with them, gives them the strength to take up their crosses and so follow him, to rise again after they have fallen, to forgive one another, to bear one another’s burdens.*”



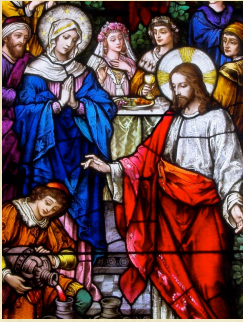
Challenges to Getting Couples to Live Sacramentally

- Twelve Essays I give to couples to know them better, meet them where they're at and try to guide them to where the Church wants them on their wedding day. I ask them:
 - About their upbringing, their family, their studies, their jobs, major interests, hobbies and involvements.
 - To tell me how they met, started to date realized the other was the right one and how the proposal happened.
 - What marriage means to them.
 - What role God has in their life and relationship, how they would define or describe love and distinguish marital love for other types of love.
 - What they love about the other and how the other has shown them how special they are.
 - How the other has inspired them to change for the better.
 - What lessons about love, marriage and family they learned at home growing up, good or bad, as well as about what their relationship is with the other's family and friends, and what they've discovered about their future spouse from those interactions.
 - Whether they love children and are planning to start a family right away after they're married



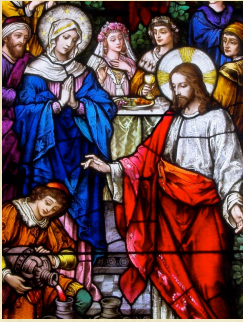
Challenges to Getting Couples to Live Sacramentally

- But the most important question I ask is, “Why do you think Christian marriage is a sacrament? What is the purpose of a sacrament?”
- Getting this right, and living it, is the secret to a marriage that will lead them to open themselves up to Christ’s restoring power, to Christ’s help, to Christ’s desire through marriage to lead them to heaven.
- The answers I get from the couple are a reflection of the type of catechesis they’ve received.
 - Many don’t have a good definition of a sacrament. Many have been taught that the sacraments are basically ceremonies that accompany stages of life. They don’t see them as life-changing encounters with Christ.
 - I try to help them to see that in the Sacraments Christ comes to us, he seeks to abide in us, and have us abide in him.
 - Because Christ’s life is eternal, the ultimate purpose of every sacrament is heaven.
 - Their mission in marriage is to help the other become a saint. Many, we know, don’t feel challenged to holiness in marriage, but the purpose of marriage is the mutual sanctification of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring.



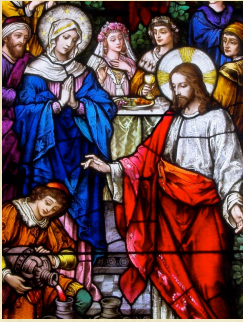
Challenges to Getting Couples to Live Sacramentally

- As soon as they've grasped the sacramentality of marriage, we can get practical as to their role in sanctifying the other.
 - The importance of personal sanctity to sanctify the other
 - Praying together
 - Going to the Sacraments together and living a truly sacramental life
 - Sacred Scripture and knowing the Word of God.
 - The Catechism and knowing the faith
 - Helping each other to live the commandments, beatitudes, corporal and spiritual works of mercy, the virtues associated with love.



Living as a Domestic Church

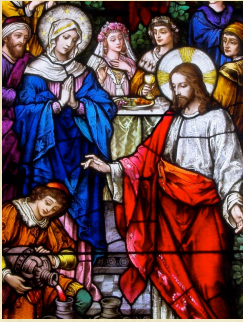
- A key aspect of living and focusing this sacramental communion with Christ in the midst of their marital and familial life has been summed up by the Church traditionally in the phrase, “Domestic Church.”
- The phrase has a Scriptural basis, St. Paul’s words in Romans, “My greetings to the Church at their house” (Priscilla, Aquila) (16:5).
- But the real source of this expression, a domestic Church, an ecclesiola or a church-in-miniature, comes from St. John Chrysostom, the great early doctor of the Church and patron saint of preachers who died in Constantinople in 407. Commenting on St. Paul’s letters, he started propagating the idea of “domestic church,” since it performs the role of a place where sanctification of human being occurs. The Domestic Church plays a key role in our sanctification because it is the primary place where we practice coming to intimately love other persons.



