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Marriage as a Healing Sacrament:

Marriage Preparation in Light of St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body and 1960 Retreat for Engaged Couples

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Abstract
In Pope John Paul II's 1981 Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, he called for a renewal of marriage preparation in order to foster more successful marriages, and to help families better recognize their identity and mission within the Church. This dissertation examines John Paul II's call for a renewal of marriage preparation in light of a *Retreat for Engaged Couples* that Karol Wojtyła (the future pope) gave in 1960. The retreat is analyzed based on his own formative experiences, pastoral approach to marriage preparation, and his other writings on marriage and family published in 1960. The retreat is centered around the vows from the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, in order for the couples to better understand the sacrament of Matrimony, and to adequately prepare themselves for receiving the graces of the sacrament, not just on their wedding day, but throughout their marriage. Through this catechesis, he gives greater meaning to love as a virtue, fidelity through active trust, reciprocity, the common good, and conjugal honor that recognizes the ends of marriage. John Paul II's call for a renewal of marriage preparation can find a model in Wojtyła's approach and content of the retreat. Over the past 50 years, there has been a massive decline in the number of couples getting sacramentally married in the Church in the United States. Emerging adults are delaying marriage, resulting in a substantial time of separation from the influence of family and the witness of marital love. In the interim, many become immersed within a hookup culture of brief, uncommitted relationships and casual sexual encounters. This contributes to a void of formation and doubt regarding the capacity of self or others to enter into authentic lifelong marital commitment. Many are wounded by a consumerist, utilitarian, and temporary mentality, which thwarts their capacity for self-gift, reciprocity, and love. Karol Wojtyła's approach and content provides insight into an adequate marriage preparation that can meet the challenges of our cultural climate, providing marriage as a healing sacrament for both the couple and the culture.

Key words: Karol Wojtyła, John Paul II, healing, love, responsibility, marriage, matrimony, wedding, marriage preparation, family, sex, conjugal, nuptial, love, fidelity, honor, grace, sacrament, liturgy, community, Środowisko, accompaniment, vows, trust, indissolubility, reciprocity, common good, self-gift, self-donation, maturity, sentiments, egoism, reciprocity, parenthood, children, sexual revolution, emerging adulthood, contraception, divorce, cohabitation.

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the 20th century there was a rich development in the Church's theology of marriage and the family, which emphasized the importance of the identity, mission, and the apostolate of the laity within the Church. Paradoxically, over the past fifty years there has been a massive decline in the number of Catholics who enter into sacramental marriage. Of those who do choose to get married in the Church, many are uncatechized, do not attend Mass regularly, and do not understand the fullness of what marriage is as a sacrament. Often priests feel afraid or unprepared to discuss issues such as premarital sex, chastity, cohabitation, contraception, and even participation in the Church with couples, for fear that they will be offended or scared off. On the other hand, some priests refuse to marry couples that fail to live in strict adherence to the teachings of the Church, yet do not help these couples to understand and live these teachings.

I propose that neither making unbridled concessions nor merely imposing rules will lead to conversion and active discipleship within the Church. Instead, marriage preparation should be viewed as an opportunity to accompany the couple, gradually leading them to the fullness of truth about faith, sacraments, and marriage. It should lead to an authentic encounter with Christ, so that the couple can participate in the mystery of redemption through their marriage. This dissertation seeks to provide a path for the renewal of marriage preparation in light of the teachings and experience of St. John Paul II.

Marriage and the family were at the heart of John Paul II's papacy.[1] As Perry Cahall notes, "Pope John Paul II wrote more extensively on the topic of marriage than any other pope in the history of the Catholic Church. With his writing we witness the most significant development in the Catholic Church's theology of marriage since St. Augustine."[2] His papal writings on marriage and family include his Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (1981), his *Letter to Families* (1994), and his five-year series of catechesis on "Human Love in the Divine Plan," popularly known as the *Theology of the Body* (1979-1984).[3] He also treated

[1] At the Canonization of John Paul II on April 27, 2014, Pope Francis declared that "In his own service to the People of God, Saint John Paul II was *the pope of the family*." Pope Francis, *Holy Mass and Rite of Canonization of Blesseds John XXIII and John Paul II,* April 27, 2014.
https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140427_omelia-canonizzazioni.html

[2] P. Cahall, *The Mystery of Marriage: A Theology of the Body and the Sacrament*, Chicago / Mundelein, IL 2016: Hildebrand Books, 267.

[3] Cf. M. Waldstein, "Introduction" in John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. M. Waldstein. Boston 2006: Pauline Books and Media.

the theme of the dignity and vocation of women in his Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* (1988) and his *Letter to Women* (1995). And he wrote about the value and inviolability of human life in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (1995). From the start of his papacy, John Paul II emphasized that "[e]very effort should be made to strengthen and develop pastoral care for the family, which should be treated as a real matter of priority, in the certainty that future evangelization depends largely on the domestic Church."[4] Far from being just one issue among many, John Paul II recognized that the family is at the heart of the Church's mission of evangelization.

In *Familiaris Consortio*, John Paul II connects the identity of the family, as domestic church, with its mission of evangelization. "The family finds in the plan of God the Creator and Redeemer not only its *identity*, what it is, but also its *mission*, what it can and should do. The role that God calls the family to perform in history derives from what the family is […] family, become what you are."[5] The family discovers its identity in God's plan as "a community of life and love," and so recognizes that it "has the mission to *guard, reveal and communicate love*, and this is a living reflection of and a real sharing in God's love for humanity and the love of Christ the Lord for the Church His bride."[6]

In order to help families better recognize their identity and live out their mission, John Paul II acknowledged that "[m]ore than ever necessary in our times is preparation of young people for marriage and family life". Therefore, he called for "better and more intensive programs of marriage preparation in order to eliminate as far as possible the difficulties that many married couples find themselves in, and even more in order to favor positively the establishing and maturing of successful marriages".[7] Based on his extensive pastoral experience, he recognized that "preparation for Christian marriage is itself a journey of faith," that is a "gradual and continuous process"[8] that includes three main stages: "remote, proximate and immediate preparation."[9] It also requires that the wedding liturgy expresses "the essentially ecclesial and sacramental nature of the conjugal covenant" that is "valid, worthy and fruitful"[10].

John Paul II's call for the renewal of marriage preparation came from his extensive pastoral experience ministering to young people, students, and families. In *Crossing the*

[4] John Paul II, Address to the Third General Assembly of the Bishops of Latin America (Jan. 28, 1979), as quoted in John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio: "The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World,"* (22 November 1981). Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1981, 65.
[5] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.
[6] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.
[7] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.
[8] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 51, 66.
[9] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.
[10] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 67.

Threshold of Hope, John Paul II reflected that "*[a]s a young priest I learned to love human love*."[11] His experience as a priest, confessor, preacher, professor, and writer helped him to understand that "young people are always searching for the beauty in love. They want their love to be beautiful."[12] Yet he also recognized that "it is necessary to prepare young people for marriage, it is necessary to teach them love. Love is not something that is learned, and yet there is nothing else as important to learn!"[13]

As a priest, Fr. Karol Wojtyła, the future Pope John Paul II, came to see the necessity and challenge of marriage preparation. He highlights this challenge in the Author's Introduction to the First Polish Edition (1960) of *Love and Responsibility*. He acknowledges that "a problem exists, which can be described as an 'introduction of love into love.'"[14] He goes on to specify what this means: "In the first instance the word 'love' signifies the content of the greatest commandment, whereas in the second instance all that is formed on the basis of the sexual drive between a man and a woman."[15] The "problem," as Wojtyła sees it, is introducing God's love, the virtue of charity, into marital and sexual love. Charity has a healing effect, which "upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love."[16] As St. Paul's letter to the Romans tells us, charity is participation in the love of the Trinity: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (*Rm* 5:5)[17]. Through this divinization of human love, the couple's love is strengthened, healed, and purified, becoming truly "beautiful." In *Love and Responsibility*, a largely philosophical and ethical work, Wojtyła sought to examine the process of learning to love by answering the question: how can we find happiness in love without using another person?

In the same year that Wojtyła published *Love and Responsibility*, he also published his most well-known play, *The Jeweler's Shop*, which is subtitled, "*A Meditation on the Sacrament of Matrimony, Passing on Occasion into a Drama*". Here also Wojtyła acknowledges the problem of the "introduction of love into love," warning that "love carries people away like an absolute, although it lacks absolute dimensions. But acting under an illusion, they do not try to

[11] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, New York 1994: Alfred A. Knopf, 123.
[12] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 123.
[13] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 122-123.
[14] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, translation and forward by Grzegorz Ignatik, Boston 2013: Pauline Books & Media, xxiii.
[15] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, xxiii.
[16] John Paul II, *The Trinity's Embrace*, Boston 2022: Pauline Books & Media, 275. Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., Vatican translation, Rome 1997: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 1827.
[17] All quotations from Scripture are from the *Revised Standard Version Second Catholic Edition*, San Francisco, 2000.

connect that love with the Love that has such a dimension. They do not even feel the need, blinded as they are not so much by the force of their emotion as by lack of humility."[18] Only God's love has absolute dimensions, because God is eternal. Love, therefore, "has the taste of the whole man. It has his weight. And the weight of his whole fate. It cannot be a single moment. Man's eternity passes through it. That is why it is to be found in the dimensions of God, because only He is eternity."[19] Human love needs divine love, "otherwise, the danger is great: love will not stand the pressure of reality."[20] Through the drama of human experience, Wojtyła again seeks to show the need for an education in love.

Less well known is that in December of 1960, the same year that he published *Love and Responsibility* and *The Jeweler's Shop*, Wojtyła gave a three-day retreat for engaged couples at the collegiate church of St. Anne in Kraków. After more than 50 years of being kept in the archives, this retreat was published in Polish for the first time in 2012 as *Budować dom na skale: rekolekcje dla narzeczonych* (Build Your House Upon the Rock: Retreat for Engaged Couples).[21] Within the retreat meditations, Bishop Wojtyła explores many of the same themes that he wrote about in *Love and Responsibility* and *The Jeweler's Shop*, but with a different focus: to spiritually prepare actual couples for their wedding day. Through the retreat, Wojtyła provides an education of the beauty of love, helping the couples build their relationship on the solid foundation of love as a virtue (charity).

I was first introduced to Wojtyła's retreat in 2013-2015, while studying for my licentiate (S.T.L.) at the John Paul II Institute in Rome. I found Wojtyła's *Retreat for Engaged Couples* to be extremely valuable for marriage preparation, and immediately noticed that it shared many common themes with his other works. In order to make a more in-depth study of the meditations, I translated the retreat into English. In 2018, I presented on its themes at the *Hildebrand Schülerkreis Personalist Philosophy Seminar* in Gaming, Austria, and published my paper in *Philosophical News: Official Publication of the European Society for Moral*

[18] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop: A Meditation on the Sacrament of Matrimony, Passing on Occasion into a Drama*, translation by Boleslaw Taborski, San Francisco 1980: Ignatius Press, 88.
[19] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 60.
[20] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 88.
[21] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale: rekolekcje dla narzeczonych*, Kraków – Rzym 2014: Instytut Dialogu Międzykulturowego im. Jana Pawła II. The first edition was published in 2012 by the John Paul II Institute for Intercultural Dialogue in Kraków [Instytut Dialogu Międzykulturowego im. Jana Pawla II w Krakowie] and the John Paul II Foundation Center of Documentation and Study of the Pontificate in Rome [Fondazione Giovanni Paolo II Centro di Documentazione e Studio del Pontificato a Roma]. In the second edition from 2014, the publication was supplemented with a part entitled "*Oblubieńczy sacrament*" [The Spousal sacrament], which included a homily and letter to newlyweds from Karol Wojtyła and two homilies from John Paul II. An Italian translation was published in 2013: P. Kwiatkowski, *Costruire la casa sulla roccia: Esercizi spirituali per fidanzati*. Angri 2013: Editrice Punto Famiglia.

Philosophy.[22] I also made an in-depth presentation in May of 2020 for the Catholic Psychotherapy Association Annual Conference on the "*Psychological and Spiritual Foundations of Marriage Preparation Within John Paul II's Retreat for Engaged Couples*." Based on the positive feedback I received and the value that people saw in the retreat mediations, I decided to further analyze the background and content of Wojtyła's retreat, and apply it to the challenges that the Church faces today regarding marriage preparation and the education of love.

One of the key insights from Wojtyła's *Retreat for Engaged Couples* is that "the sacrament of Matrimony is the introduction to married life, it is the threshold of this life. If we cross this threshold well, then it is very likely that also the successive path of marital life will unfold favorably."[23] Wojtyła's retreat is centered on preparing the couples for marriage by providing them catechesis on what marriage is as a sacrament. He does this by focusing the entirety of the retreat on the vows, so that the couples will "come to grasp the essence of sacramental marriage."[24] By helping the couples to better understand and appreciate their role as ministers of the sacrament of matrimony, and the graces that they will receive both on their wedding day and throughout their marriage, Wojtyła helps provide a "solid foundation"[25] for the entirety of married life. This dissertation seeks to analyze the retreat in order to draw from it insights into John Paul II's call for a renewal of marriage preparation.

In the first chapter we will examine the background of the retreat. We begin by looking at Wojtyła's remote preparation for his ministry (1.1.). This includes his own experience of family life, as well as his education and interests in poetry and theater. We will examine how his studies at the university, the horrors of World War II, and his experience of work contributed to his perception of human dignity and love. Through mentors like Jan Tyranowski and Mieczysław Kotlarczyk, Wojtyła was formed in the contemplative life and theater, which helped him to enter more deeply into God's presence, and to more effectively draw people into the transcendent truth of God's Word. We will also see how his experience of seminary and the study of philosophy confirmed his experiences and intuitions. Lastly, we will examine how his doctoral dissertation on St. John of the Cross contributed to his understanding of personhood, communion, and self-giving love.

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[22] Z. Swantek, "The Role of Accompaniment and *Środowisko* in Fr. Karol Wojtyła's Pastoral Ministry for an Education in Love" in *Philosophical News: Official Publication of the European Society for Moral Philosophy*, Number 16 – July 2018, 203-208.
[23] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 18.
[24] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 21.
[25] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 25.

Next, we will look to his proximate formation, in which he had direct pastoral experience in marriage preparation (1.2.). Wojtyła's first parish assignments and his experience as a university chaplain helped him to mature in his method and means of educating young people in love. From his pastoral experiences, he developed his distinct pastoral approach to the education of love: forming an environment and supportive community (*Środowisko*) where love could be experienced, along with the accompaniment of mentors and guides. His pastoral plan, though unique in that it combatted the Communist regime that occupied Poland at the time, continues to provide an example for all pastoral ministry. This is especially relevant within societies, governments, and cultures that promote values that do not support the flourishing of love and the common good. We will see how his education of love was further developed through his habilitation thesis on Max Scheler and Phenomenology, as well as his experience as a university professor. Lastly, we will examine how he expanded his pastoral strategy throughout the Archdiocese of Kraków after becoming a bishop.

In the final section of the first chapter, we will turn to the immediate stage of the background to the retreat, in which we will do an analytical reading of Wojtyła's other two major works on love that he published in 1960 (1.3.). First, we will highlight the main themes of *Love and Responsibility*, his philosophical work on sexual ethics. Then we will look at how he examines these same themes from a different perspective in his drama, *The Jeweler's Shop*.

In the second chapter we will do an in-depth analysis of the text: *Build Your House Upon the Rock: Retreat for Engaged Couples*. Our methodology will be to provide an analytical reading of the original text, based on my own translation. When it is helpful, we will utilize parallel passages from *Love and Responsibility* and *The Jeweler's Shop* to help bring out the deeper meaning of the concepts and themes that Wojtyła's discusses within the retreat. At times we will footnote parallel passages from his future writing as Pope John Paul II, but we will not bring this into the analysis, since this would be reading into the text.

In the first mediation (2.1.), we will examine Wojtyła's reflection on what it means "To Swear to the Truth Before God". Wojtyła begins by identifying the importance of marriage preparation, and what it means to prepare for marriage as a sacrament. Wojtyła's focus for the retreat will be on the vows themselves, therefore we will examine their religious character and what it means to make vows before God. This helps us to understand the significance of what it means for the spouses to be the ministers of the sacrament of Matrimony, and the importance of imploring God's grace, not just on the wedding day, but throughout the couple's marital life.

In the second mediation (2.2.), we will examine the theme of "Creative Love and Faithfulness to the End". Wojtyła highlights the connection between the promises of love and

fidelity. Couples need to arrive at a point where there is active and mutual trust, built on accurate and reciprocal knowledge of each other and personal maturity. This leads to the need for the indissolubility of marriage, which protects both the children and the love of the couple itself. Wojtyła warns of the dangers of immature sentiments, which can lead to disillusionment, as well as egoism, through which the individuals seek themselves and their own happiness, rather than the common good. In order for couples to have a solid foundation, they must build upon love as a virtue, and reach a realization of reciprocity.

In the third mediation (2.3.), we will examine the theme of "Conjugal Honor". Wojtyła begins by evaluating the ends of marriage, and the need to subordinate the secondary ends to the first. By its nature, the physical communion of spouses is oriented to procreation, and therefore couples need to take into account the possibility of becoming a father and a mother. Wojtyła will also explore the topic of natural family planning and continence within marriage. The second end of marriage, reciprocal help, is connected with the need for reciprocity. What unites the couple should not be a bilateral egoism, but love as a virtue, which allows for conjugal honor. The third end of marriage, the natural satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh, can be a true expression of love only when it is subordinated to the first two ends: procreation and the education of children, and mutual help. In this way the couple's sexual union truly is an expression of love, and is not reduced to use. Conjugal honor extends to honor within family life, to the education of children. Wojtyła ends the retreat with a meditation on marriage as the sacrament of sacrificial love, which participates in Christ's priestly sacrifice on the Cross and in the Eucharist.

In the third chapter we will apply Wojtyła's method and the themes of his retreat to the current challenges and needs related to marriage preparation in the Church. We begin (3.1.) by examining the cultural challenges. The focus will be on the experience of the Church and culture in the United States, however, much of this study will be relevant for the Church throughout the world. We will examine the massive decline in the number of sacramental marriages in the United States, and seek to understand why sacramental marriage is in crisis. We will recognize the Church's need to respond to the rise of emerging adulthood, which has led to the delay of making enduring commitments like marriage, resulting in a substantial time of separation from the influence of family and the witness of marital love. In the interim, many become immersed within a hookup culture of brief, uncommitted relationships and casual sexual encounters. This contributes to a void of formation and doubt regarding the capacity of self or others to enter into an authentic lifelong marital commitment.

Our methodology in the next two sections will be to apply insights from Wojtyla's pastoral experience and the analytical reading of his retreat to his future call as pope for a renewal of marriage preparation. For this we will utilize John Paul II's original texts on marriage and family, especially *Familiaris Consortio*, *Letter to Families*, and *Theology of the Body*. First, we will view marriage as a healing sacrament for the couple (3.2.). We will see the need to make ministry to the family and the education of love a pastoral priority within the Church, which necessitates the education and formation of clergy and laity, as well as the support of bishops. This requires accompanying the couple through marriage preparation, leading them to grow in their knowledge of the faith through catechesis, and by following Wojtyła's approach of utilizing the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* in order to give the couples a deeper understanding of the sacrament. Since Wojtyła's retreat was focused on the vows, we will consider the merits of this approach, which highlights the significance of sacramental marriage, and the unique graces that it provides. We will also consider the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* as a means of healing the wounded desires of the couple, especially through the elements of the rite.

Lastly, we will view marriage as a healing sacrament for the culture (3.3.), applying key themes from Wojtyła's retreat to the identity and mission of the family. We will first examine the identity of the family as a community of life and love. Through this identity, the family gives an authentic witness to the common good, which can have a healing effect on society. Second, we will examine the mission that flows from this identity, "to guard, reveal, and communicate love." This is done primarily through the Church's ecclesial mission as "domestic Church," in which the family shares in the three *munera* of Jesus in a unique way.

Through this dissertation, we hope to show that John Paul II's theology of marriage is not a theological abstraction, divorced from reality, but is rooted in his rich pastoral experience and understanding of marriage and family life. The context and content of Wojtyła's 1960 *Retreat for Engaged Couples* provides incredible insight into how we can renew marriage preparation, in a way that responds to the needs and challenges of our time. In recognizing the parallels of the retreat with John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* and other writings on marriage and family, we can view marriage as a healing sacrament, both for the couples and for society, and so invite couples to discover the healing graces of the sacrament, in order to better live out their identity and mission within the Church.

CHAPTER I
CONTEXT: "I LEARNED TO LOVE HUMAN LOVE"

1.1 Remote: Wojtyła's Influences and Formation

1.1.1. Family and Wadowice

Karol Wojtyła was born in Wadowice, Poland (province of Kraków) on May 18, 1920, to Karol and Emilia (nee Kaczorowska) Wojtyła. George Weigel, who wrote a two-volume biography of the future pope, believes that the "roots of John Paul II's witness to marriage and the family, and the roots of his teaching about the beauty of human love, can be found in Wadowice."[26] There, his experience of family, friendship, faith and education would prove to be deeply formative.

He was born in his family home, a small second-story apartment on 2 Rynek Street, which was across from the Church of the Presentation of the Holy Virgin.[27] It was around sunset, and the "sounds of church bells and the Marian choruses, being sung in the church in honor of Our Lady during the evening May services, were the first sounds the future pope heard on entering the world."[28] Lolek, as his family called him, was baptized Karol Józef at the Church of the Presentation on June 20, 1920.

Pope John Paul II would later reflect that his "preparation for the priesthood in the seminary was *in a certain sense* preceded by the preparation I received *in my family*, thanks to the life and example of my parents."[29] His parents met each other in church, and were married on February 10, 1904, in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul in Kraków. Emilia gave birth to her first son, Edmund, on August 26, 1906. In 1914 she gave birth to a daughter, Olga, who died shortly after birth. After this difficult pregnancy, Emilia would suffer from numerous health problems for the rest of her life, including severe back pain and sudden dizziness. Shortly before young Karol's ninth birthday, his mother died of kidney failure and congenital heart disease on April 13, 1929. She was only forty-five. John Paul II later reflected, "I had not yet made my First Holy Communion when I lost my mother: I was barely nine years old. So I do not have a clear awareness of her contribution, which must have been great, to my religious training."[30]

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[26] G. Weigel, *City of Saints: A Pilgrimage to John Paul II's Krakow*, New York 2015: Image, 27-28.
[27] His family apartment's address has been changed to 7 Kościelna Street, and is now a John Paul II museum.
[28] R. Allegri, *John Paul II: A Life of Grace*, Cincinnati, OH 2005: Servant Books, 27.
[29] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, New York 1996: Doubleday, 19-20. The sainthood causes for John Paul II's parents, Karol and Emilia Wojtyła, were formally opened on May 7, 2020.
[30] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 20.

The year after Emilia's death, Karol Sr. took his sons Edmund and Karol on a pilgrimage to the vast outdoor Marian shrine of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, located six miles from Wadowice in the foothills of the Beskidy Mountains.[31] At Kalwaria they prayed before the miraculous image of Our Lady of Calvary and walked the wooded mountain paths that connect forty-five chapels, which wind through two paths: the Way of Our Lord and the Way of Our Lady. These two paths intersect at the largest chapel, dedicated to Mary's Assumption, signifying Christ's triumph over death, and that Mary, "the first of believers, is the first fruit of the redeeming work of Christ."[32] Another chapel, commemorating Jesus meeting his mother on his way to his crucifixion, is heart-shaped, "a reminder to pilgrims that the dying Christ, by giving his mother into the care of the beloved disciple, John, gave her to all his disciples, who would always find a home in the heart of Mary."[33] Even if their father did not have the words to make sense of the suffering they were enduring, he brought his sons to this holy shrine to pray and reflect, while finding strength to deal with their sorrow.

Kalwaria Zebrzydowska sponsored a dramatic three-day passion play during Holy Week, through which "pilgrims became virtual participants in the drama of Christ's suffering and death."[34] This passion play attracts thousands of pilgrims each year, which unfolds along the trails of the shrine. George Weigel reflects that:

> the experience of the Kalwaria passion play helped teach Lolek the lesson his father had likely intended in taking him there, while they were still in mourning for a wife and mother: our lives are best understood, and our sorrows are best borne, when they are recognized as "playing" within a drama that God himself entered, in the person of his Son, so that the human drama might become, through the redemption, a divine comedy, not a cosmic tragedy or absurdity.[35]

Karol Wojtyła would continue to return to Kalwaria Zebrzydowska throughout his life, even as a priest, bishop and pope, finding it to be a place of prayer and spiritual refuge.[36]

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[31] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*, New York 2005: Harper Perennial, 30.
[32] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 26.
[33] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 26.
[34] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 25.
[35] G. Weigel, *City of Saints*, 29.
[36] Cf. John Paul II, *Apostolic Pilgrimage to Poland, Visit to the Marian Shrine of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Address of His Holiness John Paul II (7 June 1979),* https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1979/june/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19790607_polonia-kalwaria-zebrzydowska.html: "Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, the Shrine of the Mother of God, the holy places of Jerusalem connected with the life of Jesus and that of his Mother reproduced here, the 'little ways', as they are called. I visited them often as a boy and as a young man. I visited them as a priest. Especially, I often visited the Shrine of Kalwaria as Archbishop of Krakow and Cardinal. Many times we came here, the priests and I, to concelebrate before the Mother of God. We came in the yearly pilgrimage in August and in the pilgrimage of certain groups in the spring and the autumn. More frequently, however, I came here alone and, walking along the little ways of Jesus Christ and his Mother, I was able to meditate on their holy mysteries and recommend to Christ through Mary the specially difficult and uniquely responsible problems in the complexity of my ministry. I can say that almost none of these problems

When Karol was 10 years old, his older brother Edmund became a doctor.[37] Photographs confirm that "Karol would often visit his brother, the doctor."[38] Dr. Wojtyła felt a calling to dedicate himself to people who were suffering. He had a special interest in social medicine, and said that "[e]very individual, in fact, cannot be considered in a vacuum—as a mere abstraction—divorced from the social sphere in which that person lives."[39] He believed that our interpersonal relationships affect both our physical health and spiritual health, and so Edmund helped set up a special unit in the hospital for the poor and disenfranchised. He is remembered for always trying "to assist his patients, not only by means of his profound knowledge which he continued to enhance by constant studies, but also by striving to be a compassionate brother to them"[40].

In November 1932, during Edmund's second year as a doctor, a 21-year-old woman named Anna was admitted to his hospital with Scarlet Fever. At the time there were not yet any antibiotics, and scarlet fever was highly contagious. Though Anna was not his patient, Edmund offered to help her. He thought that it was immoral to let her suffer and die alone, and so he remained at her side day and night to comfort her, pray with her, and dispel her fears of death. Sadly, Edmund became infected with scarlet fever and died on December 4, 1932. He was only 26. The newspaper said that he died "offering his young life for suffering humanity"[41]. This had a profound effect on his younger brother. John Paul II later reflected that "[m]y mother's death made a deep impression on my memory and my brother's perhaps a still deeper one, because of the dramatic circumstances in which it occurred and because I was more mature."[42] He kept his brother's stethoscope in a drawer in his desk as a special treasure.

Perhaps the member of the Wojtyła family who had the greatest impact on Karol was his father, Karol Sr., who had served for 27 years in the Austro-Hungarian army. He earned a commendation during World War I, and was awarded the Iron Cross of Merit. After Poland

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reached its maturity except here, through ardent prayer before the great mystery of faith that Kalwaria holds within itself." Cf. John Paul II, *Gift and* Mystery, 30-31: "Even as a child, and still more as a priest and Bishop, it would lead me to make frequent Marian pilgrimages to Kalwaria Zebrzydowska. Kalwaria is the principal Marian shrine of the Archdiocese of Cracow. I would go there often, walking along its paths in solitude and presenting to the Lord in prayer the various problems of the Church, especially in the difficult times during the struggle against communism." Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 188.

[37] Cf. A. Frossard, *"Be Not Afraid!"*, New York 1984: St. Martin's Press, 13: John Paul II noted that his mother "wanted two sons, one a doctor and the other a priest; my brother was a doctor, and in spite of everything, I have become a priest."

[38] A. Boniecki, *The Making of the Pope of the Millennium: Kalendarium of the Life of Karol Wojtyła*, Stockbridge, Massachusetts 2005: Marian Press, 39.

[39] R. Allegri, *John Paul II: A Life of Grace*, 52.

[40] A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 47.

[41] R. Allegri, *John Paul II: A Life of Grace*, 52.

[42] A. Frossard, *"Be Not Afraid!"*, 14.

regained independence on November 11, 1918, he was admitted to the Polish Army as an officer of the 12th Infantry Regiment in Wadowice. He would be granted retirement by 1927, along with a promotion to captain because of his meritorious conduct. He became known in Wadowice as "the captain" [43].

"My father was admirable and almost all the memories of my childhood and adolescence are connected with him," John Paul II remembered. "The violence of the blows which had struck him had opened up immense spiritual depths in him; his grief found its outlet in prayer."[44] He saw his father as "a deeply religious man," whose "life became one of constant prayer."[45] He noted that "The mere fact of seeing him on his knees had a decisive influence on my early years,"[46] and that, "[s]ometimes I would wake up during the night and find my father on his knees, just as I would always see him kneeling in the parish church. We never spoke about a vocation to the priesthood, but *his example was in a way my first seminary*, a kind of domestic seminary."[47] By the time Karol was twelve years old, all of his immediate family members had died except his father. However, through his father's witness and guidance he learned that "while we cannot avoid suffering in this life, we need not fear it. For human suffering has been redeemed in Christ. The cross, borne in faith, is therefore the way of salvation."[48]

1.1.2. Poetry and Theater

While growing up in Wadowice, Karol Wojtyła was deeply formed by literature, especially Polish Romanticism. His "first exposure to Polish Romanticism probably came when his father read him the famous trilogy of Henryk Sienkiewicz, in which bold knights charge back and forth across the steppes of the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, in violent pursuit of glory and defense of faith and fatherland."[49] He also read, memorized and performed works from other great poets and dramatists of Polish Romanticism, including Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, and Cyprian Kamil Norwid.[50] Major themes from these writers were captured by Jeffrey Tranzillo in the following way:

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[43] A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 38. R. ALLEGRI, *John Paul II: A Life of Grace*, 30.
[44] A. Frossard, *"Be Not Afraid!"*, 14.
[45] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 20.
[46] A. Frossard, *"Be Not Afraid!"*, 14.
[47] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 20.
[48] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, Washington, D.C. 2013: The Catholic University of America Press, 3. Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 27-33, 41-43.
[49] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 33.
[50] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 34. Cf, John Paul II. *Memory and Identity*, 60-61: "It is well known that the nineteenth century marked a high point in Polish culture. Never before had the Polish nation produced writers of such genius as Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Zygmunt Krasiński, and Cyprian Norwid. Polish music had

> the human spirit is the driving force of history; the loss of national sovereignty is linked to the loss of Christian virtue; national suffering is a redemptive vocation leading to the authentic liberation of the human spirit; Christ's Incarnation is the deepest basis of human fraternity, equality, and freedom; God's Spirit alters the course of human history through the proclamation of the Word; the very purpose of human life is to testify to the truth; human labor has its dignity in the laborer, who can transform work, through love, into an authentic expression of human freedom and thus into a redemptive act.[51]

Wojtyła's own view of history and the human condition were shaped through his reading and performing of these works. "While reading, performing and meditating upon writings of Polish and European poets", Jarosław Kupczak notes, "Wojtyła learned to appreciate the greatness, complexity, and depth of the human person. From that time on, the human drama became the center of his work as a philosopher, poet, and priest."[52] He was also inspired to write poetry himself. His first poem, "*Over this your white grave*," was written about his mother when he was 18.[53] He would continue to write poetry for the rest of his life.[54]

While in secondary school, Wojtyła discovered a love for acting and began performing at school and at parish-sponsored theatrical performances. He met Mieczysław Kotlarczyk during this period, "who deeply influenced his thinking about the relation of the proclaimed word to the dynamics of history."[55] Kotlarczyk believed that "the spoken word could communicate objective truths and values by eliciting just the right emotional response in the persons listening, moving them thus to change the world around them for the better."[56] Wojtyła's theatrical experiences had a deep impact on his formation. Tranzillo notes that Wojtyła learned that "emotions, a natural human endowment, are meant to serve the truth of

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never before reached such heights as in the works of Fryderyk Chopin, Stanisław Moniuszko, and other composers, through whom the artistic patrimony of the nineteenth century was enriched for future generations. The same can be said of the visual arts, painting and sculpture. The nineteenth century is a century of Jan Matejko and Artur Grottger; at the turn of the twentieth century, Stanisław Wypiański appears on the scene, an extraordinary genius in several fields, followed by [the painter] Jacek Malczewski and others…. The nineteenth century was a pioneering century for theatrical arts; at the beginning we find the great Wojciech Bogusławski, whose artistic teaching was received and developed by numerous others, especially in Southern Poland, in Kraków and in Lviv, which was then part of Poland. The theater was living through its golden age, both in serious drama and in popular plays."

[51] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 3 f. 4.

[52] J. Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty: The Human Person in the Philosophy of Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II,* Washington, D.C. 2000: The Catholic University of America Press, 4. Cf. G. Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II: Origins of his thought and action*, New York 1981: The Seabury Press, 53: "As we turn to Karol Wojtyła's experiences as an actor and read some of the Polish poets whose verses he once committed to memory, we rightly bear in mind that great passages learned in youth and roles played on a school stage and in apartments (perhaps after curfew in an occupied city) can be fully as important to the development of the thought, style, and action of the Pope as the scholarly books he read later as a seminarian or indeed might have written himself as a professor."

[53] John Paul II, *Collected Poems*, New York 1982: Random House, 2.

[54] Cf. John Paul II, *Collected Poems*, New York 1982: Random House. Cf. John Paul II, *Roman Triptych: Meditations*, Washington, D.C. 2003: USCCB Publishing.

[55] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 37.

[56] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 3.

right reason and hence the true good of the person." He would also learn that "the spoken word has tremendous power to transform persons and so, too, the history of which they are, or certainly should be, the protagonists." And he would come to understand the meaning of community, "as different individuals, each having a specific role to play, came together and contributed to a goal greater than any of them could have achieved alone."[57] All of this would have an impact on his discernment of his vocation, his understanding of love, and his approach to educating and ministering to young people and families.

1.1.3. Jagiellonian University, War and Work

In September of 1938 Karol moved to Kraków to begin studies at the Jagiellonian University, "one of the oldest of central European universities (having been founded in 1364) and one of the most illustrious centers of Polish scholarship"[58]. He moved with his father to the ground floor of a two-story apartment, owned by his aunts in the Dębniki area of Kraków. It was a fifteen-minute walk from the university, with a great view over the Vistula River of the Wawel Castle and Cathedral. However, since it was a small basement apartment it was dark, damp, and extremely cold in the winter. Wojtyła's friends called the apartment "the catacombs."[59]

Wojtyła chose to study Philology. He took a rigorous course load his freshman year: "Polish etymology, phonetics, and inflection and on the interpretation of literary texts; surveys of medieval, modern, and contemporary Polish poetry, dramas, and novels; introductory courses in Russian; and a survey of the grammar or Old Church Slavonic, the historic basis of modern Slavic languages."[60] Wojtyła was not yet considering a vocation to the priesthood. He later reflected that "[a]t the time I was completely absorbed by a passion for *literature*, especially *dramatic literature*, and for the *theater*."[61] However, his studies were preparing him for his vocation and future ministry. Recalling his student days, John Paul II wrote:

> We studied the descriptive grammar of modern Polish as well as the historical evolution of the language, with a special interest in its ancient Slavic roots. This opened up completely new horizons for me; it introduced me to *the mystery of language itself.*
>
> The word, before it is ever spoken on the stage, is already present in human history as a fundamental dimension of man's spiritual experience. Ultimately, the mystery of language brings us back to the inscrutable mystery of God himself. As I came to appreciate the power of the word in my literary and linguistic studies, I

[57] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 3-4. Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 37-38.
[58] M. Jablonska, *Wind From Heaven: John Paul II The Poet Who Became Pope*, Kettering, OH 2017: Angelico Press, 65.
[59] R. Allegri, *John Paul II: A Life of Grace*, 69.
[60] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 40.
[61] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 6.

> inevitably drew closer to the mystery of the Word—that Word of which we speak every day in the Angelus: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14). Later I came to realize that my study of Polish language and letters had prepared the ground for a different kind of interest and study. It had prepared me for an encounter with philosophy and theology.[62]

Unfortunately, after a successful first year his studies at the Jagiellonian would tragically be cut short.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland, reaching Kraków on September 6. By November the Jagiellonian was shut down, and 184 professors were rounded up and sent to the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg.[63] Wojtyła was forced to get a work card in order to remain in Kraków and avoid being executed or sent to a concentration camp. He began working at the Solvay quarry at Zakrzówek, pulverizing and shoveling limestone. In October of 1941 he was transferred to the Solvay chemical factory in Borek Fałęcki, where he often worked the night shift in the plant's water purification unit.

Though he had to quit his university studies, work became for him a school of human dignity. He later wrote a poem about this experience entitled, "*The Quarry*," in which he would reflect that "the greatness of work is inside man."[64] As Pope, he recalled that "[h]aving worked with my hands, I knew quite well the meaning of physical labor. Every day I had been with people who did heavy work. I came to know their living situations, their families, their interests, their human worth, and their dignity."[65] His friendships with his coworkers became an introduction to family life, that would later bear fruit in his ministry as a priest. He noted that "*I made friends with the workers*. Sometimes they invited me to their homes. Later, as a priest and Bishop, I baptized their children and grandchildren, blessed their marriages, and officiated at many of their funerals. I was also able to observe their deep but quiet religiosity and their great wisdom about life."[66] In time he would see that this experience was providential in his formation. In an interview shortly after being elected Pope, he reflects:

> No doubt I owe much to one single year's study at Poland's most ancient university, but I am not afraid to say that the following four years, in a working-class environment, were for me a blessing sent by Providence. The experience that I acquired in that period

[62] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 7-8.
[63] R. Allegri, *John Paul II: A Life of Grace*, 75. Cf. John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 8: "True, the professors of the Jagiellonian University tried to start the new academic year in the usual way, but the lectures lasted only until November 6, 1939. […] On that day the German authorities assembled all the teachers in a meeting which ended with the deportation of those distinguished scholars to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The period of my life devoted to the study of Polish language and letters thus came to an end, and the period of the German occupation began."
[64] K. Wojtyła, "The Quarry" in *Collected Poems*, 61-71.
[65] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 21-22.
[66] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 22.

> of my life was priceless. I have often said that I considered it possibly more valuable than a doctorate, which does not mean that I have a poor opinion of university degrees![67]

Wojtyła came to see how important these experiences can be for young people in such a formative time in their life.

1.1.4. The Living Rosary and The Rhapsodic Theater

Though his studies at the university had been forced to stop, his interest in theater continued. He began writing plays focused on Biblical themes. By Christmas of 1939 Wojtyła wrote a drama, *David*, and by Easter of 1940 another drama, *Job*, a meditation on justice in history provoked by the suffering of Poland. He also finished a Polish translation of Sophocles' *Oedipus*. And by the summer of 1940 he wrote another play, *Jeremiah*, that connected Jeremiah's call for repentance to the Counter-Reformation Jesuit preacher, Piotr Skarga, who preached fiery sermons on national reform in Poland in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Wojtyła also began reciting Polish texts and staging dramas with friends, in an attempt to defy the German efforts to destroy Polish culture.[68]

Wojtyła was also receiving faith formation at his parish, St. Stanislaus Kostka in Dębniki. All but one of the Salesian priests in Wojtyła's parish were sent to a concentration camp. The remaining priest, Fr. Aleksander Drozd, continued to conduct youth ministry underground, in defiance to the Nazi prohibitions. In order to avoid suspicion, he asked several qualified leaders to help him with this task. He entrusted one of these leaders, Jan Tyranowski, with organizing meetings with the young men of the parish.

Tyranowski was a tailor, who dedicated four hours every morning to meditation and prayer. For him, "the goal of contemplative prayer was a release from thoughts and images, a certain freedom to simply *be* in God's presence."[69] He made a vow of celibacy and spent his time reading spiritual classics, including the great Spanish Carmelite mystics, St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross. Based on these writings, "he held that it is not the intellect but the will and the feelings which, when trained, with the help of grace, permitted one to reach the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, and all the other distinctive gifts dispensed by the Holy Spirit."[70] He systematically recorded his hours dedicated to spiritual reading, spiritual exercises, and contemplation.

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[67] A. Frossard, *"Be Not Afraid!"*, 15.
[68] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 62-63.
[69] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 59.
[70] G. Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II*, 80.

Though Tyranowski was a somewhat reclusive mystic, he took up the task entrusted to him to catechize the young men of the parish and teach them how to pray. Tyranowski had "a powerful, almost irresistible, quality," and "managed to communicate to these young men that the points of doctrine they were discussing were not abstractions for him, but the objects of his daily experience."[71] He began organizing Living Rosary groups, each composed of fifteen young men, ranging from 14 to 20 years old.[72] Each of the groups was led by a more mature young man, called an "animator," who received spiritual direction and instruction from Tyranowski. Wojtyła was one of these leaders.[73] "In weekly, hour-long meetings in his apartment, Tyranowski taught his group leaders both the fundamentals of the spiritual life and methods for systematically examining and improving their daily lives."[74] He showed them that the interior life has an apostolic dimension, and should lead to greater service to others. Members pledged not only to a life of intense prayer, but to actively help one another.[75]

Tyranowski also met with the entire Living Rosary group every third Sunday of the month, and made himself available to anyone who needed to talk. "He insisted that daily records be kept by each on what a member of the Living Rosary did each day. […] The goal of the discipline of keeping a spiritual and practical journal was to further an inward and outward imitation of Christ."[76] At the time when Wojtyła was involved, there were about sixty young men taking part in the Living Rosary. And "[l]eading a Living Rosary group, which meant taking a measure of responsibility for the lives of fifteen other young men, was one important factor in Karol Wojtyła's rapid maturation."[77]

Tyranowski recognized in Wojtyła a prayerful young man who enjoyed writing poetry and plays. It seemed a natural fit to introduce him to St. John of the Cross, who was a poet, mystic, and reformer of the Carmelites in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century. Wojtyła would begin reading all of St. John's major theological works, including: *The Ascent of Mount*

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[71] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 59.

[72] The fifteen men symbolized the full fifteen mysteries of the Rosary at the time. In 2002, John Paul II would introduce five more mysteries, the Luminous mysteries, in order "to bring out fully the Christological depth of the Rosary. […] Consequently, for the Rosary to become more fully a 'compendium of the Gospel', it is fitting to add, following reflection on the Incarnation and the hidden life of Christ (*the joyful mysteries*) and before focusing on the sufferings of his Passion (*the sorrowful mysteries*) and the triumph of his Resurrection (*the glorious mysteries*), a meditation on certain particularly significant moments in his public ministry (*the mysteries of light*)." Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, (16 October 2002), 19.

[73] Cf. G. Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II*, 80. Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 60-61.

[74] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 60.

[75] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope,* 60. Wojtyła put this into practice by tutoring another member of the Living Rosary named Mieczysław Maliński. He would later become a seminary classmate and lifelong friend of Wojtyła. However, according to George Weigel, Malinski later collaborated with the Polish secret police, who referred to Malinski by the code name DELTA. Cf. Weigel, *The End and the Beginning*, 75.

[76] G. Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II*, 80.

[77] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 61.

