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THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY IN TODAY'S WORLD

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Amid the pro family and anti family conflicts of the late twentieth century, much is said about the importance of the family to society as a whole. Too often, however, this importance is merely reasserted, and not explained. In the essay which follows, William E. May explains the importance of marriage and the family to the fundamental order of things—to the individual person, and to the entire social body. May's is a thoroughly Catholic presentation, drawing on the thought of Pope John Paul II which links the family decisively to God's plan and, indeed, to Christ Himself. The result is an article of cogency and beauty providing intellectual and spiritual inspiration to all those who must struggle with the problems of marriage in a hostile age. [This essay was first delivered as a talk at a workshop on Pope John Paul II sponsored by the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D. C. on March 5, 1983].

NO UNWANTED BABY OUGHT EVER TO BE BORN” IS THE SLOGAN OF PROPONENTS of contraception and abortion. “No human being ought ever to be unwanted” is the truth proclaimed by the Catholic Church in the name of Jesus Christ. This truth is central to the thought of Pope John Paul II. It is at the heart of the study on human love and sexuality that he published, as Karol Wojtyla, under the title *Love and Responsibility*, and it is an underlying theme of his Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris consortio*, in which he challenges the Christian family to “become more and more what it is, that is to say, a community of life and love.”¹

Before examining the indispensable role that the Christian family can and must play if society is to be shaped so that within it human beings will be wanted, it will first be worthwhile to call to mind the reasons why human beings ought to be wanted and why human beings as moral agents ought to want, that is, to love, other human beings.

CONCEIVED IN DIGNITY, CALLED TO DIGNITY

In his stirring homily on the Mall of our nation's capital on October 7, 1979, Pope John Paul II ringingly affirmed the priceless sanctity of human life. In that homily, appropriately called “Stand Up for Human Life,² and time and time again in his pontificate he has eloquently proclaimed the preciousness of human life which, “even if weak and suffering, is always a splendid gift of God's goodness.”³ By challenging us to “stand up” for human life, our Holy Father voices anew the ageold teaching of the Church that every human being is an irreplaceable person, a being of moral worth. The Church clearly teaches us that every human being is precious.⁴ When, as Karol Wojtyla, our present Pontiff affirmed that “a human being is beautiful and may be revealed as beautiful to another human being,”⁵ he was simply reasserting the sublime truth that the Church sees as divinely revealed in Holy Scripture. Every human being is an image, an icon or living representative of the all-holy and all-loving God (Gn 1:26). Indeed, every human being is

in truth a “word” spoken by God Himself, the “created word” of God that His Uncreated Word became (Jn 1:1, 14) precisely to show us how deeply God loves us and cherishes us (1 Jn 4:9-10).

Moreover, the Church teaches clearly that human life, from its inception, is to be respected and loved,⁶ a truth about human existence firmly set forth by Karol Wojtyla when he said, “a child, even an unborn child, cannot be denied personality in its most objective ontological sense.”⁷ Every living human body expresses a person, and of every human body it has been written, “Does a woman forget her baby at the breast, or fail to cherish the son of her womb? Yet even if they forget, I will never forget you. See, I have branded your name on the palms of my hands” (Is 49:15-16; cf. Ps 139:13-14; Lk 1:41-42).

Human life is, as noted already, bodily life, living flesh. This means, as Pope John Paul II reminds us, that to be a human being is to be a sexed being. As a consequence “sexuality ... is by no means something purely biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such.”⁸ For in the beginning “God created man in his own image . . . male and female he created them” (Gn 1:27). Every human being is inescapably a male or female person, and every human being, whatever its age or sex or race or condition, is a person, a being that ought to be wanted.