Living as a Domestic Church

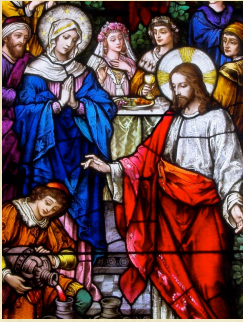
○ St. John Chrysostom wrote,

“The Church is, as it were, a small household, and as in a house there are children and wife and domestics and the man has rule over them all; just so in the Church there are women, children, servants. ... For indeed a house is a little Church. Thus it is possible for us by becoming good husbands and wives, to surpass all others. ... Let the man, as soon as he has risen from his bed, seek after nothing else, but how he may do and say something whereby he may render his whole house more reverent. The woman again, let her be indeed a good housekeeper; but before attending to this, let her have another more needful care, that the whole household may work the works of Heaven.”



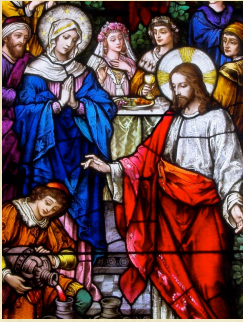
Living as a Domestic Church

- The Church in recent decades has really tried to promote the reality underlying this image:
 - The Second Vatican Council taught (LG 11): “The family is, so to speak, the domestic church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children; they should encourage them in the vocation that is proper to each of them, fostering with special care vocation to a sacred state.”
 - St. John Paul II developed it in *Familiaris Consortio* (49). “We must examine,” he said, “the many profound bonds linking the church and the Christian family and establishing the family as a ‘church in miniature’ (*ecclesia domestica*), in such a way that in its own way the family is a living image and historical representation of the mystery of the church. ... The Christian family is grafted into the mystery of the church to such a degree as to become a sharer, in its own way, in the saving mission proper to the church. ... For this reason they not only receive the love of Christ and become a saved community, but they are also called upon to communicate Christ's love to their brethren thus becoming a saving community.”



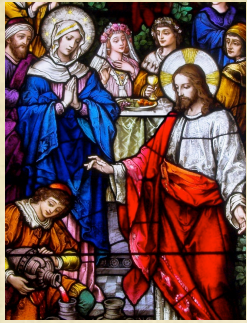
Living as a Domestic Church

- The Church in recent decades has really tried to promote the reality underlying this image (*continued*):
 - Pope Benedict, in a 2007 catechesis, said, “Every home is called to become a ‘domestic church’ in which family life is completely centered on the lordship of Christ and the love of husband and wife mirrors the mystery of Christ’s love for the Church, his bride.”
 - The Catechism says: “The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason the family home is rightly called ‘the domestic church,’ a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity” (No. 1666).
 - Pope Francis says, “The Church is a family of families, constantly enriched by the lives of all those domestic churches” (AL 87).



Living as a Domestic Church

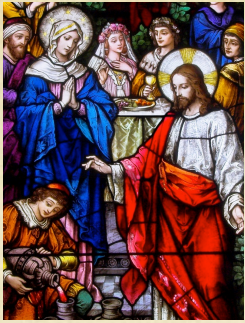
- What they are all combining to say is that a domestic church is not just a place, but a community where God is present, welcomed, adored, loved, spoken to and about. A domestic church is the outgrowth of living a sacramental life as a couple, of living with God in the world. Just as the ancients taught, “The Eucharist makes the Church,” so we could say, “The Sacraments make the Domestic Church.”
- Sometimes families can be structured not as domestic churches but as residences for people who happen to share genetics and last names. What’s being worshipped is really not God. The leaven is not Christian.
- A domestic Church is focused on the priority of holiness. That’s what defines its goals and success. To have children do better than their parents’ generation should not be thought of merely in terms of material things like money, or education, but *holiness*. Children be morally better.
- John Paul II wrote in *Familiaris Consortio* (51). “Thus the little domestic church, like the greater church, needs to be constantly and intensely evangelized.” It needs the Gospel more and more.



Encountering Christ in Marriage & Building Love by Keeping Love Loving

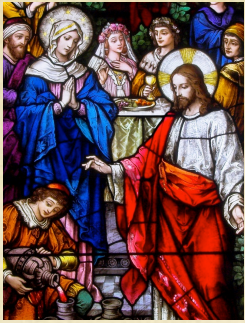
- Second Vatican Council:
 - GS 22: “Christ fully reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling clear.”
 - GS 24: “Man cannot discover himself except in the sincere gift of self.”