Carmel, The Dark Night of the Soul, The Spiritual Canticle, and *The Living Flame of Love*. This would prove to be Tyranowski's "most enduring contribution to Karol Wojtyła's life and thinking"[78]. Wojtyła even learned Spanish so he could read St. John's writings in their original language.[79]

Through Carmelite mysticism, Wojtyła learned a spirituality of abandonment and complete surrender to God through an act of love. This "abandoning of oneself completely to God's will resulted in a liberation of the spirit, a true inner freedom that the arrogance and brutality of Nazi self-assertion could neither take away nor overcome."[80] Though Wojtyła already had a prayer life, he was now learning how to enter more deeply into God's presence, and allow this experience to permeate every aspect of his life. This "imitation of Christ through the complete handing over of every worldly security to the merciful will of God seized Karol Wojtyła's imagination. Over time it would be the defining characteristic of his own discipleship."[81]

Jan Tyranowski also helped Wojtyła further develop his Marian devotion, which he began to develop during his childhood in Wadowice.[82] John Paul II reflected that, "a change took place in my understanding of devotion to the Mother of God. I was already convinced that *Mary leads us to Christ*, but at that time I began to realize also that *Christ leads us to his Mother*." It is interesting that he notes that "[a]t one point I began to question my devotion to Mary, believing that, if it became too great, it might end up compromising the supremacy of the worship owed to Christ."[83] Tyranowski "greatly helped" Wojtyła by introducing him to St.

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[78] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope, 61.*

[79] Cf. John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 142: "Before entering the seminary, I met a layman named *Jan Tyranowski*, who was a true mystic. This man, whom I consider a saint, introduced me to the great Spanish mystics and in particular to Saint John of the Cross. Even before entering the underground seminary, I read the works of that mystic, especially his poetry. In order to read it in the original, I studied Spanish. That was a very important stage in my life."

[80] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 6.

[81] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 62.

[82] Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Gift and Mystery*, 28, 30: "I learned the traditional devotions to the Mother of God in my family and in my parish at Wadowice. I remember, in the parish church, a side chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. In the mornings, the secondary students would make a visit to it before classes began. After classes, in the afternoon, many students would go there to pray to the Blessed Virgin. Also, on the hilltop in Wadowice, there was a Carmelite monastery which dated back to the time of Saint Raphael Kalinowski. People from Wadowice would go there in great numbers, and this was reflected in the widespread *use of the scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*. I too received the scapular, I think at the age of ten, and I still wear it. People also went to the Carmelites for Confession. And so, both in the parish church and in the Carmelite monastery church, my devotion to Mary took shape from the years of my early childhood and adolescence up through secondary school. […] As a child, for example, I would listen to the singing of the 'Hours of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary' in the parish church, but only afterwards did I realize their rich theological and biblical content. So too with popular folksongs, such as the Polish Christmas carols and the Lenten Lamentations on the Passion of Jesus Christ, which highlight the soul's dialogue with the Sorrowful Mother."

[83] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 28.

Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort and his book *Treatise of True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*. "There I found the answers to my questions. Yes, Mary does bring us closer to Christ; she does lead us to him, provided that we live her mystery in Christ."[84] From de Montfort, Wojtyła developed a Marian theology that was rooted in the Trinity and the Incarnation, which he recognized as he prayed the *Angelus* three times a day, which "express[es] the deepest reality of the greatest event to take place in human history."[85] Wojtyła's Marian devotion would continue to be a dominant theme in his life and papacy.

Karol continued to take care of his father during this time, who would often attend his son's clandestine recitations and performances. However, around Christmas of 1940 his father would become bedridden, and on February 18, 1941, he died at home while his son was at work. Karol ran to get a priest and remained kneeling and praying beside his father's body the entire night. Every member of his immediate family was now gone. "At twenty, I had already lost all the people I loved"[86]. Wojtyła would spend the next five months living with the Kydryński family as he grieved the death of his father.

Wojtyła, however, would not remain alone. In July he was reunited with Mieczysław Kotlarczyk, who moved into Wojtyła's basement apartment in Dębniki with his wife. Kotlarczyk had the idea of founding an underground "theater of the living word," known as the Rhapsodic Theater, to protest and resist the Nazi assault against Polish culture. During the war years, the core of the Rhapsodic Theater was directed by Kotlarczyk, and included Wojtyła and three women: Krystyna Dębowska, Halina Królikiewicz, and Danuta Michałowska. Except for Kotlarczyk, who was 12 years older than Wojtyła, they were all in their late teens or early twenties. They rehearsed in Wojtyła's apartment on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Their first performance was Słowacki's *King-Spirit*, which they performed three times, beginning on November 1, 1941. From the Fall of 1941 through the Spring of 1943, they held over one hundred rehearsals and put on seven productions in twenty-two performances. All of these productions were performed clandestinely, in private homes before handpicked acquaintances.[87]

Wojtyła continued performing with them until April of 1943. Besides developing lifelong friendships, the Rhapsodic Theater formed Wojtyła in several ways. First, "Kotlarczyk's rigorous direction honed his articulation, his timing, and his sense of connections

[84] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 29.
[85] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 229.
[86] A. Frossard, *"Be Not Afraid!"*, 13.
[87] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope,* 65. Cf. R. Allegri, *John Paul II: A Life of Grace*, 92.

with an audience."[88] Second, Słowacki's sense of the power of *Słowo*, "the word," confirmed in Wojtyła his intuition of the power of truth to alter the world of power.[89] Kotlarczyk and Wojtyła understood that "the effective proclamation of the word within—of one's inner grasp of the real truth of things—had the power to draw the listener into the transcendent truth of God's Word, which would ultimately crush the Reich's (and, later, communism's) lies and crimes against the human person."[90] Third was Kotlarczyk's understanding of theater as ritual. According to Malinski, "The performers were like a priesthood, guarding and imparting the deepest truths of life; it was their task and their opportunity to regenerate the world by a display of artistic beauty. Such was the ideology of the 'arch-priest' Kotlarczyk."[91] The theater was not mere entertainment. It had the power to "evoke sentiments of transcendence and patriotism in a quasi-liturgical atmosphere."[92]

Wojtyła and Kotlarczyk were also members of UNIA (Union), a cultural resistance movement that sought to establish principles based on Catholic moral and social teaching through which Poland could be reconstituted. It envisioned that "the new Polish state would uphold the true good of the family as the basis of society, and it would recognize the inherent dignity of every human being as someone made in God's image,"[93] two themes that would be central in Wojtyła's philosophy, theology and future pastoral ministry. UNIA supported the Rhapsodic Theater and other underground theaters. And Wojtyła risked his life while helping UNIA deliver false identification papers and baptismal certificates to Jews in Kraków, so they could escape being sent to concentration camps.

1.1.5. Seminary and Philosophy

Amidst working, performing and leading a Living Rosary group, Wojtyła had been increasingly spending time prayerfully reflecting on his life. He thought about the deaths of his family members, the atrocities of the war and the dangers that he faced. He later reflected:

> My priestly vocation took definitive shape at that time of the Second World War, during the Nazi occupation. Was this a mere coincidence or was there a more profound

[88] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 65.
[89] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 65. In the Jagiellonian University's Collegium Maius, there is a Latin inscription over the entrance of the Aula Magna: *PLUS RATIO QUAM VIS* (Reason rather than force).
[90] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 5. Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope,* 66: "Some young Poles chose armed resistance or clandestine sabotage […] Karol Wojtyła deliberately chose the power of resistance through culture, through the power of the word, in the conviction that the 'word' (and in Christian terms, the Word) is that on which the world turns."
[91] M. Malinski, *Pope John Paul II: The Life of Karol Wojtyła*, trans. P.S. Falla, New York 1980: Seabury Press, 33.
[92] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 66.
[93] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 6. Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 66-67.

> connection between what was developing within me and external historical events? It is hard to answer such a question. Certainly, in God's plan nothing happens by chance. All I can say is that the tragedy of the war had its effect on my gradual choice of vocation. It helped me to understand in a new way *the value and importance of a vocation*. In the face of the spread of evil and the atrocities of war, the meaning of the priesthood and its mission in the world became much clearer to me.[94]

His studies had been interrupted with the outbreak of the war. A year and a half later, his father died, leaving him without any remaining immediate family. John Paul II explains that "[a]ll this brought with it, objectively, *a progressive* detachment from my earlier plans"[95]. But amidst the suffering and loss, Wojtyła perceived that "a light was beginning to shine ever more brightly in the back of my mind: *the Lord wants me to become a priest*. One day I saw this with great clarity: it was like an interior illumination which brought with it the joy and certainty of a new vocation. And this awareness filled me with great inner peace."[96] In the face of so much evil, when many others felt hopeless or turned to violence, Karol instead found peace and joy in the vocation to the priesthood.

In Autumn of 1942 Wojtyła made the decision to enter the seminary. However, the seminary had been forced to operate underground. The Nazis had banned the admission of new seminarians, and frequently raided the seminary. After five seminarians were arrested, Archbishop Sapieha decided to accept candidates secretly. Wojtyła was one of ten of the first of these underground seminarians. They were told to continue to work and to tell no one that they were seminarians. They were given books to study on their own and were tested periodically. Wojtyła continued to work at the Solvay chemical factory in Borek Fałęcki, studying while working the overnight shift.[97]

One of the books that Wojtyła was assigned to read was Kazimierz Wais's book, *Ontologia czyli metafizyka ogólna* (*Ontology or the General Metaphysics*)[98], a 1926 text on Aristotelian-Thomistic thought, that was "written in the dry, dense, highly abstract formulas of early twentieth century neo-scholasticism."[99] It was a challenging work for Wojtyła, but proved to be worth the effort. He later reflected:

> My literary training, centered round the humanities, had not prepared me for the scholastic theses and formulas with which the manual was filled. I had to cut a path

[94] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 34.
[95] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 34.
[96] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 35. Cf. 37: "I would ask myself: so many young people of my own age are losing their lives, *why not me?* Today I know that it was not mere chance. Amid the overwhelming evil of the war, everything in my own personal life was tending towards the good of my vocation."[96]
[97] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 70.
[98] Cf. K. Wais, *Ontologia czyli metafizyka ogólna*, Lwów 1926: Biblioteka Religijna.
[99] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 70. Cf. Malinski, *Pope John Paul II*, 47.

> through a thick undergrowth of concepts, analyses, and axioms without even being able to identify the ground over which I was moving. After two months of hacking through this vegetation I came to a clearing, to the discovery of the deep reasons for what until then I had only lived and felt. When I passed the examination I told my examiner that in my view the new vision of the world which I had acquired in my struggle with the metaphysics manual was more valuable than the mark which I had obtained. I was not exaggerating. What intuition and sensibility had until then taught me about the world found solid confirmation.[100]

Through his reading of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, Wojtyła came to see that the things that he had "hitherto learned experientially and intuitively about the world are grounded firmly in human reason. This meant that the world is essentially intelligible, even amid and despite the manmade chaos of war."[101] This would help prevent Wojtyła from falling into the radical skepticism and moral relativism that plagued much of Europe and the United States after the war. He would come to realize that since "right reason can discern the truth of things objectively, it can also distinguish objectively between morally good and evil. Radical skepticism and moral relativism are therefore intellectually bankrupt."[102]

After nearly two years of being an underground seminarian, Wojtyła and the other seminarians were called into hiding by Archbishop Sapieha. In response to the Warsaw Uprising on August 1, 1944, the Gestapo rounded up over 8000 young men in Kraków, who were either shot or sent to concentration camps. Wojtyła's apartment had been searched, but he "had remained behind a closed door in his basement apartment, praying for deliverance with heart pounding."[103] Sapieha planned to keep the seminarians in hiding in the archbishop's residence for the remainder of the war. Now having the opportunity to live in daily contact with the archbishop, Karol Wojtyła "came to know the man who would be his model of Church leadership for more than half a century."[104] And Archbishop Sapieha, who assumed the role of rector of the seminary, made a point to speak with each of his seminarians every day. He quickly came to appreciate Wojtyła's talents as well.[105]

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[100] A. Frossard, *"Be Not Afraid!"*, 17.
[101] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 7-8.
[102] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 8. Cf. G. Weigel, 71: "The war had given him a direct, indeed harsh, experience of reality. Wais, for all the agonies he inflicted, put in place the first building blocks for a philosophical defense of realism—the intelligibility of the world—against radical skepticism and its cousin, moral relativism."
[103] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 72.
[104] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 72.
[105] John Paul II notes that Archbishop Sapieha had been aware of him for some time before he entered the seminary. Cf. John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 5: "The Metropolitan Archbishop of Cracow, Prince Adam Stefan Sapieha, visited the parish of Wadowice when I was a secondary school student. My religion teacher, Father Edward Zacher, chose me to give the address of welcome. It was the first time I had the opportunity of being in the presence of that man who was so highly regarded by everyone. I know that after my speech the Archbishop asked the religion teacher what university course I would be taking upon completion of secondary school. Father

As the end of the war approached, the Germans abandoned Kraków on the night of January 17-18, 1945. Archbishop Sapieha was able to reclaim the seminary building which had been occupied by the SS. The Jagiellonian University was able to reopen as well, and Wojtyła began his fourth and final year of theological studies in the fall of 1945, while also serving as a teaching assistant in undergraduate theology courses. He even wrote a paper on St. John of the Cross, and continued to teach himself Spanish in order to read his writings in their original language.[106]

Although life was returning to normal, the Polish nation would not return to the freedom that Wojtyła had been born into before the war. World War II was the war that Poland "lost twice," having been betrayed by Poland's Western allies at the Yalta Conference, which redefined Poland's borders and gave Poland up to Soviet control. The war "had ended not with the reestablishment of freedom and the restoration of the rights of nations, but with communist totalitarianism spread over more than half of Europe and over other parts of the world."[107] This also had a deep impact on Wojtyła, who "would develop, proclaim, and live a distinctively Christian brand of humanism, one that promises—and delivers—authentic personal and communal fulfillment through the free and total gift of self". Wojtyła knew that this was something that "all the inhuman 'humanisms' advanced to justify the violence, deceptions, greed, egoism, and chaos of totalitarian self-assertion could never do."[108] Lasting peace could not be based on the denial of human dignity and freedom.

1.1.6. Rome and St. John of the Cross

Archbishop Sapieha, who had been created a Cardinal by Pius XII in February of 1946, decided that Wojtyła should begin doctoral studies in theology at the Pontifical Athenaeum of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome (known as "the Angelicum"), and decided to ordain him ahead of the rest of his class. Having completed his preordination theology courses, Karol Wojtyła was ordained a priest on November 1, 1946, in the archbishop's private chapel.

On November 2, the feast of All Souls, Fr. Wojtyła celebrated three "first Masses" in the crypt of Saint Leonard in Wawel Cathedral, offering the Masses for the souls of his mother, brother and father. John Paul II reflected that, "I chose this place for the celebration of my first Masses in order to express my spiritual bonds with those buried in that Cathedral. […] I wanted

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Zacher replied, 'He will study Polish language and letters.' The Archbishop apparently replied: 'A pity it is not theology.'"

[106] Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 78.

[107] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 77.

[108] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 8.

to express my special spiritual bond with the history of Poland, a history symbolized by the hill of Wawel."[109] His choice also had a particular "*theological significance*." Having been ordained on the Solemnity of All Saints, he recognized that the saints "are those who, having accepted the Paschal Mystery of Christ in faith, now await the final resurrection. All those whose mortal remains rest in the tombs of Wawel Cathedral lie there in expectation of the resurrection," echoing the words of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting."[110] This truth of the Creed helped Wojtyła make sense of his nation's history, and his own vocation and destiny. In celebrating Mass among the tombs of the "great spirits" who led the nation, he knew that in their ranks were found "not only sovereigns and their consorts, or Bishops and Cardinals, but also poets, great masters of language, who were extremely influential in my education as a Christian and a patriot."[111] He owed his life, education, formation and vocation to numerous influences and the sacrifices of many people. And he knew that his priesthood would also be one of service and sacrifice for others as well.

The newly ordained Fr. Wojtyła celebrated Masses at St. Stanisław Kostka in Dębniki, his home parish in Wadowice, and the Confession of St. Stanisław in the Wawel Cathedral for his friends in the Rhapsodic Theater and the surviving members of UNIA. He soon left for Rome on November 15, arriving toward the end of November. He lived at the Belgian College, which had twenty-two resident student-priests and seminarians, including five Americans. There he had the opportunity to speak with priests from several countries and discuss different pastoral situations and forms of the apostolate developing in the Church. John Paul II later reflected that "in Rome I was able to grasp more fully how much the priesthood is linked to pastoral ministry and the apostolate of the laity. […] As I reflected on these pastoral issues, I came to appreciate ever more clearly the meaning and value of the ministerial priesthood."[112] As he enjoyed getting to know Rome and travelling throughout Europe, he recognized that Europe of the post-war period was "a Europe of splendid gothic cathedrals and yet a Europe threatened by increasing secularization." He recognized the challenges that this posed to the Church, and "the need to confront this impending danger through new forms of pastoral activity open to broader participation by the laity."[113] Although his studies took him away from pastoral

[109] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 47. The St. Leonard crypt contains the tombs of King Jan III Sobieski, King Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki, Prince Józef Poniatowski, and Tadeusz Kościuszko.
[110] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 47-48.
[111] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 48.
[112] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 54.
[113] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 56.

ministry, his experiences were also shaping his outlook on his future pastoral approach in Poland.

Wojtyła's early formation in philosophy as a seminarian took place amidst the revival of Thomism occasioned by the publication by Leo XIII of the encyclical *Aeterni Patris.*[114] At the Angelicum, Fr. Wojtyła received solid training in traditional Thomism, while also encountering different trends in contemporary Thomism at the Belgian college.[115] This sound training equipped him "to assess critically the newer philosophical and theological methods and systems being developed at other European centers of learning."[116]

Fr. Wojtyła wrote his doctoral dissertation under the direction of Fr. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, who was universally regarded as the "undisputed master of traditional neo-scholasticism,"[117] and the "greatest representative of traditional Thomism."[118] In his principal work on Thomism, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought* (1946), he argued that "metaphysical realism was indispensable for theology. The starting point of philosophy is not consciousness but the world of real beings that can be apprehended by the intellect. For Garrigou-Lagrange, the criterion of truth is being itself, and sound theology must recognize this ontological principle."[119] He taught courses on metaphysics based on Aquinas's commentary on Aristotelian metaphysics, and saw himself "as a bulwark against the pragmatists and relativists who sought to dilute the sacred truths of the Catholic faith. His

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[114] Cf. Leo XIII, Encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (August 4, 1879), 17, 31.

[115] Cf. G. Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II,* 93-103. Cf. R. Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, Grand Rapids Michigan 1997: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 34-35: "Wojtyła received from Garrigou-Lagrange rigorous training in the most traditional form of Thomism. But a careful reading of his doctoral thesis indicates that, from the time he began to study philosophy, he had an affinity for a variety of different interpretations of Thomism. At the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium, for example, there was an effort to bring about reconciliation between Thomism and modern thought (particularly that of Kant). In France, Maritain and Gilson were giving Thomism an existential dimension by maintaining that Thomas's principal philosophical contributions were the distinction between essence and existence and his legitimation of a certain eidetic institution in the interpretation of the process of abstraction" Cf. J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 9 f. 24: "Examples include the transcendental Thomism of Joseph Marechal and the existential Thomism of Etienne Gilson. Wojtyła's encounter with these and other trends, such as France's *Nouvelle Theologie* and perhaps also the existential Thomism of Jacques Maritain, might have taken place mainly at the Belgian College, where he resided."

[116] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 9. Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 84-85. Cf. R. Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, 13-14: "Although Wojtyła was an independent thinker who saw Thomism as complementary to certain contemporary philosophical movements such as phenomenology, he was convinced of the main pillars of St. Thomas's philosophy: a metaphysics centered on each being's act of existence or active presence (*esse*) that is distinct from that being's essence; conceptual realism and a belief in the intrinsic intelligibility of all being that informs the mind through its action; the metaphysical principle of act and potency; and the natural law as a manifestation of the eternal law and the foundation of objective morality. Wojtyła also believed that ontological goodness, which is 'equivalent to being as an object of activity, as an end,' must be the basis for determining moral goodness-that is, the goodness proper to the moral act (PC 158)."

[117] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 85.

[118] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 9.

[119] R. Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II: An Introduction and Commentary*, Lanham, MD 2017: Rowman & Littlefield, 10-11.

tenacious defense of an objective truth must have inspired the young Wojtyła, who would also come to see himself as a guardian of truth and universal moral values."[120]

Garrigou-Lagrange also taught courses in spirituality and held the Angelicum's chair in mystical theology. In particular, he wrote and lectured on St. John of the Cross, "whose theological views on grace, virtue, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit were in total congruity with the speculative theology of Aquinas."[121] He sought to synthesize Aquinas's philosophy with St. John's mysticism, most notably in his book, *Christian Perfection and Contemplation according to St Thomas Aquinas and St John of the Cross* (1932), and in his most popular work on spirituality, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life* (1938). He thought the mystical tradition would be particularly important in post-war Europe, but wanted to reconcile it with the Church's theology as articulated by Thomas Aquinas. With Wojtyła's earlier exposure to St. John of the Cross through Jan Tyanowski and his appreciation for Aquinas through his seminary studies, Garrigou-Lagrange was a fitting dissertation director.

Wojtyła's dissertation was written in Latin and titled, *Doctrina de fide apud S. Ioannem a Cruce* [The Doctrine of Faith According to St. John of the Cross].[122] "In his dissertation", Thomas Petri explains, "Wojtyła had hoped to show that mystical faith and dogmatic or intellectual faith were not opposing concepts but different aspects of a single virtue."[123] His interest was in supplementing the theological and philosophical system of Aquinas with the system of St. John of the Cross, which is more concerned with experience. In his introduction, Wojtyła writes:

> The doctrine we shall study is a testimony of experience. It is expressed in scholastic-mystical language, using words and concepts well known in Scholastic theology, but its primary value and significance is a witness of personal experience. It is there, in fact, that we can discover the living and dynamic reality of the virtue of faith, its activity in the human intellect, its corollaries and the effects on the movement of the soul toward union with God. For that reason we take the experiential witness of Saint John of the Cross as material for our investigation. It will be our task to discover the concept of faith that can be gleaned from that witness and the theological precisions that are latent in it.[124]

[120] R. Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, 11.
[121] R. Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, 11. Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 85.
[122] English translation: K. Wojtyła, *Faith According to St. John of the Cross,* San Francisco 1981: Ignatius Press.
[123] T. Petri, *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body: The Thomistic Foundations of John Paul II's Anthropology,* Washington, D.C. 2016: The Catholic University of America Press, 95.
[124] K. Wojtyła, *Faith According to St. John of the Cross,* Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1981, 23.

St. John of the Cross's writing is "often couched in Scholastic terminology," but his description of the experience of faith gives "a different nuance or a different meaning to that technical terminology."[125]

The dissertation is divided into two parts, with an appendix. In the first part, he gives a substantial analysis of faith and love in St. John of the Cross's four major works: *The Ascent of Mount Carmel, The Dark Night of the Soul, The Spiritual Canticle, and The Living Flame of Love*. In the second part, he offers key conclusions about the nature of faith in these works. And in the brief appendix, he attempts to correlate St. John of the Cross's understanding of faith with that of Aquinas.

The thesis of Wojtyła's dissertation is that faith is an "essential likeness" to God, which "provides an ontological transcendence in which the intellect is proportioned so as to be capable of uniting with God."[126] However, while faith is the "proportionate means of supernatural union," the virtue of charity, love, is also necessary to bring about a personal, psychological union.[127] Faith alone is not enough. We do not know God as we know an object, but as we come to know another person, through mutual self-giving. Weigel explains that "[a]s two persons in love come to live 'within' each other without losing their own unique identities, God comes to live within us, and we come to dwell, in a sense, 'within' God, without the radical difference between creator and creature being lost."[128] Faith is therefore a personal encounter with God. If it were merely an intellectual grasping of what God is, Rocco Buttiglione explains, "that would turn it into an absolute, God-like knowledge which knows the world and all that is within it. Faith is given a personal encounter with God which is real but, in this life, always remains in an obscurity ('the night of faith')."[129] According to Wojtyła, faith must be more than an emotional high. This mystical experience is a "vital, transforming union so intimate that it can be said that the Beloved lives in the lover and the lover in the Beloved [such that]

[125] K. Wojtyła, *Faith According to St. John of the Cross,* 25.
[126] T. Petri, *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body*, 96. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Faith According to St. John of the Cross,* 245.
[127] K. Wojtyła, *Faith According to St. John of the Cross,* 59, 99
[128] Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 86.
[129] R. Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, Grand Rapids Michigan 1997: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 51. Cf. 51: "Nonetheless, human faith truly encounters God, and God himself becomes the form of the human intellect. This happens not because the human person comprehends God, but because he welcomes God into himself and is welcomed by him. For Saint John, one knows God through a personal relation with him, which is one of reciprocal giving. In this relation the night of the intellect becomes light, man understands that God, by not giving himself as an object of the intellect, wants to dwell as a person in the soul."

there is an identity of life, a mutual possession, a unity that truly merits the name 'union'"[130]. As Tranzillo explains:

> In the encounter with God through the life of faith, God gives us his love—his very self—as our own. In that way, we can reciprocate the Love that we have received with a Love that is commensurate with, and hence appropriate to, the giver, who is that Love. That is, the Love that we give to God and that *is* God really comes from us and includes us. Thus, a real, mutual exchange of persons—an interpersonal encounter—takes place between God and us through faith. In that exchange, we become more ourselves by becoming God, both by participating in the divine Life, which is Love, and by imitation—by giving the gift of self fully and unreservedly to God first of all, and to neighbor. The mutual relationship of self-giving love between God and us, as Wojtyła/John Paul II understood it through the writings of St. John of the Cross, reflects the intra-Trinitarian dynamic of love in God himself.[131]

Thus, in Wojtyła's dissertation we recognize key themes that he will continue to develop in his anthropology and in his understanding of marriage.

On June 14, 1948, Wojtyła passed his doctoral exam at the Angelicum, and defended his dissertation five days later. Although he received the highest grades possible for his defense, he did not receive his doctorate from the Angelicum because he could not afford to pay for the publication of the dissertation, which was a necessary requirement. When he returned to Poland he submitted a revised version of his dissertation to the Jagiellonian University, and received his doctorate in theology in December of 1948.

1.2. Proximate: Wojtyła's Approach to the Education of Love

1.2.1. First Parish Assignment: Niegowić

After Wojtyła finished his studies in Rome, he returned to Poland to begin his first parish assignment. He was assigned as a curate (vicar) at the Church of the Assumption of Our Lady in Niegowić, a village in the foothills of the Carpathians, about fifteen miles east of Kraków. He "accepted the appointment with joy,"[132] and made his way to the parish by a combination of bus, hitching a ride on a cart, and walking through the fields. "When I finally reached the territory of the Niegowić parish," John Paul II later reflected, "I knelt down and

[130] K Wojtyła, *Faith according to St. John of the Cross*, 215.
[131] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 9. Cf. K Wojtyła, *Faith according to St. John of the Cross*, 230: "Since its will is perfectly united with God, it cannot act otherwise than does the divine will. Consequently, because of the perfection of the transforming union, the will is constantly and solely occupied in the same thing as the divine will, namely, loving God and giving to him by its love that which it has by participation – God himself. Moreover, the soul does this not only with a loving will but in a divine mode, since it is under the impetus of the Holy Spirit." Cf. 194-195, 212-13, 228-31.
[132] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 61.

kissed the ground. It was a gesture I had learned from Saint John Mary Vianney."[133] He first visited the Blessed Sacrament in the wooden church, and then introduced himself to his pastor, Fr. Kazimierz Buzała. He began his first assignment on July 8, 1948.

Fr. Wojtyła's primary responsibility was religious education. He taught at five of the elementary schools in the surrounding villages and formed Living Rosary groups for catechesis and prayer. He also organized a drama club and directed a play, *The Expected Guest*, in which he played the role of a beggar who turns out to be Christ. Reflecting on this period of his life, John Paul II recalled:

> My most memorable experience of that period, when my pastoral activities concentrated above all on the young, was *discovery of the fundamental importance of youth*. What is youth? It is not only a period of life that corresponds to a certain number of years, it is also *a time given by Providence to every person and given to him as a responsibility*. During that time he searches, like the young man in the gospel, for answers to basic questions; he searches not only for the meaning of life but also for a concrete way to go about living his life. This is the most fundamental characteristic of youth. Every mentor, beginning with parents, let alone every pastor, must be aware of this characteristic and must know how to identify it in every boy and girl. I will say more: *He must love this fundamental aspect of youth.*[134]

In addition to celebrating Mass at the parish, he believed that confession was the crowning of the pastoral work of priests.[135] "The confessional," notes Weigel, "was where priests encountered their people in the depths of their humanity, helping the person on the other side of the confessional screen to enter more deeply into the Christian drama of his or her own unique life."[136] Like St. John Vianney, Fr. Wojtyła made himself a "prisoner of the confessional."

Fr. Wojtyła lived simply, like the people he served. "That the new curate arrived with almost nothing formed another bond with his impoverished parishioners."[137] This allowed him to enter more deeply into their lives and into their homes. He remembered "the friendliness of the teachers and parishioners."[138] Particularly during the traditional blessing of the houses (kolęda) during the Christmas season, Fr. Wojtyła had the opportunity to spend some time with the families in their own environment, to know the conditions of their life up close and

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[133] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 62.
[134] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 120-121.
[135] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada: La spiritualità coniugale nel pensiero di Karol Wojtyła. Le origini* [*The Bridegroom Passes Through This Road: Conjugal Spirituality in the Thought of Karol Wojtyła*], Siena-Citta del Vaticano 2011: Edizioni Cantagalli, 49.
[136] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 92.
[137] Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 92: "There was neither electricity, nor running water nor sewage in the region. Recent floods had seriously damaged the district's roads and fields. Cows and chickens wandered among the lime trees."
[138] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 62.

participate in their familial joys and challenges. He was well known for his availability, his attention to the person in front of him, and his ability to listen for hours with patience and comprehension.[139]

In Niegowić he also began his ministry to engaged couples and newlyweds. During the eight months in the parish he officiated over thirteen weddings and baptized forty-eight babies.[140] He saw the family as the center of life and social activity, and the stable reference point for the education of new generations in the faith. This was especially true in the country parish.

During his free time, Wojtyła dedicated himself to preparing a revised version of his doctoral dissertation for submission at the Jagiellonian University. One of the young people from Niegowić, Stanislaw Wyporek, helped him by retyping his dissertation of 200 pages in Latin.[141] Wojtyła received his Doctorate on December 16, 1948.

Fr. Wojtyła would not stay long in his assignment at Niegowić. After only eight months in the parish, on March 17, 1949 he received word that he would begin a new assignment at St. Florian's parish in Kraków. There he "would develop a pastoral method and form a set of friendships that would endure for more than half a century."[142]

1.2.2. University Chaplain at St. Florian's

Fr. Wojtyła began his new assignment in August of 1949. He served at St. Florian's along with the pastor and three other vicars. Cardinal Sapieha wanted to complement and expand the university chaplaincy work being done by Father Jan Pietraszko at the Collegiate Church of St. Anne, near the Jagiellonian University.[143] St. Florian's, "a traditional home to Kraków's Catholic intellectuals," was the ideal place for this new chaplaincy, since "the new center would expand the reach of the archdiocesan campus ministry into the neighborhood of the academic institutions clustered around the *Plac Matejki* in the city's Kleparz district, just

[139] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 50.
[140] A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 119. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 113.
[141] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 50 f.84.
[142] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 93.
[143] Cf. John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 63: "At that time the university chaplaincy in Kraków was centered at Saint Anne's church, but with the addition of new faculties of study it became necessary to create a new center at Saint Florian's parish." For more on the Jan Pietraszko and his influence on Wojtyła, cf. P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada: La spiritualità coniugale nel pensiero di Karol Wojtyła. Le origini* [The Bridegroom Passes Through This Road: Conjugal Spirituality in the Thought of Karol Wojtyła], Siena-Citta del Vaticano 2011: Edizioni Cantagalli, 117-197, and L. Grygiel, *"Jan Pietraszko, maestro di Karol Wojtyła"* [*Jan Pietraszko, Karol Wojtyła's teacher*] in *L'amore e la sua regula: Karol Wojtyła e l'esperienza dell "Ambiente" di Cracovia* [Love and its rule: Karol Wojtyła and the experience of the Kraków "Environment"], Ed. S. Grygiel and P. Kwiatkowski, Siena-Citta del Vaticano 2009: Edizioni Cantagalli, 71-85.

north of the Floriańska Gate and the Barbican: the Academy of Fine Arts, the Kraków Polytechnic, and the nearby student housing."[144] As he began his student ministry, Wojtyła did not wait for the students to come to him, but went to the dormitories, boardinghouses, convents, and apartments where students lived to introduce himself and invite them to St. Florian's for a series of conferences that he gave on Thursday evenings.

This was not an easy task, given that the communist regime was increasing its pressure on the Church.[145] "Thanks to the ubiquitous communist 'security forces,' suspicion was a normal mode of self-protection: students often didn't know each other's surnames, open conversation was a danger, and every priest in Poland had a secret police agent watching his every move."[146] Despite this, Wojtyła was successful in drawing young people to the church. Many students were struck by Wojtyła's appearance. They were used to perfect-looking priests with elegant cassocks and shiny shoes, who did not appear like they could relate to the students and their struggles. Wojtyła, on the other hand, walked around the church with his very worn cassock and even more worn shoes. One student said, "these shoes told us more about the young priest than his carefully prepared sermon."[147]

His Thursday conferences were focused on two themes: the existence of God and the spiritual nature of the human person.[148] These conferences involved a systematic exploration of Christian doctrine. "The point was not the rote memorization of catechism answers as ripostes to communist propaganda; it was to demonstrate that the Church, in the Gospel, had a more compelling answer to the perennial questions of human life than the purveyors of the official state ideology."[149] On the basis of handwritten notes, these conferences were compiled, typed clandestinely, and distributed as samizdat.[150]

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[144] G. Weigel, *City of Saints*, 153.
[145] Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 94: "In 1947, the communists had formed the 'Pax' movement to create a bloc on putatively Catholic opinion subservient to the state. In August 1949, the government issued a decree, allegedly to safeguard freedom of religion, but in fact to tighten its control over the Church. The following year Catholic schools, Catholic Action (a movement for social reform) and other Catholic organizations were declared illegal, and the state took over hundreds of Catholic educational and charitable institutions."
[146] G. Weigel, *City of Saints*, 154.
[147] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 60.
[148] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 63-64: "At that time the university chaplaincy in Cracow was centered on Saint Anne's Church, but with the addition of new faculties of study it became necessary to create a new center at Saint Florian's parish. There I began to give talks to the young people at the university; every Thursday I would speak to them about fundamental problems concerning the existence of God and the spiritual nature of the human soul. These were extremely important issues, given the militant atheism being promoted by the communist regime."
[149] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 95. Cf. A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 124.
[150] A bilingual, Polish/English version of these conferences was published in 2016: K. Wojtyła, *Considerations of the Essence of Man* [Rozważania o istocie człowieka], Lublin-Roma, 2016: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu.

Wojtyła's sermons and lectures were often extremely intellectual and philosophically heavy. For the majority of the students, this was their first exposure to philosophy and theology. Recognizing this, he adjusted to a more accessible speaking style. Though his lectures were at times difficult to understand, he connected everyday personal experiences with the truth, the Gospel, and the Church.

In addition to his own lectures, Wojtyła formed a study group that read through St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* in the original Latin. He also formed a choir, and taught the students Gregorian chant, including the *Missa de Angelis*, which the choir began singing at the parish on Sundays. And during Lent Wojtyła directed the parish youth and university students in medieval "mystery plays," focused on biblical themes. He continued to attend and bring students to performances at the Rhapsodic Theater, and would review their performances under a nom de plume.

While at St. Florian's, Wojtyła launched the first marriage-preparation program in the history of the Archdiocese of Kraków.[151] Previously, marriage preparation was limited to a meeting to fill out legal forms and discuss the ceremony. Instead, "Wojtyła set out to create a pastoral program that systematically prepared young couples for marriage and family life through religious reflection, theological education, and a frank exploration of the practical and personal difficulties and opportunities of married life and child rearing."[152] Wojtyła's marriage preparation covered several themes: marriage as a sacrament, marital ethics, responsible procreation, family planning, participation in the Holy Mass, and the apostolate of the family in the Church. Wojtyła also invited lay associates, psychologists, doctors and nurses to share their expertise, which was a novelty at the time.[153] And he invited his student choir to sing at the weddings he celebrated.

Wojtyła saw the family as a key force against the communist regime, which did everything it could to organize society to the detriment of the family. "Housing, work schedules, and school hours were all organized by the state to separate parents from their children as frequently as possible. Apartments were constructed to accommodate only small families, so that children would be regarded as a problem."[154] Work shifts were organized to prevent families from being together, and permissive laws were passed to promote abortion as a means of birth control.

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[151] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 97. A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 119.
[152] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 97.
[153] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 107-108.
[154] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 97.

Since the communist regime had outlawed Catholic youth groups, Wojtyła found creative ways to educate families. For example, he organized his meetings with the parish altar servers into small groups of five to six boys, placing the emphasis on spiritual formation, especially devotion to the Eucharist. These meetings were held in their homes, which allowed Wojtyła to provide conferences and catechesis for their parents as well, especially on the themes of liturgy, education and psychology. He wanted to help lay people fully live out their Christian vocation.[155]

After two years at St. Florian's, the new archbishop of Kraków, Eugeniusz Baziak, assigned him to a two-year sabbatical to write a habilitation thesis, which would qualify him to teach as a university professor. He would continue to minister to university students and young families while writing his thesis, as well as while serving as a university professor, viewing this as his special apostolate. Though he was only at St. Florian's for two years, he celebrated 229 baptisms and 160 weddings, averaging more than one wedding each week. His extensive and ongoing experience in preparing couples for marriage and accompanying them during marriage would have a profound effect on his philosophy, teaching, and pastoral approach.

1.2.3. Pastoral Approach: Accompaniment and *Środowisko*

The communist regime had cancelled all Catholic organizations, most especially, those for young people. Paradoxically, these limits imposed on the Church favored a pastoral approach that was constructed and lived out through interpersonal relations. Wojtyła, along with the Church, had to find alterative forms of encounter and communion, rather than relying on the traditional institutional structures. By providing space where friendships and interpersonal relations could flourish, Wojtyła provided an alternative to the atheistic, Marxist ideology of the communist regime. Later, John Paul II would reflect that:

> Clearly, then, the *fundamental problem of youth is profoundly personal*. In life, youth is when we come to know ourselves. It is also a time of *communion*. Young people, whether boys or girls, know they must live for and with others, they know that their life has meaning to the extent that it becomes a free gift for others. Here is the origin of all vocations—whether to priesthood or religious life, or to marriage and family. The call to marriage is also a vocation, a gift from God.[156]

His pastoral plan, though unique in that it combatted the communist regime that occupied Poland at the time, continues to provide an example for all pastoral ministry.

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[155] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 55-56. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 97.
[156] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 121-122.

John Paul II later reflected that, "*[a]s a young priest I learned to love human love*."[157] Early on in his ministry, he recognized that there was a great need for an education in love for young people and families. He recognized that "it is necessary to prepare young people for marriage, it is necessary to *teach them love*. Love is not something that is learned, and yet there is nothing else as important to learn!"[158] For Fr. Wojtyła, a true education in love could not be done as a mere academic project, but needed both the accompaniment of guides, especially priests and parents, as well as an environment in which love could not only be learned, but witnessed to and experienced.

Fr. Karol Wojtyła recognized early on in his priesthood that young people had many questions about the meaning of life and love. He desired to create an "adequate environment"[159] in which the youth felt free to raise questions spontaneously, and to accompany them on their journey toward maturity.[160] He accomplished this through forming a group which came to became known as *Środowisko*, meaning environment or milieu.[161] *Środowisko* was made up of a mixture of various groups of university students, young adults, and young married couples that Wojtyła had befriended. "The birth of the group marked, not so much a formal structure, but more so the gift of a living presence, of openness to dialogue and sharing."[162] The idea was not to impose a method or mindset, but to provide an environment in which young people could feel free to be themselves, while being ministered to as individuals. He did not impose rules on them, but proposed ideas, giving them the freedom to respond, decide and choose.[163]

As a priest, Wojtyła saw himself not only as an administrator of the sacraments, but as "one who accompanies throughout life," helping them to live out the sacramental mystery, "not only during the liturgy, but also in their everyday life."[164] This accompaniment occurred in various activities including trips to the theater, concerts, movies, carnivals and dances. They also went on hiking trips, bicycling, skiing, camping and kayaking.[165] These trips were made in places that were not only beautiful, but somewhat deserted, which made discretion possible

[157] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 123.
[158] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 122-123.
[159] K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu" [Preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage. Crisis of the Institution and Crisis of the Sacrament], in *Educare ad amare: Scritti su matrimonio e famiglia*, translated and edited by Przemysław Kwiatkowski. Citta del Vaticano 2014: Edizioni Cantagalli, 186. All translations into English are my own.
[160] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 68.
[161] Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 98: "Środowisko does not translate easily. 'Environment' is one possibility, but John Paul II prefers the more humanistic 'milieu.'"
[162] P. Kwiatkowski, Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada, 69.
[163] P. Kwiatkowski, Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada, 68-72.
[164] P. Kwiatkowski, Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada, 72.
[165] P. Kwiatkowski, Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada, 73-74.

for this type of pastoral ministry under communism. Because it was illegal for priests to make such trips with young people, they began to refer to him as "Wujek" (Uncle).[166]

These trips allowed the members of *Środowisko* to learn to live in community and to help one another. And it provided Fr. Wojtyła the opportunity to answer questions, speak on various themes, and meet with individuals for spiritual direction. The trips also provided time for extended conversations around the campfire on books, films and cultural events, as well as their plans for the future, and questions related to work and vocation. They proposed questions about the faith and liturgy, suffering and evil, the Church in Poland, and the Universal Church. However, the dominant theme was sentiments, love, marriage and family life.[167]

He also provided days of retreat and spiritual exercises for the group. Though his discourses and homilies were at times difficult to understand, afterwards he "remained available for confessions, for individual encounters, for conversations on everyday problems."[168] And when he was away from the group, he used written correspondence to stay in touch with them, as well as to deepen and conclude individual conversations. He also wrote simple notes or postcards, assuring them of his closeness, interest, and prayers.

The foundation of *Środowisko*, however, was liturgical prayer and the Eucharist. "For at the center of his vision of pastoral ministry for the young and for the universities was the Eucharist."[169] He offered Mass for the intentions of the members of the group, for those preparing for marriage, for the sick, for those celebrating a names day, and for weddings and baptisms. "The Eucharistic celebration, translated into the gift of presence and of sharing, represented," according to Wojtyła, "the heart itself of the priestly identity." His work was to render God present in all occasions and in every place through the Mass, and "of sharing and of being intimate with others wherever they are found, to be with them in everything 'except sin'."[170] When they went camping and on kayak trips, he celebrated Mass for them, using an upside down kayak as an altar.

This accompaniment took on special significance in preparation for marriage. As he journeyed together with the youth and they entrusted the secrets of their hearts to him, "in a certain way he was living from the inside their discernment and their response to the vocation of marriage and to family life, feeling himself also responsible for their itinerary in life."[171] He

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[166] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 70 f. 151. Danuta Rybicka was responsible for the nickname, which was first used on their trip in the Spring of 1952.
[167] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 76-77.
[168] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 81.
[169] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 78.
[170] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 79.
[171] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 88.

sought to truly know the couple so he could better accompany and assist them in maturing in their love for each other and for God. "He knew that it wasn't easy to know someone profoundly during a casual encounter. He desired and proposed a more profound knowledge that would last even after a party or an encounter in the church."[172] Through this group, Fr. Wojtyła was able to get to know not only the couple, but their families and friends as well.