When we come into existence we are, by virtue of our being made in the image of the living God, persons and hence beings of moral worth. And we are, precisely as beings endowed with the capacity for conceptual thought, radically capable of determining our lives by freely choosing to conform our actions and lives to the truth.⁹ A baby (born or preborn) does not, of course, have the developed capacity for deliberating and choosing freely, but it has the natural capacity to do so because it is human and personal in nature.¹⁰ Yet when we come into being we are not yet the beings we are called to be. For we are summoned to give to ourselves, with the help of God’s grace, the added dignity of persons who are true to the image of God within us. In fact, it is precisely so that we can, with God’s help, give to ourselves this further dignity of being true to His image within us that He has gifted us with the capacity of free choice (cf. Sir 15: 11-21). We achieve the dignity to which we are freely called by choosing to shape inwardly our lives and actions in accordance with the truth. Such is the constant

teaching of the Church, beautifully summarized at Vatican Council II, particularly in *Dignitatis humanae* and *Gaudium et spes*,¹¹ and succinctly stated by Karol Wojtyla when he affirmed that “Freedom is an attribute of the human person, not in the form of absolute independence, but as self-dependence comprising dependence on the truth... [This freedom] finds its most striking expression in conscience, [whose] proper and entire function consists in making action dependent upon truth.”¹²

As moral agents, we have the moral obligation to seek the truth and to conform our choices and actions to it.¹³ “We must, therefore,” as Wojtyla has said, “demand from a person, as a thinking individual, that his or her ends should be genuinely good, since the pursuit of evil ends is contrary to the rational nature of the person... [Indeed,] the purpose of education ... is just that: a matter of seeking true ends, i.e., real goods as the ends of our actions.”¹⁴

But the human person is, as such, a surpassing good, in whom are meant to flourish all the goods of human existence, the goods, as Vatican Council II and the Church’s liturgy instruct us,¹⁵ of “life and truth, holiness and grace, justice, love and peace.” Precisely because the human person is as such a good of transcendent value, Karol Wojtyla proposed and developed in his *Love and Responsibility* what he termed the “personalistic norm.” “This norm,” he wrote, “in its negative aspect states that the person is the kind of good which does not admit of use and cannot be treated as an object of use and as such the means to an end. In its positive form the personalist norm confirms this: the person is a good towards which the only proper and adequate attitude is love.”¹⁶ Moreover, “it is not enough just to want to affirm the other person for the consequent act to become also an act of love. It is necessary, in addition, for the action undertaken with the intention of affirming another person to be objectively suited to the role which the agent’s intention assigns to it.”¹⁷

Human beings, then, are persons who ought to be wanted, to be loved; and human persons, in order to secure for themselves the further dignity of being true to the image of God within them, must respond freely to the surpassing goodness of human persons by refusing to treat them as objects and by acting toward them in ways that objectively embody love. This whole matter is well summed up by Pope John Paul II in *Familiaris consortio*: “God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the

vocation, and thus the capacity and responsibility, of love and communion. Love is therefore the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being.”¹⁸

MARRIAGE: LIFE-GIVING, PERSON-AFFIRMING, LOVE-ENABLING

If human beings are to be wanted and loved as they ought to be, and if they are to succeed in shaping their lives by choosing freely in accordance with the truth and thereby realize their vocation to love even as they have been and are loved by God in Christ, God’s plan for human life, and the role of marriage and of the family within the plan, must be recognized and put into effect.¹⁹