- Four Characteristics of Love mentioned by Soon-to-be St. Pope Paul VI 50 years ago in *Humanae Vitae*
 - Context of *Humanae Vitae*
 - Critique of Cardinal Karol Wojtyla/St. John Paul II



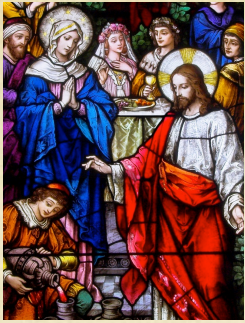
Paul VI's Four Characteristics of Love

- *Humanae Vitae* 9 – “Husband and wife, through the mutual gift of themselves, which is specific and exclusive to them alone, develop that union of two persons in which they perfect one another, cooperating with God in the generation and rearing of new lives.”
- With that introduction, it says that the characteristic features and demands of married love are:
 - Fully human and free
 - Full or total
 - Faithful and exclusive until death
 - Fruitful



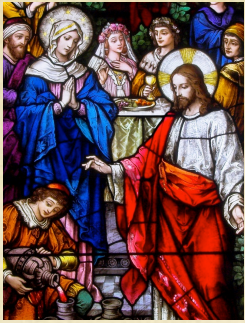
The Big Picture of Love

- God is love, an eternal loving Communion of Persons, and formed the human person in his image and likeness for love.
- God's love is free, full, faithful and fruitful
- We are called to receive, reciprocate and share that love of God.
 - “In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins” (1 Jn 4:10)
 - “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Mt 22:37)
 - “Love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 15:12)
- Love is not just a gift but a task



The Big Picture of Love

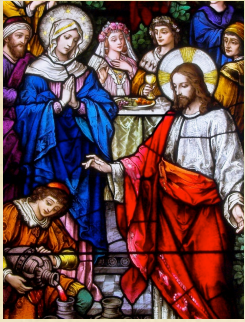
- Love is patient, kind, not jealous, not pompous, not inflated, not rude, not self-interested, not quick-tempered, doesn't brood over injury, doesn't rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoice in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1 Cor 13:1-8)
- The person who loves is sincere, hates evil, holds to the good, is affectionate, anticipates others in showing honor, constantly zealous, fervent in spirit, serves the Lord, rejoices with hope, endures affliction, perseveres in prayer, contributes to the needs of others, exercises hospitality, blesses those who persecute him, rejoices with those who rejoice, weeps with those who weep, isn't haughty, associates with the lowly, conquers evil with good, is concerned with what is noble, lives at peace with all. (Rom 12:9-21)



The Big Picture of Love

- Four words for love in Greek
 - *Storge*
 - *Philia*
 - *Eros*
 - *Agape*

- Stages of love in *Love and Responsibility*
 - Attraction
 - Desire
 - Goodwill
 - Sympathy
 - Friendship
 - Betrothed Love

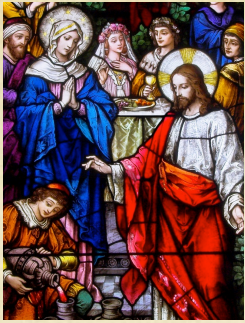


The Big Picture of Love

- Sacramental participation in Christ's spousal love
- Eph 5:21-23
 - Reverence one another out of reverence for Christ
 - Husbands love as Christ loves the Church; Wives love as the Church loves Christ.
 - The great mystery. Human marriage flows from Christ's, not the other way around
- The Covenantal Aspect of Love
- The Statements of Intention pronounced by couples before their marital vows

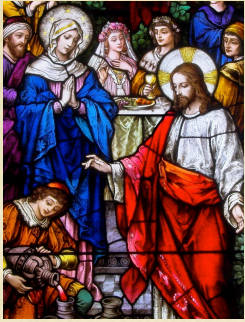


Loving with
Freedom



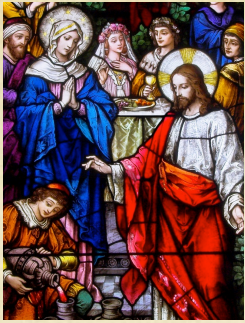
Love That Is Fully Human and Free

- Bl. Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae*:
 - “Love is above all **fully human**, a compound of sense and spirit. It is not, then, merely a question of natural instinct or emotional drive. It is also, and above all, an act of the **free will**, whose trust is such that it is meant not only to survive the joys and sorrows of daily life, but also to grow, so that husband and wife become in a way one heart and one soul, and together attain their human fulfillment.”
- God’s love is Free
- Statement of Intention: “Have you come here **freely** ... intent upon **giving yourself** to your intended spouse in marriage?”