And because of the closeness of the family environment of the group, this allowed for better collaboration between the priest and the parents. For Wojtyła believed that "the youth and families are not two separate sectors of pastoral ministry, but rather two faces of the same mystery of God, of the Church and of the human person."[173] Through his pastoral accompaniment of the members of *Środowisko* he was able to create a group that allowed for the natural intermingling of both youth and families. Wojtyła insisted that, "[y]oung people need to accept that there are persons that have already lived and reflected upon all of these questions to guide this process – both parents and pastors."[174] Nearly 40 years later as the pope, he still expressed the same belief in the need for mentors:

> If at every stage of his life man desires to be his own person, to find love, during his youth he desires it even more strongly. The desire to be one's own person, however, must not be understood as a license to do anything, without exception. The young do not want that at all—they are willing to be corrected, they want to be told yes or no. *They need guides*, and they want them close at hand. If they turn to authority figures, they do so because they see in them a wealth of human warmth and a willingness to walk with them along the paths they are following.[175]

In his accompaniment, Wojtyła was not merely an external observer, but journeyed together with the young, cultivating and helping them in the process of their maturation. The younger members of *Środowisko* looked to the older ones, learning from their example and having the opportunity to ask them questions about life, work, love, and family life.

Wojtyła's accompaniment did not stop at the wedding, but continued throughout their married and family life. He blessed their houses, baptized their children, shared his time and scarce economic resources with them, and when necessary, helped them with marital problems. He also helped families find community, so that families could support each other in transmitting the faith. Through this accompaniment, he continued to help families develop and live out their identity and mission within the Church.

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[172] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 69, 93.
[173] P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 72.
[174] K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu," 166.
[175] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 121.

1.2.4. Philosopher, Professor and Bishop

In the summer of 1951, Archbishop Eugeniusz Baziak asked Fr. Wojtyła to pursue a habilitation thesis, in order to qualify him to teach at the university level.[176] Wojtyła was hesitant at first, given that the student chaplaincy at St. Florian's was flourishing, and he had recently started a ministry to health-care workers. John Paul II later reflected that "[t]his meant that I would have less time for the pastoral work so dear to me. This was a sacrifice, but from that time on I was always resolved that my dedication to the study of theology and philosophy would not lead me to 'forget' that I was a priest; rather it would help me become one ever more fully."[177] His studies were always put in the service of his pastoral ministry.

Fr. Wojtyła moved from St. Florian's to the Dean's House at 21 Kanonicza Street, where he lived with his former seminary mentor, Fr. Ignacy Różycki. Wojtyła certainly did not "forget" that he was a priest while writing his habilitation thesis. He celebrated daily Mass at St. Catherine's Church in Kazimierz. Many of his students from the chaplaincy and *Środowisko* followed him to St. Catherine's. He returned to St. Florian's to give an annual retreat during the fourth week of Lent, and to lecture on ethics during the academic year. He also celebrated Mass at St. Anne's collegiate church for university faculty and students on the first Friday of every month.

Fr. Różycki, Wojtyła's mentor in the seminary who had recommended that he write his first dissertation on St. John of the Cross, encouraged him to explore the work of the German philosopher Max Scheler (1874-1928). Scheler had studied under Edmund Husserl, who developed the philosophical school of phenomenology, which sought to "get at the real truth of the things—of the phenomena—that present themselves to our experience,"[178] in an attempt to "reconnect experience with access to the world beyond the mind." This was in response to Immanuel Kant's ethical system, "which was founded upon a pure rationalism and the notion of duty,"[179] and denied any experience of reality apart from rational categories in the mind. Since Wojtyła's philosophy was founded in metaphysics and ontology, Wojtyła was interested

[176] Cf. John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery,* 94: "During the vacation of 1951, after two years of work in Saint Florian's parish, Archbishop Eugeniusz Baziak, who had succeeded Cardinal Sapieha as Archbishop of Cracow, directed me towards scholarly work. I was to prepare for the diploma qualifying me to teach ethics and moral theology."
[177] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 94.
[178] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 13.
[179] T. Petri, *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body*, 98. Cf. G. Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II*, 124: "All Catholic neo-Thomists would have a fundamental disposition to oppose Kant and his reasoned system that denied the possibility of the direct access of the mind to the ontic reality in Aristotelian-Thomistic thought and, above all, undermine the objective and therefore binding character of revealed moral instruction. Scheler could, therefore, in the realm of ethics, no less than in epistemology, anthropology, and metaphysics, be regarded as a prestigious ally, even if a backsliding Catholic, in reasserting, by virtue of a new methodological analysis, the moral values of eternal philosophy."

in evaluating whether Scheler's system could reconnect the mind with reality. Similar to his dissertation on St. John of the Cross, Wojtyła sought to find a way of doing philosophy that "'synthesized both approaches': the metaphysical realism of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas and the sensitivity to human experience of Max Scheler's phenomenology."[180]

Wojtyła's habilitation thesis was titled, *An Evaluation of the Possibility of Constructing a Christian Ethics on the Basis of the System of Max Scheler*. In his thesis, "he asked whether it was possible to create a solid philosophical foundation for the moral life on the basis of Scheler's phenomenology of ethics, and particularly his ethics of value."[181] Ultimately, the answer was no. "The moral act is a *real* act with real consequences," Weigel notes, "and to Wojtyła's mind Scheler had failed to come to grips with how moral choices actually shape a person."[182] In contrast to St. John of the Cross's "dark night," which emphasized freedom from emotions, Wojtyła was "critical of Scheler's tendency to emotionalize experience and consciousness, leading to a truncated portrait of the human person. The men and women [Wojtyła] had hiked with, talked with, and accompanied in their various moral struggles were more than composites of their various emotional states and experiences"[183]

Despite his criticisms of Scheler's system, Wojtyła "would make it his philosophical project over the years to take useful insights from Scheler and others about subjective human experience and to integrate them into the epistemological and the anthropological realism of Aristotelian-Thomistic metaphysics"[184]. John Paul II reflected that "I wrote on the contribution which Scheler's phenomenological type of ethical system can make to the development of moral theology. This research benefited me greatly. My previous Aristotelian-Thomistic formation was enriched by the phenomenological method, and this made it possible for me to undertake a number of creative studies."[185]

On November 30, 1954, Wojtyła's habilitation thesis was unanimously approved. On December 1st Wojtyła was also unanimously affirmed in his examination for admission to assistant professorship, and on December 3rd Wojtyła gave a lecture for the admission to assistant professorship, meeting unanimous approval.[186] However, due to new communist government regulations, in 1954 the Department of Education decided to "liquidate the

[180] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 128.
[181] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 127. Cf. J. Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 9: "The goal of Wojtyła's habilitation thesis is to test whether Scheler's philosophical theory can be used to interpret revealed Christian morality."
[182] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 129.
[183] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 129.
[184] J. Tranzillo, *John Paul II on the Vulnerable*, 15.
[185] John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 93-94.
[186] Cf. A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 137.

Theological Faculty of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow after 550 years of its existence. So, yet again, Wojtyła had fulfilled all academic requirements, but was unable to receive the degree."[187] Despite this, Wojtyła gave lectures to the students of seminaries in Kraków, Silesia and Czestochowa. He published articles in *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak*, two influential Catholic journals. And he continued to minister to students as a retreat director, spiritual adviser, and a lecturer.[188]

Stefan Swieżawski, one of the evaluators of Wojtyła's habilitation thesis, suggested to Wojtyła during a hike in September of 1954 that he should teach at the Catholic University of Lublin (*Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski*, or *KUL*). In October the Academic Senate of KUL approved the motion for Wojtyła to teach classes in philosophical ethics. And two years later, in November of 1956, Wojtyła was appointed to the Chair of Ethics, which he retained until elected pope in October 1978.[189]

The professors of the philosophy department shared four philosophical convictions. "First, all were convinced that metaphysics had primacy of place in the realm of philosophy. Second, they emphasized the importance of anthropological reflection. Third, they strongly opposed irrational trends in contemporary philosophy. And fourth, they all felt a need for historical analysis of philosophical problems."[190]

Later, Pope John Paul II would reflect on the importance of KUL's existence on the 75th anniversary of its founding:

> In the period of dramatic confrontation with marxist atheism, the Catholic University of Lublin became a special witness whose influence reached far beyond the borders of Poland, east and west. For many years, in this vast area dominated by the communist system, in this see of totalitarian coercion, the Catholic University was one of a few islands of free, unrestricted search for Truth. Taking as a fundamental the Highest Truth which is God Himself, the Catholic University fought for man, for his truth and dignity, which find their ultimate explanation and surest guarantees only in the Person of Jesus Christ. The University became a powerful sign of contradiction and a witness of Truth when, in the name of mad ideology, some attempted to reduce faith, religion, and Christianity to a mere epiphenomenon, an illusion, or a lie. In this battle for the soul of the believing nation, the Catholic University of Lublin became a resilient center of evangelization.[191]

[187] J. Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 24.
[188] Cf. J. Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 25.
[189] Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 130, 135-136.
[190] J. Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 28.
[191] Jan Pawel II, "List do Wielkiego Kanclerza KUL abpa Bolesława Pylaka" (Letter to the Grand Chancellor of KUL Abp. Bolesława Pylak) cited in Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 27.

Wojtyła would continue his student and healthcare chaplaincies in Kraków, but began taking the overnight train to Lublin every two weeks for lectures and participation in symposiums with the other professors at KUL. Wojtyła was well received as a professor:

> By all accounts, Wojtyła was a popular and inspiring teacher and never had trouble filling even the largest of Lublin's lecture halls. Every seat was occupied and latecomers would have to sit on the floor or the windowsills. Students waited expectantly for class to begin, and soon the unfashionable scholar would appear at the podium wearing an ill-fitting and frayed cassock over drab olive pants. His lively lectures engaged the thought of Scheler along with other great philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, and Kant. But he did not neglect the practical side of ethics. Sexual ethics was a recurrent theme.[192]

Wojtyła also made himself available for the pastoral needs of the students at KUL. He heard confessions, met with students for spiritual direction, and counseled students who came to him with personal problems.

He taught introductory-level courses on general philosophical ethics, as well as upper-level philosophy courses known as "monographic lectures," over a year-long cycle. Wojtyła's first monographic lectures were on the themes of "Ethical Act and Ethical Experience" (1954-1955), "Good and Value" (1955-1956), and "The Problem of Norm and Happiness" (1956-1957). These lectures were later published as the *Lublin Lectures*.[193] In these lectures, Wojtyła dialogued with the major figures in the Western philosophical tradition, including Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Kant, Hume, Bentham and Scheler. In 1957-1958 and 1958-1959 he taught on questions of sexual ethics in a series of lectures entitled "Love and Responsibility," which he would publish as a book in 1960.[194] Wojtyła also led a doctoral seminar in philosophical ethics, which he conducted outside along the mountain trails.

In August of 1958 Cardinal Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland, informed Wojtyła that Pope Pius XII had named him an auxiliary bishop to Archbishop Baziak. He had been on a two-week *Środowisko* kayaking trip on the River Łyna in northeastern Poland when he was summoned to the Primate's office. When he returned to the kayaking trip, he assured his friends not to worry, "*Wujek* will remain *Wujek*."[195]

On September 28, 1958, the feast of St. Wacław (Wenceslaus), Wojtyła was consecrated a bishop in the Wawel Cathedral. He was only 38 years old, and the youngest bishop in Poland. Members of *Środowisko* participated in the offertory procession, and many

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[192] R. Spinello, *The Splendor of Marriage: St. John Paul II's Vision of Love, Marriage, Family & the Culture of Life*, Brooklyn, NY, 2018: Angelico Press, 181.
[193] Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Lublin Lectures*, Lublin 2020: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu.
[194] Cf. K. Wojtyła *Miłość i odpowiedzialność,* Lublin 2001: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL.
[195] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 147.

of his former coworkers at the Solvay plant were in attendance. He chose *Totus Tuus* (completely yours) as his motto on his episcopal coat of arms, a prayer of dedication to the Virgin Mary from St. Louis de Montfort. John Paul II reflected:

> The ring, on the bishop's finger, signifies that he is married to the Church: "*Accipe annulum, fidei signaculum*… Take this ring, the sign of your fidelity. In integrity of faith and purity of life, protect the holy Church, bride of Christ. *Esto fidelis usque ad mortem*…" These words are taken from the Book of Revelation—"*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life*" *(Rev. 2:10)*.
>
> This ring, a nuptial symbol, expresses the particular bond between the bishop and the Church. For me it is a daily call to fidelity. It is like a silent question that echoes in my conscience: Am I totally dedicated to my Bride, the Church? Am I sufficiently "for" communities, families, young and old people, and also "for" those yet to be born?[196]

Wojtyła viewed his priesthood, and especially his episcopacy, in nuptial terms.

As a bishop, he took on numerous new pastoral responsibilities. Having already been "in demand as a guest preacher and retreat master, he now traveled even more extensively throughout the archdiocese, saying Masses, blessing buildings, ordaining subdeacons and deacons, confirming deaf-mute children, supervising meetings of various deaneries for Archbishop Baziak"[197]. He also preached special Masses and days of recollection for various groups of professionals, including doctors, lawyers, and intellectuals, and held retreats for mining engineers, nurses, teachers, lawyers, and physicians.[198]

Bishop Wojtyła continued to teach at KUL, but came to the campus less often. After taking a break from his monographic lectures in 1959-1960, he offered one more year of lectures on the "Theory and Methodology of Ethics" (1960-1961), but had to stop in 1961 due to his increasing responsibilities as bishop. He continued to offer his doctoral seminar, but often had to meet with his students for six hours at a time, due to his less frequent visits to Lublin.

Though his episcopal ordination marked the end of his assignment as a university chaplain, ministry to young people and families remained a top priority and focus for Bishop Wojtyła. His experience as a professor, chaplain and guide to young people and couples was not merely a sentimental memory of his early priesthood, but became one of the fundamental elements of his pastoral strategy, which he would now put to use not only within *Środowisko*, but throughout the whole archdiocese.[199] Wojtyła would later explain that:

> a whole series, one could say the majority, of pastoral activities concerns families in a more or less direct manner, leads the family at various stages into the Church, and

[196] John Paul II, *Rise, Let Us Be On Our Way*, New York 2004: Warner Books, 39.
[197] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 150.
[198] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 150.
[199] Cf. P. Kwiatkowski, *Lo Sposo Passa Per Questa Strada*, 99.

> thereby shapes the Church. There cannot be, at the heart of the matter, any kind of separation of the family ministry—only a deepening of its individual elements, a more conscious emphasis in all pastoral activities on this basic reality called the family. There are many such elements: not only the Sacrament of Marriage, but the Sacrament of Baptism, and Confirmation, participation in the Eucharist (not only First Holy Communion), finally, the Sacrament of the Sick and Christian burial. In all of these pastoral activities, in most cases, the priest meets with the family, he molds the family, leads it into the Church, and impresses upon it, in the name of the Church, some mark of the Christian life, awareness and attitude. A good priest will always keep this in mind. The reality of the family will remain within his field of vision both with regard to the broad sphere of catechesis and, for example, with regard to charitable action.[200]

Pastoral care to the family was therefore not a separate ministry, or one ministry among many, but pervaded all the ministries within the Church.

When Bishop Wojtyła visited the numerous parishes in the Archdiocese of Kraków, he saw this as an opportunity to minister to couples and families. He encountered engaged couples, spouses, families and widows, giving to each his blessing, and giving spouses an opportunity to renew their vows before the bishop. Later as a Cardinal, Wojtyła would reflect on the importance of these visits:

> I consider meeting with married couples during visitations as a very important, even a central moment of the visitation. Marriage is a sacrament which binds two people; it is expressed by their union and is expressed by the family. Through this sacrament, the family is created within the Church, but, at the same time, the family in some measure creates the Church as a living community of the people of God. The meeting of the bishop with married couples during the visitation of a parish is like touching this very basic bond of the human community which is shaped in the Church and which in turn shapes the Church.[201]

In this way, Bishop Wojtyła worked together with the pastors of the parishes to enliven family ministry withing the parish. For Wojtyła, the "fundamental method of the family ministry in the parish is to formulate the various pastoral issues in a way that will make the family recognize its place in the Church and help it to understand its responsibilities better."[202] The family was not only the object of ministry, but also has a mission within the Church.[203]

While at St. Florian's, Fr. Wojtyła had initiated the first marriage preparation courses in the Archdiocese. Now as a bishop (and later as Archbishop), Wojtyła would have the chance to expand this novelty throughout the whole diocese. For this endeavor, he recognized the need

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[200] K. Wojtyła quoted in A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 197.
[201] K. Wojtyła quoted in A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium* 197.
[202] K. Wojtyła quoted in A. Boniecki*, Kalendarium*, *197*.
[203] Cf. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 49: "Christian married couples and parents […] 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."

for training for pastoral ministry to the family for the laity and in the formation of priests. This would lead to the founding of the Institute of the Family, which Boniecki notes was founded in 1960 for lay students, and then was expanded to include priests in 1965/1966.[204] In 1969 this informal structure was transformed into an archdiocesan Institute for Family Studies, "which sponsored conferences on such family-related issues as the theology of marriage, human sexuality, child care, and healing post-abortion stress." And in 1970, the Institute became affiliated with the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, and "evolved into a two-year program training 250 students each biennium. These students were the seminarians, priests, and lay men and women who became instructors and facilitators in the parish-based marriage-preparation programs [that Wojtyła] encouraged every pastor to establish."[205] For Wojtyła, preparation for marriage and ministry to families was the key to helping people discover and live out their vocations, which would lead to renewal within the Church.

1.3. Immediate: Context for Wojtyła's 1960 Retreat for Engaged Couples

We have explored Wojtyła's influences and formation in his preparation for the priesthood, and his experience working with young people and families, as well as his pastoral approach to marriage preparation. All of this is to help us have deeper appreciation for his *Retreat for Engaged Couples*, which he gave in 1960. That same year he published two other works related to marriage and family. The first, *Love and Responsibility*, is a philosophical work that explores the question of finding happiness in love. The second, *The Jeweler's Shop*, is a fictional drama about love, marriage, and children. We will summarize these two works here, in order to draw out important themes and ideas that will help us to better understand and appreciate Wojtyła's retreat, which we will explore in depth in the next chapter.

1.3.1. Love and Responsibility

In the academic years 1957-1958 and 1958-1959, Karol Wojtyła gave a year-long cycle of monographic lectures at KUL on "Love and Responsibility," exploring questions of human dignity, sexual ethics, love, marriage and family. John Paul II later reflected on that time period:

> By this point the war was ended and the controversies with Marxism were in full swing. In those years, my greatest involvement was with young people who asked me questions, not so much about the existence of God, but rather *about how to live,* how to face and resolve problems of love and marriage, not to mention problems related to work. The memory of those young people from the period following the German

[204] A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 195.
[205] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 196.

> occupation has always remained with me. In a certain sense, with their doubts and with their questions, they also showed me the way. From our meetings, from my sharing in the problems of their lives, a book was born, the contents of which is summarized in the title *Love and Responsibility.*"[206]

Love and Responsibility deals with five principal themes: the perfection of the person through love, the nature of spousal love, the existential character of the sexual drive, the person and chastity, and marriage and vocation. He explores these themes in four chapters, with a fifth chapter offering a "supplementary view" on sexology and ethics. Here we will review the four main chapters.

The Person and the Drive

Wojtyła's starting point is the person, whom he recognizes as different from the world of things (objects). A person cannot be defined merely as an "individual member of the species," because a person is "an individual of a rational nature (*individua substantia*)."[207] A person is a subject, who has a spiritual soul which is united to the body. Unlike animals, the human person has an "interior life" that "focuses on truth and the good."[208] Although the human person's connection "with the world begins on the 'biological' and sensual basis, it is nevertheless formed in the manner proper to man only in the orbit of the interior life."[209] This interior life allows man to make sense of his experience, to recognize what is good and true, and make choices in order to determine and fulfill himself.

A person is both the subject and object of action. Things happen to him, but he also has the ability to determine for himself how he will act, how to assert his "I," and thus how to form himself. Man's nature "includes the power of self-determination based on reflection and manifested in the fact that, while acting, man chooses what he wants to do. This power is called

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[206] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 200. Cf. John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, 89-90: "My now long experience, amid so many different situations, has confirmed my conviction that *priestly holiness alone is the soil which can nourish an effective pastoral activity, a true 'cura animarum.'* The truest secret of authentic pastoral success does not lie in material means, much less in sophisticated programs. The lasting results of pastoral endeavors are born of the holiness of the priest. This is the foundation! Needless to say, study, and updating are indispensable; in short, an adequate preparation which enables one to respond to urgent needs and to discern *pastoral priorities*. But it can also be said that priorities depend on circumstances, and every priest is called to identify and pursue them under the authority of his Bishop and in harmony with the directives of the universal Church. In my own life I have identified these priorities in the lay apostolate and particularly in the pastoral care of the family—an area in which lay people themselves have helped me so much—in youth ministry and in serious dialogue with the world of learning and culture. All this has been reflected in my scholarly and literary activity. This was the origin of my study *Love and Responsibility*, and, among others, the literary work *The Jeweler's Shop*, which is subtitled *Meditations on the Sacrament of Marriage*."
[207] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 4, 5.
[208] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 5.
[209] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 5-6.

free will."[210] A person is more than unique and unrepeatable. A person determines themselves (*sui juris*), and this property cannot be transferred to someone else. "This nontransferability or incommunicability of the person is most closely linked with his interiority, with self-determination, with free will. No one else can will in my stead. No one can substitute his act of the will for mine."[211] Human society, culture and relationships depend on respect for this freedom.

In participation with others, man recognizes that the other shares the same humanity, and is therefore a person, another "I" with self-determination and free will. Therefore, it is never suitable to use another human being, to make them into a means to an end. Wojtyła calls this the Personalistic Norm: "Whenever the person is an object of action in your conduct, remember that you may not treat him merely as a means to an end, as a tool, but [you must] take into account that the person himself has or at least should have his end."[212] In our interactions with other human beings, we should recognize that "the person is a kind of good that is incompatible with using," and therefore "the person is a kind of good to which only love constitutes the proper and fully-mature relation."[213] We either love the person by respecting his or her self-chosen ends, or we use the person as an instrument to achieve our own ends.

Wojtyła contrasts the personalistic norm with the ethical theory of utilitarianism, which argues that right actions are those that maximize happiness, and are measured by "what brings pleasure and excludes pain, for pleasure constitutes the essential manifestation of man's happiness."[214] The error of this ethical system is that it incorrectly identifies "pleasure alone as the only or the greatest good, to which everything else in the action of man and of human society should be subordinated."[215] But pleasure is something that is "elusive," which cannot be "fully determined in advance."[216] It is instead something "collateral" and "accidental," and not an end in itself.[217] If it were, all human interactions would be reduced to using others as a means to the end of pleasure.

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[210] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 6.
[211] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 6.
[212] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 11. This is Wojtyła's reformulation of Immanuel Kant's second categorical imperative. Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. L Beck. Indianapolis 1959: Bobbs-Merrill, 54: "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or that of another, always as an end and never as a means only."
[213] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 25.
[214] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 19-20. Cf. 20: "The utilitarian considers the principle of maximizing pleasure while at the same time minimizing pain as the chief norm of human morality, adding that it should be applied not only individually, egoistically, but also collectively, socially."
[215] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 20.
[216] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 21.
[217] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 20.

"The only way out of this inevitable egoism," Wojtyła contends, "is to recognize besides a purely subjective good, i.e., besides pleasure, an *objective good*, which can also unite persons—and then it acquires the characteristics of a common good."[218] This is the foundation of love, and by subordinating themselves to it, the persons choosing this common good "liberate themselves from subjectivism and from egoism inherently concealed in it."[219]

This helps us understand the purpose of the sexual drive, which is the theme of the second part of the first chapter. We might take pleasure in our sexual capacities, but pleasure is not their purpose. The sexual drive directs a man and a woman to each other and opens the way for a deep personal union. In this union, two incomplete and complementary parts form a natural unified whole ordered to the biological end of reproduction. Unlike animals, whose sexual drive is a matter of instinct, for persons the sexual drive is a "certain orientation, a certain direction of the whole human being linked to his very nature […] according to which man's whole being develops from within and perfects itself."[220] In human beings, the sexual drive is not mere instinct, but is subordinated to the will, and is subject to man's freedom. "Man is not responsible for what happens to him in the sexual sphere, […] but he is by all means responsible for what he does in this sphere."[221] The direction of the drive must be perfected and given shape by acts of the will at the level of the person.

The sexual drive has an *existential meaning*, because through the sexual union of man and woman they can bring a new human person into existence, "which is the person's first and most fundamental good"[222]. Personal being is the highest form of existence, and this accounts for the "proper greatness of this drive"[223]. Thus, the natural purpose of sexual activity is procreation, "and the love of persons, of a man and a woman, […] can be correctly formed only inasmuch as it is formed in close harmony with the proper finality of the drive."[224] The fully-mature conjugal love of two persons "serve the existence of another concrete person, who

[218] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 22.
[219] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 22-23.
[220] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 30. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 31: "every man is a sexual being, and belonging to one of the two sexes, entails a certain orientation of the whole being itself, an orientation that is manifested in a concrete development of this being from within." 33: "the sexual drive is found in man as a completely different situation than in animals, where it constitutes a source of instinctive actions that are subject to nature itself. In man, the drive by nature is subordinated to the will, and thereby it is subject to the specific dynamic of freedom that is at the disposal of the will. The sexual drive rises above determinism of the biological order with an act of love."
[221] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 31.
[222] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 36.
[223] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 35.
[224] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 36, 37.

is their own child," and "this person constitutes a confirmation and extension of their own love."[225]

Wojtyła considers three interpretations of the sexual drive. The first is the religious interpretation, which recognizes that all creatures do not have existence from themselves, but "participate in the whole order of existence". They do this "not only through the fact that they themselves exist, but also through the fact that at least some of them help transmit existence to new beings within their species."[226] Through this participation, a man and a woman become "rational co-creators of a new human being," co-creating together and with God, who "creates the spiritual and immortal soul of this being"[227]. And just as God continually creates, so also the parents assume responsibility for the education of the person. In this, "in the work of education of new persons, is concentrated the whole fertility of love of both persons, of a woman and a man. Here lies its proper end, its natural direction."[228]

Second, Wojtyła considers the rigoristic or puritan interpretation, which falls into utilitarianism. The rigorist interpretation believes that "because the Creator uses a man and a woman and their sexual intercourse to ensure the existence of the species *Homo sapiens*, he uses persons as a means to his end. In consequence, marriage and sexual intercourse are good only when they serve procreation."[229] Husband and wife use each other for procreation, and the evil of sexual pleasure "must be tolerated, since it cannot be excluded." [230] Contrary to this interpretation, Wojtyła shows that God does not use people, "but opens before them the possibility of a particular realization of love. It depends on them whether they will place their sexual intercourse on the level of love, on the level proper to persons, or below this level."[231] Sexual pleasure, which is not an end in itself, is not evil, but is experienced along with the joy of cooperating with God in the possibility of procreation, while preserving a love that is worthy of persons.

Third, Wojtyła considers the libidinistic interpretation, which interprets the sexual drive according to *libido*, "the drive toward delight," that comes from the relief of sexual tension, and views procreation merely as a "collateral end—an end *per accidens*."[232] This interpretation endorses utilitarianism, advocating maximizing pleasure as the supreme moral norm, thereby

[225] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 37.
[226] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 38.
[227] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 40.
[228] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 39.
[229] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 43.
[230] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 43.
[231] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 44-45.
[232] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 46.

excluding the interiority of the person. However, thanks to man's interiority, his reason and free will, man "cannot leave to instinct the whole responsibility for the drive, disposing himself only toward delight, but he must take up full responsibility for the way he uses the sexual drive."[233] The libidinistic interpretation is linked with socio-economic problems related to population growth, which "adherents of the utilitarian mentality want to regard as a problem of a purely technical nature, whereas Catholic ethics sees in it a problem of an utterly ethical nature."[234] The utilitarian mentality, focused on the necessary pleasure of libido, attempts to eliminate the finality of procreation, or the person conceived from sexual union. Wojtyła instead affirms that the personalistic norm cannot be contradicted, and "the person himself cannot be in any way subordinated to economics" [235].

Wrapping up the chapter, Wojtyła examines the ends of marriage: procreation (*procreation*), mutual help (*mutuum adiutorium*), and a remedy for concupiscence (*remedium concupiscentiae*). "Objectively speaking," he notes, "marriage is above all to serve existence, then the relationship between a man and a woman, and finally the correct direction of concupiscence."[236] The personalistic norm, while not one of the ends of marriage, reminds us that the ends are achieved by persons. A utilitarian vision of the ends leads to treating the first end through the rigorist distortion, and the third end through the libidinistic distortion. Instead, "the realization of all the ends of marriage must be at the same time the fulfillment of love as virtue, for only as virtue does love correspond to the evangelical commandment and the demands of the personalistic norm contained in this commandment."[237] *Procreatio* and *mutuum adiutorium* "proceed from love as virtue," whereas *remedium concupiscentiae* is only "an effect of love-virtue." Procreation is the primary end "in the objective, ontological order,"[238] and the satisfaction of natural concupiscence must be subordinated to the other two ends.

The Person and Love

In his second chapter Wojtyła explores the theme of the person and love, asking how to differentiate authentic love from "distortions" in love, which can be caused by errant sexual desire and pleasure seeking.[239] In order to understand the nature of love, Wojtyła does a

[233] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 47.
[234] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 49.
[235] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 49.
[236] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 50-51.
[237] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 52.
[238] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 52.
[239] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 27.

threefold analysis of the love that unites a man and woman: the metaphysics of love, the psychology of love, and the ethics of love.

In the first part he does a metaphysical analysis of love, exploring love's fundamental elements. The first element is fondness (*amor complacentiae*) or attraction. A person perceives another person as a good because that person embodies certain values, such as physical characteristics or psychological qualities. This attraction engages the reason and will, as the person begins to think of the other as a good for him or her. Emotions and affective reactions to the sexual and spiritual values of the person play a dominant role in fondness. "Fondness belongs to the essence of love and, in a sense, it is already love, even though love is not just fondness."[240] However, because affections can "appear in a spontaneous way," this reaction can be "blind" and at times contributes to "distorting or falsifying fondness," which fails to "grasp the truth about the object."[241] If the relation to the other person is not based on the truth, it can lead to disappointment and even hate.

The second element is desire (*amor concupiscentiae*), which recognizes an objective need for the other person as a good for oneself: "I want you because you are good for me"[242] Since every person is limited and not self-sufficient, there is a recognition of our need of others. Love as desire recognizes the complementarity of man and woman, and the need of the other as good or beneficial for oneself. Love as desire is not reduced to a utilitarian attitude, but is experienced as a longing "for a person and not as desire alone, *concupiscentia*."[243]

The third element is benevolence (*amor benevolentiae*), in which a person goes beyond longing for the other as merely a good for his or her own fulfillment, and instead actively seeks the good of the beloved. As St. Thomas Aquinas defines it: "To love is to will the good of another."[244] Benevolence directs the will in an altruistic way, toward an affirmation of the person for his or her own sake. It is true love, the "pure essence" of love, which "perfects its object the most; it develops most fully both his existence and the existence of the person to whom it turns."[245]

Fondness, desire, and benevolence all "belong to the nature of love," but reciprocity "reveals that love has matured, that it has become something 'between' persons, that it created some community—in this its full nature is realized."[246] Reciprocity brings a synthesis to these

[240] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 60.
[241] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 61.
[242] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 65.
[243] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 65.
[244] Cf. T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 26, a.4.
[245] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 67.
[246] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 69.

other aspects of love, assuring that love is not based on a "consumer attitude" or egoism, but on a "unity in which the mature 'we' is manifested"[247]. Both sympathy and friendship are needed to develop this reciprocity. Sympathy represents affective love, an emotional bond between two people whereby they empathize with each other and experience things together. Sympathy helps to create a "we," but it is fragile because it is based purely on emotions, on what "happens" to a person.[248] Therefore, "the love between a woman and a man cannot remain on the level of sympathy alone, but it must become friendship." In friendship, "the participation of the will is decisive. I want the good for you as much as I want it for myself, for my own 'I.'"[249] Through friendship a moral unity is created, bringing about a "unity of the will (*unum velle*), thanks to which two 'I's' become one 'we.'"[250] In the education of love, both are essential: "sympathy must be *transformed* into friendship, and friendship *complemented* with sympathy."[251]

The "fullest" form of human love is spousal love (*miłość oblubieńcza*), the essence of which consists in "giving oneself, of making one's nontransferable and incommunicable 'I' someone else's possession"[252] Through this "reciprocal self-giving of persons,"[253] use is excluded, and instead the person "is not in the least destroyed or devalued, but on the contrary, is developed and enriched"[254]. Due to free will, the person is capable of giving himself or herself in this total and exclusive way. "In giving ourselves we must find a particular proof of possessing ourselves."[255] Spousal love is most commonly achieved through the marriage of a man and a woman, but can also occur between a person and God. In marriage, sexual intercourse expresses that spousal love "is not only a spiritual union of persons, but also a bodily and earthly one"[256].

In part two of the second chapter, Wojtyła looks at the psychological analysis of love, focusing on the catalysts for love, which include both physical and emotional components. Sensuality is an experience of the sexual values associated with the body of a person of the opposite sex. Affectivity is an experience of the sexual values linked with the whole person. These two forces constitute the "raw material" for romantic attraction to grow into spousal

[247] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 71.
[248] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 72.
[249] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 73.
[250] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 77.
[251] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 74.
[252] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 80.
[253] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 79.
[254] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 80.
[255] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 80.
[256] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 196.

love, but in themselves are not yet love. There is a danger of sensuality being "completely blind to the person,"[257] orienting itself merely to the body and their sexual values. Affectivity can idealize a person, leading to disillusionment and hatred. Therefore, sensual and affective experiences must be integrated with friendship and benevolence, based on "freedom and truth."[258]

In the third part, Wojtyła does an ethical analysis of love, recognizing that "love as lived-experience must be subordinated to love as virtue"[259]. There are four requirements necessary for spousal love to be lived out as a virtue. First, spousal love must be "permeated" with the "affirmation of the person, otherwise it would not be love."[260] The person must be affirmed for their value as a person, and not merely for their body, sensuality or affectivity alone. Second, the "specific weight"[261] of spousal love, love as a virtue, requires "the reciprocal self-giving and the reciprocal belonging (*przynależność*) of two persons."[262] This belonging is expressed through the exclusive and permanent bond whose expression is sexual intercourse. Third, spousal love involves assuming responsibility "for the true good of the person,"[263] for their well-being and fulfillment. This involves making a choice of a person, not merely for their sexual values but for the value of the person. This requires a mature and free choice that is faithful to the value of the person. Fourth, love depends on freedom, and an "authentic commitment of freedom is possible only when it is based on truth."[264] One can only make a free commitment to another when it is based on the truth of the person, and not distortions caused by immature sentiments, egoism, or utilitarian desire. Spousal love is always a free striving for interpersonal union and the other's good. This "longing for the good 'without limits' for the other 'I' contains in the bud, as it were, the whole creative urge of true love, the urge to endow beloved persons with the good, to make them happy."[265]

The Person and Chastity

In the third chapter, Wojtyła delves into the theme of chastity. The first part deals with the rehabilitation of chastity, which has suffered from misperceptions and even resentment.

[257] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 93.
[258] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 98.
[259] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 103.
[260] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 105.
[261] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 108.
[262] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 109. Note that here Wojtyła calls this "the law of 'ecstasy,' of going out of oneself in order to exist more fully in the other." He will later famously refer to this as the "law of the gift".
[263] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 112.
[264] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 117.
[265] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 119.

Chastity represents "a higher value," which "demands a greater effort of the will, if we want to attain and realize it."[266] The response of contemporary man is similar to the cardinal vice of sloth (*acedia*), which St. Thomas Aquinas defines as "sorrow proceeding from the fact that the good is difficult."[267] But resentment goes further than this. It not only calls the good of chastity evil, "but also depreciates what should merit the esteem so that man does not have to take pains to measure up to the true good, but can 'safely' acknowledge as the good only what suits him, what is convenient for him."[268] Chastity, a superior value, is replaced with the desire for pleasure.

Love unites persons into one common subject of action, without losing their personal subjectivity. Each is the subject of numerous acts, both exterior deeds (*actus externi*) and interior deeds (*actus interni*), whose object is the other person. And a person should always be an object of love. However, the concupiscence of the flesh "replaces the object of love, which is the person, with another, namely the 'body and sex' linked to some person."[269] Concupiscence imposes itself on the will, finding an "outlet" in the body and sex, while denying the possibility of love. Instead, "the disintegration of love proceeds," because the intimacy and intercourse stemming from concupiscence of the flesh alone "do not unite a man and a woman as persons, do not have the value of a personal union, and are not love in its proper (i.e., ethical) meaning."[270] There is a need for integration. While sensuality provides "material for love," without creativity of the will love cannot exist, and "what is left is only the material that the concupiscence of the flesh merely uses up, finds an 'outlet' in it."[271]

Affectivity, because it reacts to the whole human being and not merely the body as an object of use, can provide "a natural protection against the concupiscence of the flesh."[272] However, affectivity does not constitute a "full solution" to the problem of concupiscence, because it brings only the "material" of love into the reciprocal relation between a woman and a man. A "fully-mature protection against the concupiscence of the flesh is found only in the deep *realism of virtue*,"[273] and so the virtue of chastity is needed.

Subjectivism distorts the essence of love. The first form of subjectivism is *subjectivism of affection*, through which "affection in a sense averts the 'gaze of truth' from what is objective

[266] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 125.
[267] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 125. Cf. T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, 35.
[268] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 126.
[269] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 132.
[270] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 132, 133.
[271] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 133.
[272] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 133.
[273] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 134.

in action, from the object of the act and from the act itself, and turns it toward what is subjective in action, toward the lived-experience alone."[274] This leads to disintegration of love and the value of the act being measured by affection, rather than objective principles. The second form is *subjectivism of value*, which treats the objective values of "the person, the 'body and sex,' or 'femininity/masculinity,' […] only and exclusively as an opportunity to evoke pleasure or various degrees of delight."[275] This utilitarian outlook "ruins the very essence of love," because pleasure "becomes the complete and absolute value to which everything should be subordinated, for here it is the interior measure of all human acts."[276] Egoism grows out of both of these forms of subjectivism. Egoism "is disposed exclusively toward its own 'I,' toward ego,"[277] and therefore it excludes love, the common good, and the possibility of reciprocity. Egoism seeks pleasure, which is a "purely subjective good," which at most seeks "the other's pleasure 'next' to his own pleasure, but always only 'on condition' of one's own pleasure."[278] Love, which creates reciprocity and the common good, cannot be based on pleasure alone.

While sensuality and affectivity provide the "material for love," without integration they "may easily become the 'material' for sin." They only become love if they are integrated, "through lifting them up to the personal level, through the reciprocal affirmation of the value of the person."[279] This integration is an important protection against the concupiscence of the flesh, which is a "constant inclination to see the person of the other sex through the values of *sexus* alone as an 'object of possible use,'" and a "latent readiness in man to overturn the objective values."[280] While concupiscence of the flesh is not yet a sin, it is an effect of original sin and a "hotbed of sin," which "awakens a desire to use," whereas the body and its sexual value "should awaken love because of the value of the person"[281] Concupiscence habitually pushes the will to cross the threshold of sin, consenting to what at first merely "happens" to man in his reactions of sensuality, instead choosing to perform deeds which "possess a moral value, they are good and evil; and if they are evil, we call them sins."[282]

Subjectivism of affection reduces love to "subjective, emotional states alone,"[283] using affection as love's true measure. When the person and love is subordinated to affection, rather

[274] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 136.
[275] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 137.
[276] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 138.
[277] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 138.
[278] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 139.
[279] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 142.
[280] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 142.
[281] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 143.
[282] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 145.
[283] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 147.

than subordinating affection to the person in love, this leads to sin. Subjectivism of values erroneously sees the good in what is pleasant, and leads to the will yielding to concupiscence, "inasmuch as it sees the good in pleasure alone, and to such an extent that pleasure obscures everything else: both the value of the person and the value of the true union of persons in love."[284] Love as a virtue is replaced by a distortion of the will that is disposed toward "sensory-sexual use alone," and a "habitual inability to 'love' a person,"[285] because the will lacks love. Affection and pleasure are "secondary goods" from which "it is impossible to build love, that is, the durable union of persons"[286]. The true good is the person, while sin violates the true good.

The personalistic norm is realized through the virtue of love. St. Thomas Aquinas links chastity with the cardinal virtue of temperance (*temperantia*), which is needed in order to subordinate sensual movements to reason. "For to long for and pursue what reason acknowledges as good is natural (i.e., in conformity with nature) for a rational being such as man. Only in such a pursuit, in such a relation toward goods, is the true perfection of a rational being, of a person, expressed and realized."[287] Temperance helps man to achieve the perfection proper to his rational nature by assisting the will and the concupiscible power (*appetitus concupiscibilis*) in mastering sensual movements. Thus, the virtue of chastity is the habit that "consists in constantly keeping in balance the concupiscent power by the habitual relation to the true good (*bonum honestum*), which is defined by reason."[288] Chastity only makes sense in relation to the virtue of love, because chastity liberates love from the attitude of use. "To be chaste (*czysty*) means to have a 'transparent' relation to the person of the other sex—chastity is the same as the 'transparency' of interiority, without which love is not itself, for it is not itself as long as the wish to 'use' is not subordinated to the readiness to 'love' in every situation."[289] Chastity serves authentic love—love as a virtue—and "only a chaste woman and a chaste man are capable of true love."[290]

Chastity is often misunderstood to be merely abstinence, contempt for the body, or the suppression of the sexual urge and values of the body, pushing them "down to the subconscious, where they await an opportunity to explode."[291] However, "chastity is first and

[284] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 148.
[285] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 148.
[286] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 149.
[287] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 152.
[288] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 153.
[289] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 154.
[290] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 156.
[291] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 155.

foremost a 'yes,' from which a 'no' then proceeds." We see this connection between chastity and love in the personalistic norm, which "contains a twofold content: the positive ('love') and the negative ('do not use')."[292] Chastity, therefore, leads to "humility of the body,"[293] which relates to humility before the greatness of the person and love.

The virtue of chastity is realized through two components which affirm the value of the person: shame and abstinence. Men and women cover the "parts and organs of the body that determine its sexual differences."[294] While the body is good, man and women experience shame "in response to someone's sensory-sexual reaction directed toward the 'body as an object of use'," but also as an "interior need to avoid those reactions to the body that remain in conflict with the value of the person."[295] Shame is a "natural self-defense,"[296] that reminds the person of their value and protects them from being reduced to an object of use. Therefore, "sexual shame is not a flight from love, but quite the contrary, it is some opening of a way toward it. The spontaneous need to conceal the sexual values themselves linked to the person in a natural way to unveil the value of the person himself."[297] True love absorbs shame, because "true love makes these lived-experiences to be permeated with the affirmation of the value of the person to such an extent that the relation of the will to another person as an object of use is excluded."[298] Love seeks the true good of the other.

Abstinence is the second component needed for chastity. Chastity cannot be achieved without self-mastery, which protects man's power of self-determination. And self-mastery is achieved through abstinence, which Wojtyła also calls continence (*powściągliwość*), "the habit of restraining the concupiscence of the flesh by the will, the ability to moderate effectively the sensations connected with the reactions of sensuality and even of affectivity"[299]. The value of the person must "take the lead," and this value "should not be only 'coldly' understood, but also felt."[300] Therefore, affectivity plays an important "auxiliary role" in the process of subordination of continence to the process of "objectivization,"[301] so the objective value of the person seizes consciousness and the will. Man's "proficiency for making allies of potential enemies," like sensuality and affectivity, "is perhaps even more characteristic of the essence of

[292] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 156.
[293] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 156.
[294] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 159.
[295] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 161.
[296] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 166.
[297] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 163.
[298] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 167.
[299] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 181.
[300] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 184.
[301] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 183.

self-mastery and of chastity than 'pure' continence itself."[302] In this way he shows the dignity of his personhood, not merely allowing things to "happen" to him, but choosing to act in accord with reason.

This allows for honorableness in action. "The 'honorable' (*godziwe*) is precisely what is in accord with reason, thus what is worthy of a rational being, of a person. The principle of honorableness in action constitutes the substantive opposite of the principle of utility advocated by the utilitarians."[303] If a person does not act in accord with his rational nature, and is instead dominated by concupiscence of the flesh, "he jeopardizes his natural perfection; he allows what is inferior to and dependent on him to act in him, and even more—he subjects himself to it."[304] Abstinence is needed for self-mastery, and for the realization of love and reciprocity.