God is the author of human life. But He chooses to give life to us not immediately from Himself as exclusive cause, but through the causality of human persons, one a female, the other a male. Whenever human life is given it is a splendid gift of God and as such is of priceless value. Not for nothing did Augustine the Manichee call the son born to him and his unnamed mistress—a child, be it noted, unwanted when conceived but whose personhood, once manifest, compelled love—Adeodatus, “given by God.”²⁰ Yet in God’s plan children are not meant to be given life in the random copulation of unwed males and females but rather in the loving embrace of husband and wife. The reason, as Augustine the Catholic so beautifully put it centuries ago when meditating on the “creation accounts” in the early chapters of Genesis—the stories, Pope John Paul II tells us, of our “beati fying beginnings”²¹—is that “children are to be begotten lovingly, nourished humanely, and educated religiously,” i.e., in the knowledge and love of the one true God.²² When unmarried individuals generate human life they do not, as shall be seen later, do so “lovingly.” In addition, while they do indeed “reproduce” themselves they do not truly procreate, i.e., participate rightly in God’s loving act of creating new human life. They do not do so because they are not capable of caring properly for the person to whom they give life. History and human experience bear eloquent yet tragic witness to this. Of all living creatures, the newborn human person is the most vulnerable and helpless. It needs a home where it can take root and grow, something that unmarried individuals simply cannot provide.²³

As a human reality that has God as its author, from whom it has, as Edward Schillebeeckx has noted, “its intrinsic conditions”²⁴ marriage has as its *raison*

d’être the generation and education of children. This is the constant and firm teaching of the Church, a point emphasized time and time again by *Gaudium et spes*, Paul VI, and most recently John Paul II.²⁵ Marriage and children go together. Not only are children the “crowning glory” of marriage,²⁶ marriage actually *capacitates* a man and a woman to give life lovingly and procreatively. Husband and wife, precisely because they are spouses and thus able to give to one another what non-spouses cannot give, namely conjugal or spousal love, are led by their love for one another “to the reciprocal ‘knowledge’ which makes them ‘one flesh.’” “Yet their spousal love, John Paul II continues

does not end with the couple, because it makes them capable of the greatest 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.”²⁷



Parenting, moreover, is not limited to the loving begetting of human life. The life begotten requires a home where it can be nurtured and educated. Marriage again is the abiding reality that enables spouses to meet their parental responsibilities and allows their spousal love “to become for the children the visible sign of the very love of God, ‘from whom every family in heaven and on earth’ (Eph 3:15) is named.”²⁸

Marriage, in short, is the necessary condition for giving life lovingly and procreatively. A man and a woman united in marriage not only can want the children to whom they can give life, they are also capacitated, by virtue of their being married, to love those children by educating them, by opening their minds to the authentic goods of human existence, the goods of truth and of life, of holiness and of grace, of peace, justice, and friendship. Christian spouses, moreover, as shall be shown later, are by virtue of their baptism capable of giving to their children a redeeming and sanctifying love.

Husbands and wives, then, are given the capac-

ity by their marriage itself to participate in God's plan for human existence. But why is marriage the necessary condition for attaining this great good? How does it, and it alone, make men and women capable of giving life lovingly, nourishing it humanely, and educating it religiously?

Husbands and wives can do this because they have already, by giving themselves to one another in marriage, freely chosen the "intimate community of life and love willed by God himself"²⁹ for respecting truly the irreplaceable and nonsubstitutable personhood of human beings. They have already freely chosen to shape their lives in accordance with the truth, with the personalistic norm that requires that persons never be regarded as means or as objects of enjoyment but as beings toward whom the only adequate response is love. For what makes a man and a woman husband and wife, spouses, is their free act of what *Gaudium et spes* correctly called "irrevocable personal consent"³⁰ to be married persons. This act's inner character as a self-determining free choice was beautifully disclosed in Adam's exclamation, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. . . . For this reason shall a man leave father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" (Gn 2:23-24). For, as Pope John Paul II has perceptively noted, a man leaves mother and father, to whom he pertains by nature, to cleave by choice to his wife and she to him.³¹ Before this act of irrevocable personal consent the man and the woman are separate individuals, replaceable and substitutable in each other's lives. But in and through this act they make each other unique and utterly irreplaceable.³² They give to themselves a new and lasting identity; he becomes her husband, she becomes his wife, and together they become spouses. Forswearing all others, they freely give themselves wholly and exclusively to each other and by so doing bring into being the beautiful reality of marriage. This reality, far from being a legalistic or extrinsic limitation upon their freedom or an empty formality, is, as Pope John Paul II affirms in *Familiaris consortio*, "an interior requirement of the covenant of conjugal love which is publicly affirmed³⁴ as unique and exclusive in order to live in complete fidelity to the plan

of God."³⁵ Marriage is the gift and fruit³⁶ of a freedom dependent on truth,³⁷ for it is brought into existence by the free choice of the man and the woman to affirm and accept the truth of each other's irreplaceable personhood.