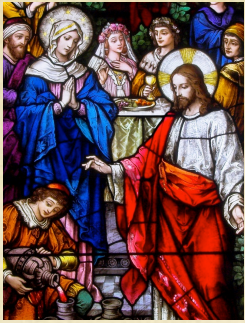
Love That Is Fully Human and Free

- “Positive” Characteristics of Freedom
 - Freedom cannot be understood as a license to do “absolutely anything:” it means a “gift of self.”
 - The paradox of love and freedom: Freedom exists for love, commitment and self gift. But we freely limit one form of freedom for the fulfillment of freedom in love.
 - Mutual choice to give and receive.
 - The Nuptial meaning of the body, of the person.
 - The Book of Genesis highlights the conscious and free choice that gives rise to marriage.
 - Our character is built through the free choices we make.
 - The link between freedom and the truth.
 - The link between freedom and the good



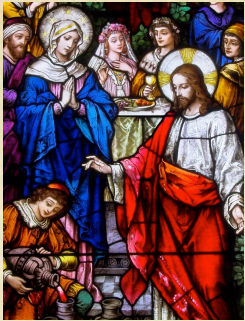
Love That Is Fully Human and Free

- “Negative” Characteristics of Freedom
 - Not controlled or manipulated or compelled by another person
 - No internal or external pressure or constraint.
 - “Shotgun weddings” and the problem of pregnancy.
 - Ultimatums.
 - Parental pressure.
 - Not dominated by a disordered desire



Love That Is Fully Human and Free

- The Necessity of Chastity
 - Lack of chastity robs us of freedom. Only the chaste person is capable of true love, because only the chaste person is free from the domination of the temptation to use others.
 - Most are confused about what chastity is:
 - Difference between chastity and continence/abstinence
 - Difference between chastity and celibacy
 - Understanding Chastity and...
 - Temperance/continence
 - Love
 - Purity
 - Piety
 - The virtue of chastity is a self-mastery tied to ascetical practices and discipline that bears fruit in serenity and peace.

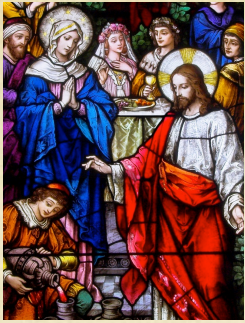


Love That Is Fully Human and Free

- Problems making fully human and free love more challenging:
 - Enslavement in general, to oneself, to one's urges.
 - Confusion about meaning of freedom
 - Selfishness and individualism.
 - LF 14. Individualism presupposes a use of freedom in which the subject does what he wants, in which he himself is the one to "establish the truth" of whatever he finds pleasing or useful. He does not tolerate the fact that someone else "wants" or demands something from him in the name of an objective truth. He does not want to "give" to another on the basis of truth; he does not want to become a "sincere gift." Individualism thus remains egocentric and selfish.
 - Fear of commitment, entrapment.
 - Addictions to alcohol, drugs, sex, porn.
 - Forced marriage, child marriage



Loving
Fully



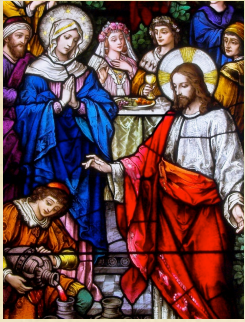
Loving Fully

- Blessed Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae* 9 said that love is full or total:
 - It's “a very special form of personal friendship in which husband and wife generously share everything, allowing no unreasonable exceptions and not thinking solely of their own convenience. Whoever really loves his partner loves not only for what he receives, but loves that partner for the partner's own sake, content to be able to enrich the other with the gift of himself.”
- God's love is total, as we see in Jesus
- Jesus calls us to that type of full love
- Statement of Intention: “Are you ... **without reservation** intent upon **giving yourself** to your intended spouse in marriage?”