Lastly, tenderness allows us to empathize with another person's inner feelings, "to embrace the other's lived-experiences and the states of the other person's soul with one's own affection."[305] It allows for a closeness between persons to develop. However, abstinence is needed so that tenderness does not devolve into an excuse to use another, becoming "mere 'material' for egoism"[306] instead. Rather than the "egoism that contradicts love," abstinence allows for love to be built on "a certain sacrifice and denial of oneself," so that love as a virtue can flourish.[307]

Justice and Respect to the Creator

The first part of Wojtyła's final chapter focuses on marriage. Marriage provides the "appropriate framework" that allows for a man and woman to unite in sexual intercourse and form a "durable union of persons"[308]. Marriage was instituted by the Creator, as Jesus affirms in his teachings, to be monogamous and indissoluble.[309] Monogamy and indissolubility of marriage "necessitates the integration of love," as Wojtyła showed in the second chapter. "Without it marriage is an enormous risk. A man and a woman whose love has not thoroughly matured, has not crystallized as a fully-mature union of persons, should not marry, for they are

[302] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 185.
[303] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 178.
[304] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 178.
[305] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 186.
[306] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 192.
[307] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 192.
[308] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 195.
[309] Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 196-197: "in the teaching of Jesus Christ the issue of monogamy and indissolubility of marriage is posited definitively and decisively. Christ had before his eyes the fact of the original institution of marriage by the Creator, marriage of a closely monogamous (Gen 1:27, 2:24) and indissoluble character ('What God has joined, let no man put asunder'), to which he appealed constantly."

not prepared for the life test of marriage."[310] Not that love has to be perfectly mature at the time of entering into marriage. But a mature union of persons must be built on the primacy of the value of the person, rather than the principle of utility. Without monogamy and indissolubility, "this would contradict the personalistic norm," which "requires a durable, lifelong preservation of the union."[311] Monogamy and indissolubility protect the personal order.

Marriage justifies sexual intercourse between a man and a woman, "first of all regarding themselves, but also regarding society,"[312] because the birth of a child is the "ordinary consequence" of this intercourse. Through children, man and a woman become a family, and the family "itself is already a community, a small society, on which the existence of every large society depends, e.g., a nation, a state, the Church."[313] Thus society has an interest in "the process of its continuous becoming through the family," which serves the "foundations of human existence."[314] On the other hand, without the institution of marriage, "a person engaging in sexual intercourse is, as a matter of fact, pushed to the position of an object of use for another person (X or Y), and this fully contradicts the demands of the personalistic norm, without which we cannot in any way imagine relations between persons on a truly personal level."[315] Both pre-marital and extra-marital relations are morally evil, for they always reduce a person to an object of use for another person, even if they consent or want it.

Marriage is a durable inter-personal union of two persons based on love. While a husband and wife without children still enjoy the "full value of the institution," we can say that "marriage serves love, so to speak, more fully when it serves existence, when it becomes a family."[316] The love between husband and wife "matures all the more through procreation."[317]

There is also a need to justify sexual relations between a man and a woman before God. As creatures, human beings are dependent on God for their existence. "Thanks to his rationality man comprehends that he possesses himself (*sui iuris*), and at the same time that he as a creature is a possession of the Creator, and experiences (*przeżywać*) the Creator's right of ownership with respect to himself."[318] Since every person is first of all the possession of the Creator, in the reciprocal gift of man and woman to each other in marriage, God also must

[310] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 199.
[311] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 199.
[312] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 206.
[313] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 201.
[314] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 201.
[315] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 206.
[316] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 202.
[317] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 202.
[318] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 207.

"give him to her, and her to him, or in any case he must approve their reciprocal self-giving"[319]. Wojtyła refers to marriage as a "sacrament from the beginning,"[320] since the creation of the first man and woman. This "sacrament of nature" (*sacramentum naturae*) is fully revealed in the "sacrament of grace,"[321] instituted by Jesus Christ and imparted by the Church. Since "the justification of man with respect to God is accomplished fundamentally through grace, […] only the sacrament of marriage fully satisfies the need for justification of the fact of conjugal intercourse with respect to God the Creator."[322]

How can the conjugal act conform to the objective demands of the personalistic norm? When spouses unite, "a meeting of two orders takes place in the conjugal intercourse of a man and a woman, namely of the order of nature, which aims at reproduction, and of the personal order, which is expressed in the love of persons and strives to realize its love as fully as possible."[323] Therefore, the conjugal act is not only a union of persons, but "by its nature (essence) a union of persons in relation to *procreatio*."[324] The order of nature and the personal order are interrelated, and "it is impossible to separate these two orders; one depends on the other, and particularly the relation to reproduction (*procreatio*) conditions the realization of love."[325]

The order of nature is different from the biological order. Becoming a father or a mother is not merely biological, but personal. Every time a man and a woman make the conscious and free choice to have sexual intercourse, they are also choosing the possibility of becoming a father and a mother. Therefore, "sexual intercourse of a man and a woman in marriage possesses its full value of a personal union only when it contains the conscious acceptance of the possibility of parenthood." [326] Without this state of consciousness and the will, the sexual act would be unjust, becoming merely mutual use rather than a union in love. Whenever the possibility of procreation is positively excluded, "then *eo ipso* the intention of each of them turns away from the person and is directed toward the use alone: the 'person co-creating love' disappears and what remains is a 'partner of an erotic lived-experience.'" [327] The value of the person is canceled, and the sexual act no longer serves the union of persons. Therefore, man and woman must always accept the possibility that they "can" become a parent, although it is

[319] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 207.
[320] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 207.
[321] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 208.
[322] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 209.
[323] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 211.
[324] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 211.
[325] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 212.
[326] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 212.
[327] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 221.

not necessary for every act of intercourse to result in pregnancy, nor must they always will procreation explicitly.

Periodic abstinence (*wstrzemięźliwość*) should be exercised, especially in times when the spouses "cannot," "do not want to," or "should not" become a father and a mother.[328] Rather than violate nature, man "as a rational being can direct his conjugal life in such a way that it does not cause procreation. He can do so by conforming to the periods of the woman's fertility and infertility, that is, by having intercourse during the infertile periods and abstaining from intercourse during fertile periods."[329] Abstinence should not be considered as merely a technique for utility, but as a virtue, recognizing that "the love of a man and a woman loses nothing by temporarily relinquishing amorous lived-experiences; on the contrary, it gains: the union of persons becomes more profound, grounded fundamentally in affirmation of the value of the person, and not merely on sexual attachment."[330] This truly honors the value of the person. "As opposed to artificial methods, the natural method in striving to regulate conceptions takes advantage of the circumstances in which biological conception cannot naturally occur. Hence, the very 'naturalness' of conjugal intercourse is not violated, whereas artificial methods violate the very "naturalness' of intercourse."[331] The natural order and the order of persons are both respected, as well as the mutual affirmation of the value of the person.

The second part of the fourth chapter is focused on the question of vocation. God is both man's Creator and Redeemer, to whom man is dependent for existence and sanctification through grace. When man respects the order of nature, he "becomes a partaker of God's thought, *particeps Creatoris*, he has a share in the law which God eternally imparted to the world by creating it."[332] God is also the creator of the person, so man shows particular justice to the Creator "insofar as he loves people"[333] and respects the personal order. This is particularly shown through the conjugal relations of man and woman in marriage, when their truly personal union in love is permeated with the readiness for parenthood.

However, the relation between God and man cannot be based on justice alone, since man is not capable of giving to God all that is fully owed to Him. Wojtyła sees in Christ a different solution. Man can give himself entirely to God, "not from justice alone, but from

[328] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 223.
[329] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 221.
[330] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 227.
[331] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 223. Cf. 216: "There is no victory over nature in the sense of violating it. Mastery of nature can result only from a thorough knowledge of its finality and the regularity that governs it. Man masters nature by the fact of evermore fully taking advantage of the possibilities hidden in it."
[332] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 232-233.
[333] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 233.

love," which "places the relation of man to God on a higher level than justice alone, for the latter does not go toward a union of persons at all, whereas love tends precisely to it."[334] Man can respond to the gifts of his existence and redemption, by giving back to God all that He has bestowed. And this creates union and communion between man and God.

Besides marriage, virginity is also a vocation in which man is called to develop himself through giving himself out of love. A "'virgin' (*dziewiczy człowiek*) means somebody untouched by another, sexually intact. […] Bodily intactness is an exterior expression of the fact that the person belongs only to himself and to the Creator."[335] Just as marriage is based on reciprocal spousal love, so also through virginity, the possibility of reciprocal spousal love between man and God is realized. For "the human soul, being the bride of God, gives itself to him exclusively. This exclusive and total self-giving to God is the fruit of a spiritual process accomplished inside the person under the order of grace. […] virginity is spousal love directed to God himself."[336]

The word vocation "indicates that there exists a proper direction of every person's development through commitment of his whole life in the service of certain values."[337] Each person should discern their vocation, "understanding, on the one hand, what he carries in himself and what he could give to others, and on the other hand, what is expected of him."[338] Vocation, therefore, is an active commitment to direct one's whole life and love toward the gift of self in a spousal way, whether in marriage or virginity. Through directing love in this way, the "gift of self can be most creative for the person: he realizes himself the most precisely by giving himself the most."[339] By giving oneself out of love, man develops his personhood and responds to the Gospel commandment to love, "a call to perfection through love. This call is universal. The task of every man of good will is to apply it to himself and by this to concretize

[334] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 236.
[335] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 237.
[336] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 236.
[337] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 242.
[338] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 242. Cf. 243: "What is my vocation? This means: in which direction should the development of my personhood proceed in light of what I have in myself, what I can give of myself, what others—people and God—expect of me?"
[339] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 242. Cf. *Gaudium et spes*, "*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,"* 24 in *Vatican Council II, Volume 1: The Conciliar and Postconciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, O.P., new rev. ed., Northport, New York 1992: Costello Publishing: "man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself."

it, precisely in discerning the main direction of his life."[340] This is not done alone, but with the help of God's grace, who calls humanity to "enter into God's action and respond to his love."[341]

Wojtyła concludes by reflecting on fatherhood and motherhood, especially in the interior or spiritual sense. Spiritual parenthood, "as a manifestation of interior maturity of the human person is an end to which every man, a man and a woman, is called in some way (and the ways will be quite diverse), even outside marriage."[342] Here he is not speaking of paternity in the biological sense, so much as characterizing an inner attitude of the person. This attitude reflects "the mark of a particular spiritual perfection, which always consists in some 'generation' in the spiritual sense, forming souls."[343] Thus each person, in discovering their vocation, finds the path in which God is calling them to spiritual perfection. The call to spiritual paternity, "is implicated, in a sense, in the evangelical call to perfection, which indicates the 'Father' as its supreme model. Thus, man attains a likeness to God the Creator particularly when this primarily spiritual fatherhood-motherhood, whose archetype is God, is also formed in him."[344] The more a person is capable of giving of themselves to and for others in a life-giving way, the more they grow in spiritual perfection. Therefore, "[s]piritual generation is a symptom of the person's maturity and of some fullness, both of which one wills to give to others ('*bonum est diffusivum sui*'). So, it seeks 'children,' i.e., other people, especially younger, who will receive what it wants to give."[345] Thus each person, in discovering their vocation, finds the path in which God is calling them to grow in spiritual perfection.

1.3.2. The Jeweler's Shop

We now move on to Wojtyła's second major work on marriage that he published in 1960, *The Jeweler's Shop: A Meditation on the Sacrament of Matrimony, Passing on Occasion into a Drama*. Wojtyła wrote six plays in the course of twenty-five years. His first three: *David, Job, and Jeremiah,* were Biblically themed plays about Polish history, which he wrote in 1939-1940. In 1944 he wrote *Our God's Brother*, which he later rewrote in 1950. This was a poetic and dramatic biography of Brother Albert Chmielowski (1845-1916), who like Wojtyła, gave

[340] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 243. Cf. Matthew 5:48: "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 11: "Fortified by so many and such powerful means of salvation, all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord, each in his own way, to that perfect holiness whereby the Father Himself is perfect."
[341] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 243.
[342] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 246.
[343] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 245.
[344] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 246.
[345] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 246.

up a possible career as an artist for a religious vocation. John Paul II would later celebrate his canonization in 1989.

Wojtyła finished *The Jeweler's Shop* in early 1960, and published it in the December 1960 issue of the Krakow Catholic monthly *Znak* (The Sign), under the literary pseudonym, Andrzej Jawień.[346] This was the first of his plays to be published, and his only play to be published before he became pope.[347] His last play, *Radiation of Fatherhood—A Mystery*, was written in 1964, but was not published until 1979. Both *The Jeweler's Shop* and *Radiation of Fatherhood* are centered on the themes of man's nature, marriage and family.

Act I: The Signals

The first act centers on the engagement of Teresa and Andrew. Teresa recounts that Andrew asked her to be his "life's companion," rather than his wife. He did this while looking ahead, "as if to signify that in front of us was a road whose end could not be seen"[348]. The road journeyed together is one of the themes of the first act. Although a couple does not know what the future will bring, in marriage they vow to be united until death, to be a companion for life. While Teresa delays answering for a few minutes, she already knew her answer, which "had almost been determined. We both knew that it reached deep into the past and advanced far into the future, that it penetrated our existence like a weaver's shuttle, to catch the weft that determines a fabric's pattern."[349] Her reference to a "weaver's shuttle" shows how their lives are being woven together into one. But it may also be a biblical reference to Job 7:6: "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and come to their end without hope." This foreshadows the brevity of Andrew's life, who will die in the war early on in their marriage.

Andrew details the stages in his growing interest in Teresa, similar to those that Wojtyła mapped out in *Love and Responsibility*. First there was fondness or attraction: "I realized she had come into the focus of my attention, I mean, *I had to* be interested in her, and at the same time I *accepted* the fact that I had to."[350] Andrew's words reflect Wojtyła's description of how a "woman can easily enter a man's field of vision as a specific good, and he, also as a good, can enter her field of vision."[351] In fondness, there is both "an emotional-affective reaction to a good," as well as a cognitive commitment of the will, "a commitment of thinking about this

[346] This pseudonym was a common surname in Niegowić. Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 112.
[347] B. Taborski, "Introduction to The Jeweler's Shop" in K. Wojtyła, *The Collected Plays and Writings on Theater*, translated by Boleslaw Taborski, Berkley, California 1987: University of California Press, 267.
[348] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 23.
[349] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 24.
[350] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 24.
[351] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 58.

person as a certain good"[352]. Attraction is not merely an emotional-affective reaction that happens *to* Andrew, but also something that he *accepted* with the will, committing to viewing Teresa as a good. This led to the experience of desire, in which Andrew recognizes Teresa not just as a good, but as a good for himself: "There must have been something in Teresa that suited my personality."[353] This recognition leads Andrew to love as benevolence, in which he feels that he "ought to" give himself for her good.[354] Teresa, likewise, recognizes the same within herself: "I felt that somehow I was the right one for him, and that I supposed I could love him."[355]

Andrew admits that in the past he "wanted to regard love as a passion, as an emotion to surpass all—I believed in the absolute of emotion."[356] But following the forcefulness of sensation only led him to meet "solitary islands," whereas with Teresa, "there was something that allowed one to think of throwing a bridge."[357] Here we see the development of reciprocity and spousal love, which assures that "the bridge between us would not be a shaky footbridge among water lilies and reeds."[358] Andrew recognizes that love must be based on more than the "shaky footbridge" of emotions, but on the "reciprocal self-giving of persons,"[359] so that love "can be a collision in which two selves realize profoundly they ought to belong to each other, even though they have no convenient moods and sensations."[360] Andrew therefore describes Teresa as his "alter ego," another self, and "that my country is also her country"[361]

After saying yes to Andrew's proposal, Teresa reflects on an experience that they had years before while hiking and camping in the mountains with a large group of people. This is based on a real experience that Wojtyła had with members of his *Środowisko*.[362] As the night fell, they heard what sounded like someone calling for help from the distance, but they were unable to identify whether it was coming from a person or a bird. They tried calling out to see if the person would respond, but the signals did not connect. At first, Teresa and Andrew were also like "signals that could not connect."[363] Andrew admits that at that time he was oblivious to Teresa's presence and value in his life. He laments that "I recoiled from accepting what

[352] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 59.
[353] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 24.
[354] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.
[355] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 27.
[356] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.
[357] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.
[358] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.
[359] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.
[360] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.
[361] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.
[362] Cf. G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 116-117.
[363] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 30.

today is for me a most magnificent gift," and that "at the time I did not want to know [what] today [I] am willing to regard as our common good."[364] But as time has passed Teresa's presence has matured within Andrew: "Teresa—Teresa—Teresa—like a strange focus on my way to maturity—no longer a prism of superficial rays, but a being of true light."[365]

Andrew and Teresa next pause before the window of a shoe shop, and Teresa explains that she was looking for high-heeled shoes, because "Andrew is so much taller than I that I have to add a little height"[366]. She will wear these shoes on her wedding day, explaining that as "we entered the church I equaled him in height, inasmuch as there was no disproportion"[367]. This is a symbol of the equality of man and woman in marriage, who are able to look each other in the eyes. The window of the shoe shop also symbolizes the practicalities of married life, which is where the drama of love will be lived out, providing opportunities for God's grace.

They next come to the window the jeweler's shop, where they see wedding rings. Andrew explains:

> The rings in the window appealed to us with a strange force.
> Now they are just artifacts of precious metal,
> but it will be so only until the moment
> when I put one of them on Teresa's finger,
> and she puts the other on mine.
> From then on they will mark our fate.
> They will constantly act as a reminder of the past,
> as a lesson to be memorized for good,
> and they will constantly open up the future,
> joining the past to the future.
> By the same token, they are, for all time,
> like two last links in a chain,
> to unite us invisibly.[368]

The rings are a symbol of their fidelity, that they are bonded to one another through their reciprocal self-giving love, creating a common good between them. As Andrew says, "We are secretly growing into one because of these two rings."[369] This is also reflected in the words of the Chorus, which is made up of different voices of guests attending Andrew and Teresa's wedding. "New people—Teresa and Andrew—two until now, but still not one, one from now on, though still two."[370] In marriage, husband and wife become "one flesh," while still

[364] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 30.
[365] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 30.
[366] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 32.
[367] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 35.
[368] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 33-34.
[369] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 34.
[370] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 39.

remaining two individuals. Neither spouse loses their subjectivity, and yet "from now on" their futures are bound together as a union of persons.

As Andrew and Teresa enter the shop to choose their rings, the jeweler speaks strange words that remained in their memories: "'The weight of these golden rings', he said, 'is not the weight of metal, but the proper weight of man, each of you separately and both together.'"[371] The rings symbolize the "weight" or value of the person, which will take on new meaning in marriage once they have been united together as one.

Andrew remarks that there was something "peculiar" but also "gentle and penetrating" in the gaze of the jeweler. "I had the feeling that he was seeking our hearts with his eyes and delving into our past," while "also trying to impart something to us. We found ourselves not only on the level of His gaze, but also on the level of His life."[372] This "peculiar" jeweler is a sign of the sacrament of marriage itself. As Andrew and Teresa approach the sacrament, they recognize that it connects their past with what it will impart on them: God's grace. "Our whole existence stood before Him," Andrew remarks. "His eyes were flashing signals which we were not able to receive fully just then, as once we had been unable to receive fully the signals in the mountains—and yet, they reached to our inner hearts. And somehow we went in their direction, and they covered the fabric of our whole lives."[373] Just as they were not able to make sense of the "signals" in the mountains, so also they are not able to fully recognize the gift that they are receiving through the sacrament of marriage. And yet the "signals," the sacramental signs of marriage, are still capable of reaching their "inner hearts," and covers their "whole lives." The grace received in marriage, not only gives them grace on their wedding day, but will unite them in an indissoluble conjugal bond throughout their life, continuing to give them the graces of healing and sanctification. Although they do not know the future, they are united in the love of God, Christ's spousal love for the Church, so there is nothing to fear. "The future for us remains an unknown quantity, which we now accept without anxiety. Love has overcome anxiety. The future depends on love."[374]

Act II: The Bridegroom

In the second act, Wojtyła introduces us to another married couple, Stefan and Anna. Their marriage is marked by bitterness and disillusionment. Anna shares her disappointment

[371] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 37.
[372] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 43.
[373] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 43.
[374] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 43.

with Stefan, but he does not take to heart Anna's grievances, which leads her to conclude that he no longer loves her. And so a rift opens between them, and Anna laments that in the past "love was something indisputable, a melody played on all the strings of the heart. Later the strings gradually muted and neither of us could do anything about it. […] Life changed into a more and more strenuous existence of two people who occupied less and less room in each other."[375] They no longer share reciprocity and the common good, but only "the sum of duties remained"[376].

Anna decides to sell her wedding ring back to the jeweler's shop, rationalizing that Stefan probably wouldn't even notice that it was gone. However, the jeweler refuses the ring, saying: "Your husband must be alive—in which case neither of your rings, taken separately, will weigh anything—only both together will register. My jeweler's scales have this peculiarity that they weigh not the metal but man's entire being and fate."[377] The rings are a symbol for the union of husband and wife. They cannot consider themselves separately, as mere individuals, as long as both spouses are alive. Their fates are interwoven, and only have value together. Fading emotions, disappointment and hurt does not change anything. The sacramental bond cannot be separated by human beings, since God has joined them together.[378]

Near the jeweler's shop Anna meets "a chance interlocutor" who knows her name and identifies himself as "Adam."[379] Adam is a figure like Wojtyła, who accompanied couples as they prepared for marriage, but also throughout their marital life. He is a confessor and spiritual adviser, who points the way, but "it is up to those whom he confesses and advises to apply what he says by his own volition."[380] He does not force them to act, but only guides them. He is also a representative of Adam, of humanity, who experiences the consequences of sin, as well as of Christ, the "new Adam," who leads humanity to redemption.[381]

Anna reveals her struggles to Adam, who advises her not to break away from her life, but "to remain with truth"[382]. But Anna thinks that truth is to be found in emotions and sentiments. She asks, "Isn't what one feels most strongly the truth? […] is not love a matter of

[375] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 51.
[376] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 51.
[377] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 52.
[378] Cf. Matthew 19:6: "What God joins together, let no one put asunder."
[379] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 54.
[380] B. Taborski, "Introduction to The Jeweler's Shop" in K. Wojtyła, *The Collected Plays and Writings on Theater*, translated by Boleslaw Taborski, Berkley, California 1987: University of California Press, 271.
[381] Cf. R. Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, 264: "Adam is a symbol of Christ, the 'new Adam,' just as much as of the 'old Adam.' He also represents the Church, especially in its this-worldly and laical aspect, which accompanies, and herself lives through, the passage from the old to the new Adam."
[382] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 55.

the senses and of a climate which unites and makes two people walk in the sphere of their feeling?—this is the whole truth."[383] Adam, on the other hand, says that love is "a synthesis of two people's existence which converges, as it were, at a certain point and makes them into one."[384]

Adam points out the jeweler's shop to Anna and says, "soon the Bridegroom will pass by."[385] This news fascinates Anna, which awakens a longing within her: "A longing for someone perfect, for a man firm and good, who would be different from Stefan."[386] Anna responds by attempting to arouse the attention of men passing by. In between her failed attempts, Adam comments on the nature of human love, although he does not appear to be speaking directly to her. He remarks:

> This is just what compels me to think about human love. There is no other matter imbedded more strongly in the surface of human life, and there is no matter more unknown and more mysterious. The divergence between what lies on the surface and the mystery of love constitutes precisely the source of the drama. It is one of the greatest dramas of human existence. The surface of love has its current—swift, flickering, changeable. A kaleidoscope of waves and situations full of attraction. The current is sometimes so stunning that it carries people away—women and men. They get carried away by the thought that they have absorbed the whole secret of love, but in fact they have not yet even touched it. They are happy for a while, thinking that they have reached the limits of existence and wrested all its secrets from it, so that nothing remains. That's how it is: on the other side of that rapture nothing remains, there is nothing left behind it. But there can't be nothing, there can't! Listen to me, there can't. Man is a *continuum*, a totality in a continuity—so it cannot be that nothing remains![387]

Adam warns of the "divergence" between what lies on the surface and the mystery of love. On the surface level, people often get carried away by emotions, which like a current are "swift, flickering, changeable." They mistake the "raw material" for love as love itself, although they "have not yet even touched it." Once the emotions pass they are left with nothing. But the drama of love consists in loving another as a person, as a "*continuum*," and not merely for a moment. Therefore, love "is not an adventure. It has the taste of the whole man. It has his weight. And the weight of his whole fate. It cannot be a single moment. Man's eternity passes through it. That is why it is to be found in the dimensions of God, because only He is eternity."[388] Like the jeweler, Adam describes love as a "weight," that cannot be measured by an individual moment or emotion. Since a person is created by God and for God, love for a

[383] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 56.
[384] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 56.
[385] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 55.
[386] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 56-57.
[387] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 57-58.
[388] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 60.

person must consider the "weight of their whole fate," their eternal destiny. Adam warns that living for pleasure, which is fleeting, is "[t]o be for a moment only, only now—and cut oneself off from eternity. To take in everything at one moment and lose everything immediately after."[389]

After several failed attempts to connect with men on the street, Anna is about to enter a car with a man when Adam stops her, pointing out that there are five wise virgins and five foolish virgins on the street. Here, Wojtyła brings Jesus' parable from Matthew 25:1-13 to life, so Adam can help Anna recognize that she is like one of the foolish virgins, who "are walking in lethargy—they have a dormant space in them."[390] Adam has come to awaken Anna, to open up the dormant space within her to love. "You cannot live without love," Adam tells her. "You were calling with despair for a love you do not have. You were looking for someone who would take you by the hand and hug you."[391] The first two elements of love as a virtue, affirmation of the person and reciprocity, appear to be missing in Anna's marriage with Stefan.[392]

Adam then says to Anna, "how am I to prove to you that on the other side of all those loves which fill our lives—there is *Love!* The Bridegroom is coming down the street and walks every street! How am I to prove to you that you are the bride?"[393] Here he is referring to Jesus, the Bridegroom, who says, "beloved, you do not know how deeply you are mine, how much you belong to my love and my suffering—because to love means to give life through death; to love means to let gush a spring of water of life into the depths of the soul, which burns or smolders, and cannot burn out."[394] These words are reminiscent of Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:7-30), as he assures her that "whoever drinks the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14). Like Anna, she had misplaced her desires by looking for love in men "who are not your husband" (John 4:18). But her encounter with the true Bridegroom, Jesus, leads her to recognize the truth of her situation, and to find healing in Christ. Like the Samaritan woman, Anna is about to recognize the truth of her situation, and will also experience healing through her encounter with Christ.

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[389] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 60-61.
[390] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 63.
[391] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 64. Cf. John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis* (4 March 1979), 10: "Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it."
[392] Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 103-112.
[393] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 64.
[394] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 64.

When Anna goes out to meet the Bridegroom, she is surprised to see Stefan's face, and immediately withdraws, telling Adam that "I have seen the face that I hate, and the face I ought to love."[395] Adam explains to her that in "the Bridegroom's face each of us finds a similarity to the faces of those with whom love has entangled us on this side of life, of existence. They are all in him."[396] Through the sacrament of marriage, Stefan and Anna are given and entrusted to each other by Christ, who unites them. In loving each other, they are loving Christ, the source of their love. It is in the face of their spouse that they see the face of Christ the Bridegroom.

Act 3: The Children

The third act turns our attention to Andrew and Teresa's son, Christopher, and Stefan and Anna's daughter, Monica. In the opening scene, Teresa is walking home after Christopher told her about his love for Monica. This leads her to stop in front of the jeweler's shop and reflect on her relationship with Andrew. We learn that Andrew died in the war when Christopher was only two years old. In front of the jeweler's shop Teresa sees "something like a mirror, where the fates of Andrew and myself were once reflected. […] On the far side of the mirror the jeweler fitted the rings. On the far side of the mirror our fate was split—but the union remained."[397] Though Andrew and Teresa are separated by death, their union remains in their son, Christopher. The jeweler's shop reflects the durability of the sacrament.[398]

Next Christopher and Monica share their common experience of an absent father. While Christopher's father died, he notes that "Father remained in Mother, […] Mother implanted the idea of Father in me"[399]. Even Monica recognizes the presence of Christopher's father within him: "[y]our father went away and died, and yet the union remained—you were its spokesman, the love passed to you."[400] Monica's father is still alive, yet she does not know him as a father. Her parents live "like two strangers, the union one dreams of does not exist"[401]. She therefore lacks confidence in love, as she asks: "Is human love at all capable of enduring through man's whole existence? Well, what pervades me now is the feeling of love—but I am also pervaded

[395] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 65.
[396] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 66.
[397] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 71, 73.
[398] Cf. B. Taborski, "Introduction" in K. Wojtyła, *The Collected Plays and Writings on Theater*, 18.
[399] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 74.
[400] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 75.
[401] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 75. Cf. R. Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, 263: "Monica's situation is a precise symmetrical counterpart to Christopher's. She has known her father and lived with him, and she has known affection. But she has not known *the figure of the father in the mother*. She has not therefore really known him as a father and has not been brought up to her full maturity as a woman, which is ultimately the capacity to generate the image of the man within her self and, together with that image, the son which will nourish himself from her in order to grow."

by a feeling of the future, and that is fear."[402] Monica experiences conflicting feelings, while Christopher acknowledges that "[w]hen the wave of emotions subsides, what remains will be important."[403] Emotions can be fleeting or misleading.

When Christopher and Monica go to the jeweler's shop, they do not experience the force of the jeweler's look or words in the way that Andrew and Teresa had years ago. Teresa wonders if "the old jeweler does not act anymore with the force of his eyes and his word? Or is it that those two are unable to feel that force, hidden in his look and his speech."[404] The jeweler, who represents the sacrament of marriage, does not make an impression on them. Instead, as Monica remarks, "All the beauty remained in our own feeling. […] I was absorbed by my love—and by nothing else, it seems."[405] This reflects the problem of many young people, who do not understand the value of marriage as a sacrament, and focus more on the power of their emotions. The jeweler also represents the voice of conscience and the power of moral judgment, which is often blinded by immature sentiments.

Yet it seems that they are not doomed to repeat the mistakes of their parents. Teresa reflects that "Christopher, my son, is good to Monica, as if he wanted to be to her the father he himself never knew and the father she thought she had lost […] He wanted to remold the memories of her parents."[406] Here, Christopher embodies the spiritual paternity that Wojtyła detailed at the end of *Love and Responsibility*, "a symptom of a person's maturity and of some fullness, both of which one wills to give to others ('*bonum est diffusivum sui*')."[407] Christopher wishes to share this fullness which he received from his parents with Monica, giving spiritual life to her. Christopher acknowledges that when it comes to love, "one question is important: Is it creative?"[408] Through the affirmation of the value of the person, and through the mutual gift of self in marriage, spouses give life to one another, and open themselves up to the gift of new life. Thus Teresa remarks that "Monica and Christopher again reflect *in some way* the absolute Existence and Love," and "to create something, to reflect the absolute Existence and Love, must be the most wonderful of all!"[409]

Teresa also reveals that Adam was Andrew's friend, who served in the same company as him in the war. Adam, is "representative of the providential and guiding forces in life."[410]

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[402] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 75.
[403] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 77.
[404] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 81.
[405] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 80.
[406] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 83, 85.
[407] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 246.
[408] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 77.
[409] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 89, 90.
[410] B. Taborski, "Introduction" in K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 18.

He returns to accompany Teresa in her loss and to serve as a father figure to Christopher. Teresa describes Adam as "a common denominator for us all—at the same time a spokesman and a judge. Somehow we quietly entrusted ourselves to his thoughts, his analysis and heart."[411] This includes Anna, who encounters Adam anew and confesses to him that reconciliation has begun for her and Stefan. Adam remarks that a "new love could begin only through a meeting with the Bridegroom."[412] Through the healing encounter with Christ, she was able to take responsibility for her own weaknesses, and forgive her husband for his mistakes. "Anna had entered the road of complementary love. She had to complement, giving and taking in different proportions than before."[413] True reciprocity was made possible. And now she could accept Stefan as a gift from God, and therefore an encounter with God. "That the Bridegroom had to have Stefan's face—this I now understand."[414]

Adam acknowledges that "every person has at his disposal an existence and a Love. The problem is: How to build a sensible structure from it?"[415] He acknowledges that "love carries people away like an absolute, although it lacks absolute dimensions. But acting under an illusion, they do not try to connect that love with the Love that has such a dimension. They do not even feel the need, blinded as they are not so much by the force of their emotion as by lack of humility."[416] Only God's love has absolute dimensions, because God is eternal. Therefore, love's "structure must never be inward-looking. It must be open in such a way that on the one hand it embraces other people, while on the other, it always reflects the absolute Existence and Love; it must always, *in some way*, reflect them."[417] In order to "build a sensible structure for love," it must be built on the foundation of love as a virtue, that reflects God who is "Existence and Love".

Wojtyła ends with Stefan's recognition that Anna and himself have been poor reflections of "the absolute Existence and Love," especially for Monica. Yet "for the first time in many years,"[418] he sees the possibility of opening up his soul to Anna and seeking reconciliation. He puts his hand on her shoulder, a sign of physical closeness and intimacy that had been lacking "for a long, long time," and says, "What a pity that for so many years we have not felt ourselves to be a couple of children."[419]

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[411] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 89, 90.
[412] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 87.
[413] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 87.
[414] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 87.
[415] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 87.
[416] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 88.
[417] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 89.
[418] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 90.
[419] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 91.

CHAPTER II
BUILD YOUR HOUSE UPON THE ROCK: RETREAT FOR ENGAGED COUPLES

2.1. First Meditation: To Swear to the Truth Before God

2.1.1. Introduction

Karol Wojtyła was ordained an auxiliary bishop in 1958. This *Retreat for Engaged Couples* was given by Bishop Wojtyła two years later in 1960, the same year that he published *Love and Responsibility* and *The Jeweler's Shop*. It took place in the collegiate church of St. Anne in Kraków, a church that Wojtyła would give various retreats over the years, especially for students.[420] It was given over three days, from December 19th to the 21st, in order to prepare engaged couples spiritually for their wedding, which would be celebrated during the upcoming Christmas season. On the first day of the retreat he meditates on the marriage vows, which will be the overall focus of the retreat. On the second day he reflects on the vows of love and fidelity, which lead to trust, indissolubility, reciprocity, and the common good. And on the third day he meditates on conjugal honor, focusing on the value of the person, the ends of marriage, and the sacrificial dimension of spousal love.

The retreat has been given the title *Build Your House On the Rock (Budować dom na skale)*, but this appears to be a later addition, added when the retreat was first published in 2012. In Boniecki's *Kalendarium of the Life of Karol Wojtyła*, he refers to it simply as a "triduum," a three-day observance, "for engaged couples in preparation for marriage at Christmas."[421] The title refers to the parable of Jesus in Matthew 7:24-25:

> Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who builds his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined.

This Gospel is one of the choices that couples have for their wedding in the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*.[422] Wojtyła never refers to this parable throughout the retreat.

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[420]. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *The Way of Christ: Spiritual Exercises*, translated by Leslie Wearne, New York, NY 1984: HarperCollins Publishers, which contains his retreats for university students in 1962 and 1972

[421] A. Boniecki, *Kalendarium*, 195.

[422] Cf. *The Roman Ritual, The Order of Celebrating Matrimony: English Translation According to the Second Typical Edition*. New Jersey 2016: Catholic Book Publishing Corp., 180.

However, he speaks several times about "building" their relationship on a "solid foundation". So the title, even if not originally Wojtyła's, emphasizes one of central themes of the retreat.

Bishop Karol Wojtyła begins the retreat by emphasizing the need for preparation for receiving the sacraments. He gives the example of catechumens, adults preparing for baptism and entry into the Church, who often spend a year or more preparing to receive the sacraments. He also notes that children prepare for their first Confession, first Communion, and Confirmation, "in order to help them understand the mystery of faith."[423] Since marriage also is a sacrament, the couple needs to adequately prepare themselves. "For this reason," Wojtyła assures the couples, "catechesis is necessary."[424]

Catechesis, Wojtyła notes, refers to the word "catechumen," and to preparation for receiving the sacraments. Here he puts the three days of spiritual exercises under the context of catechesis, "to prepare for the sacrament of Matrimony in itself."[425] His purpose is not to prepare for the whole of married life, which includes "very broad topics" that the couples have received preparation for elsewhere. Nonetheless, Wojtyła notes that it "is obvious that the sacrament in a certain sense projects its light on all of married life and that in preparing for the sacrament we are indirectly preparing ourselves for the whole of married life."[426] While the focus of the retreat is to prepare the couples for their wedding day, this preparation "indirectly" helps to prepare the couple to live out the sacrament throughout their whole life together.

Here Wojtyła notes something that is very helpful for marriage preparation. Marriage is a sacrament. It is important to understand the graces of the sacrament, which are given not only on their wedding day, but will continue to have a sacramental effect throughout their lives. It is important also to understand the sign through which the sacrament is enacted, and what is signified through this sign. Wojtyła assures them that "the sacrament of Matrimony is the introduction to married life, it is the threshold of this life. If we cross this threshold well, then it is very likely that also the successive path of marital life will unfold favorably."[427] If the couple is well prepared to receive the sacrament of Matrimony on their wedding day, this will assure them that they will live out their married life in an efficacious and fruitful way.

Wojtyła also notes that "these catecheses are dictated from a deep concern for the needs of our time. In fact, these days, Christian sacramental marriage seems to be subjected to

[423] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale: rekolekcje dla narzeczonych*, Kraków – Rzym 2014: Instytut Dialogu Międzykulturowego im. Jana Pawła II, 17. All translations are my own.
[424] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 18.
[425] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 18.
[426] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 18.
[427] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 19.

particular trials. We must therefore do everything in order to resist these trials."[428] That Wojtyła had "deep concerns for the needs of our time," shows that his meditations are not theological abstractions divorced from reality, but are meant to take flesh in daily life, amidst the "particular trials" that his listeners faced.

Wojtyła does not define the "needs of our time," nor identify the "particular trials" sacramental marriage was being subjected to, although this would have been clearer to the couples in attendance. In the first place, he is referring to the communist regime that was imposed after the Second World War, which threatened "human freedom, the truth of the family and the education of new generations."[429] The regime did everything in its power to undermine marriage, the family, and respect for life. In the introduction to the Italian translation of the retreat, Kwiatkowski notes:

> By violating consciences and destroying lives, the totalitarian system introduced an ideology that prevented the authentic growth of people. And new ideas quickly became a practice. For example, an attempt was made to eliminate the term "marriage" from official language, replacing it with the "civil contract". The so-called birth regulation was nothing more than the increasingly frequent practice of abortion. The dwellings in the new neighborhoods were so tightly designed that you even lacked space for a table around which the family could sit. School and work schedules not only hindered participation in religious services, but above all drastically reduced the time shared within the family environment. All Christian and patriotic groups and associations, including many with a long tradition, were considered illicit and therefore dissolved.[430]

We saw how Wojtyła's approach to the education of love combatted this totalitarian system (1.2.3), and can view this as a model for any marriage preparation that is done within a society that does not support the Christian vision of human dignity, marriage, and family.

But the "needs of our time" that Wojtyła refers to goes beyond the communist threat. In 1958, two years before the retreat, Wojtyła published an article outlining the crisis of the institution of marriage, as well as the crisis of the sacrament of marriage. "If we are facing a crisis of marriage," he notes, "it is a sign that either preparation in this field has been neglected, or that its usual methods have proven to be insufficient. In our case both possibilities should be considered."[431] Marriage had suffered from both a lack of preparation and insufficient forms of preparation.

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[428] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 19. Cf. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 4: "Since God's plan for marriage and the family touches men and women in the concreteness of their daily existence in specific social and cultural situations, the Church ought to apply herself to understanding the situations within which marriage and the family are lived today, in order to fulfill her task of serving."

[429] P. Kwiatkowski, *"Introduzione: L'amore cresce in continuazione"* in K. Wojtyła*, Costruire la casa sulla roccia: Esercizi spirituali per fidanzati,* Angri 2013: Editrice Punto Famiglia, 16.

[430] P. Kwiatkowski, *"Introduzione: L'amore cresce in continuazione"*, 16.

[431] K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu," 134-136.

The result, which Wojtyła finds "particularly sad," is that "in a country in which the overwhelming majority is baptized," numerous people "exclude themselves from the sacramental life which began through baptism"[432]. They do not see the particular value of marriage as a sacrament, nor avail themselves of the grace of the sacrament. Wojtyła laments a lack of understanding "that marriage of the baptized is a sacrament and is based on the objective redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ, which penetrates the whole subjective life of people who through marriage tend towards a definitive supernatural end." Therefore, he notes that "the crisis of the institution is not so much a question of avoiding evil, as it is above all of fully extracting the good that can be achieved in marriage thanks to the fact that it is a sacramental institution."[433] Therefore, when marriage and family are under attack, and many Catholics fail to understand the value of the sacrament, the need for catechesis is all the more necessary. The focus of the retreat will be on "fully extracting the good" of sacramental marriage, beginning with the religious character of the marriage vows.

2.1.2. The Religious Character of the Marriage Vows

In this first section, Wojtyła further sets the stage for the entire retreat by emphasizing his focus. Wojtyła begins his meditations by asking: "What is Sacramental Marriage Preparation actually preparing for?"[434] Ultimately it is preparation to make a vow. Therefore, his entire meditations will be centered on the vows: their character, greatness, intention, and content. "During these three days we will reflect only on the words of these vows, the marriage formula. By analyzing it we will come to grasp the essence of sacramental marriage."[435]

Every marriage is an "agreement" or "contract." It is made between two people, a man and a woman, after "mature reflection," and after having "completely decided to live together as spouses and to form a family."[436] For Wojtyła, "mature reflection" requires personal growth, recognition of immature sentiments, overcoming egoism, developing the capacity for self-

[432] K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu," 136. In the same year that Wojtyła published this article, Joseph Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI, published an article warning that Catholicism was increasingly becoming "a Church of pagans who still call themselves Christians but in truth have become pagans." J. Ratzinger, "The New Pagans and the Church (1958)," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* (January 30, 2017), translated by Fr. Kenneth Baker, S.J. Cf. John Paul II, John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* (7 December 1990), 33: "Entire groups of the baptized people have lost their sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel."
[433] K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu," 138.
[434] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 19.
[435] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 20-21.
[436] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 19.

donation, the realization of reciprocity, and creative generosity. This will be the content of his meditations, as he unpacks the meaning of the vows.

Wojtyła notes that the decision to enter into marriage does not merely affect the two spouses, but "possesses a social significance because it serves the existence of this or that society. For this reason, society watches over the stipulation of the marriage contract."[437] Wojtyła makes a similar point in *Love and Responsibility*, stressing that the "family itself is already a community, a small society, on which the existence of every large society depends, e.g., a nation, a state, the Church. It is understandable that this large society tries to watch over the process of its continuous becoming through the family."[438] This helps remedy an individualistic view of marriage, which sees it as a private act of love between two people, with no bearing on the Church or state. It is within marriage that new members of society come to birth and are educated in what it means to be human, virtuous, and to live in community. This will be the subject of his third meditation: Conjugal Honor (2.3.).

Like civil marriage, sacramental marriage is also a contract, but a religious and solemn contract. Though similar to civil marriage, "What constitutes the specificity, the peculiarity of sacramental ecclesial marriage, is its religious character, and this religious character is visible above all in the vows."[439] Here Wojtyła quotes the vows from the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*:

> "I N. take you N. as my wife (husband)
> and to you I vow love, faith, and honor in marriage,
> and to not abandon you until death.
> Help me, O Lord God Almighty,
> One and Three, with all the Saints."[440]

These vows, which the spouses speak to each other on their wedding day, will be the content and focus for the three days of meditations.