A man and a woman marry by giving, themselves irrevocably to one another, but they also pledge to one another a unique kind of friendship and of love, one that is exclusive in nature and open to the sharing of the whole of their lives with each other and to the sharing of the gift of life itself with children. Karol Wojtyla correctly observed,

Love between two people is quite unthinkable without some common good to bind them together.... Man's capacity for love depends on his willingness consciously to seek a good together with others, and to subordinate himself to that good for the sake of others, or to others for the sake of that good.³⁸



And again, "love . . . is conditioned by the common attitude of people toward the same good, which they choose as their aim, and to which they subordinate themselves."³⁹ This principle is true of every form of human love, for love requires objective goods that friends will for each other. But in marriage the truth of this principle is revealed in a

special and unique way, insofar as "marriage" as Wojtyla continued, "*is one of the most important areas where this principle is put into practice.*" For in marriage and in marriage alone

two people, a man and a woman, are united in such a way that they become in a sense "one flesh," i.e., the common subject as it were, of sexual life. How is it possible to ensure that one person does not then become for the other ... nothing more than the means to an end, i.e., an object used exclusively for the attainment of a selfish end? To exclude this possibility they must share the same end [objective good]. Such an end, where marriage is concerned, is procreation, the future generation, a family, and, at the same time, the continued ripening of the relationship between two people, in all the areas of

activity which conjugal life includes. ... *These objective purposes of marriage create in principle the possibility of love and exclude the possibility of treating a person as a means to an end and as an object of use.*⁴⁰

In short, in marrying, a man and a woman not only give to themselves the irrevocable identity of husband and wife but they also pledge to one another the goods of marriage recognized by the Church as the goods of progeny and of steadfast fidelity.⁴¹ Their marriage itself is one of the goods of marriage, namely its indissoluble unity or sacramentus (and more of this later); this is the good that marriage is⁴² and is the good that makes the further goods of marriage possible. But in marrying, the man and the woman commit themselves to these further goods and take upon themselves the obligation to respect them in their life together and to bring them into being by their choices and actions.⁴³

These truths are beautifully and concretely made evident in the marital or conjugal act. This act, as Vatican Council II taught, uniquely expresses and perfects conjugal love,⁴⁴ for in it husband and wife become “one flesh” and are open to the marital goods of human life in its transmission and of exclusive marital love and fidelity. When spouses choose to unite in this way, they choose to come to “know” one another in an intimate and unforgettable way; and they choose to do so as non-substitutable and irreplaceable persons precisely because they have already made one another non-substitutable and irreplaceable in their lives by their act of marital consent. Their choice, therefore, is the choice to unite in an act that is truly, as Pope John Paul II says, “the sign and the fruit of a total personal self-giving.”⁴⁵ Sexual union, as a marital act, thus unites two persons who want each other and who can be secure in the trust that they are wanted and will be wanted “for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, until death.” Their choice, in short, is guided not by blinded passion or mindless sentiment but by truth, by the certain knowledge that they are indeed recognized by one another as persons toward whom the only adequate and proper response is love.