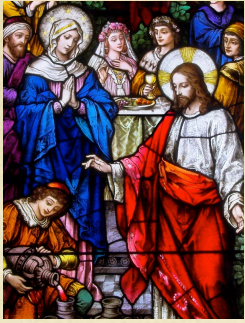
Loving Fully

- “Positive” Characteristics of a Love that is Full
 - Involves the whole of the person in fullness of self-surrender and completeness of personal commitment: one’s body, mind, fertility, finances and unknown future health conditions.
 - Aims at a “deeply personal **unity**, a unity that, beyond union in one flesh, leads to forming one heart and soul” (CCC 1643)
 - “Demands **indissolubility** and faithfulness in definitive mutual giving” (CCC 1643)
 - Until death, not “until further notice,” or “for as long as we both shall love.”
 - Can’t be past action alone, but continuous, each day, self-giving love.
 - Involves a mutual belonging (AL 319)
 - Features a priority commitment over other loves, over work.
 - Modeled on the Eucharist.
 - Ultimately desires God for the person, the truest happiness, truest good.
 - Self-mastery is needed to give like this.



Loving Fully

- “Negative” Characteristics of a Love that is Full
 - There is no totality in eros without marriage. Shared attractions, desires or emotions are not enough.
 - Doesn't mean losing one's identity, melding into each other, giving up healthy boundaries or letting oneself be abused.
 - Must accept the whole of the other, including those parts that annoy or you wish were different.
 - *Love and Responsibility*: take away the fullness of self-surrender and completeness of personal commitment, what remains will be a total denial and negation of it.

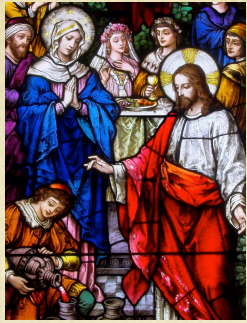


Loving Fully

- Problems confronting the fullness of love
 - Giving partially because one is divided
 - Trust issues
 - A failure to appreciate properly and give and receive with regard to the fullness of the respective masculinity and femininity.
 - Taking rather than giving. Using rather than loving.
 - Lack of honesty, hiding or keeping critical information from one's fiancé(e) that would fit with reservations
 - Pre-nuptial agreements.
 - Polygamy

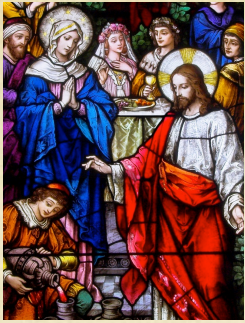


Loving
Faithfully
and
Exclusively



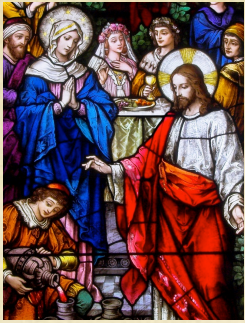
Loving Faithfully and Exclusively

- Bl. Paul VI said in *Humanae Vitae* that love is faithful and exclusive of all other until death
- God's love is faithful and irrevocable, fulfilled in Jesus
- Spouses have the ability to share in and represent this love
- Statement of Intention: "Will you love and honor your intended spouse for the rest of your life?"



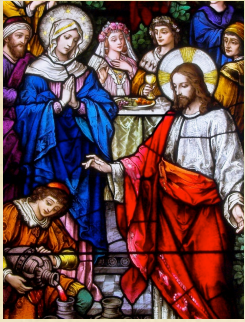
Loving Faithfully and Exclusively

- “Positive” characteristics of faithful and exclusive love
 - One keeps his or her promises, no matter how feelings change.
 - It involves a covenant, commitment, like God’s.
 - Positive acts of faithfulness. Little things of renewing the choice for the other, putting the other first.
 - Faithful in thought, word and action.
 - Faithful to God at the same time.



Loving Faithfully and Exclusively

- “Negative” characteristics of faithful and exclusive love
 - It can seem difficult, even impossible, to bind oneself for life to another human being. Requires trust, holy daring, and God’s help.
 - It involves guarding one’s heart, eyes, body, keeping one’s erotic love exclusively for the spouse.
 - It means fighting and avoiding temptations toward lust, and step-by-step acts of infidelity when one experiences attraction and even desire for someone else, or when one’s attractions and desires for one’s spouse may temporarily wane.
 - No flirting with others

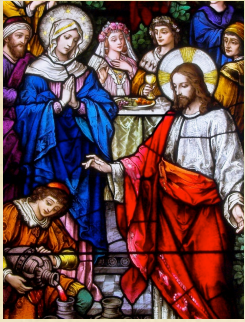


Loving Faithfully and Exclusively

- Problems challenging faithful and exclusive love
 - Infidelity and untrustworthiness
 - Pornography
 - Adultery and extramarital affairs, with internet agencies that specialize in adultery.
 - Problematic forms of online chatting
 - Past relationships that are basically unfaithful in advance.
 - Past wounds that make it difficult to believe that another could be faithful and the insecurity that results.