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[437] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 19-20.
[438] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 201.
[439] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 20.
[440] The Polish edition contains the following note: "The liturgy of the sacrament of Matrimony has undergone changes regarding the sequence of the individual rites and the subsequent introduction in the Polish language. For example, in the rite in effect in 1960, when Bishop Karol Wojtyła held the spiritual exercises, the rite of the exchange of rings preceded the pronunciation of the matrimonial formula. In the formula appeared the word "faith," while the word "fidelity" was introduced in the marital vows in 1963, with the new ritual of sacraments and sacramentals. The marriage liturgy was enriched so as to emphasize above all the active participation of the spouses, who are the ministers of the sacrament. Cf. *List Episkopatu Polski w związku z zatwierdzeniem nowego wydania Rytuału* (24 marca 1963 r.), [w:] „Notificationes e Curia Metropolitana Cracoviensi" nr 7-8 (1963), s. 202-205, przyp. red." K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale: rekolekcje dla narzeczonych*, Kraków – Rzym 2014: Instytut Dialogu Międzykulturowego im. Jana Pawła II, 20.

Although the wording of the vows in the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* has changed since 1960, the current version of the formula is very similar, maintaining the three-fold vow of love, faith, and honor, which provides the structure of Wojtyła's meditations. In the current English version, the bridegroom and the bride say:

> "I, N., take you, N., to be my wife (husband).
> I promise to be faithful to you,
> in good times and in bad,
> in sickness and in health,
> to love you and to honor you
> all the days of my life."[441]

Rather than speak of fidelity until death, the current formula expresses the same sentiment in more positive words, promising faithfulness, love and honor "all the days of my life." It also elaborates on what faithfulness means, promising faithfulness "in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health". What is missing is the invocation of the help of the Trinity and all the Saints. However, in the current rite, the couple exchanges rings after the vows, saying: "N., receive 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."[442] This emphasizes that the vows are made "in the name" of the Triune God, although the appeal for the help of God and all the Saints is less explicit. Despite these changes, Wojtyła's meditations on the vows remain relevant today.

2.1.3. Vows Pronounced Before God

Wojtyła brings the couples' attention to the words: "to you I vow," emphasizing that they are making a vow to a person. He highlights that in Polish, the sacrament of Matrimony is often called "*ślubem,*" because the Polish word "*ślub"* means both "marriage" and "vow".[443] This shows that there is a clear connection between the vows and marriage. However, Wojtyła notes that the vows are also addressed to God: "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the Saints." These words "determine the character of the entire formula; they attribute to it the value of an oath."[444] As an oath, they are swearing before God, calling on God as a witness.

[441] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 62.
[442] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony,* 67A.
[443] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 21.
[444] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 21.

Here, Wojtyła notes, it "would be natural to raise your right hand," as is normally done while swearing or making an oath.[445] Instead, the couple joins their right hands while making their vows. Wojtyła highlights that the Polish custom is for the priest to place a stole over the right hands of the bride and groom, which are joined. This signifies that they are the minsters of the sacrament of Matrimony, as Wojtyła will reflect on in the next section (2.1.4.). It also signifies that they are united through the priestly love of Christ the Bridegroom for his bride, the Church. Wojtyła will explain this custom at the end of his third meditation (2.3.6.).

To what is God called upon to witness? Wojtyła proposes two options: a witness of one's sincerity or one's will. "In the first case it is a matter of the truth of the intellect, in the second case of the authenticity of the will."[446] In marriage, Wojtyła makes clear, it is more a matter of the authenticity of the will. Otherwise, there is a danger that one could sincerely mean the vows, but with a "poverty of intention," without the commitment of the will. Therefore, "we call upon God as a witness to the authenticity of our will and of our decision, as if we would say: 'I truly want this which I vow here. I really want it.'"[447] After "mature reflection," the couple each must be ready to vow to each other and before God that this is what they truly want and will. "Only then," the words, "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the saints," can "constitute a frame that encapsulates the words of the marriage vows."[448]

By making their vows before God, the couple recognizes that it is God who gives the spouses to each other and approves of their union. "It is not sufficient for a woman to give her person through marriage to a man, and for him to do so with his person to her," Wojtyła acknowledges in *Love and Responsibility*. "If each of these persons is at the same time a possession of the Creator, then he also must give him to her, and her to him, or in any case he must approve their reciprocal self-giving that is contained in the institution of marriage."[449]

Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on the vows because they "determine the magnitude of your decision, the greatness of the whole matter." By calling on God as a witness, the spouses are "so permeated by the greatness of this decision that no human authority is sufficient

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[445] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 21. Here Wojtyła literally says "raise two fingers," reflecting the Polish custom of raising two fingers while swearing an oath. Since the American and British custom is to raise one's right hand when swearing an oath, I have adjusted the translation so that it is clearer.
[446] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 21-22.
[447] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 22. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 41: "Love—love pulsating in brows, in man becomes thought and will: the will of Teresa being Andrew, the will of Andrew being Teresa."
[448] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 22.
[449] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 208. Cf. K. Wojtyła, "On the Meaning of Spousal Love" (1974), in *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, translated by T. Sandok, New York 1993: Peter Lang, 294: "Each time we follow attentively the whole liturgy of this sacrament, two people stand before us, a man and a woman, who come to express before God precisely this, that they constitute an objective situation, in which both are to become a gift for each other as spouses."

for them. They have need of God Himself as a witness to their readiness and maturity"[450]. There is no authority higher than God, and therefore nothing higher that they could use as a basis or foundation of their vows. Because of the greatness of marriage, and the greatness of the value of the persons who give themselves, there is a need also to call on such a great authority. "We need to reflect well on this, because these words, pronounced only once in a lifetime, determine the greatness of marriage and the greatness of the commitment lived out in everyday life."[451] The words of the vows, the words of consent, are the form of the sacramental sign of marriage. This sign continues beyond their wedding day through the living out of their vows "all the days of my life." Therefore, Wojtyła encourages them to "reflect well" on the vows, because they determine the greatness of marriage, which should only be entered into when they are prepared to call on God as a witness to their "readiness and maturity."

2.1.4. The Ministers of the Marriage and their Witnesses

Wojtyła next turns their attention to the witnesses at the wedding. In sacramental marriage, "[t]he official witness on behalf of the Church is the priest. In addition, two other persons are usually called upon to sign the marriage document on behalf of all the other participants in the act."[452] The priest and two others, usually the best man and maid of honor, serve as the official witnesses of the Church. They do this on behalf of all who attend and witness the wedding.

Wojtyła notes that after the priest receives the vows of the betrothed, he addresses all present in these words: "I take you, that are here present, as witnesses, so that you may be witnesses of the present marriage hereby legally contracted and confirmed by the Church."[453] Although these words are not in the current rite, he is making an important theological point. The couple have each become incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ through their Baptism. Therefore, their exchange of vows is an ecclesial act which has ramifications for the

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[450] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, pp. 22-23. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 110-111: "Spousal love, which bears in itself the interior need to give one's person to another person—a need crystallized between a woman and a man also in bodily self-giving and in full sexual intercourse—possesses its natural greatness. The measure of this greatness is the value of the person who gives himself, and not only the degree of sensual-sexual delight linked to this self-giving."

[451] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 23.

[452] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 23. Cf. *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition: New English Translation* (Codex Iuris Cononici [CIC]), Washington, DC 1998: Canon Law Society of America, c 1108 § 1: "Only those marriages are valid which are contracted in the presence of the local Ordinary or parish priest or of the priest or deacon delegated by either of them, who, in the presence of two witnesses, assists". Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1630: "The priest (or deacon) who assists at the celebration of a marriage receives the consent of the spouses in the name of the Church and gives the blessing of the Church. The presence of the Church's minister (and also of the witnesses) visibly expresses the fact that marriage is an ecclesial reality."

[453] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 23.

whole Church. It is neither a private act between the couple, nor simply between them and God. As members of Christ's body, the Church, their union has an effect on the Church.

Wojtyła notes that it may be surprising that the priest is a witness, and not the minister of the sacrament, since normally the priest is the minister of the sacraments. However, Wojtyła affirms that marriage is "the only sacrament of which the Catholic priest not only is not, but cannot be the minister."[454] The spouses themselves are the ministers of the sacrament, who constitute their marriage through the words of consent.

In fact, he reminds them that it is possible in exceptional situations to enter into the sacrament of Matrimony without a priest. For example, there were times during World War II when there was no priest available to marry some couples for an extended amount of time. But since the priest serves as a witness and gives the Nuptial Blessing, the priest is still normally required for the sacrament.

Therefore, Wojtyła stresses the need to "reflect" and "remember" this when they are pronouncing their vows. He encourages them with the words that the bishop says to deacons at their ordination: "Be attentive to what you do!" For they must remember that "due to the fact that the couple contracts the sacrament of Matrimony by pronouncing vows, the whole act tends upward, it rises toward a majesty greatly unmeasurable, toward a Witness without equal: toward God."[455] Entering into marriage is not just a human question, but a divine reality. "We must have a solid foundation for what we do, what we want, and what we intend to do, if we are to call upon God as a witness."[456]

2.1.5. To Implore the Grace of God for a Lifetime

The vows reflect that marriage is "something great," that has a "very distant perspective." The spouses are usually young and in good health, so when they promise to "not abandon you until death," this often feels far away, in the distant future. And yet through this "irrevocable" promise made "once and for all," the couple looks to that future together, promising to love, be faithful, and honor each other throughout their lives, which are now joined until death.[457]

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[454] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 24. The Polish edition contains the following note: Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1623: "According to Latin tradition, the spouses as ministers of Christ's grace mutually confer upon each other the sacrament of Matrimony by expressing their consent before the Church. In the tradition of the Eastern Churches, the priests (bishops or presbyters) are witnesses to the mutual consent given by the spouses, but for the validity of the sacrament their blessing is also necessary."
[455] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 25.
[456] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 25.
[457] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 26.

Joined to this distant perspective of the vows, they immediately say, "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the Saints." There are two meanings to these words. First, this is an invocation, in which they call on God to be a witness. Second, it is also a supplication, imploring God's help to live out the vows. This brings to light the importance of marriage as a sacrament. Wojtyła reminds them that "a sacrament is a visible, exterior sign of grace"[458]. The couples do not make their vows alone, through their own strength, but with the help of God's grace. Thus, "Christ, the Lord God, has instituted marriage precisely as a sacrament with the intention of helping, to help all those who contract it, who receive this sacrament."[459] Therefore, Wojtyła encourages the retreatants to go to confession and receive the Eucharist so they can be in the state of grace on their wedding day. For "marriage deepens, it strengthens the state of grace in us if we are well prepared for it."[460]

Wojtyła warns that at the time of the wedding ceremony, this distant perspective of life "is seen only from the perspective of happiness." But it is "also linked to suffering and sadness, to disappointment, and various difficulties that you must go through."[461] Therefore,

> when we say, "help me," we not only mean in the moment in which we contract the sacrament of Matrimony. Rather, we mean for our entire future: the various moments, instances, and situations that we cannot even imagine now, these difficult and critical situations, which will lead us to invoke God in a loud voice: "help me!" And with this in a certain sense we already predispose ourselves for the future, for the active grace that this sacrament guarantees us.[462]

The words spoken on the wedding day, "help me," become a constant supplication to God to help through His grace.[463] On the wedding day, the couple gives to God their "entire future," in order to "predispose" that future to God's grace. They bring their entire future – good times and bad, sickness and health – before God at the altar, imploring His grace ahead of time. This is similar to what happens in the Eucharist. The bread and wine are given to God at the altar, only to be given back to us transformed through the Holy Spirit into Christ's living body, blood, soul, and divinity. So also in marriage the spouses give themselves to one another at the altar, and are transformed through the Holy Spirit, which comes down on the couple during the Nuptial Blessing, transforming their love into a living reflection and participation in Christ's

[458] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 27.
[459] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 27.
[460] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 27.
[461] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 27.
[462] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 28.
[463] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1608: "Without his help man and woman cannot achieve the union of their lives for which God created them 'in the beginning.'"

love for the Church. Their love is healed from the danger of being self-enclosed, and is opened to participation in the eternal communion of love of the Trinity.

Wojtyła also addresses the need for grace in *Love and Responsibility*. When discussing the problem of the "education of love," Wojtyła notes that love is the work of persons, but also "a work of grace." When we act, "the operation of grace is hidden in these actions as a contribution of the invisible Creator, who being love himself has the power to form any love […] if only people want consciously to co-create it with him"[464]. Since God is love (see 1 Jn 4:8), He can form our human love (including romantic and sexual love). But we have to "consciously co-create it with him."

Calling to mind the Gospel commandment to "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," (Mt 5:48) Wojtyła notes that "By calling to perfection, the Gospel at the same time presents the truth about grace for us to believe. The action of grace places man in the orbit of the action of God, who is inscrutable in his personal life, and in the orbit of his love."[465] God's grace is "inscrutable," especially in the "orbit of love". We cannot be perfect as God is perfect without God. But God has given us the sacrament of Matrimony in order to perfect us through the help of His grace.

Wojtyła touches on this theme in *The Jeweler's Shop* as well. Adam, while reflecting on the trials that Stefan and Anna are going through, notes that the cause lies in the past. He says:

> The thing is that love carries people away like an absolute, although it lacks absolute dimensions. But acting under an illusion, they do not try to connect that love with the Love that has such a dimension. They do not even feel the need, blinded as they are not so much by the force of their emotion as by lack of humility. They lack humility toward what love must be in its true essence. The more aware they are of it, the smaller the danger. Otherwise the danger is great: love will not stand the pressure of reality.[466]

In sacramental marriage, the couple connects their love with the absolute love of God, which is capable of sanctifying, healing, purifying, and strengthening their own love. But a "lack of humility" often blinds couples, who think that they can do it on their own, without God. Their own love becomes an absolute, but many times human love can suffer from immature sentiments, egoism, a utilitarian mindset, and concupiscence, all of which Wojtyła will cover as the retreat progresses.

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[464] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 122.
[465] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 243.
[466] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 88.

Wojtyła ends the first day of the retreat by inviting the couples to bring what they have heard to prayer, especially through "the most magnificent of prayers, that of the Holy Mass". Through Mass, they will prepare themselves "in the best way possible to receive this great sacrament"[467] of matrimony. In the Eucharist they recognize the sacramental expression of Christ's spousal love given for his bride, the Church, in the total offering of his body on the Cross: "This is my body, which is given for you" (Luke 22:19). In the same way, they are called to offer themselves for each other in marriage.

2.2. Second Meditation: Creative Love and Faithfulness to the End

2.2.1. Introduction

In the first meditation, Wojtyła focused on what it means to make a vow and implore God for help. In this second meditation, Wojtyła turns his attention to penetrating "the content" of the vows, in order to understand what each person promises in marriage. He reminds the couples that the vows have a religious sense, because they are solemn promises made before God.

The vows begin with the words, "To you I vow love". When these words are spoken on the wedding day, the spouses usually "experience a very vivid feeling of love." However, Wojtyła warns that "perhaps exactly due to the fact that they feel love, they don't understand with the intellect the fundamental sense of that which they promise."[468] In order to have a solid foundation for their marriage, strong emotions are not enough. As Christopher says in *The Jeweler's Shop*, "When the wave of emotions subsides, what remains will be important."[469] Therefore, the focus of the second meditation is to "analyze this essential sense of love, in order to understand that which the spouses vow in the moment of marriage."[470]

Wojtyła begins his second meditation by reflecting on trust as the fruit of fidelity. This trust can only be achieved through a long process of growing in maturity and accurate knowledge of each other. He will then show that in sacramental marriage, God has joined the spouses together, and therefore their union is indissoluble. Indissolubility and fidelity serves

[467] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 28. Cf. John Paul II*, Gratissimam Sane* "*Letter to Families*", (2 February 1994), 11: "Kneeling before the Father, from whom all fatherhood and motherhood come, the future parents come to realize that they have been 'redeemed'. They have been purchased at great cost, *by the price* of the most sincere gift of all, *the blood of Christ* of which they partake through the Sacrament. The liturgical crowning of the marriage rite is the Eucharist, the sacrifice of that 'Body which has been given up' and that 'Blood which has been shed', which in a certain way finds expression in the consent of the spouses."
[468] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 34.
[469] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 77.
[470] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 34.

the needs of children, as well as the true flourishing of spousal love. Lastly, Wojtyła will reflect on reciprocity and the common good, which require the foundation of love as a virtue, rather than strong emotions. Immature sentiments and egoism are enemies of love, and do not allow for reciprocity or the common good.

2.2.2. Trust as the Fruit of Faithful Love

In order to better understand the "essential sense of love," Wojtyła moves on to the next word in the vows: "To you I vow love, faith". He notes that faith means faithfulness or fidelity.[471] Love and fidelity are "two attitudes, two forms of commitment that are interrelated, of which the second," fidelity, "is the consequence of the first. Consequence and confirmation". Fidelity is also a "preparation for the first, a way toward it."[472] If love is more than a strong emotion, it is lived out through fidelity. It allows for fidelity. And fidelity allows for love to blossom.

When the couple promise fidelity, they are saying to each other: "To you I give the assurance that you can count on me in life," and that "you can entrust yourself to me."[473] Wojtyła recognized that marriage is an ambitious commitment. However, he also acknowledges that "a person has a right to be ambitious in this way; not only the right, but the need." He needs to be ambitious because love is more than a feeling or an emotion; it requires growth in maturity. Man "must be mature to the point that he can count on himself," so that in marriage he is capable of saying, "I want to be a person on whom you can count on in life."[474] Love must mature into "active trust," in which the spouses count on one another.

This maturity comes after a "long process" in which both of the spouses grow in "accurate knowledge" of each other. This is knowledge "of their values and […] of their weaknesses. Because otherwise there cannot be confidence. You can respect a person highly, but to have faith in them, to count on them for your whole life, requires much more. It is therefore something that one arrives at after a long process, a process of knowledge."[475] The couple that wishes to marry must enter into the marriage with full knowledge of one's own

[471] As was noted above, the vow of "faith" was changed to "fidelity" in 1962 to make this clearer.
[472] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 35.
[473] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 35.
[474] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 35. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 199: "The principle of monogamy and indissolubility of marriage necessitates the integration of love […] Without it marriage is an enormous risk. A man and a woman whose love has not thoroughly matured has not crystallized as a fully-mature union of persons, should not marry, for they are not prepared for the life test of marriage. In any case, the point is not for their love to be already definitively mature at the moment of contracting marriage, but to be mature for further maturation within marriage and through marriage."
[475] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 36.

weaknesses and the weaknesses of one's spouse. Yet, they must also be willing to say that notwithstanding this, I am still capable of pledging my love, fidelity, and honor in marriage. Wojtyła elaborates on this beautifully in *Love and Responsibility*:

> love of the person, a love that is mature with the interior act of choice and focused on the value of the person himself, makes us affectively love the person as he truly is—not our image of him but the real person. We love him along with his virtues and vices, in a sense independently of the virtues and despite the vices. The greatness of this love is manifested the most when this person falls, when his weaknesses or even sins come to light. One who truly loves does not then refuse his love, but in a sense loves even more—he loves while being conscious of deficiencies and vices, without, however, approving of them. For the person himself never loses his essential value. Affection, which follows the value of the person, is faithful to man.[476]

Fidelity comes from a mature sense of affection that is rooted in the value of the person, and in accurate knowledge of their values and weaknesses. This mature and accurate knowledge is juxtaposed with blind affection. "For affections appear in a spontaneous way," Wojtyła warns, "hence fondness toward some persons arises at times suddenly and unexpectedly—but properly speaking this reaction is 'blind.' The natural activity of affections does not tend to grasp the truth about the object. Truth is in man a function and a task of reason."[477]

At the time of the wedding, the feeling of love may be so strong that the spouses cannot even imagine the possibility of betrayal and infidelity. However, "man is a weak being and must defend himself from this possibility in a more concrete and profound way than the simple feelings or emotions of the moment."[478] Affections fluctuate, and therefore cannot be a solid foundation for faithful love. Wojtyła therefore seeks to provide a "deeper defense" against infidelity, through a "fuller understanding of the content of the marriage vows."[479] This leads to reflecting on indissolubility, reciprocity, and the common good.

2.2.3. The Indissolubility of Marriage

The vow "to not abandon you until death," is "an expression of fidelity to its full consequences." Fidelity must be lived out throughout the entire lives of the spouses. Wojtyła notes that it was Christ himself who instituted monogamous marriage, and therefore "[t]here is no possibility of divorce."[480] When the priest witnesses the vows of the spouses on their wedding day, he will then repeat the words of Jesus, "So they are no longer two, but one flesh.

[476] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 116-117.
[477] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 61.
[478] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 37.
[479] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 37.
[480] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 38.

Therefore, what God has joined together, no one may put asunder" (Cf. Genesis 1:27; 2:24; Matthew 19:6).[481] Since God has joined them together as one, it is impossible for human beings, including the spouses, to dissolve their marriage. Wojtyła notes that, "If the marital bond was contracted, and contracted validly, in a way that neither of the parties can contest the validity, then the bond cannot be dissolved."[482]

Wojtyła recognizes that the institution of marriage has suffered from "deformation and deviations" due to divorce and polygamy. However, monogamous marriage and indissolubility "are always proof of the high moral culture"[483] of the couple or of the age. There are several reasons for this, of which Wojtyła highlights two.[484]

The first reason for indissolubility concerns the children, who have an "important human right to have their parents." This is only possible if the spouses, both parents, live together in a stable, monogamous marriage. Divorce deprives the children of this right, which is "an immense injustice."[485] The primary end of marriage, as Wojtyła will reflect on during the third day of the retreat (2.3.2.), is the procreation and education of offspring. Part of this education is the care that the mother and father bring to their children, and the witness that they give of God's faithful love through their own fidelity in marriage. Divorce weakens the understanding of marital love, and negates the sign of God's faithfulness.

The second reason for indissolubility of marriage is "the consideration of human love." If love "is worthy of its name," it cannot be "only an investment of passion sanctioned by law, it must be indissoluble." If human love is true, it cannot be merely a sentiment or emotion that can fade in time. "In this case it is an adventure that lasts more or less long, but you cannot call such an adventure love."[486] Wojtyła makes the same point in *The Jeweler's Shop*, when Adam says that: "Love is not an adventure. It has the taste of the whole man. It has his weight. And the weight of his whole fate. It cannot be a single moment. Man's eternity passes through it.

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[481] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 38. Cf. *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 64. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 196-197: "In general, in the teaching of Jesus Christ the issue of monogamy and indissolubility of marriage was posited definitively and decisively. Christ had before his eyes the fact of the original intention of marriage by the Creator, marriage of a closely monogamous (Gen 1:27, 2:24) and indissoluble character ('What God has joined together, let no man put asunder'), to which he appealed constantly."

[482] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 38.

[483] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 39.

[484] Cf. *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 2: "A Marriage is established by the conjugal covenant, that is, the irrevocable consent of both spouses, by which they freely give themselves to each other and accept each other. Moreover, this singular union of a man and a woman requires, and the good of the children demands, the complete fidelity of the spouses and the indissoluble unity of the bond."

[485] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 39.

[486] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 40. Cf. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 20, in which he quotes from *Gaudium et Spes,* 48: "As a mutual gift of two persons, this intimate union, as well as the good of children, imposes total fidelity on the spouses and argues for an unbreakable oneness between them."

That is why it is to be found in the dimensions of God, because only He is eternity."[487] When a couple pledges fidelity through their vows, they take on the "weight" and responsibility for the person to whom they make their vows. They truly become one, and therefore they cannot separate, because their good, their weight, is now shared.

Earlier in *The Jeweler's Shop*, when Anna tries to sell her wedding ring the Jeweler says to her, "Your husband must be alive—in which case neither of your rings, taken separately, will weight anything—only both together will register. My jeweler's scales have this peculiarity that they weigh not the metal but man's entire being and fate."[488] A person's being and fate has been united with their spouse through marriage, so they cannot seek happiness through infidelity, nor by abandoning or dissolving the marriage.

From a psychological perspective, marital life involves a "particular unity" and "intimacy of coexistence. Breaking, annihilating, erasing all this, is equivalent to trampling on the personalities, to trample on our humanity."[489] These are serious words from Karol Wojtyła, who saw with his own eyes how the humanity of his countrymen was "trampled" on by the Nazis in the Second World War, and described it in exactly these words multiple times.[490] Because marriage brings about a union of persons, breaking this union "tramples" on their personalities and dignity. In order for love to be "full and complete," it must be faithful "until

[487] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 60.
[488] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 52. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 99: "The will is in a sense the last resort of the person; without its participation no lived-experience has full personal value—it does not possess the complete, specific weight of the person. This specific weight of the person is closely connected with freedom, and freedom is a property of the will."
[489] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 40.
[490] John Paul II, Apostolic Pilgrimage to Poland, *"Holy Mass at the Concentration Camp Auschwitz-Bierkenau,"* Homily of His Holiness John Paul II (June 7, 1979), https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19790607_polonia-brzezinka.html: "The victory through faith and love was won by [Maximilian Kolbe] in this place, which was built for the negation of faith—faith in God and faith in man—and to trample radically not only on love but on all signs of human dignity, of humanity. […] Can it still be a surprise to anyone that the Pope born and brought up in this land, the Pope who came to the see of Saint Peter from the diocese in whose territory is situated the camp of Auschwitz, should have begun his first Encyclical with the words 'Redemptor Hominis' and should have dedicated it as a whole to the cause of man, to the dignity of man, to the threats to him, and finally to his inalienable rights that can so easily be trampled on and annihilated by his fellowmen?" Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Pilgrimage to Poland, *"Holy Cross Mass in the Cathedral of Warsaw"* (June 16, 1983), https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/pl/homilies/1983/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19830616_cattedrale-varsavia.html: "Together with all my countrymen - especially with those who are most acutely tasting the bitterness of disappointment, humiliation, suffering, of being deprived of their freedom, of being wronged, of having their dignity trampled on, I stand under the cross of Christ to celebrate the extraordinary jubilee of the Year of Redemption on Polish soil." (Translation my own.) Cf. John Paul II, "Message to Polish Bishops," in *Origins* 19:15 (September 14, 1989), 251-252: "The Second World War made all people aware of the magnitude […] which contempt for man and the violation of human rights could reach. It led to an unprecedented marshaling of hatred, which in turn trampled on man and on everything that is human."

death." It is necessary for the couple to "keep this in mind, to be aware of it, to want it, when you make this promise so binding, great, and formulated before the divine majesty"[491].

2.2.4. Reciprocity and the Common Good of the Couple

Wojtyła next reflects on two enemies of love. The first is immature sentiments. Usually when couples pronounce their vows, this is done with a certain "easiness and lightness," because their words are based on their feelings. As Andrew reflects in *The Jeweler's Shop*, "I was ready to follow sensation, strong, forceful sensation. I wanted to regard love as passion, as an emotion to surpass all—I believed in the absolute of emotion."[492] The couple tries to build their love on their feelings, however, "this material for construction is only raw material, and is not yet a finished construction, a finished creation – while love is creation."[493] While love can initiate with attraction, sentiments and goodwill, these are the "raw material" for love, but not yet love itself. If this material for love does not mature, "the innocence that accompanies the sublime words of the martial promise can be transformed into hate."[494] The raw material therefore needs to be constructed into a mature love, because "love is creation,"[495] which creates unity between the spouses and leads to fruitfulness. As Christopher says in *The Jeweler's Shop*, "one question is important: Is it creative?"[496]

In *Love and Responsibility*, Wojtyła notes that "sensuality provides material for love, but an appropriate creativity of the will is necessarily needed in relation to this material. Without this creativity love cannot exist, what is left is only the material that the concupiscence of the flesh merely uses up, finding an 'outlet' in it."[497] He goes on to say:

> For love is never something ready-made, something merely 'given' (*dany*) to a woman and a man, but at once it is always something 'entrusted' (*zadany*). It is necessary to look at it this way: love in a sense never 'is,' but only constantly 'becomes,' depending on the contribution of each person. This commitment is based on what is 'given,' and therefore the lived-experiences that have their basis in the sensuality and natural affectivity of either a woman or a man constitute only the 'material' of love. A tendency exists to consider them as a ready-made form of love. This is an erroneous tendency—it conceals the consumption-oriented and utilitarian attitude, which—as is known—is contrary to the nature of love itself.[498]

[491] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 41.
[492] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.
[493] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 41.
[494] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 41.
[495] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 41.
[496] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 77.
[497] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 133.
[498] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 121.

Wojtyła is warning the couples that while affectivity and sensuality are important "material" for the building of love, they do not constitute the fullness of love in themselves. Without reciprocal self-giving between the spouses, affectivity and sensuality run the risk of becoming material for the concupiscence of the flesh, in which the spouses use each other and view each other as objects of utility and consumption.

Immature sentiments lead to the danger of idealizing a person, and thus becoming disillusioned when the truth of the person is revealed, and they do not live up to the ideal that has been created in the mind. As Anna laments in *The Jeweler's Shop*, "Bitterness is a taste of food and drink, it is also an inner taste—at taste of the soul when it has suffered disappointment or disillusionment. That taste permeates everything we happen to say, think or do; it permeates even our smile."[499]

When love is based on strong emotions, there is a danger that strong feelings of love can give way to equally strong feelings of hatred. As Wojtyła says in *Love and Responsibility*:

> And precisely here the emotional-affective reactions at times contribute to distorting or falsifying fondness, when through them one perceives values in a given person that in truth do not exist there. This can be very dangerous for love. For when the affective reaction passes away—and fluctuation belongs to its nature—then the subject who based his entire relation to a given person on this reaction, and not on the truth about the person, is left in a vacuum, so to speak, being deprived of the good that he thought he had found. And sometimes an affective reaction of the opposite coloring is born out of this vacuum and the sense of disappointment linked to it: a purely affective love often turns into an affective hate toward the same person.[500]

Here again we see the importance of affective maturity, which subordinates affection to the truth about the person.

The second enemy of love is egoism. Wojtyła calls this "a hidden enemy, a conspirator latent in each of us without exception […] It is the adversary of love. […] It makes me seek only my own good, I seek myself."[501] In egoism we see this "consumption-oriented and utilitarian attitude,"[502] which sees the other merely or mainly as a good for myself, whom I desire to use for my own happiness and enjoyment.

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[499] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 47.
[500] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 60-61. Cf. 90: "sensuality alone is not love, and can very easily become its opposite." Cf. 95: "Both a woman and a man may be disillusioned by the fact that the values attributed to the beloved person turn out to be fiction. Because of the dissonance between the ideal and the reality, affective love is sometimes not only extinguished but even transformed into affective hatred." Cf. 110: "One of the greatest sufferings is when love turns out to be not what it was considered to be, but something quite contrary." Cf. 134: "Experience teaches that a one-sidedly 'idealistic' approach to love sometimes later becomes a source of bitter disillusion, or generates an explicit lack of consistency in conduct, especially in conjugal life."
[501] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 41-42.
[502] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 121.

"Instead," Wojtyła says, "in marriage we must seek the common good together. Marriage is not my 'I' and your 'I' – my good and your good – as two opposing poles. Marriage is: us and our good."[503] Contrary to egoism, love seeks the good of the other, treating it as one's own. "When I pronounce the words: 'to you I vow love,' there is a very great unity, a maturity, that must already be 'us'. Not only my I and your I, but the desire for the […] development of life through the common good, our good."[504] Wojtyła elaborates this in *Love and Responsibility*:

> The only way out of this inevitable egoism is to recognize besides a purely subjective good, i.e., besides pleasure, an objective good, which can also unite persons—and then it acquires the characteristics of a common good. This objective common good is the foundation of love, and the persons choosing this common good together at the same time subordinate themselves to it. Thanks to this, they bind one another with the true, objective bond of love, the bond that enables them to liberate themselves from subjectivism and from egoism inherently concealed in it. Love is a union of persons.[505]

In order for love to have a mature, solid foundation, it needs to be based on more than a purely subjective good such as pleasure or emotions. The foundation of love is the objective common good, which allows for a union of persons.

In *Love and Responsibility* Wojtyła notes that "between myself and this person a particular bond is born: the bond of a *common good* and a common end, which binds us." What is this common good? "Concerning marriage, this end is procreation, progeny, the family, and at the same time the whole constantly growing maturity of the relationship between both persons in all the spheres brought by the spousal relationship itself."[506] Thus Wojtyła tells the couples on retreat that one of the goods that the couple seeks within marriage that unites them in a particular way is children, which can be seen as an expression of "this commonality, of our good."[507] He will elaborate on the good of children in the third part of the retreat (2.3.2.-2.3.3.).

The common good is achieved through reciprocity, which delivers the spouses from egoism and forms them into a community of love. "Reciprocity means that I want your good

[503] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 42.
[504] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 42.
[505] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 22-23.
[506] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 12, 14. Cf. John Paul II*, Letter to Families*, 10: "The words of consent define the common good of *the couple and of the family.* First, the common good of the spouses: love, fidelity, honor, the permanence of their union until death—'all the days of my life'. The good of both, which is at the same time the good of each, must then become the good of the children."
[507] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 42.

as it were my own good, and on the other hand you want my good as if it was yours."[508] In marriage, the spouses truly become "one flesh," a community of love, and therefore can no longer view their own good apart from the good of their spouse. As Wojtyła notes in *Love and Responsibility*:

> In order for the 'we' to exist, two-sided love itself is not enough because, after all, there are still two 'I's' in it, although they are already fully predisposed to become one 'we.' Reciprocity is decisive precisely for this 'we' to come into existence. Reciprocity reveals that love has matured, that it has become something 'between' persons, that it created some community—in this its full nature is realized. Reciprocity belongs precisely to it.[509]

Reciprocity forms a communion of persons who are united in their mutual love for each other. Therefore, "love between a woman and a man tends naturally to reciprocal self-giving and belonging of persons."[510] Love seeks to build reciprocity.

Wojtyła gives examples of this reciprocity several times in *The Jeweler's Shop*. Andrew reflects that "love can be a collision in which two selves realize profoundly they ought to belong to each other, even though they have no convenient moods and sensations. It is one of those processes in the universe which bring a synthesis, unite what was divided, broaden and enrich what was limited and narrow."[511] This leads him to recognizing that Teresa's good is the same as his good, and so he seeks to form a bond of reciprocity between them. "Today I see that my country is also her country, and, after all, I dreamed of throwing a bridge"[512]. And after their marriage, they truly become one. "New people—Teresa and Andrew—two until now, but still not one, one from now on, though still two."[513] As Adam will reflect, "Love is,

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[508] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 42. Cf. T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 5, a. 4, ad 2. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 113: "By choosing another person one chooses in him, in a sense, another 'I,' as though one were choosing oneself in the other and the other in oneself."

[509] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 68-69. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 71: "For love can survive only as a unity in which the mature 'we' is manifested; it will not survive as an arrangement of two egoisms in the framework of which two 'I's' are manifested. Love has a structure of interpersonal community." Cf. 112-113: "For this 'flavor' of love is bound with the sense of responsibility for the person. After all, this sense implies concern for the true good of the person—the quintessence of all altruism and at the same time an infallible sign of some expansion of one's 'I,' of one's existence, with the 'other I' and with this other existence, which is for me as close to my own. … Love divorced from a feeling of responsibility for the person is a negation of itself, is always and necessarily egoism. *The greater the feeling of responsibility for the person the more true love there is*."

[510] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 113. Cf. 111: "Spousal love consists, on the one hand, in the giving of the person, and, on the other hand, in the reception of this giving. The 'mystery' of reciprocity is intertwined in this—reception must be at once giving, and giving at once reception. Love is by its nature reciprocal: one who knows how to receive also knows how to give".

[511] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 26.

[512] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 31.

[513] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 39.

[…] a synthesis of two people's existence which converges, as it were, at a certain point and makes them into one."[514]

Wojtyła reminds the couples that love must be a "long-term creation project." Therefore, it is necessary to "examine this love, at its development, because feelings oscillate, and sometimes go away by themselves, but virtue can create continually. And love is a virtue."[515] When love is not merely a sentiment but a virtue, "love grows continuously," which means that "the unity grows. The reciprocity grows, the comprehension grows, the desire for the common good and the common creation of this good grows."[516] The maturity of love is not about growth of passion or feelings, but love as a virtue—the realization of the common good and reciprocity. As Wojtyła expresses it in *Love and Responsibility*:

> This refers particularly to the love between a woman and a man. In accord with the full meaning of the word, love is a virtue and not merely an affection, let alone merely an arousal of the senses. This virtue is created in the will and has at its disposal the resources of the will's spiritual potentiality, that is, it is an authentic commitment of the freedom of the person-subject, proceeding from the truth about the person-object. Love as virtue lives in the will by being disposed toward the value of the person, and so it is the source of the affirmation of the person that permeates all reactions, lived-experiences, and all conduct in general.[517]

As we saw in our summary of *Love and Responsibility* (1.3.1.), there are four requirements necessary for spousal love to be lived out as a virtue: the affirmation of the person, reciprocal self-giving and belonging, responsibility for the good of the other, and the free choice based on the truth of the person. "Only in the virtue of love are the objective demands of the personalistic norm realized, the norm that commands 'loving' the person and rejects any 'use' of him."[518]

Wojtyła ends his second day of meditations by encouraging the couples to "return often" to the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians:

> Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all

[514] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 56.
[515] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 43.
[516] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 43. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 151: "love in the world of persons must possess its ethical completeness and fullness (*integritas*); its psychological manifestations alone will not suffice—indeed, love is mature, also psychologically mature, only when it possesses an ethical value, when it is the virtue of love."
[517] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 106.
[518] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 151. Cf. K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu," 158: "We need to always remember that simple sentiment—even the healthiest and noblest—*is not yet love*, but is only a certain material from which it is then possible to construct love, that love on which two people can base their entire common life in marriage. Such love *cannot be only a sentiment*, but *must be a virtue*."

> things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)[519]

Wojtyła does not comment on these words, but only repeats the last line: "Love never fails."[520] He encourages the couples "to meditate on these words, verifying the development of your love in marriage in light of them."[521] In light of his meditations on love, he wants to encourage the couples to have confidence in their love. Not merely love as attraction, sentiments, or goodwill, but love as a virtue, which is creative and brings about the common good through reciprocity.

2.3. Third Meditation: Conjugal Honor

2.3.1. Introduction

Wojtyła begins by summarizing his meditations from the first two days. On the first day he analyzed what it means to make a marital vow, an act that calls on God as a witness. On the second day he analyzed the content of the vows, with the focus on understanding the indissolubility of marriage in light of the promises of love and fidelity. "We have seen that all these objects of the marital promise, because they are an oath, […] contain each other, reciprocally give rise to each other, and in a certain sense compose the complete image of conjugal love."[522] The vows of love, fidelity, and honor are all interrelated. Therefore, in the third meditation he will focus on honor, but in light of the vows of love and fidelity.

He begins by distinguishing conjugal honor, connecting it with the three ends of marriage. He then reflects on the need to subordinate the third end, the mitigation of concupiscence, with the first end, the generation and education of offspring. The third end is also subordinated to the second end, reciprocal help and the good of the spouses. This leads to reflecting on how responsibility for love in marriage leads to a growing responsibility for love in family life. Lastly, Wojtyła will reflect again on marriage as a sacrament, this time emphasizing that it is a sacrament of sacrificial love, through which the spouses participate in the love of Christ for the Church, and therefore need to continually pray for the grace to live out their marriage well.

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[519] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 43.
[520] Later as Pope, John Paul II will comment extensively on these verses. Cf. John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 14: "Meditating on the thirteenth chapter of the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, we set out on a path which leads us to understand quickly and clearly the full truth about the civilization of love. No other biblical text expresses this truth so simply and so profoundly as the *hymn to love…* The hymn to love in the First Letter to the Corinthians remains the *Magna Charta* of the civilization of love."
[521] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 43.
[522] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 47-48.

2.3.2. The Ends of Marriage

Conjugal honor is different from honor in the broad sense, which can be used synonymously with duty. A person who "diligently attends to his duties" is considered "a just person, an honorable person."[523] In marriage, there arises the need to be "all the more honorable because we have, as it were, bound ourselves to another person."[524] Marriage, demands "security and trust," and therefore "you must be an honorable person due to the fact that another person is bound to you in an indissoluble way."[525] As Wojtyła elaborated on during the second day of the retreat (2.2.2.), there needs to be active trust in which each spouse can count on the other to honor their vows.

Honor is part of love and fidelity, but "in a higher, more exact meaning, conjugal honor is very closely related to the realization of the ends of marriage."[526] By ends he is referring to the Greek term *telos*, which means goal, aim, purpose. These are the objective ends (*finis operis*) of marriage, perceived through natural law.[527] Following the teaching of the Church, Wojtyła refers to three ends of marriage: "the first end is procreation, in Latin *procreatio*. The second end is reciprocity and the reciprocal help of the spouses – of the husband and the wife. The third end […] is the satisfaction of the natural concupiscence of the flesh. These are the three ends, in this order."[528] He presents these three ends of marriage in a similar way in *Love*

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[523] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 48. Within the formula of the vows, I translate "uczciwość małżeńską" as "honor in marriage," reflecting the three promises made in the words of consent: love, fidelity, and honor. However, when Wojtyła refers to "uczciwość małżeńską" as a term that goes beyond ordinary "honor" (uczciwość), I refer to it as "conjugal honor" for clarity. This could also be translated as "integrity" or "conjugal integrity," as it is in John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. M. Waldstein. Boston 2006: Pauline Books and Media, 539, 543, 546, 614, 615 (Audiences 105:1; 106:2 107:4; 117b2, 117b6).

[524] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 48.

[525] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 48. Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, 543 (106:2): "In the perspective of a shared life and of the conjugal vocation, that initial sign of marriage as a sacrament of the Church will be continually filled with the 'prophetism of the body.' The body of each spouse *will speak 'for' and 'on behalf of'* each of them; the body will speak *in the name and with the authority of the person*, of each of the persons, thus carrying out the conjugal dialogue, which is proper to their vocation and based on the language of the body, continually reread on the right occasion and at the proper time: and it is necessary that it is reread in the truth! The couple are called to form their lives and their living together as a 'communion of persons' on the basis of this language. Given that *a complex of meanings corresponds to the language*, the couple – through their conduct and behavior, actions and gestures [...] – are called to become the authors of these meanings of the 'language of the body,' from which they then build and continually deepen love, faithfulness, conjugal integrity, and the union that remains indissoluble until death."

[526] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 49.

[527] Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 31: "Because a man and a woman are persons, they must consciously realize the ends of marriage in accordance with the above defined order, for this is an objective order that is accessible to reason, and thus binding for persons."

[528] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 49. Here I translate «zaspokojenie naturalnej pożądliwości ciała» as "satisfaction of the natural concupiscence of the flesh," based on Grzegorz Ignatik's translation of «zaspokojenie naturalnej pożądliwości» as "satisfaction of natural concupiscence" and «pożądliwość ciała» as "concupiscence of the flesh" in *Love in Responsibility.* Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Miłość i odpowiedzialność,* Lublin 2001: Towarzystwo

and Responsibility, stating that the Church, "teaches consistently that the primary end of marriage is *procreation*, whereas the secondary end is what in the Latin terminology has been defined as *mutuum adiutorium*. Besides these, there is a tertiary end listed—*remedium concupiscentiae*."[529]

Here, the Polish publication of the retreat footnotes the 1917 Code of Canon Law, which states that "[t]he primary purpose (*finis*) of marriage is the procreation and education of offspring; the secondary purpose is mutual assistance and the remedy of concupiscence."[530] While Wojtyła calls "reciprocity and the reciprocal help of spouses" the second end, and "satisfaction of the natural concupiscence of the flesh" the third end, the 1917 Code lists both mutual assistance and the remedy of concupiscence as secondary ends, without any particular order.[531] As we will see, while Wojtyła recognizes that the remedy of concupiscence is an end of marriage, "it is not an autonomous end," but "must be subordinated to the first two."[532] By subordinating this end to the first two ends, Wojtyła anticipates the development of the language used to speak about the ends of marriage at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)[533], in Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (1968)[534], and his own future writings

Naukowe KUL), 66, 132-137. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 52, 129-134, 137, 142-146, 148, 150, 154, 156, 174, 178-181, 183-184, 192, 256, 260.