Contrast this beautiful act of oblation, betrothal love between spouses and the sexual coition of unmarried individuals. When the latter “have sex,” they do not do so as irreplaceable and non-substitutable persons but as individuals who are in principle replaceable and substitutable, disposable. There may indeed be some sentimental affection between them, but as Karol Wojtyła

has clearly shown (in company with all who think clearly and deeply about the matter), it is foolish and tragic to confuse affectionate sentimentality with authentic love.⁴⁶ When non-married individuals choose to “have sex,” they are joined not as irreplaceable spouse/persons but as bodies to be possessed, as providers of what is desired here and now, as objects of enjoyment. Their choice is not rooted in the truth that human persons are irreplaceable and non-substitutable, for they refuse to affirm and accept the irreplaceable personhood of one another. Thus their choice to become “one flesh” is, as Pope John Paul II pointedly notes in *Familiaris consortio*, “a lie.” It is a lie because those who choose to act this way are not in truth one flesh, the single subject, as it were, of sexual activity, but rather two separate individuals. They are not united by their free and irrevocable choice of one another. As our Holy Father remarks, “if the person were to withhold something or reserve the possibility of deciding otherwise in the future “and this is precisely the case when nonmarried individuals choose to copulate—”by this very fact he or she would not be giving totally.”⁴⁷ Not for nothing did the New Testament use the term *perneia*, fornication, lewd conduct, to designate what today is euphemistically called “pre-marital” or “non-marital” sex.⁴⁸ The choice to act in this way is a choice that fails the test of truth, that sets aside the personalistic norm by refusing to recognize and accept the irreplaceable dignity of the human person. In acts thus chosen, persons are not wanted, not loved. How starkly such acts contrast with the beauty of marital coition.

MARRIAGE, GRACE AND SANCTIFYING LOVE

Marriage not only enables a man and a woman, now husband and wife, to give life procreatively to new human persons and to give to one another a special and unique sort of human love, it also enables them to be mediators of Christ’s sanctifying and redemptive love. For marriage is a sacrament or living and effective sign of the grace that God wills to extend to us through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. It is important here, I believe, to call to mind a remarkable passage from Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, written in 1880. In that encyclical on marriage, issued 101 years prior to *Familiaris consortio* Leo wrote as follows:

Since marriage has God for its author, and since it has been even from the beginning a shadowing forth of the incarnation of the Word of God, therefore there is in it something sacred and religious, not adventitious but innate, not received

from men but implanted by nature. Wherefore, Innocent II and Honorius III, our predecessors,⁴⁹ were enabled to say, not unjustly nor rashly, that the sacrament of marriage exists both among the faithful and among infidels [understood not pejoratively but simply as a way of describing those who do not, in fact, have faith in Christ].⁵⁰

What Leo meant in saying this was that the human reality of marriage, which is called into being by God Himself and is endowed by Him, as *Gaudium et spes* insists, “with various benefits and ends in view,”⁵¹ is in itself a fitting sign of the union that God wills to exist between Himself and His people, of the grace-filled mystery of Christ’s indissoluble union with His bride, the Church.⁵² As such, marriage is inwardly receptive of the covenant of God’s grace, and through the will of God and the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus Christ it has actually been integrated into the economy of salvation. The marriages of non-Christians are indeed, in a very real sense, open to integration within the mystery of salvation and are thus in an implicit sense “sacraments” of grace. But when baptized men and women give themselves to one another in marriage the mystery of Christ’s grace-filled, sanctifying, and redemptive spousal union with the Church is explicitly manifested and efficaciously made present in the world so long as the spouses themselves place no obstacles in the way.

When Christian men and women marry they do so as persons who are already, through baptism, united with Christ and with His body, the Church (cf. I Co 6:15-20). By means of their baptism, as Pope John Paul states, “man and woman are definitively placed with 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, is elevated and assumed into the spousal charity of Christ, sustained and enriched by his redeeming power.”⁵³ As a result, their marriage is

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.