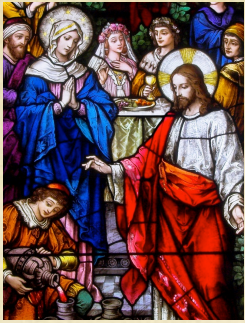


Loving
Fruitfully



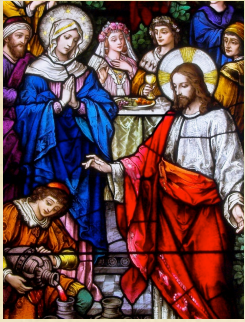
Loving Fruitfully

- Bl. Paul VI wrote in *Humanae Vitae* that love is fruitful:
 - “It is not confined wholly to the loving interchange of husband and wife; it also contrives to go beyond this to bring new life into being. Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the procreation and education of children. Children are really the supreme gift of marriage and contribute in the highest degree to their parents' welfare.”
- Christ's love is always life-giving
- Statement of intention: “Do you intend to **accept children lovingly from God and raise them according to the law of Christ and the Church?**”



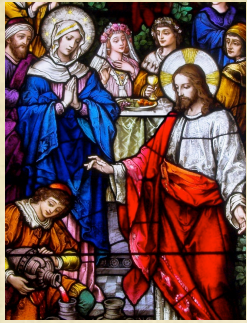
Loving Fruitfully

- “Positive” Characteristics of Fruitful Love
 - Love is life-giving. It makes love as it participates in making life.
 - Cooperation with God in something eternal! Pro-creation.
 - Openness to God and to the generosity of his love. Not just “general” openness but constant openness
 - FC 28. Fecundity is the fruit and the sign of conjugal love, the living testimony of the full reciprocal self-giving of the spouses.
 - Openness to each other: “For spouses, the moment of conjugal union constitutes a very particular expression of this [sincere gift of self]. It is then that a man and woman, in the "truth" of their masculinity and femininity, become a mutual gift to each other. All married life is a gift; but this becomes most evident when the spouses, in giving themselves to each other in love, bring about that encounter which makes them "one flesh" (Gen 2:24). (LF 12).
 - The order of nature and the personal order
 - Moral, spiritual and supernatural fruitfulness



Loving Fruitfully

- “Negative” Characteristics of Fruitful Love
 - No to fear of children.
 - No to focusing on the consequences of the marital act at the expense of focusing on God and the other with love.
 - No to prioritizing many other things above the gift of children.
 - No to exceptions because of a general openness.



Loving Fruitfully

- Problems to be confronted with regard to loving fruitfully:
 - Various forms of stinginess or sterility
 - Abortion
 - Sterilization
 - Contraception and confusion over the vast difference between contraception and natural family planning.
 - NFP not being taught as part of the good news, or adequately practiced.
 - Infertility. The problems of IVF and Surrogacy
 - Unfortunate difficulties with the crucially important practices of adoption and foster care.



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Welcome!

I warmly welcome you to this website, put together at the insistence and with the assistance of friends.

During my diaconal ordination, Cardinal Edmund Szoka gave me the following instruction from the Ordination Rite as together we gripped the Book of the Gospels:

*"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are.
Believe what you read.
Teach what you believe.
Practice what you teach."*

Those words have never lost their resonance.

Since that day -- October 8, 1998 -- I have tried to live up to that commission to be a "herald of the Gospel," by striving to teach what the Church believes, to practice what I preach to others, and to spread with joy and enthusiasm the truth Christ has entrusted to His church -- in and out of season, in and out of the pulpit.

This website is a chronicle of those attempts.

It constitutes the "five loaves and two fish" (or even less!) that I have placed into the hands of the Lord as an attempt to feed a hungry crowd, confident that, if He wishes, He can multiply and supplement that meager offering to nourish many more (Jn 6:1-14).

In Christ,
Fr. Roger J. Landry

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- Longing to See God's Face in Prayer and in Others, 10th Friday (II), June 15, 2018
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- The Necessity and Art of Trinitarian Prayer, Catholic Medical Association Boot Camp, June 18, 2018
- Christ, the Redeemer of Marriage: Living and Proclaiming the Gospel of the Sacramentality of Marriage at a Time When Sex, Love,