[529] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 30.

[530] Catholic Church and Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 or Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law: in English translation with extensive scholarly apparatus*, San Francisco 2001: Ignatius Press, Can. 1013 § 1.

[531] On the ordering of the ends, Cf. P. Cahall, *The Mystery of Marriage: A Theology of the Body and the Sacrament*, Chicago / Mundelein 2016: Hillenbrand books, 92-93: "First of all, to designate the hierarch of ends of marriage is not to establish a hierarchy of values pertaining to those ends. It is not saying that the good of the spouses is somehow of less value than the procreation and education of children. It is also not saying that the good of the spouses as a secondary end only has value as a means to attain the primary end of procreation. […] Far from attempting to designate a hierarchy of value, the "ranking" of the primary and secondary ends of marriage is meant to point out what distinguishes marriage from other relationships which could also serve the good of the persons in these relationships, through some type of mutual assistance they provide to each other. In other words, to say that the procreation and education of children is the *primary* end of marriage is to point out what is most distinctive about this type of relationship, and what makes it unique among all types of human relationships."

[532] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 50.

[533] Cf. *Gaudium et spes,* 48: "By their very nature, the institution of matrimony itself and conjugal love are ordained for the procreation and education of children, and find in them their ultimate crown. Thus a man and a woman, who by their compact of conjugal love 'are no longer two, but one flesh' (Matt. 19:ff), render mutual help and service to each other through an intimate union of their persons and of their actions."

[534] Cf. Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae "On Human Life"* (25 July 1968), 12: "This particular doctrine, often expounded by the magisterium of the Church, is based on the inseparable connection, established by God, which man on his own initiative may not break, between the unitive significance and the procreative significance which are both inherent to the marriage act. The reason is that the fundamental nature of the marriage act, while uniting husband and wife in the closest intimacy, also renders them capable of generating new life—and this as a result of laws written into the actual nature of man and of woman. And if each of these essential qualities, the unitive and the procreative, is preserved, the use of marriage fully retains its sense of true mutual love and its ordination to the supreme responsibility of parenthood to which man is called."

as Pope John Paul II[535], including the 1983 Code of Canon Law[536] and the 1992 Catechism of the Catholic Church[537], which were promulgated under his pontificate.

Wojtyła notes that the third end, the satisfaction of the natural concupiscence of the flesh, is Biblical, highlighting St. Paul (1 Corinthisans 7:2, 3, 5, 9) who says, "Now in regard to the matters about which you wrote: 'It is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman,' but because of cases of immorality every man should have his own wife, and every woman her own husband" (1 Corinthians 7:1:1-2). St. Paul goes on to say, "if they cannot exercise self-control they should marry, for it is better to marry than to be on fire" (1 Corinthians 7:9). Thus marriage has been understood as a remedy or mitigation of concupiscence.

This should not be understood to mean that marriage is an outlet for lust. When Wojtyła says, "satisfaction of the natural concupiscence of the flesh," he does not mean this in a sinful or fallen way. As he tells the retreatants, the sexual impulse is "a natural impulse, […] which has been given to mankind by the Creator for great ends, that is, for the preservation of the existence of humanity."[538] He will explore this "great end" in the next section (2.3.3.). God has given humanity the sexual urge to be satisfied on the level of persons, in which husband and wife come together through mutual self-giving in order to express love and share in God's creative power. "Therefore, when we speak of physical desire or even the concupiscence of the

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[535]: Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. M. Waldstein. Boston 2006: Pauline Books and Media. 642-643 (127:3): "According to the traditional language, love, as a superior 'power,' coordinates the acts of the persons, of the husband and wife, *in the area of the ends of marriage*. Although, in approaching the issue, neither the conciliar constitution nor the encyclical use the traditional language (defining the hierarchy of ends: 'procreation,' 'mutual aid,' and 'remedy of concupiscence'), they nevertheless speak about that to which the traditional expressions refer. […] In this renewed orientation, the traditional teaching of the ends of marriage (and of their hierarchy) is confirmed and at the same time deepened from the point of view of the interior life of the spouses, of conjugal and familial spirituality." Cf. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 32.

[536] Cf. *1983 Code of Canon Law*, Can. 1055 § 1: "The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring" Cf. Can. 1061 § 1: "A valid marriage between the baptized is called *ratum tantum* if it has not been consummated; it is called *ratum et consummatum* if the spouses have performed between themselves in a human fashion a conjugal act which is suitable in itself for the procreation of offspring, to which marriage is ordered by its nature and by which the spouses become one flesh."

[537] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2363: "The spouses' union achieves the twofold end of marriage: the good of the spouses themselves and the transmission of life."

[538] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 50. Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 35: "the sexual drive possesses an existential meaning, for it is closely linked to the existence of man, to the existence of the species *Homo sapiens.*" Cf. 36-37: "The proper end of the sexual drive is the existence of the species *Homo sapiens*, its extension, *procreation*, and the love of persons, of a man and a woman, is formed within this finality, in its bedrock, as it were; it is formed as if out of this material, which is provided by the drive. So, this love can be correctly formed only inasmuch as it is formed in close harmony with the proper finality of the drive. A clear conflict with this finality will be at the same time a disturbance and undermining of the love of persons." Cf. 202: "First and foremost, marriage serves existence […] marriage serves love, so to speak, more fully when it serves existence, when it becomes a family."

flesh and its satisfaction, this must not immediately be associated with something morally negative, with sin, with something morally evil."[539]

If the conjugal act were to be done with lust or with reducing the other to an object of pleasure, it would fail to be an act of love. Marriage becomes a "remedy for concupiscence" because it allows for the "satisfaction of the natural concupiscence of the flesh," the sexual drive, in a way that respects the dignity of the person and does not violate the personalistic norm. As Wojtyła wrote in 1958, "[t]he main practical and educational problem of preparation for marriage consists in freeing human love, sexual love […] from the consumeristic attitude, […] and to shift the entire focus to the value of that person."[540] Marriage, therefore, serves the end of a remedy for concupiscence, for healing wounded sexual desires. But this is "not an autonomous end, nor is it a primary end." Instead, it must be "subordinated to the first two [ends]. And only on this condition can conjugal life have its moral foundations"[541] In the next two sections of the retreat, Wojtyła will show what it means to subordinate the third end to the first two ends.

2.3.3. Conjugal Life and Offspring

"Above all," Wojtyła affirms, "there is a need to subordinate this third end of marriage to the first end," because the "physical communion of the spouses, or conjugal life, by its nature is oriented to procreation."[542] Here, Wojtyła is not speaking merely of biological nature. By "nature," he is referring to the natural law, "faithfulness to reason, because man is a rational being."[543] From this "faithfulness to nature," or natural law, Wojtyła elicits two principles.

The first principle is that "when the spouses join together, they must take into account the possibility of procreation."[544] This does not mean that the spouses only join in the conjugal act for the purpose of procreation, or with the desire to have children. But they must always "keep in mind that they can become a father and a mother, that they can have children."[545]

The second principle involves "family planning, or the so-called just, moral regulation of conception,"[546] which allows for the subordination of the third end to the first. Wojtyła notes that it is not the role of the priest to explore this problem, and so biologists and doctors are

[539] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 50.
[540] K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu," 162-164.
[541] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 50-51.
[542] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 51.
[543] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 51.
[544] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 51.
[545] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 52.
[546] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 52.

needed, who have a "moral obligation" to instruct couples in this area. This reflects Wojtyła's own approach to marriage preparation, in which he enlisted the help of doctors, psychologists, and couples to share their knowledge, expertise, and experience.

For the retreat, Wojtyła focuses his attention on the moral perspective, in order to shed light on how it connects to the promise of conjugal honor. When spouses "have just reasons for not wanting more children or for not wanting children in a certain period," they can rely on the "natural regulation" of conception, "exploiting the periods of the woman's cycle in which she, by nature, is infertile."[547] However, this principle can only be realized through "continence" or "periodic abstinence," in which the couple refrains from having sexual relations. The Church's teaching, Wojtyła tells the couples, is "based on what it draws from the Gospel and from Divine Revelation"[548].

In *Love and Responsibility*, Wojtyła explains that "if continence is to be a virtue and not just a method in the *utilitarian* sense, it must not serve to destroy *readiness for parenthood* in a husband and a wife, since acceptance that 'I may become a father'/'I may become a mother' is what justifies the marital relationship and puts it on the level of a true union of persons."[549] Abstaining from sexual relations for a time when there are "just reasons" is permissible, so long as they remain ready for the possibility of parenthood if God wills it.

2.3.4. Spiritual and Physical Unity

The third end is subordinated not only to the first end of marriage, but the second: reciprocal help. Through this reciprocity of the spouses, "they must create a harmonious and concordant unity, they must live in a deep agreement and mutual understanding. They must

[547] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 52-53.
[548] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 53. Cf. 1 Corinthians 7:3, 5: "The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. […] Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, lest Satan tempt you through lack of self-control."
[549] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 242. Cf. 216: "Parental readiness in the conjugal act guards love and is an indispensable condition of a truly personal union. […] Thanks to it, both of the united persons act in conformity with the interior logic of love; they respect the interior dynamic of love and open themselves to the new good, which in this case is an expression of the creative power of love." Cf. 229: "From the viewpoint of the family, periodic abstinence as a method of regulating conceptions is permissible insofar as it does not clash with a genuine parental attitude." Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. M. Waldstein. Boston 2006: Pauline Books and Media, 456 (85:7): "St. Paul clearly says that both conjugal relations and the voluntary periodic abstinence of the spouses must be a fruit of the 'gift of God,' which is their 'own,' and that the spouses themselves, by consciously cooperating with it, can keep up and strengthen their reciprocal personal bond together with the dignity that being 'temple[s] of the Holy Spirit who is in [them]' (see 1 Cor 6:19) confers on their bodies."

simply love each other or want the good of each other"[550]. This reciprocal love is meant as a virtue, not merely as a passion.

"The third end of marriage must be subordinated to the first also so that the second end can be realized; so that what unites the couple is truly love, and not bilateral egoism."[551] Here he is stressing a very important point that he made in *Love and Responsibility*. "Egoism excludes love, but allows a certain calculation and compromise: where there is no love, however, a bilateral arrangement between egoisms may exist."[552] The couple must be united in love, which unites them through reciprocal help and mutual self-gift, not bilateral egoism. For as Wojtyła tells the retreatants, egoism "is the opposite of love," and "the satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh, if it is not controlled, if it is not subordinated to the first and to the second end of marriage, becomes the occasion for an egoism that is at times vast in marriage."[553] The spouses cannot satisfy concupiscence at the expense of the other. Egoism is combatted by reciprocal help, by giving of oneself for the good of one's spouse. The more that the spouses give of themselves for the other's good, the greater the unity they will experience.

2.3.5. Responsibility for the Marriage and for the Family

In this short section, Wojtyła relates conjugal honor to the ends of marriage, especially the first end of procreation. Honor extends beyond the couple to familial life, and to the education of their offspring. When the couple is making their vows at the foot of the altar, the "awareness of all that comes with martial life […] must be in the mind, in the heart, in the will"[554].

Returning to the content of the first meditation, Wojtyła reminds the couples that the marital promise has the character of an oath, in which you invoke God as a witness to the "authenticity of [the] will," and therefore "full awareness of the consequences"[555] and a sense of responsibility is necessary. As Wojtyła writes in *Love and Responsibility*:

> the justification of man with respect to God is accomplished fundamentally through grace. And man receives grace through the sacraments imparted by the Church, which Christ endowed for this end with power in the supernatural order. Therefore, only the

[550] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 54.
[551] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 54-55.
[552] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 139. Cf. 23: "In this harmonization, egoisms will remain egoisms, with the only difference that these two egoisms, the feminine and the masculine, will be for each other mutually useful and mutually advantageous. Once the mutual usefulness and advantage cease, nothing remains from this whole harmony." Cf. 216: "Parental readiness serves here the purpose of breaking bilateral egoism […] behind which also hides the use of the person."
[553] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 55.
[554] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 56.
[555] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 57.

> sacrament of marriage fully satisfies the need for justification of the fact of conjugal intercourse with respect to God the Creator. This explains the fact that its institution came hand in hand with the definitive revelation of the supernatural order.[556]

God is called upon as a witness to the love of the couple, and responds by giving the grace of the sacrament in order to help the couple live out their spousal love. Conjugal honor extends as the spouses become parents, and they help each other to bring spiritual life to their children.

2.3.6. The Sacrament of Sacrificial Love

Wojtyła concludes the retreat by returning to the importance of marriage as a sacrament, highlighting that the rite of the sacrament of matrimony is focused on the two becoming one. "Marital life is a unity," Wojtyła says, "created one step after the other between two persons, of the woman and of the man […] who have committed themselves in this sense through the vows made in the presence of God."[557]

Wojtyła explains that the wedding rings are an expression of this unity. The wedding rings "are like the last link in the chain that will bind them, moreover, they will weld them to each other; this is what they want to express. Love confers on them this bond, to this 'welding'. They are welded to each other for all of their earthly existence. In good times and in bad, in joy and in sorrow."[558] Andrew uses this same expression in *The Jeweler's Shop*, reflecting that the wedding rings "are, for all time, like two last links in a chain, to unite us invisibly. […] We are secretly growing into one because of these two rings."[559] The wedding rings are a visible sign and reminder of the vows that they have made. Though the couple themselves are the sign of the sacrament, along with the vows that they express, they are united in a conjugal bond that they will live out "until death" or "all the days of my life." In the current rite, the spouses exchange rings saying: "N., receive 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."[560] Similar to the old rite, in which Wojtyła reflected on the importance of the couple calling on the Trinity and all the Saints, so also with the exchange of rings the couple calls upon the Trinity, the source and summit of their own love. The rings become a visible reminder on the bodies of the spouses of their participation in the love of the Trinity through their own self-giving love.

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[556] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 209.
[557] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 57.
[558] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 57.
[559] K. Wojtyła, *The Jeweler's Shop*, 34.
[560] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 67A.

Wojtyła also explains the symbolism of the stole. "Moreover, when they slip the ring on each other's finger as a sign of their vows, the priest wraps the two hands with his stole, to put on what is human, on what the betrothed spontaneously and before God make and constitute, a seal – the symbol of the priesthood."[561] This Polish custom expresses that the spouses themselves are the ministers of the sacrament, and that they are united through the priestly love of Christ the Bridegroom for his bride, the Church. Wojtyła tells the couples that the sacrament "has something priestly to it," because "the Lord Jesus has treated marriage as participation in his priesthood, in his sacrifice."[562] This priestly act transforms human love, family life, the generation and education of children, and their destiny into acts of participating in the Cross, in Jesus' sacrifice, and therefore also in his redemption.

Therefore, once again Wojtyła exhorts the couples to prepare themselves well for the sacrament. "I beg you to prepare yourselves for this sacrament in a religious way, […] It is a great sacrament. You cannot approach it superficially, you cannot approach it with levity. You need to see the greatness that is truly of this sacrament, the greatness of all its consequences."[563] Wojtyła ends by focusing the retreatants' attention on the last words of the vows: "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the Saints." Because they are calling on God as a witness, Wojtyła warns them that these words "can be pronounced effectively, fruitfully, only by the humble person, the person on their knees."[564] The vows should be made with humility, as the fruit of prayer, because "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6).[565] But they can trust that through humble prayer, "rightly God must give you the grace, […] if this will then materialize into the building of your entire life. He must give you the grace. Both when you speak these words and later, throughout your life, when you have to put this into practice – sometimes encountering hardships and resistance – receive the grace."[566] The sacrament of marriage offers them grace, both on their wedding day and throughout their marriage. As they live out their vows, they will need to continually turn to God, especially in moments of hardship. "Implore God, and also implore with me," Wojtyła says, "so that what is pronounced with the mouth becomes truly the foundation of your life. Amen."[567] The vows are the foundation of their life together because they mark both their identity, who they will be in marriage, and their mission, how they will live out their married life together.

[561] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 57-58.
[562] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 58.
[563] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 58.
[564] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 58-59.
[565] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 59.
[566] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 59.
[567] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 59.

CHAPTER III
APPLICATION: MARRIAGE AS A HEALING SACRAMENT

3.1. In Need of Healing: Cultural Challenges

In order to appreciate the healing dimensions of sacramental marriage, both for couples and for society, we need to understand the cultural situation of our time. Otherwise, the Church's teachings are in danger of being dismissed as mere ideals or theological abstractions, divorced from reality and lived experience. As John Paul II noted in *Familiaris Consortio*, "Since God's plan for marriage and the family touches men and women in the concreteness of their daily existence in specific social and cultural situations, the Church ought to apply herself to understanding the situations within which marriage and the family are living today, in order to fulfill her task of serving."[568]

The Pontifical Council for the Family has warned that "contemporary culture is witnessing a crisis in marriage, both in its religious and civil dimensions".[569] In this chapter we will see that since the 1970s, a new life phase known as "emerging adulthood" has developed, in which young people are increasingly delaying entering into the normal commitments of adulthood: career, marriage and having children. This has resulted in a substantial time of separation from the influence of family and the witness of marital love. In the interim, many become immersed within a "hookup culture" of brief, uncommitted relationships and casual sexual encounters. All of these factors have changed the public view of marriage and weakened the capacity of emerging adults to enter into happy, enduring marriages.

3.1.1. Decline in Sacramental Marriage

There is a significant crisis in the Church when it comes to the sacrament of marriage. In 1970 there were 426,309 sacramental celebrations of marriage in the United States, with a Catholic population of 54.1 million. In 2020, however, there were only 131,827 sacramental marriages, although the Catholic population had increased to over 72.4 million.[570] While the Catholic population has increased by 18.3 million (thirty four percent) over the past 50 years, the number of Catholic marriages has declined by nearly seventy percent! As the numbers

[568] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 4.
[569] Pontifical Council for the Family, *Family, Marriage, and "De Facto" Unions*, 7.
[570] Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, "Frequently Requested Church Statistics," accessed January 2, 2021. http://cara.georgetown.edu/frequently-requested-church-statistics/. Note that CARA's statistics reflect what was reported at the beginning of the year based on the previous year. Therefore, the numbers for 2020 are from 2019, and were in no way affected by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

continuing to decrease, Timothy O'Malley warns that "sacramental marriage among those baptized into the Church risks becoming a marginally practiced rite in the next two generations, as Americans' views on marriage—especially among emerging adults—continues to change."[571] Unless the Church makes a compelling demonstration of how sacramental marriage provides a way of human flourishing distinct from secular approaches to marriage, it is likely that there will be a continual decline in Catholic marriages.

One challenge that is reflected in the decline in sacramental marriages has been the rise of emerging adulthood. In the past, many young people who drifted away from the Church during college or after they moved out of their parents' house quickly returned when they started thinking about getting married and starting a family. However, since many emerging adults are putting off marriage until their mid-to-late twenties (or even their early thirties), their time away from the Church has greatly increased. If faith has not been a part of their life for five to ten years or more, chances are that they are not going to recognize the value of getting married in the Church.

3.1.2. Emerging Adulthood

In the 1950s and 1960s there were clear cultural expectations and an easy shift from the teenage years to adulthood. Sociologist Jeffrey Jensen Arnett notes that in the early 1960s, "the typical 21-year-old was married or about to be married, caring for a newborn child or expecting one soon, done with education or about to be done, and settled into a long-term job or role as full-time mother."[572] After the uncertainties of the Great Depression in the 1930s and two World Wars in the early 20th Century, many young people were eager to get married, start a family, and begin their careers. There was a sense of stability that led to an ease in finding a job, settling down in one place, getting married and having children. "Young people of that time grew up quickly and made serious enduring choices about their lives at a relatively early age."[573]

However, that is not the case for today's emerging adults. Christian Smith, a sociologist at Notre Dame University who did extensive national studies on emerging adulthood, found that "[s]tudies agree that the transition to adulthood today is more complex, disjointed, and confusing than it was in past decades. The steps through schooling, a first real job, marriage,

[571] T. O'Malley, *"The Sacrament of Marriage and the Healing of Desire"*. https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/the-sacrament-of-marriage-and-the-healing-of-desire/
[572] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, New York 2015: Oxford University Press, 1.
[573] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 1.

and parenthood are simply less well organized and coherent today than they were in the past."[574] There is no longer a clear trajectory and cultural expectations for young people to follow.

Over the past 50 years American culture has witnessed the rise of a phenomenon known as "emerging adulthood," a new life phase that has prolonged the number of years it takes to enter into the adult enduring commitments of work, marriage, and starting a family. This "new, distinct, and important state in life […] has emerged in our culture in recent decades – reshaping the meaning of self, youth, relationships, and life commitments as well as a variety of behaviors and dispositions among the young."[575] This new life phase is the result of the culture, and continues to impact the culture and its understanding of marriage.

Jeffrey Jensen Arnett first proposed the name "*emerging adulthood*" for this "new and historically unprecedented stage of the life course,"[576] which arose throughout the world beginning in the 1970s. Arnett notes that "Emerging adulthood can be said to exist wherever there is a gap of at least several years between the time young people finish secondary school and the time they enter stable adult roles in love and work."[577] It is a period of time in which young people become more independent of their parents, often moving out of their home. Yet they have not "entered into stable, enduring commitments typical of adult life, such as long-term job, marriage, and parenthood."[578] It is a time of transition, but also a phase of life in which young people come to know their identities with greater independence from their families, and before they have made many enduring commitments.

Christian Smith describes it as a "new life phase" that "involves a stretching out of the time it takes to move from the teenage years into full adulthood"[579]. While the length of this life phase can vary, in scholarly literature "emerging adulthood" generally refers to 18- to 29-year-olds.[580] Arnett notes that even if we were to conservatively characterize emerging

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[574] C. Smith, *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood,* New York 2011: Oxford University Press, 15.
[575] C. Smith, *Young Catholic America: Emerging Adults In, Out Of, And Gone From the Church*, New York 2014: Oxford University Press, 7.
[576] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 2.
[577] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 26.
[578] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 9.
[579] C. Smith, *Lost in Transition*, 232.
[580] C. Smith *Lost in Transition*, 16. See J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 7: "Age 18 to 25 is a conservative range to use when age ranges are required for referring to emerging adulthood, because relatively few 18-25-year-olds have crossed the major thresholds into a stable, established adulthood. However, 18-29 can be legitimately used as well, to include the many people who do not make the transition into established adulthood until closer to age 30. The 18-29 age range also makes more sense internationally, as median ages of entering marriage and parenthood are higher in all other developed countries than they are in the United States, usually around age 30." 17: "18-25 is the heart of the age range for emerging adulthood in American society. However, for most people there is nothing about reaching age 25 that results in a sudden and definitive transition to adulthood, so, in some

adulthood as lasting from 18 to 25, this seven-year period is "longer than infancy, longer than early or middle childhood, and nearly as long as adolescence. Emerging adulthood is a transitional period, yes, – and so is every other period of life – but it is not merely a transition, and it should be studied as a separate life stage."[581] Arnett marks this stage as one of intense identity exploration, instability, focus on self, feeling in transition, and unparalleled optimism for future possibilities.

There are numerous social forces that laid the foundations for the rise of emerging adulthood. Arnett notes "four revolutionary changes" that took place throughout the 20th century, especially in the 1960s and 1970s.[582] The first was the Technological Revolution, which led to a shift from a manufacturing economy to a service economy in the United States and other developed nations, which required new technological training and skills. "In the early twentieth century," Arnett notes, "most work entailed *making things* in factory-based manufacturing jobs. By the early twenty-first century, most work involved *using information* in service-based work such as business, finance, insurance, education, and health."[583] These changes in the American and global economy required a greater need for higher education.

In 1940, less than 25 percent of Americans over 25 had completed high school, and only 4.6 percent had graduated from college with a bachelor's degree.[584] But as World War II came to a close, the 1944 GI Bill provided government benefits to veterans, including subsidies for higher education. Government subsidizing of community colleges and state universities made college education more affordable to a greater number of people. From 1950 to 1970 the proportion of those with college degrees doubled.[585] And as of 2015, "An exceptionally high proportion of young Americans, nearly 70%, now continue their education beyond high school."[586]

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ways for some people, emerging adulthood may last through the twenties. Either 18-25 or 18-29 may be an appropriate age range for emerging adulthood, depending on the topic or question being addressed."

[581] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 23-24.

[582] J. Brian Bransfield notes three similar "revolutions" that he sees "at the center of the storm" when it comes to the cultural crisis related to marriage and family: the Industrial Revolution, the Sexual Revolution, and the Technological Revolution. Cf. J.B. Bransfield, *The Human Person According to John Paul II*, Boston 2009, Pauline Books & Media, 20-33.

[583] J. Arnett, Emerging Adulthood, 4.

[584] Cf. U.S. Census, "Highest Educational Levels Reached by Adults in the U.S. Since 1940" https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2017/cb17-51.html

[585] A. Cherlin, *The Marriage-Go-Round: The State of Marriage and the Family in America Today*, New York 2009: Vintage Books, 89.

[586] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 4. Surprising perhaps, although 70% of Americans begin higher education at around 18-19, only 33.4 percent of Americans age 25 and older have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. See U.S. Census, "Highest Educational Levels Reached by Adults in the U.S. Since 1940" https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2017/cb17-51.html

As higher education grew from a privilege of the minority to the expectation of the majority, many began to enter the workforce later, and thus also put off marriage and family until they had finished college and started a career. As a result, "a high proportion of American youth are no longer stopping school and beginning stable careers at age 18 but are extending their formal schooling well into their twenties. […] And many are continuing in graduate and professional school programs often up until their thirties."[587] This means that most young people wait until they have finished school before entering into the adult commitments of marriage and parenthood, often postponing these commitments until their mid-to-late twenties.

While these changes in the economy and higher education have provided new opportunities for young people, they have also contributed to a lack of stability. During the age of the manufacturing economy, companies were able to offer employees greater stability, providing them with lifelong employment in exchange for loyal service. Reid Hoffman, cofounder of LinkedIn, notes that "In that era, careers were considered nearly as permanent as marriage. Employers and employees committed to each other, for better or worse, through bull and bear markets, until retirement did them part."[588] But as the development of the microchip ushered in the Information Age, sparking a communications revolution and the globalization of business, companies and employees have had to focus on adaptability, often treating employees as "short-term commodities," while employees view themselves as "free agents," seeking out the best opportunities for their own personal growth and advancement.[589] These changes in the American and global economy "undermine stable, lifelong careers, and replace them instead with careers of lower security, more frequent job changes, and an ongoing need for training and education."[590] This lack of stability has contributed to young people not feeling settled into a career until much later, when they have more experience and marketability.

The second macrosocial development was the Sexual Revolution of the late 1960s, which was compounded by the invention of the birth control pill in 1964. As Ross Douthat writes:

> Before the sexual revolution, a rigorous ethic of chastity and monogamy had seemed self-evidently commonsensical even to many non-Christians. What was moral was also practical, and vice versa; so long as sex made babies, it made sense that the only truly safe sex was married sex. Scripture and tradition supplied the Christian view of

[587] C. Smith, "*Getting a Life: the challenge of emerging adulthood*" https://www.booksandculture.com/articles/2007/novdec/2.10.html
[588] R. Hoffman, B. Casnocha, and C. Yeh, *The Alliance: Managing Talent in the Networked Age*, Boston 2014: Harvard Business Review Press, 9.
[589] R. Hoffman, B. Casnocha, and C. Yeh, *The Alliance: Managing Talent in the Networked Age*, 10.
[590] C. Smith, *Lost in Transition*, 14.

> marriage, but it was fear of illegitimacy, abandonment, and disease that made the position nearly universally acceptable.[591]

In normalizing sex outside of marriage and promoting contraception so that the risk of pregnancy was decreased, sex "increasingly came to be seen as a normal element of any close or perhaps even casual relationship and had nothing to do with having a baby—serving, for many, as a kind of recreational activity."[592] We will explore this in more depth in 3.1.4.

Third was the Women's Movement that grew out of the Sexual Revolution. Before the 1970s, "[r]emaining single was simply not a viable social status for a woman after her early twenties. Relatively few women attended college, and those who did were often there […] for the purpose of finding a husband. The range of occupations open to young women were severely restricted."[593] However, over the past 50 years women have been granted unprecedented opportunities for education and careers in the United States. Unlike the past, "[a]t every level of education, from grade school through graduate school, girls now surpass boys."[594] Women now make up 57% of undergraduates in America's colleges and universities and have nearly unlimited career opportunities. "With so many options open to them, and with so little pressure on them to marry by their early twenties, the lives of young American women today have changed almost beyond recognition from what they were 50 years ago."[595] Rather than work until they get married or have their first child, many women are putting off marriage and family until after they begin a career, and continue working full-time even after having children. Having their own careers, women are less dependent on their husbands for financial security, and are now able to be more selective when it comes to potential spouses.

The fourth cultural change was the youth movement, which "denigrated adulthood and exalted being, acting, and feeling young."[596] While many young people after World War II were eager to achieve the stability of a job, home, marriage and children, after the 1960s these began to be viewed as obligations to be avoided, rather than achievements that led to flourishing and happiness. Although most young people want these things eventually, they do not feel in a rush to enter into these commitments, since in their minds they represent "a closing of doors—the end of independence, the end of spontaneity, the end of a sense of wide-open

[591] R. Douthat, *Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics*, New York 2012: Free Press, 70-71.
[592] Smith, Christian, *Lost in Transition*, 14.
[593] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 6.
[594] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 6.
[595] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 6.
[596] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 6.

possibility."[597] This reflects an impoverished notion of freedom, that views freedom more as the ability to choose, rather than the ability to determine oneself through making choices.[598]

3.1.3. Delayed Marriage

The United States has historically had one of the highest marriage rates of any Western nation.[599] However, the marriage rate has declined significantly since the late 1960s. In 1960, 72% of U.S. adults were married. According to the 2014 Religious Landscape Study, that number has fallen significantly to less than half (48%).[600] Of the 52% who are not currently married, 25% are single and have never been married, 13% are divorced or separated, 7% are widowed, and 7% are cohabiting with a partner.[601]

Many today imagine that marriage has always resembled the characteristics of the decade of the 1950s, with a high number of couples getting married at young ages, having a large number of children, and with a relatively low divorce rate. As sociologist Andrew Cherlin notes, "We sometimes think of the 1950s as the era of the traditional family, perhaps because that's as far back as our collective memory now reaches. But in truth it was the most unusual time for family life in the past century." In fact, "[n]either their own parents before them nor their children after them married as young or had as many children."[602] The experience of marriage and family in the 1950s and early 1960s was a historical anomaly, and not the norm.

When American society was more rural and agricultural in the 19th and early 20th centuries, people married at relatively later ages. In 1890 the average age of marriage was 26.1 for men and 22.0 for women.[603] However, as urbanization increased, the average age began to decrease. This happened gradually at first, due to the economic uncertainties during World War I, the Great Depression of the 1930s, and World War II. But in the post-World War II prosperity of the late 1940s and 1950s, there was new incentive to get married and start a family. This led

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[597] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 7.
[598] Cf. D.C. Schindler, "The Crisis of Marriage as a Crisis of Meaning: On the Sterility of the Modern Will," in *Communio* 41 (Summer 2014), 331-371, especially 336-344
[599] A. Cherlin, *The Marriage-Go-Round,* 4.
[600] Pew Research Center, *Religious Landscape Study* (2014). http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/14/as-u-s-marriage-rate-hovers-at-50-education-gap-in-marital-status-widens/
[601] Pew Research Center, "Share of married adults varies widely across U.S. religious groups" (2018). David Masci and Claire Gecewicz. March 19, 2018. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/19/share-of-married-adults-varies-widely-across-u-s-religious-groups/
[602] A. Cherlin, *The Marriage-Go-Round,* 6.
[603] U.S. Bureau of the Census, "*Historical Marital Status Tables,"* https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/marital.html. Cf. K. Hymowitz, J. Carroll, W.B. Wilcox, and K. Kaye, "*Knot Yet: The Benefits and Costs of Delayed Marriage in America*" (2013), 12: "In 1900, the median age of marriage for women in the United States was a little over 23 and for men, about 26."

to a uniquely high percentage of Americans to get married. "About 95 percent of adults who came of age in the 1950s got married," and "Americans married at younger ages and had children at a faster pace than in any other twentieth-century decade."[604] By 1960, the average age of marriage was the lowest it had ever been throughout American history: 22.8 for men and 20 for women.[605]

After the 1960s, however, the average age of marriage began to steadily increase. The average age for women increased one-to-two years every decade: 20.8 in 1970, 22 in 1980, 23.9 in 1990, 25.1 in 2000, and 26.1 in 2010. The average age for men also steadily increased nearly one-and-a-half (1.5) years each decade: 23.2 in 1970, 24.7 in 1980, 26.1 in 1990, 26.8 in 2000, and 28.2 in 2010. By 2020, the median age at first marriage had reached its highest point in recorded history: 30.5 years for men and 28.1 for women.[606]

Though emerging adults are increasingly delaying getting married, studies show that 93-96% want to get married eventually.[607] Americans still value marriage, but most emerging adults "just don't want to marry *now* or any time soon. They feel no rush."[608] While it is true that only 16% of emerging adults between the ages of 18 and 29 are married, the majority (57%) of adults over the age of 30 are married.[609] And by age 40, over 80% of Americans have gotten married.[610] Marriage has not faded away, but the perception of marriage and children has changed, leading to increasing delays in emerging adults getting married.

Cherlin notes that one of the key changes in the perception of marriage has been that "[w]hereas marriage used to be the foundation of adult family life, now it is often the capstone."[611] When marriage was viewed as foundational to adult life, more people were

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[604] A. Cherlin, *The Marriage-Go-Round,* 70, 71. Cf. 81: "Depression, war, prosperity; no other generation in the twentieth century, we now know had a life course filled with this many calamities and opportunities. By the time the ups and downs ended, they had embraced marriage and childbearing as no other twentieth-century generation had done or subsequently would."

[605] Pew Research Center, "*Record Share of Americans Have Never Married*" (September 24, 2014), 4-5. The U.S. Census Bureau notes that the absolute lowest average age for men was 22.5 and women 20.1 in 1956. https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/marital.html

[606] U.S. Bureau of the Census: https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/marital.html
Cf: http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/02/13/8-facts-about-love-and-marriage/.

[607] M. Regnerus and J. Uecker, *Premarital Sex In America: How Young Americans Meet, Mate, and Think about Marrying*, New York 2011: Oxford University Press, 169. Cf. J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 85: "In a variety of studies, over 90% of emerging adults plan to marry eventually."

[608] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex In America*, 169. Cf. J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 85: "In a variety of studies, over 90% of emerging adults plan to marry eventually."

[609] Pew Research Center, "Share of married adults varies widely across U.S. religious groups" (2018). Cf. J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 114: "over 80% of Americans get married by age 40, 65% by their early thirties."

[610] Cf. J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*,114. Arnett notes here in the footnote that "The 80% married by age 40 is lower than the 90% figure that applied through the twentieth century, but another 5%-10% are in long-term cohabiting relationships, so the total who have experienced a long-term union remains close to 90%."

[611] A. Cherlin, *The Marriage-Go-Round,* 139.

getting married and at younger ages. Regnerus says that the "emphasis [was] on building something—a family, a household, perhaps careers and financial success."[612] There was a practical importance to marriage, as husband and wife united to build a life together. But for emerging adults, there is now an individualistic focus of figuring out one's identity, often through having numerous pleasurable experiences. Marriage is no longer seen as the steppingstone into adult life, but the capstone, that signifies that one has successfully navigated the emerging adulthood years, and are now prepared personally and financially to know what they want out of marriage. "We now get ourselves ready for marriage, rather than marry to get ourselves poised to accomplish common objectives—a home, job, family. Instead, marriage itself has become one of the objectives, an accomplishment signaling that they have 'made it.'"[613]

As the perception of marriage has changed from the cornerstone of adult life to its capstone, this has affected when people feel they should get married. As we have seen, in the past there existed clearer cultural norms for when people should get married. Arnett notes that "Men married when they became financially capable of supporting a wife and children, usually by their early twenties and rarely later than their mid-twenties." Women, on the other hand, "married when they were mature enough to assume the responsibilities of caring for a husband and children and running a household, often in their late teens and rarely later than their early twenties."[614]

But with the rise of emerging adulthood and the cultural factors that have given rise to this life phase, those norms have been weakened. "Instead of being able to follow a clear cultural norm for when to marry, now the responsibility for deciding when to marry is on the emerging adults themselves."[615] This depends largely on subjective standards set individually, based on when they feel ready emotionally, financially, and career wise. They also need to find a partner who feels the same way.

Some of what has impelled many to put off marriage has been their own experience of unhappy marriages and divorce, whether in their own family or in society in general. Most have heard the statistics that about 50% of marriages end in divorce,[616] and so they want to adequately prepare themselves and avoid the pitfalls that their parents or others have fallen

[612] M. Regnerus, *The Future of Christian Marriage*, New York 2020: Oxford University Press, 38.
[613] M. Regnerus, *The Future of Christian Marriage*, 38.
[614] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 117.
[615] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*,118.
[616] Cf. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "National Marriage and Divorce Trends for 2000-2021" https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/dvs/marriage-divorce/national-marriage-divorce-rates-00-21.pdf

into. “They believe, too, that postponing marriage will ensure a better chance at eventual marital success. Rushing to marry means a shorter search and heightened odds of a poorer match.”[617] What is lacking, however, is an understanding of how to prepare themselves for the stable, lifelong, monogamous commitment of marriage. Simply postponing marriage is inadequate, and can actually be detrimental, if in the interim they become immersed within a hookup culture of brief, uncommitted relationships and casual sexual encounters.

Emerging adults feel that before they can be ready to commit themselves to another person, they want to get their own lives together first, as individuals. “Some of this project is practical and concrete: finishing education, settling into a stable career.”[618] As noted above, the rise of higher education and the changing dynamics of the economy have made many emerging adults feel that they are not financially prepared to enter into marriage. A national survey of 20-29-year-olds conducted by the National Marriage Project found that “80 percent of unmarried respondents asserted that educational pursuits and career development take precedence over marriage, and 86 percent affirmed that a person ‘must be economically set’ before marrying. In other words, many believe they can’t afford marriage yet.”[619] For emerging adults who indicate that they want to eventually get married, 34% say that the main reason they do not get married sooner is because they are not financially prepared for marriage.[620]

This is due in part to parents, who typically advise their children “to finish their education, to launch their careers, and to become financially independent.” Dependence, then, “feels like weakness to them.”[621] As long as they are still dependent on parents or other sources, they do not feel ready to take on the responsibilities of married life.

There are other factors besides careers and finances. Arnett notes that “[o]ther aspects of emerging adults’ self-assessment of readiness for marriage are more intangible and internal. They look within themselves and ask themselves if they feel ready, if they feel mature enough, if they feel they know themselves well enough.”[622] Many feel that they are still figuring out who they are and what they want out of life. Since their identity is still somewhat fluid, they

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[617] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 184.
[618] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 118.
[619] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 183. Cf. J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*,, 118.
[620] Pew Research Center, W. Wang and K. Parker, *“Record Share of Americans Have Never Been Married”* (September 24, 2014), 7. This is truer of emerging adults than other age cohorts who wish to get married. This study reports that “Compared with their older counterparts, young adults who have never been married are more likely to cite financial security as the main reason for not being currently married (34% of those ages 25 to 34 compared with 20% of those 35 and older).”
[621] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 189. Cf. M. Regnerus, *The Future of Christian Marriage*, New York 2020: Oxford University Press, 38.
[622] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 118.

feel insecure about making a commitment. "To commit to a relationship *now* would seem to them to foolishly promise *not* to change. Change, it's clear, is perceived as inherently damaging to marriage."[623] And if they are not sure which direction their life is going, it feels foolish to commit to another person, who might hold them back from pursuing their dreams. "Staying unmarried allows emerging adults to keep their options open, not just in terms of whom they might marry but in terms of who they might become and what they might decide to do with their lives."[624]

Identity exploration is a major aspect of emerging adulthood. In dating, they gradually move from an adolescent focus on enjoyment to figuring out who they are and what type of person best suits them as a partner. As sociologist Mark Regnerus found, many feel that "[t]o marry before one knows what one 'really wants' feels profoundly foolish and short sighted."[625] In the past, marrying your "high school sweetheart" or someone you grew up with was viewed as a good thing. But for emerging adults, "finding a love partner in your teens and continuing in a relationship with the person through your early twenties, culminating in marriage, is now viewed as unhealthy, a mistake, a path likely to lead to trouble in the long run."[626] This reflects an extremely consumeristic, utilitarian point of view when it comes to dating and marriage. Therefore, "[m]any emerging adults—especially men—conduct their relationships with a nagging sense that there may still be someone better out there."[627]

Although there is no clear cultural expectation for when someone should get married, there is a general cultural consensus that most want to be married by the time they are 30. For many emerging adults, "30 is the age when they imagine that they will be finished with their identity explorations and ready to commit themselves to someone else."[628] While in their 20s emerging adults feel optimistic about the endless possibilities that lie before them, they fear that at some point their dreams need a concrete realization. "So, in theory they can get married whenever they want, whenever they decide the time is right, but in practice age 30 is for many people a deadline age. It is the age they want to get married by, and it is also the age they feel that other people expect them to get married by."[629] Even if the cultural norms and expectations are not as concrete as they were in the past, emerging adults still experience the pressures of expectations set on them by their parents, peers, and society.

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[623] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 185.
[624] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 119.
[625] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 184.
[626] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 83.
[627] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 171.
[628] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 120.
[629] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*,, 120.

This is especially true for women. Today, "women feel more pressure than men to find a marriage partner before age 30."[630] This is in large part due to their desire to become a mother, or at least to be open to this possibility. "If they get married by age 30, that gives them a while to enjoy time as a couple with their spouse and still be able to have a child or two before they pass their prime childbearing years."[631]

Men, on the other hand, do not experience the biological urgency to get married. For many, marriage is something that can be put off until necessary. Regnerus notes that in "a recent nationwide survey of young men, 62 percent of unmarried 25- to 29-year-olds (and 51 percent of 30- to 34-year-olds) said they were 'not interested in getting married any time soon.'"[632] In fact, "81 percent of unmarried men aged 25-29 agreed that 'at this stage in your life, you want to have fun and freedom.' (Even 74 percent of single 30- to 34-year-olds still agreed.)"[633] As we will see (3.1.4.), with the rise of contraception, the ease of ability to have sex outside of marriage, and with less fear of an unwanted pregnancy, many men feel neither the desire nor social pressure to get married.

It is interesting to note that while today women are able to pursue education and careers, and therefore experience greater equality with men, most women still consider their spouse's financial situation to be very important. Of never-married women, 78% ranked finding a spouse with a steady job to be extremely important.[634] Perhaps this is due in part to women wanting to have financial support if they take time off from work in order to raise their children. Men, on the other hand, do not place as high a degree of an importance on their spouse's income. Perhaps surprisingly, what never-married men value most in "finding someone who shares their ideas about raising children."[635] Even if men do not experience the same biological pressure that women do to get married earlier in order to have children, men still value having a family and raising them with someone who shares the same vision.