Christian marriage, in short, is a sanctifying and redemptive reality by virtue of the grace of God made visible in Christ Jesus. Christian spouses, therefore, cooperate with God not only by giving love of a special kind to one another and by giving life to their children but also by being for one another and for their children and even for the entire human community, sources of sanctifying and redemptive love. Their marriage, and the family founded on it, is indeed a domestic Church, and their life together is a life that is capable of participating in the saving mission of Christ and His Church.⁵⁵ Christian spouses, precisely by reason of their indestructible union with Christ through baptism, “are for one another and for the children witnesses to the salvation in which the sacrament makes them sharers. Of this salvation even marriage, like every sacrament, is a memorial, actuation, and prophecy.”⁵⁶

God’s original plan for human life, so beautifully and dramatically portrayed in the initial chapters of Genesis wherein the story of how the beatifying beginning of the human race and of the human family were spoiled by the sinful choices of human persons (the point of the story we find in Genesis 3). Because of sin the human family was disunited, beset by difficulties, inwardly wounded. Human sinfulness led to the alienation of husband from wife, of children from parents, of persons from one another, of human beings from God. The human family, God’s “wanted ones,” “his people,” became, as the prophet Hosea dramatically symbolized through his marriage, “not wanted,” “not my people.” Yet in His boundless mercy God willed to reconcile His people to Himself and to one another. Through His Son Jesus Christ He has accomplished this work of reconciliation, for with St. Paul we are confident that “neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39).

Through the marriage of baptized persons, the human family disunited through sin can once more, as Pope John Paul II insists, be “reconstituted in its unity.”⁵⁷ The Christian family, brought into being by the irrevocable gift of Christian spouses of themselves to one another thus has the mission of mediating Christ’s sanctifying and redemptive love to the world. Precisely because it participates in the salvific efficacy of Christ’s redemptive love, it can enable its members to shape their choices

and actions in accordance with the truth; it can enable spouses and children to recognize and accept the personalistic norm, to refuse to consider other human persons as objects of use or enjoyment and to be willing to want them and to love them by willing efficaciously for them the goods of human existence, the goods of “life and

truth, holiness and grace, justice, love and peace.”⁵⁸ The mission of the Christian family can thus truthfully be summarized as that of making the world safe for human beings and of bringing into existence a society in which no human person will ever be unwanted.



NOTES

1Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation, Familiaris consortio* (November 22, 1981), n. 17.

2Pope John Paul II, “‘Stand Up’ for Human Life,” *Origins* NC documentary Service 9.18 (October 18, 1979) 279-281. “Nothing surpasses the greatness or dignity of a human person. Human life is not just an idea or an abstraction. Human life is the concrete reality of a being that lives, that acts, that grows and develops. . . . Human life is precious because it is the gift of a God whose love is infinite; and when God gives life, it is forever” (279).

3*Familiaris consortio*, n. 30.

4Here it should be noted that the Church has not as yet definitively judged whether full human personal life begins at conception. Thus in the “Declaration on Abortion” issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on November 18, 1979, we find a footnote # 19, which leaves the issues unresolved whether full human personal life begins at the moment of conception/fertilization. The note does, however, affirm that at conception/fertilization there is in being incipiently human life (text in *Official Catholic Teaching: Love and Sexuality*, ed. Odile M. Liebard, Wilmington, N.C.:McGrath Publishing Company, 1978, p. 490). Within the text of the “Declaration” we read: “it is not for the biological sciences to pass a definite judgment on properly philosophical and moral question, such as the moment when the human person first exists. . . . From the moral viewpoint . . . it is clear that, even if there be some doubt whether the entity conceived is already a human person, it is an objectively serious sin to expose oneself to the danger of committing murder.” This is followed by a citation from Tertullian, “He who will be a human being is already a human being” (p. 414).

5Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II), *Love and Responsibility*, trans. H J. Willetts (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1981), p. 79.

6Pope Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, in *Official Catholic Teachings: Love and Sexuality*, pp. 43-44; Pope Pius XII, Discourse to the St. Luke Union of Italian Doctors, *Discorsi i Radiomessaggi di sua Santità Pio XII*, 6 (1949) 191-192; Pope John XXIII, *Mater et magistra*, in *The Pope Speaks* 7 (1961) 331; *Gaudium et spes*, n. 51, cf. n. 27; Pope Paul VI, *Humanae vitae* n. 14.

7Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility* p. 26.

8 Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, n. 11; cf. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 51: “Man’s sexuality and the faculty of reproduction wondrously surpass the endowments of lower forms of life.”

9 Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 214; cf. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 12, 14, 15.

10On this cf. Robert Joyce, “When Does a Person Begin?” in *New Perspectives on Human Abortion*, ed. Thomas W. Hilgers, M.D., Dennis Horan, and David Mall (Frederick Md.: University Publications of America, 1981), pp. 345-356, especially p. 347.

11*Dignitatis humanae*, nn. 2-3; *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 15-17. For a brilliant synthesis of the teaching of Vatican Council II on this matter see John M. Finnish, “The Natural Law, Objective Morality, and Vatican II,” in *Principles of Catholic Moral Life*, ed. William E. May (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981), pp. 113-150, especially pp. 117-121.

12Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 291, note 8. Emphasis added. Wojtyla develops this idea at more length in his *The Acting Person*, trans. Andrzej Potocki (Dordrecht/Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979), Part II, chapter 4, “Self Determination and Fulfillment,” pp. 149-187, especially pp. 152-163.

13*Dignitatis humanae*, n. 3.

14Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 27.

15 *Gaudium et spes*, n. 38; Preface for the Feast of Christ the King.

16 Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 41. Cf. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 35: “Here then is the norm for human activity; that it harmonize with the authentic interest of the human race, in accordance with God’s will and design, and enable men as individuals and as members of society to pursue and fulfill their total vocation.

17 Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 292, note 11.

18 Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, n. 11.

19 This is the theme developed in *Familiaris consortio*, nn. 11-16.

20 St. Augustine, *Confessions*, BK 4, c. 2. n. 2.

21 Pope John Paul II, *The Original Unity of Man and Woman: Catechesis on the Book of Genesis* (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1981), p. 109 (Discourse of January 9, 1980 on the “Nuptial Meaning of the Body”).

22 St. Augustine, *De genesi and literam*, 9.7.

23 I recognize that unmarried individuals can at times care properly for their children, and parents who become single because of widowhood or abandonment or other causes seek heroically in many instances to provide for their children. Yet nothing can supply the home that loving spouses are capable of giving to their children.

24 Edward Schillebeeckx, *Marriage: Human Reality and Saving Mystery* (New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1965), p. 24.

25 *Gaudium et spes* n. 48: “By its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of children and in them it finds its crowning glory”; n. 50: “Marriage and married love are by nature ordered to the procreation and education of children. Indeed, children are the supreme gift of marriage”; n. 50: “Without intending to underestimate the other ends of marriage, it must be said that true married love and the whole structure of family life which results from it are directed to disposing the spouses to cooperate valiantly with the love of the Creator and Saviour; who through them will increase and enrich his family from day to day.”

Pope Paul VI, *Humanae vitae*, n. 8: “Marriage is ... the wise institution of the Creator to realize in mankind His design of love. By means of the reciprocal personal gift of self, proper and exclusive to them, husband and wife tend toward the communion of their beings in view of mutual personal perfection, to collaborate with God in the generation and education of new lives.”

Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, n. 28: “Fecundity is the fruit and sign of conjugal love, the living testimony of the full reciprocal self-giving of the spouses. “

26 *Gaudium et spes*, n. 48, text cited in the previous note.

27 Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, n. 14.

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Ibid.*, n. 11.

30 *Gaudium et spes* n. 48.

31 Pope John Paul II, *The Original Unity of Man and Woman*, pp. 81-82 (Discourse of November 21, 1979 on “Marriage Is One and Indissoluble in the First Chapters of Genesis”).

32 Here the words of the German Protestant theologian, Helmut Thielicke, are pertinent. He wrote: “Not uniqueness establishes the marriage, but the marriage establishes the uniqueness”: *The Ethics of Sex* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 108.