3.1.4. Contraception

The Sexual Revolution of the twentieth century, especially during the 1960s, changed the way that society views sex, dating, marriage and family.[636] "Sexual Revolution" refers to

[630] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 122.
[631] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 120.
[632] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 171. (ft 4)
[633] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 171.
[634] Pew Research Center, *"Record Share of Americans Have Never Married"* (September 24, 2014), 6.
[635] Pew Research Center, *"Record Share of Americans Have Never Married"* (September 24, 2014), 6.
[636] It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to go into a detailed history of the Sexual Revolution. For a deeper understanding of the causes of the Sexual Revolution and its effects, Cf. Eberstadt, M. *Primal Screams: How the Sexual Revolution Created Identity Politics*, West Conshohocken, PA 2019: Templeton Press. Cf. P. Elliott, *The*

the "ongoing destigmatization of all varieties of nonmarital sexual activity, accompanied by a sharp rise in such sexual activity, in diverse societies around the world"[637]. The Sexual Revolution promised greater sexual satisfaction, happier marriages, stronger families, and equality of men and women. It also promised to eliminate unwanted pregnancy outside of marriage, abortion, infanticide, child neglect, abandonment, and unwed mothers. In reality the opposite has occurred. Mary Eberstadt affirms that "an empirical record has been assembled that is beyond refutation and that testifies to the unhappy economic, social, and moral consequences."[638] It has resulted in a decreased interest in marriage and greater unhappiness within marriage, an increase in infidelity and divorce, and increased numbers of unwanted pregnancies, abortion, child neglect, abuse and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The Church was not adequately prepared to respond to the Sexual Revolution due to problems in Catholic morality that can be traced back to the influence of Nominalism on morality, beginning in the thirteenth century.[639] Nominalism takes its name from Ockham's denial of the existence of universal forms independent of human reason. This would eventually lead to a dropping of the treatises on beatitude and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which for Thomas Aquinas were the beginning and end of the moral life. The treatise on grace was dismissed from moral teaching. Virtue was no longer conceived as a real change within the being of the person that bestowed a power to act excellently (*habitus*), but a mere psychological propensity (i.e., a habit) that actually constrained freedom.[640] It eliminated the idea of speaking of an end (*telos*) for human action, leaving human acts isolated and unrelated to one another. This led to a "manualist" approach to morality, which viewed morality as juridical cases, aiming to serve priests in the tribunal of the confessional.[641] The focus of morality was no longer beatitude, but obligation. The moral life was depicted as a constant struggle between an indeterminate freedom that was not ordered to any specific goods and law that constrained it.[642]

Sexual Revolution: History-Ideology-Power, Australia 2020: Freedom Publishing Books. Cf. G. Kuby, *The Global Sexual Revolution: Destruction of Freedom in the Name of Freedom*, translated by James Patrick Kirchner, Kettering, OH 2015: LifeSite. Cf. J. Roback Morse, *The Sexual State: How Elite Ideologies Are Destroying Lives and Why the Church Was Right All Along*, Charlotte, North Carolina, 2018: TAN Books.

[637] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill: Paradoxes of the Sexual Revolution*, San Francisco 2012: Ignatius Press, 12.

[638] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 25.

[639] Cf. S. Pinckaers, *Sources of Christian Ethics*, Washington, D.C. 1995: The Catholic University of America Press, 229-33; 241-253; 260-273.

[640] Cf. R. Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, South Bend, Indiana 1991: University of Notre Dame Press, 34-44.

[641] R. Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 273. Cf. J. Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue: An Introduction to Catholic Sexual Ethics,* Washington, D.C. 2003: The Catholic University of America Press, 17.

[642] Cf. S. Pinckaers, *Sources of Christian Ethics*, 268-272.

This gave new prominence to conscience as the place where the clash between freedom and law played itself out. It also led to the rise of *casuistry*, moral theology centered around the study of individual cases of conscience. By reducing the inclinations of human nature to biological function, the manuals provided a heavily physicalist account of the natural law. It was precisely this reduction that would make it impossible to formulate an effective argument against the pill in the debate prior to *Humanae vitae*.[643] Thus many Catholics in the twentieth century felt the dominant moral category was law imposed as a restraint upon individual freedom. The resulting moral horizon was act-centered, individualistic, and often adversarial.[644]

On the positive side, personalist theologians of the twentieth century began to emphasize the place of love within marriage and sexuality, especially in the treatments of authors such as Dietrich von Hildebrand and Herbert Doms.[645] As we have seen, Karol Wojtyła was also among those who contributed to the more personalist understanding of these themes.

All Christian denominations had always condemned contraception. However, this tradition was ruptured on the 14th of August 1930, when at the Lambeth Conference the Anglican Church permitted the use of contraception to its members, despite condemning contraception in 1908 and in 1920. Soon all Protestant churches would change their positions on contraception. This was fueled by Margaret Sanger, who used anti-Catholic sentiments to help convince Protestant Churches to support contraception. Only the Catholic Church would uphold its position, which had always been maintained in Scripture and Tradition. Less than five months after the Lambeth Conference, Pope Pius XI issued the encyclical *Casti connubii* (On Christian Marriage), defending the Church's position:

> No reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.[646]

Catholics thus found themselves estranged from other Christians on a key issue of sexual behavior and ethics.[647]

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643 Cf. S. Pinckaers, *Sources of Christian Ethics*, 245; 437-438.
644 J. Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue*, 19. Cf. T. Petri, *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body*, 11-44.
645 J. Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue*, 10-11.
646 Pope Pius XI, Encyclical *Casti connubii* "On Christian Marriage", (31 December 1930), 54.
647 See J. Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue*, 10.

By far the factor that had the greatest impact on the Sexual Revolution was the development of the birth control pill, which launched a "massive shift of cultural attitudes and practices"[648]. Mary Eberstadt writes that "[n]o single event since Eve took the apple has been as consequential for relations between the sexes as the arrival of modern contraception."[649] By separating procreation from sex, the Pill opened the possibility for increased premarital sex, infidelity, and the separation of sex from marriage, leading to the normalization of homosexuality and same-sex unions ("gay marriage").

Though the Catholic Church had always condemned contraception, the Pill's proponents argued that it did not interrupt an act of intercourse (as in the case of withdrawal) or interrupt its natural finality (as in the case of barrier methods). Rather, it merely uses progesterone, a natural hormone secreted by the ovaries, which suspends ovulation during the "safe period" of a woman's menstrual cycle.[650] As Dr. John Rock argued in his 1963 book *The Time Has Come*, "there is no moral difference between the natural safe period and the pill induced safe period."[651] Many came to believe that there was no moral dilemma with allowing human reason to control nature as technology and medicine had increasingly been doing for centuries. These perceptions were articulated with increasing volume by doctors, theologians, and even bishops.[652]

After the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church experienced many changes in its language, liturgy, and practice. To many Catholics it appeared that the entire Church was changing, and many expected the Church to update its teachings on contraception.[653] When Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (25 July 1968) upheld the Church's teaching, many were surprised and there was widespread dissent within the Church. Many of the laity had been told that birth control was a matter to be decided by individual conscience, and were dismayed by what they perceived to be an attempt to re-impose an outdated teaching. Theologians

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[648] See J. Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue*, 8.

[649] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 11.

[650] See J. Graboski, *Sex and Virtue*, 12.

[651] J. Rock, *The Time Has Come: A Catholic Doctor's Proposals to End the Battle over Birth Control*, New York 1963: Alfred A. Knopf, 168f.

[652] See J. Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue*, 12.

[653] Cf. C. Smith, *Young Catholic America*, 14: "Whatever the implications of the immediate teachings of Vatican II, it seems that after the council ended, the Church in the U.S. did a less than ideal job of instructing the faithful in the pews about its teachings and their implications. The Second Vatican Council was a major event in the life of the Church and its multi-faceted meaning needed strong, clear transmission and interpretation by the bishops to the clergy, religious, and lay faithful. In retrospect, it does not seem that such unified, lucid, authoritative instruction and direction was provided. As a result, significant uncertainty and misunderstanding settled into Church life and culture, which led to various kinds of experimentation and innovation, some arguably good, some less so."

unfairly complained that the encyclical's conclusions were unsupported by the natural law arguments, but only by the authority of the Pope. Since the encyclical was not infallible, these theologians argued that people had a right to follow their conscience on this matter.[654] Even some bishops' conferences undermined the document, suggesting that considerations of conscience might outweigh the teaching.[655] Added to this was the cultural climate of the time. As George Weigel writes, "The timing of *Humanae Vitae* could not have been worse; 1968, a year of revolutionary enthusiasms, was not the moment for calm, measured reflection on anything. It is doubtful whether any reiteration of the classic Catholic position on marital chastity, no matter how persuasively argued, could have been heard in such circumstances."[656]

The Catholic perception on premarital sex and contraception changed drastically during the 1960s and early 1970s. "In 1963, 74 percent of American Catholics said sex before marriage was wrong; by 1974, that number dropped by half, to only 35 percent. By 1978, only 23 percent of American Catholic adults said that sex before marriage is always wrong." During that same time period, "nearly 90 percent of American Catholic women rejected the teachings of *Humanae Vitae* on birth control."[657] Despite the Church's defense of its teaching, dissent from the Church's teaching was encouraged in America by both theologians and priests.

The Sexual Revolution promised greater sexual satisfaction, happier marriages, stronger families, and equality of men and women. By eliminating unwanted pregnancies, it also promised to eliminate pregnancy outside of marriage, abortion, infanticide, child neglect, abandonment, and unwed mothers. In reality the opposite has occurred. Mary Eberstadt affirms that "an empirical record has been assembled that is beyond refutation and that testifies to the unhappy economic, social, and moral consequences."[658] Pope Paul VI warned in *Humanae Vitae* of the grave consequences that would follow if the teaching of the Church on sexual morality and contraception were not followed. As Janet Smith explains, Paul VI "argued that contraception is wrong because it is not in accord with the truth about the human person and the truth about the meaning of marriage. […] Thus the Church does not teach that contraception

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[654] Cf. The "Washington statement" spearheaded by Charles Curran of The Catholic University of America. "Statement by Catholic Theologians Washington, D.C., July 30, 1968," in *Readings in Moral Theology, No. 8: Dialogue about Catholic Sexual Teaching*, ed. C. Curran and R. McCormick, New York 1993: Paulist Press, 135-137. Cf. C. Smith, *Young Catholic America*, 19: "*Humanae Vitae*, whether for legitimate reasons or not, provoked a storm of controversy and provided the crucial occasion when what was to become a majority of American Catholics made a kind of 'declaration of independence' from the binding authority of papal teachings, deciding that they as individuals were authorized to make their own choices on such doctrinal and moral matters."

[655] Cf. W.H. Shannon, *The Lively Debate: Response to Humanae Vitae*, New York 1970: Sheed & Ward, 118-122.

[656] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 210.

[657] C. Smith, *Young Catholic America*, 23.

[658] M. Eberstadt, Adam and Eve after the Pill, 25.

is wrong because it has bad consequences, but it teaches that contraception will have bad consequences because it is wrong."[659] Paul VI listed four grave consequences.

First, he warns that contraception would open up a "wide and easy road […] toward conjugal infidelity and the general lowering of morality."[660] Contraception has made the possibility of having sex outside of marriage easier. Before contraception, people didn't have sex outside of marriage due to "fear of pregnancy, fear of social stigma and punishment, and fear of disease. The Pill and its cousins have subsequently undermined the first two structures, at least in theory, while modern medicine has largely erased the third."[661] While it was predicted that contraception would eliminate the problem of unwanted pregnancy, pregnancy outside of marriage and teen pregnancy, it has instead exacerbated the problem. This is especially true for teenagers. In the United States, about 77 percent of teen pregnancies are unplanned[662], and 30 percent ended in an abortion.[663] Of the babies born to teen mothers, 89 percent are unmarried.[664] More unwanted pregnancies lead to an increase in abortion. There are more than a million abortions reported in the United States each year, and the Guttmacher Institute, a division of Planned Parenthood of America, reported that worldwide there were 73 million abortions per year between 2015 and 2019.[665]

An increase in pregnancies outside of marriage means an increase of children growing up without the presence of their fathers. "Boys and girls without fathers in the home, as generations of studies and social scientists have shown by now, suffer emotional, financial, educational, and other problems at higher rates than their peers. They are at a higher risk for a variety of behavioral and mental disorders. They are more likely to go to prison."[666] This means that pregnancy outside of marriage has negative consequences not only for the mother or her children, but for the whole of society.

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[659] J. E. Smith, *"Humanae Vitae: A Prophetic Document*?" United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC 1988, 1.
[660] Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, 17.
[661] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 96. Cf. R. Douthat, *Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics*, New York 2012: Free Press, 70-71: "Before the Sexual Revolution, a rigorous ethic of chastity and monogamy had seemed self-evidently commonsensical even to many non-Christians. What was moral was also practical, and vice versa; so long as sex made babies, it made sense that the only truly safe sex was married sex. Scripture and tradition supplied the Christian view of marriage, but it was fear of illegitimacy, abandonment, and disease that made the position nearly universally acceptable."
[662] W.D. Mosher, J. Jones, J.C. Abma, "*Intended and unintended births in the United States: 1982-2010*," National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat, 55. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr055.pdf.
[663] K. Kost and S. Henshaw, "*U.S. teenage pregnancies, births and abortions, 2010: National trends by age, race and ethnicity,"* Guttmacher Institute. http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/USTPtrends10.pdf
[664] B.E. Hamilton, J.A. Martin, M.J.K. Osterman, & S.C. Curtin, *Births: Final Data for 2013*, Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr64/nvsr64_01.pdf
[665] Cf. "*Unintended Pregnancy and Abortion Worldwide,"* Guttmacher Institute, 2022. https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/induced-abortion-worldwide
[666] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 29-30.

Numerous social scientists have shown that monogamous married people are happier, healthier and better off financially.[667] Men who are married earn more and work harder than men who are single.[668] However, contraception has led to an increase in infidelity, which in turn has led to an increase in the number of divorces. Andrew Cherlin notes that in the 1950s, "one in three marriages ended in divorce."[669] That rate "began to rise again in the early 1960s, and shot up to an all-time high by 1980,"[670] when about half of all first marriages ended in divorce. Since then, the divorce rate has decreased, yet in 2019 the CDC reported that almost 50% of all marriages in the United States end in divorce or separation. This number considers that while only 41% of first marriages end in divorce, 60% of second marriages and 73% of third marriages end in divorce.[671]

Eberstadt notes that divorce has a devastating effect on women and children. "Women who are divorced or unmarried are far more likely—twice as likely, according to one study—to suffer physical abuse than are woman in an intact marriage."[672] And children whose mothers are divorced or unmarried are far more likely to suffer physical abuse in the home than are children with biological parents.[673] Rather than freeing women, the Sexual Revolution and contraception has caused women the most harm. "It is women who have abortions and get depressed about them, women who are usually left to raise children alone when a man leaves for someone else, women who typically take the biggest financial hit in divorce."[674]

The second grave consequence that Paul VI predicted was that contraception would lead men to "lose respect for women," considering them as "a mere instrument of selfish enjoyment, and no longer as his respected and beloved companion."[675]. Many predicted that women would be happier given the many social and economic transformations of modernity that would appear to benefit women: a closing gender wage gap, an educational attainment that now tops that of men, the sexual freedom conveyed by artificial contraception. Instead "the reverse seems to be true. […] Women no longer report being happier than men and, in many

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[667] Cf. L.J. Waite and M. Gallagher, *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially*, New York 2000: Doubleday.
[668] Cf. H. Chun and I. Lee, "Why Do Married Men Earn More: Productivity or Marriage Selection?", *Economic Inquiry* 39, no. 2 (April 2001): 307-319.
[669] Cherlin, *The Marriage-Go-Round,* 76.
[670] Cherlin, *The Marriage-Go-Round,* 97.
[671] Cf. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "National Marriage and Divorce Trends for 2000-2021" https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/dvs/marriage-divorce/national-marriage-divorce-rates-00-21.pdf
[672] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 31. Cf. L.J. Waite and M. Gallagher*, The Case for Marriage*, 150-160.
[673] Cf. D. Blankenhorn, *Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem*, New York 1995: Basic Books.
[674] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 32.
[675] Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, 17.

instances, now report happiness that is below that of men."[676] This is in part because women lack meaningful lasting relationships with men. The Sexual Revolution drove "men away from women and families—in part because, in a world where men no longer had to marry to assure their access to sex, many lost interest in marriage."[677]

Another clear indicator of the lack of respect for women is the "sexual obesity" caused by "the widespread gorging on pornographic imagery that is also deleterious and unhealthy"[678]. While it is often argued that pornography viewing is private and does not do harm to anyone, this increase of pornography has led to a decrease of romantic interest in men.[679] Porn has led men to see fewer and fewer women as porn-worthy.[680] Men who use pornography report to having "lost the ability to relate to or be close to women. They have trouble being turned on by 'real' women, and their sex lives with their girlfriends or wives collapse."[681] Thus women report greater unhappiness in marriages due to husbands who are immature, disinterested in having sex with them, and a lack of romance.[682] Contraception, rather than being a source of happiness in marriage, has assisted in its breakdown.

The third grave consequence that Paul VI predicted was that contraception would place "a dangerous weapon […] in the hands of those public authorities who take no heed of moral exigencies […] placing at the mercy of the intervention of public authorities the most personal and most reserved sector of conjugal intimacy."[683] A clear example of this has been the Chinese government's "one-child policy," which included forced abortions, infanticide, sterilization and many other policies.[684] Another example is the attempt by the United States to force contraceptives on other nations in exchange for financial aid. Along with this, the government increasingly expands its role into the family. Due to the smaller size of families, "more people now expect their governments to perform tasks once assumed by sons, daughters," and other family members. There is increase pressure on the state "to operate as a family substitute—in

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[676] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 47. Cf. B. Stevenson and J. Wolfers, "The Paradox of Declining Female Happiness", *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 1, no. 2 (2009): 190-225.
[677] M. Eberstadt, *How the West Really Lost God*, 134. Cf. G. Gilder, *Sexual Suicide*, New York 1973: Quadrangle Books.
[678] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 56.
[679] See M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 51. See A. Fortini, "Why Your Marriage Sucks", *Salon*, June 24, 2009, http://www.salon.com/2009/06/24/vindication_love/.
[680] See N. Wolf, "The Porn Myth", *New York*, October 20, 2003, http://nymag.com/nymetro/news/trends/n_9437/
[681] P. Paul, "From Pornography to Porno to Porn: How Porn Became the Norm", in *The Social Cost of Pornography: A Collection of Papers*, Princeton, N.J. 2010: Witherspoon Institute, 6.
[682] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 51. Cf. K. S. Hymowitz, *Manning Up: How the Rise of Women Has Turned Men into Boys*, New York 2011: Basic Books.
[683] Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, 17.
[684] M. Eberstadt, *Adam and Eve after the Pill*, 143.

particular, a father substitute."[685]

The fourth grave consequence of contraception is that it would lead men and women to think that they had limitless "domination over his own body and its functions"[686]. Women often take contraception without thinking of how it permanently alters the very makeup of their bodies. Widespread sterilization has made it harder for men and women to conceive children when they are ready. Children are no longer thought of as the fruit of love, but as a product to produce through artificial insemination or in vitro fertilization. What was once natural is now controlled and manipulated by science. By separating sex from marriage, and separating sex from childbearing, contraception naturally has led to the acceptance of marriage between two men or two women (so called "gay marriage").[687] Marriage is reduced to a romantic partnership, and children are viewed no longer as the natural gift of marriage, but as a product that couples can design, create, and purchase, as well as discard when necessary.

3.1.5. Cohabitation

Another important factor that has contributed to the delayed marriage of many emerging adults and the changing perception of marriage has been the growing acceptance of cohabitation. Cohabitation was extremely rare in the 1950s and 1960s. Even for the generation that reached their twenties during the height of the Sexual Revolution in the late 1960s and early 1970s, cohabitation remained relatively rare, with only 8% of couples living together before marriage.[688] But by the mid-1980s and 1990s, "cohabitation was the norm, and over half of emerging adults lived with a romantic partner before marriage."[689] And by 2015, between 60-70% of emerging adults cohabit before marriage.[690]

In the past, when sex outside of marriage was frowned upon, cohabitation was also viewed negatively, because it would be assumed that a man and woman who were living together were also having sex. But as contraception eliminated the connection between sex and babies, and sex outside of marriage became normalized and accepted, so also public perception

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[685] M. Eberstadt, *How the West Really Lost God: A New Theory of Secularization*, West Conshohocken, PA 2013: Templeton Press, 16.
[686] Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, 17.
[687] Cf. R. Anderson, *Truth Overruled: The Future of Marriage and Religious Freedom*, Washington, D.C. 2015, Regnery Publishing. Cf. S. Girgis, R. Anderson, R. George, *What Is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense*, New York 2012: Encounter Books. Cf. R. Reilly, *Making Gay Okay: How Rationalizing Homosexual Behavior is Changing Everything*, San Francisco, 2015: Ignatius Press.
[688] Cf. A. Cherlin, *The Marriage-Go-Round*, 89.
[689] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 125.
[690] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 125. Cf. M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 199: "Between 50 and 70 percent of couples today are thought to be cohabiting before marrying."

of cohabitation shifted. “Most Americans (69%) say cohabitation is acceptable even if a couple doesn’t plan to get married, while another 16% say it’s acceptable, but only if the couple plans to marry; 14% say it’s never acceptable.”[691]

As cohabitation becomes more common, it has become more acceptable, especially for young people. 79% of emerging adults (18-29) say that “cohabitation is acceptable even if the couple doesn’t plan to marry.”[692] Among emerging adults, only 23% have married, whereas 44% have ever cohabited.[693] Overall, half of those who have ever cohabited are younger than 35. A majority of adults 18 to 44 have cohabited at some point in their lives. An even higher percentage (59%) have cohabited than have ever married (50%). Of course, many who cohabit will also eventually marry. 35% of adults 18 to 44 have both cohabited and married, while 23% have cohabited but have not married. Only 15% have married and not cohabited. However, another 26% have never cohabited nor gotten married.[694]

The majority of cohabiters have only lived with one partner. Among emerging adults, 73% have lived with only one partner, while 19% have cohabited with two different partners. For adults 18 to 44, 62% have lived with only one partner, while 24% have lived with two and 14% have lived with three or more.[695]

Not everyone who cohabits does so for the same reasons. Some move in together largely for intimacy-based reasons, such as love (73%) and companionship (61%).[696] Others move in together for more practical reasons, such as splitting expenses and saving money (38%) or convenience (37%). And for many, it is viewed as a step toward marriage, whether the couple is engaged or in a serious relationship. Couples may also justify their decision to cohabit with a mix of both intimacy-based and practical reasons, however studies typically distinguish three types of cohabitation.

The first is “premarital cohabitation,” in which the couple is in a serious relationship and hopes to eventually get married. Of those living together, 27% are engaged and another 50% describe their relationship as serious.[697] In both cases, the couple views this as a step toward marriage. Sometimes it is the engagement itself that leads the couple to move in together. They are spending a lot of time together anyway, so it makes sense to them to share

[691] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *“Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S”,* 22. Cf. “Key findings on marriage and cohabitation in the U.S.” (November 6, 2019).
[692] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *“Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S”,* 22.
[693] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *“Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S”,* 17.
[694] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *“Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S”,* 17.
[695] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *“Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S”,* 19.
[696] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *“Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S”,* 31-32.
[697] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *“Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S”,* 33.

a residence. And as they begin to prepare their future home together, it may make financial sense for many couples to live together and save money for both their wedding and their marriage. Or it can be simply for the practical reason that one of the future spouse's leases is up at their current apartment, so they move in together rather than move back home before the wedding.

The majority, however, are not engaged, but are in a serious enough relationship that they hope will lead to marriage. Many, therefore, "want to test their compatibility before they enter marriage."[698] This is viewed by the couples as a positive way to prepare themselves for marriage. Arnett notes that "in a national survey of emerging adults, 62% agreed that 'living together with someone before marriage is a good way to avoid eventual divorce.' Emerging adults who have experienced their parents' divorce are especially likely to mention this as a reason for cohabiting."[699] It is not that they do not want to get married, but they view it as a positive step toward preparing for a successful marriage.[700]

The second type is "uncommitted cohabitation," which is based largely on practical reasons. In this situation, the couple "lacks a shared understanding that they are headed toward marriage."[701] Marriage is viewed as something they might be interested in someday, but it is not part of their foreseeable future. Though they recognize that the relationship and living arrangement is only temporary (even if for a couple of years), it provides them with the benefits of companionship and shared expenses.

A third type of cohabitation is called "committed cohabitation," which is viewed as a "substitute for marriage."[702] This is for couples who do not intend to get married, but plan to live together in a serious relationship that largely resembles a marriage. This is much more popular in Europe than in the United States.[703] This is common among people who do not see the religious or social benefits of being married. It is also common among people who are divorced, and do not want to enter into another marriage.

Although cohabitation resembles marriage in that it is a committed relationship through which a couple can share a home together and split expenses, it is still very different from marriage on many levels. As Arnett notes:

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[698] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 126.
[699] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 126.
[700] Of married adults who were not engaged when they moved in together, 66% say they saw cohabitation as a step toward marriage. Cf. Pew Research Center, November 2019 *"Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S",* 35.
[701] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 127.
[702] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 127.
[703] Cf. J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 127.

> Marriage is different precisely because it requires the legal document, the ceremony, the public declaration of the intention to remain together "till death do us part." This makes marriage not only a private commitment between two people but a social commitment, backed up by the expectations of society, the power of tradition, and the force of law.[704]

Cohabitation might seem like a good way to test the relationship, just as you might take a car for a "test drive" before you commit to purchasing it. However, you cannot practice or test permanence. Marriage is a permanent commitment, whereas cohabitation is not. Marriage is substantially different from cohabitation precisely because it is a public and legally binding permanent commitment. Married couples are therefore more likely to work through their problems, and are freer to communicate with one another, precisely because they know that their spouse has publicly promised to remain faithful to them. Many cohabiting couples report that they are afraid to share their concerns for fear of upsetting their partner, who might respond by terminating the relationship.

The marriage commitment is therefore not only legally different from cohabitation, but substantially different psychologically as well. "[M]arriage really is different from cohabitation in terms of the effects it has on the people involved. According to a substantial body of research, marriage has a variety of positive effects on psychological health, financial well-being, and emotional well-being that cohabitation does not."[705] A recent Pew Research Center study has shown that married adults are more likely than those who are cohabiting to say that things are going very well in their relationship (58% compared to 41%). And among cohabiters in a relationship that they do not describe as "very serious," only 6% describe their relationship as going very well.[706] Married adults have greater trust in their spouses to be faithful to them, to act in their best interest, to tell the truth, and to handle money responsibly. They also are more satisfied with the division of household chores, the balance between work and personal life, their communication, and parenting.[707]

It is often thought that cohabitation will better prepare couples for happier marriages. However, it has had the opposite effect for several reasons. First, the growing acceptance and practice of cohabitation has diminished the value of marriage in public perception. Many people do not recognize or understand the benefits of being married, nor marriage's social impact on the culture. "A narrow majority of Americans (53%) say that society is better off if

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[704] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 128.
[705] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 128. Cf. L.J. Waite and M. Gallagher, *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People Are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially*, New York 2000: Broadway Books.
[706] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *"Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S",* 40.
[707] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *"Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S",* 41-43.

couples who want to stay together long-term eventually get married, while 46% say society is just as well off if they decide *not* to marry."[708] And among emerging adults, the majority (55%) say that society is just as well off if couples do not get married.[709] One of the prime reasons society has an interest in marriage is that it provides children an ideal environment for being raised in a loving, stable home with their biological parents. However, a majority (59%) of Americans think that cohabiting couples can raise children just as well as married couples, and no longer see the unique importance of marriage.[710]

Second, studies show that despite public perception, cohabitation does not better prepare people for marriage. "Cohabitation may offer short-term advantages but a high long-term cost. Couples who live together and then get married face higher chances of divorcing than do couples who never cohabited."[711] This is especially true of couples who cohabit before getting engaged, but also true for engaged couples who cohabit.[712]

As noted above, couples cohabit for different reasons. Couples who cohabit for intimacy-based reasons are more likely to stay together than those who cohabit for practical reasons. However, Regnerus notes that "Couples who were out to 'test' their relationship … failed far more often. They were more anxious and reported significantly more attached concerns, which ultimately doomed the relationship they were testing."[713] Cohabitation adds constraints on the relationship such as shared rent, debts, and pets. Yet these are added before trust has matured and the couple has truly committed to one another. These "premature 'entanglements' are apt to lead to ambiguity, frustration, anxiety, and power plays—not exactly fertile soil for commitment to emerge."[714]

When couples make shared commitments before trust and reciprocity has matured in their relationship, it often leads to what Scott Stanley, a psychologist and cohabitation expert,

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[708] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *"Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S",* 23. Note that this study indicates that people with a religious affiliation are more likely to say that society is better off if couples get married: 57% of Catholics, 52% of White Protestants, 69% of Black Protestants, and 78% of White Evangelicals agree.
[709] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *"Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S",* 23.
[710] Pew Research Center, November 2019 *"Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S",* 24.
[711] L.J. Waite and M. Gallagher*, The Case for Marriage*, 46. J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 126-127: "Unfortunately…living together does not enhance the likelihood that a marriage will endure. In fact, until recently the probability of divorce for young people who live together and then married was higher, not lower, compared to their peers".
[712] Cf. M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 202.
[713] M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 201-202.
[714] M. Regnerus, *Cheap Sex: The Transformation of Men, Marriage, and Monogamy,* New York 2017: Oxford University Press, 32.

has distinguished as "sliding" into marriage versus "deciding".[715] With the added pressures of living together, couples do not have the freedom to truly decide that they want to commit to each other in marriage. Instead, many couples "slide" into marriage, slowly figuring that since they already live together and share commitments, they might as well get married at some point. It becomes easier to get married then to break up, move out, and start all over in the search for love. But since love, commitment and trust have not truly matured, these couples are much more likely to divorce.

Third, the failures of cohabitation have severe emotional consequences which can damage people's capacity for entering into a stable marriage in the future. Cohabitation, by its nature, is unstable. For most, it is a step either toward marriage or ending their relationship. "Over half of cohabiting couples dissolve within five years,"[716] whereas only 20% get married.[717] Though not the same as divorce, the split of those who cohabit can also be extremely devastating. It leads to diminished confidence in one's trust in others to make a serious commitment, as well as questioning of one's own ability to enter into a lifelong marriage. "Cohabitation not only deprives people of the benefits of marriage now, but it makes it at least somewhat less likely they will achieve a successful marriage in the future."[718]

The conventional wisdom is that delayed marriage, contraception, and cohabitation would all help young people to grow in maturity, and therefore be better prepared for entering into the life-long commitment of marriage. In reality, the opposite has occurred. They have not only weakened public perception of the value of marriage and sexuality, but wound and weaken the capacity of young people to enter into happy and healthy marriages. Young people are often wounded by their own experiences of family life growing up, the hookup culture that the Sexual Revolution has produced, and their own dating and sexual experiences. In order to respond to the needs of our time, Catholic marriage preparation must address and bring healing to these wounds, showing that the Church's vision of marriage is not an abstract ideal, but a real possibility through the redemptive love of Christ. The more couples experience healing through preparation for marriage, the more they can open themselves up to ongoing healing throughout their marriage, through the grace of the sacrament. And they can bring healing to the culture

[715] Cf. S.M. Stanley, G.K. Rhoades, and H.J. Markham, "Sliding vs. Deciding: Inertia and the Premarital Cohabitation Effect," *Family Relations*, 55 (2006): 499-509. Cf. M. Regnerus, *Cheap Sex*, 42, ft. 63. Cf. M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 199, ft. 48.
[716] J. Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 125-126.
[717] Cf. M. Regnerus, *Premarital Sex in America*, 199.
[718] L.J. Waite and M. Gallagher, *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People Are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially*, New York 2000: Broadway Books, 46.

through the witness of their love, the better they are prepared to live out their mission through their marriage.

3.2. Healing the Couple: "A Saved Community"

3.2.1. Pastoral Priority: Accompaniment, Catechesis, and Liturgy

As we have seen, the Church is facing a true vocations crisis when it comes to marriage. The number of sacramental marriages in the United States has decreased by nearly 70 percent in the past 50 years. Emerging adults are putting off marriage, and in the meantime drift away from their faith, becoming less likely to get married in the Church or see the value of having a sacramental marriage. As John Paul II warned in *Familiaris Consortio*, "[m]ore than ever necessary in our times is preparation of young people for marriage and family life." He therefore called for "better and more intensive programs of marriage preparation in order to eliminate as far as possible the difficulties that many married couples find themselves in, and even more in order to favor positively the establishing and maturing of successful marriages"[719] Based on Wojtyła's pastoral experience and *Retreat for Engaged Couples*, we have seen the importance of accompaniment, catechesis, and the liturgy as tools to help bring about "more intensive programs of marriage preparation" that can meet the challenges of our time. Marriage is a healing sacrament, in which couples "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."[720] In this section, we will examine the couple as a "saved community," who experience the healing effects of the sacrament on their desires and their capacity to form a "communion of love and life"[721].

<u>Accompaniment</u>

John Paul II affirmed that "it is necessary to prepare young people for marriage, it is necessary to teach them love. Love is not something that is learned, and yet there is nothing else as important to learn!"[722] As we have seen, his pastoral approach as a priest shows that a true education in love does not come simply by taking a class or a one-day Pre-Cana presentation on the Church's teaching. Within a cultural context that often does not support the flourishing of marital love and family life, John Paul II understood that a true education in love

[719] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.
[720] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 49.
[721] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.
[722] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 122-123.

required not merely a teaching of ideas, but a gradual process of learning and maturing through accompaniment. Rather than seeing marriage preparation as a mere academic project, what is needed is the accompaniment of guides, especially priests and married couples, as well as an environment in which love can not only be learned, but witnessed to and experienced.

Ideally, this environment should be provided first of all through the family and the Church while young people are growing up, long before the couple gets engaged. John Paul II calls this the Remote and Proximate stages of marriage preparation. Remote preparation "begins in early childhood" through the experience of the family, that helps the child form his or her personality and character, recognize authentic values, and grow in education and practice of the faith, including recognizing that "marriage is a true vocation and mission," while also discussing the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood or religious life.[723]

Proximate preparation is a stage of catechesis, "a catechumenal process," in which young people gain true appreciation for the sacraments.[724] The sacraments are not merely something that we receive, or marks of achievement for different life stages, but are true encounters with Christ, who acts in and through the sacraments. Marriage should be presented "as an interpersonal relationship of a man and a woman that has to be continually developed, and it will encourage those concerned to study the nature of conjugal sexuality and responsible parenthood, with the essential medical and biological knowledge concerned with it."[725] It should also instruct young people on the importance of the family for educating children, the role of work, participation in society, and the apostolate of the family within the Church.

The challenge is that when couples get engaged and approach the Church for marriage preparation, many have not had adequate formation in the remote or proximate stages of preparation. As we have seen, the rise of emerging adulthood has led many young people to delay making enduring commitments like marriage, resulting in a substantial time of separation from the influence of family and the witness of marital love. In the interim, many become immersed within a hookup culture of brief, uncommitted relationships and casual sexual encounters. This contributes to a void of formation and doubt regarding their capacity to enter into an authentic lifelong marital commitment. Many also had inadequate religious education, or lacked a consistent practice of the sacramental life while growing up.

Given that many of those who are getting married in the Church may be lacking in faith formation, marriage preparation must be viewed as an opportunity to accompany the couple,

[723] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.
[724] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.
[725] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.

gradually leading them to the fullness of truth about faith, sacraments and marriage. This requires patience and work, but it is well worth the effort. As John Paul II notes, "preparation for Christian marriage is itself a journey of faith,"[726] that is a "gradual and continuous process"[727]. This accompaniment begins in marriage preparation (or even before), and needs to continue after the wedding. Therefore, "the Church's pastoral action must be progressive, also in the sense that it must follow the family, accompanying it step by step in the different stages of its formation and development."[728]

As we have seen, Wojtyła accompanied young people and couples in their journey toward maturity, helping them to understand what love truly is, and how to mature in their capacity to love. Therefore, an education in love (catechesis), the spiritual accompaniment of the priest, and the community environment where love can be experienced (*Środowisko*), are all essential elements for a true preparation and living out of the vocation to love in marriage.

Catechesis

Paul Gondreau describes the common experience of many engaged couples who seek marriage preparation from the Church:

> We can easily picture the scene. An engaged couple approaches a parish priest and asks to be married in the Church. If asked why they would like this, they would probably be hard pressed to say much beyond the simple fact (a mere sociological one) that one or both are Catholic and that they would like a "church wedding." Chances are quite good that they are cohabiting and contracepting and that neither attends Mass regularly, if at all. Yet chances are also quite good that the marriage preparation program they are about to undergo will do little to address their objectively grave moral situation, or conversely, to explain how the objectively good, the true flourishing, of their relationship can only be attained by living chastely. Chances are even better that said program will do little to present clearly the theological meaning and purpose of the sacrament of marriage, if only because the presenters of the program do not know this theology themselves. And so the couple proceeds to the altar with little understanding of the truly "great mystery" (μέγα μυστήριον), to quote St. Paul's reference to marriage in Ephesians 5:32, that marks the sacrament in which they are about to partake. A most unfortunate omission, since the opportunity to explain this "great mystery," particularly along the lines of how their human love as man and woman shall be likened unto the divine and of how they shall be offered the guarantee of a happy successful marriage—no mean news in a world where the institution of marriage is under aggressive assault—will have been missed.[729]

[726] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 51.
[727] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.
[728] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 65.
[729] P. Gondreau, "The Redemption and Divinization of Human Sexuality through the Sacrament of Marriage: A Thomistic Approach," in *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2012): 383.

Despite John Paul II's call for the renewal of marriage preparation over 40 years ago, still many parishes and dioceses in the United States are not prepared to meet the needs of those who seek to get married within the Church, and to utilize marriage preparation as an opportunity to present the "good news" of sacramental marriage, leading couples to deeper faith and practice within the Church.

One challenge is that of those who do choose to get married in the Church, many are uncatechized, do not attend Mass regularly, and do not understand the fullness of what marriage is as a sacrament. This reflects the growing existence of "baptized non-believers," which "raises a new theological problem and a grave pastoral dilemma, especially when the lack of, or rather the rejection of, the Faith seems clear."[730] Already in 1958, Joseph Ratzinger (who would later become Pope Benedict XVI), warned that Catholicism was increasingly becoming "a Church of pagans who still call themselves Christians but in truth have become pagans."[731] In 1975 Pope Paul VI warned that "[t]oday there is a very large number of baptized people who for the most part have not formally renounced their Baptism but who are entirely indifferent to it and not living in accordance with it."[732] Likewise, Pope John Paul II lamented that "[e]ntire groups of the baptized people have lost their sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel."[733] And more recently, Pope Francis warned that "in recent decades there has been a breakdown in the way Catholics pass down the Catholic faith to their young. It is undeniable that many people feel disillusioned and no longer identify with the Catholic tradition."[734] Despite their lack of faith, some are still choosing to get married in the Church, which can be a tremendous opportunity not only for marriage preparation, but for evangelizing and catechizing them, so that they can appreciate the value of the sacrament and continue growing in their faith throughout their marriage.

Wojtyła began his *Retreat for Engaged Couples* by stressing that "catechesis is necessary."[735] Catechesis remains even more important for marriage preparation today. John Paul II's first two Apostolic Exhortations, *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979) and *Familiaris Consortio* (1981) both address the importance of catechesis in relation to the sacraments. In *Catechesi Tradendae* he notes that "catechesis always has reference to the sacraments."

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[730] International Theological Commission, *Catholic Doctrine on Marriage* (1977), § 2.3.
[731] J. Ratzinger, "The New Pagans and the Church (1958)," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* (January 30, 2017), translated by Fr. Kenneth Baker, S.J.
[732] Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (8 December 1975), 56.
[733] John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* (7 December 1990), 33.
[734] Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 70.
[735] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 18.

Catechesis prepares for the sacraments, and "authentic practice of the sacraments is bound to have a catechetical aspect". He warns that the "sacramental life is impoverished and very soon turns into hollow ritualism if it is not based on serious knowledge of the meaning of the sacraments, and catechesis becomes intellectualized if it fails to come alive in the sacramental practice."[736] Ultimately, catechesis is not primarily about learning about different teachings or rules of the Church, but about leading couples to an authentic encounter with Jesus Christ, that leads to lifelong discipleship. John Paul II says that, "the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only he can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity."[737]

In *Familiaris Consortio*, he speaks of the third phase of marriage preparation, Immediate preparation, as being "similar to the catechumenate," through which "there must also be a deeper knowledge of the mystery of Christ and the Church, of the meaning of grace and of the responsibility of Christian marriage, as well as preparation for taking an active and conscious part in the rites of the marriage liturgy."[738] Those providing marriage preparation for couples need to be aware of the need for catechesis, and have a clear understanding of these basic elements of the faith and sacraments that should be covered during the months leading up to the wedding.

John Paul II notes that "it is the primary duty of pastors to bring about a rediscovery of the faith and to nourish it and bring it to maturity."[739] This comes from his own experience. As a priest, Wojtyła initiated the first marriage-preparation program in the history of the Archdiocese of Kraków. Later as the Archbishop of Kraków, he established an archdiocesan Institute of Family Studies in order to provide training for pastoral ministry to the family for seminarians, priests, men and women religious, and lay people. Through this he was able to expand the parish-based marriage-preparation programs throughout all the parishes in the Archdiocese. When he became pope, John Paul II brought this to the level of the universal Church by establishing the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in 1981 at the Lateran University in Rome. He said that "[b]ishops should see to it that as many priests as possible attend specialized courses there before taking on parish responsibilities.

[736] John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae* (16 October 1979), 23.
[737] John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*, 5.
[738] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.
[739] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 68. Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 52: "It devolves on priests duly trained about family matters to nurture the vocation of spouses by a variety of pastoral means, by preaching God's word, by liturgical worship, and by other spiritual aids to conjugal and family life; to sustain them sympathetically and patiently in difficulties, and to make them courageous through love, so that families which are truly illustrious can be formed."

Elsewhere, formation courses are periodically held at Higher Institutes of theological and pastoral studies."[740] Other institutes of this kind were set up throughout the world. "Such initiatives," John Paul II said, "should be encouraged, sustained, increased in number, and of course are also open to lay people who intend to use their professional skills (medical, legal, psychological, social or education) to help the family."[741]

Despite John Paul II's insistence that "as many priests as possible" receive this training "before taking on parish responsibilities," many priests have not been given adequate formation in the theology of marriage and family, nor have been equipped to meet the needs of our time. Priests are often afraid to discuss issues such as pre-marital sex, chastity, cohabitation, contraception and even participation in the Church with couples, for fear that they will be offended or scared off. As the preparatory document for the 2014 Synod on the Family reported:

> Some observations attribute the responsibility for this lack of knowledge to the clergy, who, in the judgment of some of the faithful, are not sufficiently familiar with the documentation on marriage and the family, nor do they seem to have the resources for development in these areas. Some observations inferred that the clergy sometimes feel so unsuited and ill-prepared to treat issues regarding sexuality, fertility and procreation that they often choose to remain silent. Some responses also voice a certain dissatisfaction with some members of the clergy who appear indifferent to some moral teachings. Their divergence from Church doctrine leads to confusion among the People of God. Consequently, some responses ask that the clergy be better prepared and exercise a sense of responsibility in explaining the Word of God and presenting the documents of the Church on marriage and the family.[742]

Better seminary preparation and ongoing formation opportunities need to be available to help priests better meet the challenges and needs of our time.

Marriage preparation, however, is not solely the job of the priest. As Wojtyła expressed in 1975, "The welfare of each marriage and each family—by virtue of the fact of the sacrament—becomes to some extent the concern for the whole people of God" [743] Wojtyła's experience of marriage preparation, in which he utilized the expertise of the laity and professionals from various fields, was confirmed by the Second Vatican Council. "Those too who are skilled in other sciences, notably the medical, biological, social and psychological, can considerably advance the welfare of marriage and the family along with peace of conscience if

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[740] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 70.
[741] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 70.
[742] Synod of Bishops, III Extraordinary General Assembly, The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization, *Instrumentum Laboris* (2014), 12. https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20140626_instrumentum-laboris-familia_en.html
[743] K. Wojtyła, "Pastoral Reflections on the Family" (1975) in *Person and Community*, 356.

by pooling their efforts they labor to explain more thoroughly the various conditions favoring a proper regulation of births."[744] Dioceses and parishes need to develop teams of faithful lay people who can share their experience and expertise.[745] And married couples should be assisted in helping to better work together with the Church during the remote and proximate stages of marriage preparation, so that young people have better formation in human dignity, love, sexual ethics, and family life.