“For a development of this matter see my *Sex, Marriage, and Chastity: Reflections of a Catholic Layman, Spouse, and Parent* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981), pp. 35-37. Cf. also J. R. Lucas, “The ‘Vinculum Conjugale’: A Moral Reality,” *Theology* 78 (1975) 225-230.

34 Until the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century the Church recognized the validity of clandestine marriages so long as true and free consent to the reality of marriage was given. Yet because of the grave social evils of clandestine marriages, the Church forbade them. At the Council of Trent the Council Fathers decreed that in the future Roman Catholics could give valid consent to marriage only in the presence of the parish priest (or his delegate) and two witnesses (and, of course, if this is impossible, for instance in missionary countries, free consent by the spouses publicly given suffices).

35 Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, n. H.

36 Here the remarks of St. Augustine in his *Confessions*, Bk. 13, ch. 26, n. 41, are significant: “The gift is the thing itself given . . . but the fruit is the good and right will of the giver.” Compare this with Karol Wojtyła’s remarks

in *Love and Responsibility*, p. 49: “Love . . . is given its definitive shape by acts of the will at the level of the person.”

37Cf. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 291, note 8.

38Ibid., pp. 28-29.

39Ibid., p. 30.

40Ibid., emphasis added.

41Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (in *Official Catholic Teachings: Love and Sexuality*, pp. 26-31). Pius wrote, “under the three goods of marriage set forth by St. Augustine is contained a splendid summary of the whole doctrine of Christian marriage.” *Gaudium et spes*, n. 48, refers to the “benefits and ends” that God had in view in establishing marriage, and in footnote 1 to this paragraph refers to the teaching of St. Augustine on the threefold good of marriage in his *De bono conjugali*, PL 40.375-376, to the teaching of St. Thomas on the same subject in *Summa Theologiae, Pars Tertia, Supplementum*, q. 49, a. 3, ad 1, and to the teaching of Pope Pius XI in *Casti Connubii*.

42A splendid commentary on the teaching of St. Thomas that the sacrament is the good that marriage is provided by Germain G. Grisez, “Marriage: Reflections Based on St. Thomas Aquinas and Vatican Council II,” *The Catholic Mind* 64 (June, 1966) 4-19. Cf. my *Sex, Marriage, and Chastity*, pp. 39-47.

43Cf. *Sex, Marriage, and Chastity*, pp. 39-47.

44*Gaudium et spes*, n. 49: “Married love is uniquely expressed and perfected by the exercise of the acts proper to marriage.” While the Council recognized the uniquely beautiful way in which marital love is expressed in the marital act, it by no means identified marital love with the marital act. “There is a time to embrace, and a time not to embrace,” and the heart of conjugal love is charity, a charity that vivifies conjugal chastity, without which, as the Council also teaches (cf. n. 51) spousal love will wither away. See *Sex, Marriage, and Chastity*, pp. 39-47.

45Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, n. 11.

46Cf. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, pp. 109-114 for a brilliant discussion of the difference between love and affection and sentimentality.

47Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, n. 11.

48Cf. Joseph Jensen, O.S.B., “Does Porneia Mean Fornication? A Critique of Bruce Malina,” *Novum Testamentum* 20 (1978) 161-184.

49Innocent III (1198-1216), Honorius III (1216-1227).

50Pope Leo XIII, *Arcanum Divinae Sapientiae*, in *Official Catholic Teachings: Love and Sexuality*, n. 9, p. 9.

51*Gaudium et spes*, n. 48.

52Cf. Hosea, chapters 1-3; Ephesians 5:22-33.

53Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, n. 13.

54Ibid.

55Ibid., Part III, Section 4, nn. 49-64.

56Ibid., n. 13.

57Ibid., n. 15.

58Cf. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 38; Preface for the Feast of Christ the King.