In Wojtyła's 1960 retreat, he noted that "these catecheses are dictated from a deep concern for the needs of our time. In fact, these days, Christian sacramental marriage seems to be subjected to particular trials. We must therefore do everything in order to resist these trials."[746] Later as pope, John Paul II pointed out that the family is still facing "particular trials" similar to that of communism's attempt to undermine marriage. In his 1994 Letter to Families, he laments that:

> [u]nfortunately various programs backed by very powerful resources nowadays seem to aim at the breakdown of the family. At times it appears that concerted efforts are being made to present as "normal" and attractive, and even to glamorize, situations which are in fact "irregular." Indeed, they contradict "the truth and love" which should inspire and guide relationships between men and women, thus causing tensions and divisions in families, with grave consequences particularly for children. The moral conscience becomes darkened; what is true, good and beautiful is deformed, and freedom is replaced by what is actually enslavement.[747]

Therefore, catechesis remains incredibly important to not only educate couples on the basics of the faith, sacraments, marriage and family, but also to resist the many trials and programs that seek to undermine marriage and family. In this respect, the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* can be a great catechetical tool.

The Liturgy

Timothy O'Malley warns that "[p]articipation in hookup culture […] tells us a story about love that forms our imaginations, even if we are not fully aware of it." For example, "The narrative hookup culture tells us that love and sex are for sale, easily purchased and then left

[744] *Gaudium et Spes*, 52.
[745] For an example of such a program that utilizes married couples to accompany and witness to love and virtue, Cf. R. Verret and M. Verret, *Witness to Love: How to Help the Next Generation Build Marriages That Survive and Thrive*, Charlotte, North Carolina 2015, Saint Benedict Press.
[746] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 19. Cf. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 4: "Since God's plan for marriage and the family touches men and women in the concreteness of their daily existence in specific social and cultural situations, the Church ought to apply herself to understanding the situations within which marriage and the family are lived today, in order to fulfill her task of serving."
[747] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 5. Cf. D. Hajduk, *Healing the Culture and the Family*, Waterloo, ON 2022: Arouca Press.

behind when new options present themselves."[748] We see this in the divorce mentality, or what Pope Francis calls "the throwaway culture"[749]. People become disposable and easily replaceable, and so there is a loss of the value of fidelity. O'Malley also notes that the hookup culture "forms us to see a separation between love and sex, between communion with another person and the pleasure we experience during sex."[750] Through this contraceptive mentality, people are formed to view their partner's body as an object for their own sexual enjoyment and pleasure, rather than for communion and procreation. "The problem with hookup culture isn't so much that everyone is participating in it. It's that it becomes the cultural liturgy by which young adults learn to think about both dating and mating." By cultural liturgy, he means "a series of socially acceptable practices that form us into a way of life."[751]

Timothy O'Malley therefore suggests that "[i]f the Church seeks to renew marriage, it will need to deal with the renewal of the practice of marriage itself, demonstrating how the Sacrament of Marriage provides a way of human flourishing distinct from secular approaches to marriage." Like Wojtyła, O'Malley believes that "[a]ttention to the Order of Celebrating Marriage, the actual rite, may be helpful in this regard."[752]

This reflects what Wojtyła did in his *Retreat for Engaged Couples*, and his "Pastoral Reflections on the Family" (1975), in which he wrote that "[t]he whole liturgy of the sacrament of matrimony is worthy of serious reflection, since it so clearly accentuates the connection between making a gift of oneself and offering a spiritual sacrifice."[753] Marriage preparation needs to include sacramental instruction, helping to heal the desires of the spouses (often wounded by a consumerist, utilitarian, and/or temporary mentality) in order to prepare them to make sincere gifts of themselves to each other, and to be ministers of the sacrament within the mission of the Church. This healing of desire is built into the concrete images, practices and narratives prescribed in the rite. Through marriage in the Church, couples seek to strengthen their love sacramentally by uniting it with Christ's love for the Church. As they bring their love to the altar on their wedding, their love will then be transformed, so that it will not just be a self-enclosed love, but a love that leads both to look out together as they seek to transform the world through the fruitfulness of their marriage.

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[748] T. O'Malley, *Off the Hook: God, Love, Dating, and Marriage in a Hookup World*, Notre Dame, Indiana 2018: Ave Maria Press, 4.
[749] Cf. Francis, *Laudato Si'* (24 May 2015), 16, 20-22, 43.
[750] T. O'Malley, *Off the Hook*, 4.
[751] T. O'Malley, *Off the Hook*, 4.
[752] T. O'Malley, "The Sacrament of Marriage and the Healing of Desire" https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/the-sacrament-of-marriage-and-the-healing-of-desire/
[753] K. Wojtyła, "Pastoral Reflections on the Family" (1975) in *Person and Community*, 350.

As Pope Francis suggests in *Amoris Laetitia*, "We need to find the right language, arguments and forms of witness that can help us reach the hearts of young people, appealing to their capacity for generosity, commitment, love and even heroism, and in this way inviting them to take up the challenge of marriage with enthusiasm and courage"[754]. The way forward then is to utilize the rich development of the Church's understanding of the sacrament of marriage in the past century, which places greater emphasis on Biblical and liturgical language and symbols. While this development has taken place theologically, it has barely begun to take root in the day-to-day pastoral and sacramental practices of the Church, nor the lives of many of the faithful. Here, it is helpful to examine John Paul II's presentation of marriage as the sacrament of Creation and Redemption in his *Theology of the Body*.

3.2.2. Marriage: Sacrament of Creation and Redemption

Drawing from the Church's history and his participation in the Second Vatican Council, John Paul II derives his definition of sacrament from an analysis of St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians and the use of the term "mystery" (*mysterion*). Rather than a "restricted meaning," that would refer only to one of the seven sacraments, he notes that "we use a *wider and perhaps an older and more fundamental meaning of the term* 'sacrament' in our considerations. Ephesians, and especially 5:22-33, seems to authorize us specifically in this use."[755] In this passage, St. Paul connects the first covenant of Creation, the union of man and woman in marriage in Genesis 2:24, with the new eschatological covenant made in Christ through his union with the Church. "For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and unite with his wife, and the two will form one flesh. This *mystery is great*; I say this with reference to Christ and the Church" (Eph. 5:31-32).[756] St. Paul uses the term "mystery" to signify God's salvific plan, originally hidden in the thought of God, and then gradually revealed in the history of salvation.[757] The spousal union of Christ with the Church is the "great mystery" (Latin: *sacramentum magnum*) through which the mystery is accomplished in man and in the Church through the sacraments.

John Paul II notes that while this text is often quoted in marriage ceremonies, when St. Paul speaks of the "great mystery," he is not exclusively or primarily concerned with marriage as a sacrament. Rather, according to "the rather widespread opinion of scholars and

[754] Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia* (19 March 2016), 40.
[755] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 513 (98:8).
[756] Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 465 (87:1).
[757] Cf. Ephesians 1:9; 3:3; 4:9; 5:32; 6:19.

theologians," in this text "*mysterion*" is used to speak "*about the bases of the sacramentality* of the whole of Christian life, […] the sacramentality of all Christian existence in the Church and especially about the sacramentality of marriage."[758] All of Christian life is sacramental because it is a participation in the mystery revealed and accomplished in Christ.

From "the beginning," all of creation was given to man as a gift in order that man would be brought into relationship with his Creator. John Paul II explains that "if creation is a gift given to man, […] then *its fullness* and deepest dimension is *determined by grace*, that is, by participation in the inner life of God himself, in his holiness."[759] It is through his body that man is capable of opening himself to the world around him, of discovering its meaning, and participating in this gift. "Man appears in the visible world as the highest expression of the divine gift, because he bears within himself the inner dimension of the gift."[760] Man is the highpoint of creation. Not only is man capable of recognizing the gift of creation, he is also able to recognize his own capacity of becoming a gift. John Paul II calls the "nuptial meaning" of the body, through which man is able to recognize everything, including his very being, as a gift. "This is *the body*: a *witness* to creation as a fundamental gift, and therefore a witness *to Love as the source from which this same giving springs*."[761] Since all of creation comes from the Creator's love, nothing can be viewed as a mere object, but should be seen as a gift given to man to lead him to holiness.

The "sacramentality of the world" reaches its fullest expression in man, created in the image of God. And man reaches his fulfillment through the sincere giving of himself to another.[762] The union of man and woman in marriage, through their mutual gift of self to each other, is therefore the culmination of the sacrament of creation. John Paul II explains: "*The words of Genesis 2:24*, 'the man will…unite with his wife, and the two will be one flesh,' […] *constitute marriage as an integral part* and in some sense the central part of the *'sacrament of creation.'* […] In this sense, it is the primordial sacrament."[763] From the beginning, marriage serves as a primordial sacrament, in that it allows man to participate in the mystery of divine life and love, in the eternal self-giving communion of the Trinity, and thus to be a sign of this mystery. This is because we have been chosen in Christ "before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him" (Eph 1:4). Marriage, from the beginning, is an image of and

[758] Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 488-489 (93:4).
[759] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 191 (16:3).
[760] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 203 (19:3).
[761] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 183 (14:4).
[762] Cf. *Gaudium et spes*, 24.
[763] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 506 (96:6).

a participation in this eternal election in Christ. Marriage "*expresses the Creator's salvific initiative*, which corresponds to man's eternal election spoken about in Ephesians."[764] Therefore, from the beginning, marriage was intended not only to advance the work of creation through procreation, but "to spread the same sacrament of creation to further generations of human beings, that is, to spread the supernatural fruits of man's eternal election by the Father in the eternal Son, the fruits man was endowed with by God in the very act of creation."[765]

With Original Sin, marriage lost its efficacy as the central point of the sacrament of creation. Man lost his participation in grace and holiness. "*Instead of being illumined by the heritage of original grace,* […] the perspective of procreation was darkened by the *heritage of original sin,*" and "marriage, as the primordial sacrament, was deprived of the supernatural efficaciousness it drew at the moment."[766] Man is deprived of participation in the gift. Instead of passing on grace to his children, he instead passes on the effects of sin: concupiscence and shame. "Nevertheless, […] *marriage never ceases to be the figure of the sacrament,* […] marriage has remained the platform of the realization of God's eternal plans, according to which the sacrament of creation had come near to human beings and prepared them for the sacrament of redemption."[767] The union of the first Adam and Eve foreshadows and prepares us for the union of the new Adam and Eve, Christ and the Church. John Paul II explains:

> Just as the "first Adam"—man, male and female—who was created in the state of original innocence and called in this state to conjugal union (in this sense we speak about the sacrament of creation) was a sign of the eternal Mystery, so also the "second Adam," Christ, who is united with the Church through the sacrament of redemption by an indissoluble bond analogous to the indissoluble covenant of spouses, is the definitive sign of the same eternal Mystery.[768]

Just as the marriage of man and woman was a sign of supernatural gracing in the sacrament of creation, so the analogy of marriage, of Christ's giving of himself for the Church, is the "great" sign of man's endowment with grace in the sacrament of redemption.[769] There is continuity

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[764] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 506 (96:7).

[765] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 506 (96:7).

[766] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 507 (97:1).

[767] Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 507 (97:1).

[768] Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 510 (97:5).

[769] Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 507 (97:1): "in Ephesians 5:31, when the author appeals to the words of the institution of marriage in Genesis 2:24 ('for this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and unite with his wife, and the two will be one flesh'), and immediately after this declares, 'This mystery is great, I say this with reference to Christ and the Church' (Eph 5:32), he seems to point out not only the identity of the Mystery hidden in God from eternity, but also the continuity of its realization between the primordial sacrament connected with man's supernatural gracing [that is, endowment with grace] in creation itself and the new gracing—which was brought about when 'Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her, in order to make her holy' (Eph 5:25-26)—*an endowment with grace that can be defined in its entirety as the sacrament of redemption."*

between the original gracing and the new gracing, but they are also distinct. The grace given to man in "the beginning" was given to him while in the state of original innocence. The grace of redemption, by contrast, is given for the remission of sins. The sacrament of redemption is "*the definitive realization of the Mystery hidden from eternity in God*," through which man becomes a "new creation"[770]. Through this we become united with Christ so that through him, with him and in him we can be brought into eternal communion with the Trinity.

The sign of the sacrament of creation remains the same in the sacrament of redemption. The mystery that was hidden from all eternity in God, "a mystery that in the beginning in the sacrament of creation became *a visible reality through the union* of the first man and the first woman in the perspective of marriage—becomes in the sacrament of redemption *a visible reality in the indissoluble union of Christ with the Church.*"[771] The original sign of marriage contains and reflects the meaning and purpose of every sacramental action: to effect communion that is transformative and fruitful between God and man. Thus "all the sacraments of the New Covenant find their prototype in some way in marriage as the primordial sacrament."[772] It is a prototype also in that all of the sacraments draw their power from the spousal love of Christ for the Church.[773] Each of the sacraments in their own way unites us with Christ our Bridegroom, so that we can become "one flesh" (Gen 2:24) with him and become impregnated with the gift of divine life.

In order for man to truly understand himself in his body, he must seek his meaning in light of "the beginning," in the mystery of creation, as well as in light of his redemption. The spousal meaning of the body allows him to recognize the whole world as a gift given to him in order to draw him into relationship with his Creator. And it allows him to discover himself through making a gift of himself for others. "The union of Christ with the Church allows us to understand in what way the spousal meaning of the body is completed by the redemptive meaning on the different roads of life and in different situations"[774]. This includes the vocations of marriage and celibacy. Man's entire life, through the sacrament of redemption, can be

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[770] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 508 (97:3). Cf. 2 Cor 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come."

[771] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 509 (97:4). Cf. 503 (95b:7): "It is a particular merit of the author of Ephesians that he brought these two signs together, making of them *the single great sign*, that is, *a great sacrament ('sacramentum magnum').*"

[772] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 511 (98:2).

[773] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1617: "The entire Christian life bears the mark of the spousal love of Christ and the Church. Already Baptism, the entry into the People of God, is a nuptial mystery; it is so to speak the nuptial bath which precedes the wedding feat, the Eucharist."

[774] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 529 (102:8).

sanctified and turned into a gift. We will now examine how catechetical accompaniment during marriage preparation can help couples appreciate this richer sense of sacramentality.

3.2.3. The Sacrament: Sign, Covenant, and Grace

Through catechesis, engaged couples preparing for marriage should come to understand and appreciate the uniqueness of marriage as a sacrament. As Wojtyła reflected in 1958, after ten years of pastoral experience, "the crisis of the institution [of marriage] is not so much a question of avoiding evil, as it is above all of fully extracting the good that can be achieved in marriage thanks to the fact that it is a sacramental institution."[775]

There are three elements of sacraments that need to be considered in order to understand the Sacrament of Matrimony: the visible sign (*sacramentum tantum*), the abiding reality (*res et sacramentum*), and the grace bestowed through Christ's action in the sacrament (*res tantum*).[776] Wojtyła addresses each of these in his 1960 *Retreat for Engaged Couples* while meditating on the role of the ministers and witnesses (2.1.4), the vows (2.1.2., 2.1.3.), and the graces of the sacrament (2.1.5., 2.3.6.). However, since he was addressing couples during a spiritual retreat, he did not use these technical, theological terms.[777] Later as John Paul II, he returns to mediating on the role of the ministers and witnesses, the vows, and the graces of the sacrament, but with greater theological precision. He does this especially in his *Theology of the Body* and *Letter to Families*, both of which contain extensive commentary on the *Rite of Celebrating Matrimony*.

Sign

The first element of the sacrament of Matrimony is the visible sign (*sacramentum tantum*), which is composed of both form (words) and matter (objects). As the Catechism says, "[t]he sacraments are perceptible signs (words and actions) accessible to our human nature. By the action of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit they make present efficaciously the grace

[775] K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu," 138.
[776] Cf. P. Cahall, *The Mystery of Marriage: A Theology of the Body and the Sacrament*, Chicago 2016: Hillenbrand books, 207-236, 267-329. Cf. T. O'Malley, *Invitation and Encounter: Evangelizing Through the Sacraments*, Huntington, Indiana 202: Our Sunday Visitor, 75-90. Cf. M. Ouellet, *Mystery and Sacrament of Love: A Theology of Marriage and the Family for the New Evangelization*, translated by M.K. Borras and A.J. Walker, Grand Rapids, Michigan 2015: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 58-104.
[777] Wojtyla explores the graces of the sacrament of marriage in a 1975 homily. Cf. Wojtyła, K., "Łaska Sakramentu Małżeństwa," in *Sposi, amici dello Sposo: Omelie su matrimonio e famiglia*, translated and edited by P. Kwiatkowski. Citta del Vaticano 2014: Edizioni Cantagalli.

that they signify."[778] The outward sign of marriage signifies the mutual self-donation of Christ and the Church, the "great sacrament" (Eph 5:32).

The form of the sacrament is the words of consent ("I take you…"), while the matter is the spouses themselves. In words that are very similar to those used in the 1960 *Retreat for Engaged Couples*, John Paul II writes in *Theology of the Body*:

> "I…TAKE YOU…AS MY WIFE"; "I…take you…as my husband." These words stand at the center of the liturgy of marriage as a sacrament of the Church. The engaged couple speak these words, inserting them in the following formula of consent: "I promise to be faithful to you always, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, and to love you and honor you all the days of my life." With these words the engaged couple contract marriage, and at the same time they receive it as a sacrament of which both are the ministers. Both, the man and the woman, administer the sacrament. They do so before witnesses. The authorized witness is the priest, who at the same time blesses the marriage and presides over the whole liturgy of the sacrament. Further witnesses are, in a certain sense, all the participants in the wedding rite and in an "official" way some of them (usually two) who are specifically called as witnesses. They must witness that the marriage is contracted before God and confirmed by the Church. In the normal course of events, sacramental marriage is a public act before society and the Church by which two persons, a man and a woman, become husband and wife, that is, the actual subject of the married vocation and life.[779]

Here John Paul II gives us a summary of the significance of the priest and witnesses, the minsters, and the content of the consent.

First, it is important to note that the exchange of consent is an ecclesial act. Due to the couple's baptism, they have been incorporated into the mystical body of Christ. Through their identity as baptized Catholics, the giving of the spouses to each other in marriage becomes an act of Christ himself.[780] This helps us to understand why the Sacrament of Matrimony is celebrated "in the house of the Church"[781]. As Perry Cahall notes, "For a baptized couple, their

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[778] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1084. Cf. 1123: "The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify men, to build up the Body of Christ and, finally, to give worship to God. Because they are signs they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and express it (SC, 59)." Cf. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 59.

[779] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 1531 (103:1). Cf. John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 10: "This is a commitment which the bride and groom undertake 'before God and his Church', as the celebrant reminds them before they exchange their consent. Those who take part in the rite are witnesses of this commitment, for in a certain sense they represent the Church and society, the settings in which the new family will live and grow. […] If the Church (and the State for that matter) receives the consent which the spouses express in the words cited above, she does so because that consent is "written in their hearts" (*Rom* 2:15). It is the spouses who give their consent to each other by a solemn promise, that is by confirming the truth of that consent in the sight of God. As baptized Christians, they are the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony in the Church. Saint Paul teaches that this mutual commitment of theirs is a 'great mystery' (*Eph* 5:32)."

[780] Cf. T. O'Malley, *"The Liturgical-Sacramental Identity of the Domestic Church: Combatting Domestic Romanticism by Means of the Liturgical Act"* in *Antiphon* 24:1 (2020), 10. R. Bonetti, *La liturgia della famiglia: La coppia sacramento dell'amore*, Milano 2012: San Paolo, 14-17.

[781] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 59.

consent is never a private act just between the two of them, or even between the two of them and God. As members of the Body of Christ their exchange of consent has ramifications for the whole Church."[782] Therefore, it is necessary to make this exchange publicly in the presence of at least two witnesses, as well as before a priest or deacon, who serves as the official representative of the Church.[783]

Second, we should consider the content of the words of consent. In Catholic marriage, the words of the vows are given by the Church, because consent is an objective act. The couple may not write their own vows, because the vows cannot be a purely subjective expression of loving affection, which is subject to fluctuation and change. The vows, "contracted before God and confirmed by the Church," are pledged objectively. The consent must be given "freely and wholeheartedly," with the pledge to be permanently bound to each other "all the days of my life," through a pledge "to be faithful" and "to love you and honor you," that is marked by an openness to "accept children lovingly from God, and to bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church"[784]. We will examine this in more detail in the next section (3.2.3.).

Third, it is not just the words of consent that make the couple married, but the matter: the couple themselves and their mutual self-donation to each other. The couple, as ministers of the sacrament, are part of the sign of the sacrament. "*Both of them*, as man and woman, being ministers of the sacrament at the moment of contracting marriage, at the same time *constitute the full and real visible sign* of the sacrament itself."[785] The words of consent are not merely contractual language, but involve the freely given pledge of the man and the woman to give of themselves fully to each other for as long as they live. "The words spoken by them would not of themselves constitute the sacramental sign if the human subjectivity of the engaged man and woman and at the same time the consciousness of the body linked with the masculinity and the femininity of the bride and the bridegroom did not correspond to them."[786] It is not simply through speaking the words of consent, but by the offering of the spouses to each other, which becomes the sacramental sign of marriage.

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[782] P. Cahall, *The Mystery of Marriage,* 302.
[783] Cf. CIC, c 1108 § 1: "Only those marriages are valid which are contracted in the presence of the local Ordinary or parish priest or of the priest or deacon delegated by either of them, who, in the presence of two witnesses, assists". Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1630: "The priest (or deacon) who assists at the celebration of a marriage receives the consent of the spouses in the name of the Church and gives the blessing of the Church. The presence of the Church's minister (and also of the witnesses) visibly expresses the fact that marriage is an ecclesial reality."
[784] *Order for Celebrating Matrimony*, 30.
[785] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 533 (103:4).
[786] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 533 (103:4).

Therefore, John Paul II states that the essential sign of the Sacrament of Matrimony is the "'language of the body' reread in truth"[787]. The couple not only pledges their vows to each other through words, but through giving of their very selves to one another, and their bodies are essential elements of this self-gift. "What determines [the sacramental sign] is *in some sense 'the language of the body,'* inasmuch as the man and the woman, who are to become one flesh by marriage, express in this sign the reciprocal gift of masculinity and femininity as the foundation of the conjugal union of the persons."[788] As John Paul II says:

> Marriage as a sacrament is contracted by means of *the word*, which is *a sacramental sign in virtue of its content*, "I take you as my wife/as my husband, and I promise to be faithful to you always, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, and to love you and honor you all the days of my life." However, this sacramental word is, of itself, only a sign of the coming to be of marriage. And the coming to be of marriage is distinct from its consummation, so much so that without this consummation, marriage is not yet constituted in its full reality. The observation that a marriage is juridically contracted but not consummated (*ratum, non consummatum*) corresponds to the observation that it has not been fully constituted as a marriage.[789]

Thus, sexual intercourse between a married couple becomes a physical expression of the vows that are spoken in the wedding liturgy, through which there is a mutual giving and receiving of persons that is free, total, faithful, and fruitful. We will go deeper into this expression of the vows when we explore the identity of the family as it relates to the common good (3.3.1.).

Covenant

The second aspect is the abiding reality (*res et sacramentum*) of the conjugal bond, which is brought into being by the sacrament. John Paul II says that "[t]he sign they bring into being with the words of the conjugal consent is not merely an immediate and fleeting sign, but a sign that looks toward the future and produces a lasting effect, namely, the conjugal bond, one and indissoluble ('all the days of my life,' that is, until death)."[790] The couple truly becomes "one flesh," (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5) and are united in Christ's covenant love for the Church. Since it is Christ who has united them sacramentally, the priest or deacon, after receiving their consent, quotes Jesus as he says to the bride and bridegroom: "What God joins together, let no one put asunder."[791] The sacrament creates the new reality of the conjugal bond.

[787] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 538 (104:9).
[788] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 533 (103:4).
[789] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 532 (103:2).
[790] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 541 (105:6).
[791] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 64. Cf. Matthew 19:6.

What makes marriage unique is that the "spouses participate in [the sacrament] 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."[792] Through their conjugal bond as "one flesh," the couple first is a sign of "Christ's incarnation," through which he united his divinity with our humanity, becoming "one flesh" with us. They are also a sign of "the mystery of the covenant," that Jesus established at the Last Supper and fulfilled through his death and Resurrection. Their fidelity is a sign of Christ's fidelity to the Church.[793]

This participation in Christ's life also has unique content. "[C]onjugal 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."[794] It also "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)."[795] Because it is a sacrament, "the normal characteristics of all natural conjugal love," are given "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."[796] Through the conjugal bond that is effected, the spouses receive healing that purifies, strengthens, and raises them to become an "expression" or sign of Christian values.

Marriage is not merely a sacrament that the couple receives on their wedding day. The couple themselves become transformed into the sacrament, an efficacious sign that they participate in throughout their marriage. "The gift of Jesus Christ is not exhausted in the actual celebration of the sacrament of marriage, but rather accompanies the married couple throughout their lives."[797] It is an abiding sign. As John Paul II reflects in *Theology of the Body*:

> *the key for understanding* marriage remains *the reality of the sign* with which marriage is constituted on the basis of man's covenant with God in Christ and in the Church: it is constituted in the supernatural order of the sacred bond requiring grace. In this order, marriage is a visible and efficacious sign. "Having originated in the mystery of creation, it draws its new origin form the mystery of redemption in order to serve the "union of the sons of God in truth and love" (*Gaudium et* Spes, 24:3). The liturgy of the sacrament

[792] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 13.
[793] Cf. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 13: "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."
[794] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 13.
[795] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 13.
[796] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 13.
[797] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 56.

> of Marriage gives a form to that sign: directly during the sacramental rite on the basis of the ensemble of its eloquent expressions; indirectly, throughout the whole of life. As spouses, the man and the woman bear this sign throughout the whole of their lives, and they remain this sign until death.[798]

John Paul II notes that the form of the sign of marriage is important both directly in the sacramental rite, through the words of consent, and indirectly through the conjugal bond that unites the spouses throughout life. "Just as husbands and wives receive from the sacrament the gift and responsibility of translating into daily living the sanctification bestowed on them, so the same sacrament confers on them the grace and moral obligation of transforming their whole lives into a 'spiritual sacrifice' (*Lumen gentium*, 34)."[799] This is accomplished through the third element of the sacrament.

Grace

The third element to the sacrament is the grace (*res tantum*) that the couple receives, the sacramental effect. John Paul II explains that a "sacrament is a sign of grace, it is *an efficacious sign*." This means that a sacrament "does not merely *indicate* and express grace in a visible way, in the manner of a sign, but *produces* grace and contributes efficaciously to cause that grace to become part of man and to *realize and fulfill the work of salvation* in him, the work determined ahead of time by God from eternity and fully revealed in Christ."[800] This is true also of the sacrament of Matrimony.

As Wojtyła said in his *Retreat for Engaged Couples*, "God must give you the grace, if what [in your vows] you will say, if this will then materialize into the building of your entire life. He must give you the grace. Both when you speak these words and later, throughout your life, when you have to put this into practice – sometimes encountering hardships and resistance – receive the grace."[801] Marriage, a natural institution, has been elevated by Jesus to one of the seven sacraments, in order to give couples the grace to heal their corrupted nature and disordered desires, and elevate them toward their supernatural good.[802]

As John Paul II said, "[w]illed by God in the very act of creation, marriage and the family are interiorly ordained to fulfillment in Christ and have need of His graces in order to

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[798] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 534 (103:7).
[799] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 56.
[800] John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 468 (87:5).
[801] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 59.
[802] Cf. M. Ouellet, *Divine Likeness: Toward a Trinitarian Anthropology of the Family*, translated by Philip Milligan and Linda M. Cicone, Grand Rapids, Michigan 2006: William B. Eerdmans, 93: "In this sense, the primary end of sacramental marriage is supernatural: it consists in the sanctity of conjugal love called to reproduce and incarnate the spousal love of Christ and the Church (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:21-23)."

be healed from the wounds of sin and restored to their 'beginning,' that is, to full understanding and the full realization of God's plan."[803] From the beginning, marriage was a sign of God's covenant love for humanity, expressing God's desire to unite with us in order to be fruitful within us, sharing with us His own divine life. Now elevated to a sacrament, marriage is an efficacious sign and participation in Christ's love for the Church, pointing us to union with Christ, so he can impregnate us with his divine life through grace.

John Paul II's theology of marriage reflects the Christology of marriage articulated in the Second Vatican Council's *Gaudium et spes*: "Our Savior, the spouse of the Church, now encounters Christian spouses through the sacrament of marriage. He abides with them in order that by their mutual self-giving spouses will love each other with enduring fidelity, as he loved the Church and delivered himself for it (cf. Eph 5:25)."[804] Grace is not some abstract "thing" that is added to natural marriage. The sacrament is presented as an "encounter with Christ," who "abides with" the spouses, allowing them to participate in Christ's spousal love for the Church. "Authentic married love is caught up into divine love and is directed and enriched by the redemptive power of Christ and the salvific action of the Church."[805] Through the power of Christ acting within their marriage, spouses can experience the healing of their wounded desires.[806] As *Lumen Gentium* puts it, "in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony by which they signify and share the mystery of the unity and faithful love between Christ and the Church, Christian married couples help one another to attain holiness in their married life."[807] Not only does the sacrament of Matrimony provide healing, but also sanctifies the couples in order for them to grow in holiness.

The sacrament of Matrimony provides couples with the grace to resist temptations particular to married life, such as "self-absorption, egoism, pursuit of one's own pleasure,"[808] thus becoming a remedy for concupiscence, especially sexual concupiscence. Far from being

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[803] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 3. Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman*, 526, 102:2: "they participate in the salvific love of Christ, which at the same time expresses itself as his spousal love for the Church. In the light of Ephesians (5:32)—precisely *through participation in the salvific love of Christ—marriage is confirmed and simultaneously renewed as the sacrament of the human 'beginning,'* that is, as the sacrament in which man and woman, called to become 'one flesh,' share in the creative love of God himself." Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1608: "to heal the wounds of sin, man and woman need the help of the grace of God."

[804] *Gaudium et Spes*, 48.

[805] *Gaudium et Spes*, 48. Cf. R. Bonetti, *La liturgia della famiglia: La coppia sacramento dell'amore*, Milano 2012: San Paolo, 9-32.

[806] Cf. J. Kupczak, *Gift & Communion: John Paul II's Theology of the Body,* Washington, D.C. 2014: The Catholic University of America Press, 133: "In John Paul II's theology of gift, only the person who accepts Christ's gift of redeeming grace, which alone is capable of healing the desire of the flesh, is able to become a gift of love for others. In the dynamic of mutual gift, therefore, equally important as the personal ability to become a gift is the ability to accept and receive a gift, which some thinkers describe as 'receptivity.'"

[807] Vatican Council II, *Lumen Gentium* (21 November 1964), 11.

[808] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1609.

an outlet for lust, marriage sanctifies their sexual union through grace, directing their sexuality toward a total gift of self that is free, total, faithful, and fruitful.[809] Thus marriage redeems the spouses through the sacrament, providing them a path of healing and freedom from sin. This leads the couple to be "a saved community," through the healing and sanctifying graces of the sacrament that they received and bear throughout their lives.

3.2.4. The Rite: Readings, Vows, Nuptial Blessing

In Wojtyła's *Retreat for Engaged Couples*, he utilized the rite, the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* itself, and especially the vows, as his focal point of meditation. This approach should be taken up and expanded, helping engaged couples to appreciate every aspect of their wedding liturgy. Already we have looked at the ministers, witnesses, and graces of the sacrament. Now we turn our attention to the readings, vows, Nuptial Blessing, and connection with the Eucharist. Each of these elements can provide healing for the couple, and also for those who witness their wedding.[810]

The Readings

The first element from the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* is the readings. Couples are allowed to choose the readings at their wedding from a list that the Church provides.[811] These are readings that are related to marriage, directly or indirectly, and tell the story of God's love for humanity. Timothy O'Malley identifies four Biblical themes worth contemplating with the couple as they choose their readings: "(1) the re-creation of man and woman in the image and likeness of God, (2) the revelation of Jesus Christ as Bridegroom of the Church, (3) the participation of husband and wife in the nuptial love of Christ, and (4) the wedding feast of the Lamb."[812] Rather than simply have the couple choose their readings, the readings can be presented to them as a matter of catechesis and evangelization. As they reflect on these Biblical passages, they are called to interweave their love story with God's love story, recognizing how God is calling them to participate through their marriage in the redemption of the world. Their wedding is much more meaningful than simply celebrating their love; it is the celebration of

[809] Cf. Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, 9.
[810] For deeper analysis of *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, Cf. K. Stevenson, *Nuptial Blessing: A Study of Christian Marriage Rites,* New York 1983: Oxford University Press. Cf. P. Turner, *One Love: A Pastoral Guide to The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, Collegeville, Minnesota 2016: Liturgical Press. Cf. P. Turner, *Inseparable Love: A Commentary on The Order of Celebrating Matrimony in the Catholic Church*, Collegeville, Minnesota 2017: Liturgical Press.
[811] Cf. J. Champlin, *Together for Life: Sixth Edition*, Notre Dame, Indiana 2016: Ave Maria Press.
[812] T. O'Malley, *Off the Hook*, 55.

their love and history (past and present) being united with Christ's love for the Church, which will have a healing and redemptive effect on them as a couple. And their marriage can have a healing effect on the Church and society, by making Christ's redemptive love present.

During the wedding liturgy, the imaginations of the couple and their guests are immersed in the scriptural narrative, which can bring healing from the effects of the hookup culture and sin. As Timothy O'Malley writes:

> In the scriptures of the Catholic wedding liturgy, we hear about a divine love that restores men and women to their original destiny as creatures made for self-gift. We discover a love made manifest in Christ, who did not objectify, did not control, but instead loved unto the very end. We see how married couples become signs of this love insofar as they enter into relationship with Jesus, who can heal our most grievous wounds. And we get a glimpse of the final moments of the story of God and humanity, the wedding feast of the Lamb that will spill over into all of creation. Ultimately, through the Bible, we learn that we are made for even deeper communion with God.[813]

The couple not only reflects God's love story during their wedding, but they become a sign of it, enacting it in their bodies. As they make a total gift of themselves to each other in marriage, those attending the wedding witness an embodiment of God's spousal love that they heard proclaimed in the readings from scripture.

The Vows

We see this even more clearly in the second element of the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, the vows. Before the couples declare their consent, the priest or deacon asks them three questions "about their freedom of choice, fidelity to each other, and the acceptance and upbringing of children, and each responds separately."[814] Dana Macalintal and Nick Wagner, who use a catechumenal approach to marriage preparation, notes that "[t]he church takes these questions so seriously that you could actually structure your entire marriage preparation process around these three questions alone, and you would basically cover the entirety of what we understand to be Christian marriage."[815] In fact, these three questions connect very closely with the vows of love, fidelity, and honor.

The first question before consent is about freedom: "N. and N., have you come here to enter into Marriage without coercion, freely and wholeheartedly?"[816] This corresponds to the vow of love, which can only be given freely. This reflects God's love, who created us freely

[813] T. O'Malley, *Off the Hook*, 49-50.
[814] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 60.
[815] D. Macalintal and N. Wagner, *Joined By the Church, Sealed By a Blessing*, Collegeville, Minnesota 2014: Liturgical Press, 12.
[816] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 60.

out of love, and "shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). God loves us simply for the gift that we are, and invites us to respond freely to the gift of His love. "In this is love," St. John tell us, "not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). The love of husband and wife is called to reflect Christ's spousal love for his Bride, the Church, which is given freely.

As Wojtyła notes multiple times in his *Retreat for Engaged Couples*, while the couples may experience strong emotions at the time of their wedding, in order for love to be true, in order to have a "solid foundation," love must be a virtue. As was noted in our summary of *Love and Responsibility* (1.3.1.), love as a virtue first affirms the value of the person, and not merely for their body, sensuality or affectivity alone. Second, love as a virtue is expressed in the mutual self-giving of spouses, through the exclusive and permanent bond whose expression is the conjugal act. Third, it requires a mature and free choice that takes responsibility for the true good of the person. And fourth, love depends on freedom, but one can only make a free commitment to another when it is based on the truth of the person, and not distortions caused by immature sentiments, egoism, or utilitarian desire. Love is a free striving for interpersonal union and the other's good.

As a virtue, love involves giving of oneself to the other out of love, for their good. As Wojtyła says, "love is never something ready-made, something merely 'given' to a woman and a man, but at once it is always something 'entrusted.'[…] love in a sense never 'is,' but only constantly 'becomes,' depending on the contribution of each person, on their thorough commitment."[817] Love involves reciprocal self-gift. It is not a feeling that couples need be afraid might fade in time. The vow to love is constantly renewed by the free choice to give of oneself out of love for one's spouse. It is an act of the will that is made definitively through the vows on the wedding day, and then is lived out faithfully throughout the shared life of the couple, "all the days of my life," that is, "until death do us part."[818] The more that the spouses grow in their capacity for self-giving love, the more they experience healing and freedom from utilitarian, selfish desires.[819]

The second question before the consent is about fidelity: "Are you prepared, as you follow the path of Marriage, to love and honor each other for as long as you both shall live?"[820]

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[817] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 121.
[818] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 62.
[819] Cf. J. Kupczak, *Gift & Communion,* 132: "In light of the theology of gift, love consists not in realizing one's own private desires or plans, but in an ecstatic concentration on the 'I' of the other person, which—paradoxically—leads to the self-fulfillment and happiness of the one who loves."
[820] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 60.

In this question, love and honor are connected to the vow to be faithful, "for as long as you both shall live". Marriage is indissoluble, and therefore requires absolute fidelity. In order for the gift to be total, exclusive, and permanent, it cannot be withdrawn. It cannot be conditional. Then it is not a total gift of self. As John Paul II says, "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"[821] The totality and permanence of the mutual exchange of persons that is characteristic of spousal love makes it distinct from other forms of love.

Fidelity allows for true intimacy between the spouses, because it allows for true freedom. Since their love is unconditional, the couple can always be honest with each other, knowing that their spouse is there to help them to grow in holiness. They can receive the truth about their weaknesses and faults without the fear of being abandoned. They have the freedom to live truthfully and communicate their struggles to one another. This allows for true love to flourish. And it allows for the spouses to experience healing, as their weaknesses and faults do not lead to rejection and abandonment, but leads the spouses to love each other all the more, and help each other in their weaknesses.

If the Cross is where Jesus shows his love and offers his life for his Bride, the Church, then marriage is like a slow crucifixion. Not because marriage is so awful and painful, but because it involves the continuous, daily dying to oneself and one's ego, in order to more faithfully give oneself to your spouse. As John Paul II said, "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."[822] Through their faithfulness to their vows, the spouses help each other and their children to experience redemption, and in so doing experience salvation themselves.

The third question before the consent is about fruitfulness: "Are you prepared to accept children lovingly from God and to bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?"[823] This reflects the vow to honor each other. Wojtyła wrote that "[t]he main practical and educational problem of the preparation for marriage consists in freeing human love, sexual love […] from the consumeristic attitude, […] and to shift the entire focus to the value of that person."[824] The value of the person means honoring their fertility, their capacity to be a parent.

[821] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio,* 11.
[822] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio,* 13.
[823] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 60.
[824] K. Wojtyła, "Propedeutyka sakramentu małżeństwa. Kryzys instytucji i kryzys sakramentu," 162-164.

This has a healing effect on the spouses, who gradually experience freedom from concupiscent desire, as they learn to see their spouse not just as a husband or wife, but as a father or mother.

Children draw love out of their parents, helping them to grow even more in their capacity for self-giving love and sacrifice. As John Paul II notes, the child's "*life becomes a gift for the very people who were givers of life* and who cannot but help feel its presence, its sharing in their life and its contribution to their common good and to that of the community of the family."[825] Children help heal the couple from a love that is self-enclosed, opening them up to others who can share in their love. This goes beyond procreation and the education of children, but taking on a responsibility and mission within the Church and society to be fruitful in sharing the good, especially the good news of the Gospel, with others. We will look at this more in depth in the next section (3.3.1.).

The Nuptial Blessing

The third element of the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* is the Nuptial Blessing. This occurs within the Liturgy of the Eucharist, after praying the Our Father. The Nuptial Blessing has four parts:

> The prayer begins through remembering what has been accomplished through the union of husband and wife in the divine plan of salvation. The Church then asks that the Spirit might descend anew on the couple, strengthening their sacramental union. Specific blessings are given to each spouse, that they might be able to fulfill their vocations as husband and wife, father and mother. The prayer concludes by asking that God might lead them to the heavenly banquet.[826]

The love of the couple is situated within salvation history, as they have a new ecclesial role in the Church as a married couple. And so they will be blessed and sent out on mission, as God leads them on the path to the heavenly banquet in Heaven.

Just as the Holy Spirit is called down upon the bread and wine during the Epiclesis, so also in the Nuptial Blessing the Holy Spirit is called down upon the couple, in order to strengthen their sacramental union. As John Paul II says, the gift of self of the spouses "is rooted in the gift of God, Creator and Redeemer, and in the 'grace of the Holy Spirit' which the celebrant during the rite of Marriage prays will be 'poured out' on the spouses. Without such an 'outpouring', it would be very difficult to understand all this and to carry it out as man's vocation."[827] Imaging Christ's love for the Church is not an impossible ideal, but is rooted in

[825] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 10.
[826] T. O'Malley, *Off the Hook*, 97.
[827] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 11.

the grace that the couple receives of participating in Christ's sacrificial love, and through this outpouring of the Holy Spirit. God does not call us to the impossible, but gives us the sacrament in order to experience redemption.[828] Thus the Nuptial Blessing also has a healing effect on the couple, giving them a greater capacity for self-giving love.

The Nuptial Blessing takes place during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. As a newly married couple, they are able to perceive the Eucharistic offering in a new way. Just as the Eucharist is a sign and sacrament of Christ's love for the Church, so also the spouses have become a sign and sacrament of Christ's love for the Church. In the Eucharist they recognize that they are called to this same sacrifice of love. To give of themselves totally to one another, in order to form a communion that is life-giving. As John Paul II says, "the liturgical crowning of the marriage rite is the Eucharist, the sacrifice of that 'body which has been given up' and that 'blood which has been shed,' which in a certain way finds expression in the content of the spouses."[829]

Through meditation on the elements of the rite of Matrimony: the Readings, the Vows, and the Nuptial Blessing, the couple and those who witness their wedding can experience healing of their understanding and appreciation of marriage. Their wedding day will take on even deeper relevance, as they better understand the liturgical aspects of the rite. And this will help the couple to better understand and live out their identity and mission within the Church as a married couple, which we will explore in our final section.

3.3. Healing the Culture: "A Saving Community"

In this section, we will examine how a married couple and their family become, through the grace of the sacrament, not only a "*saved* community," but a "*saving* community"[830]. They become not only spouses but also missionaries with a new role in the Church: to share in Jesus's self-gift on the Cross, while evangelizing and transforming the world through the witness of their love. Good times and bad, sickness and health, are all occasions to grow in union with

[828] Cf. John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* (6 August 1993), 103: "Man always has before him the spiritual horizon of hope, thanks to the *help of divine grace* and with *the cooperation of human freedom.* […] *Christ has redeemed us!* This means that he has given us the possibility of realizing *the entire* truth of our being; he has set our freedom free from the *domination* of concupiscence. And if redeemed man still sins, this is not due to an imperfection of Christ's redemptive act, but to man's will not to avail himself of the grace which flows from that act. God's command is of course proportioned to man's capabilities; but to the capabilities of the man to whom the Holy Spirit has been given; of the man who, though he has fallen into sin, can always obtain pardon and enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit."
[829] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 11.
[830] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 49.

Christ and his self-giving, sacrificial love. We will first look at the identity of the couple, as a "community of life and love," which witnesses to human dignity and the common good, and thus the building up a "civilization of love" and a "culture of life". Then we will explore the mission of the family to "*guard, reveal and communicate love*,"[831] especially through their ecclesial mission as a Domestic Church, that participates in the threefold office (*munera*) of Christ as priest, prophet, and king.

3.3.1. Identity: "A Community of Life and Love"

In *Familiaris Consortio*, John Paul II connects the identity of the family with its mission of evangelization. "The family finds in the plan of God the Creator and Redeemer not only its *identity*, what it is, but also its *mission*, what it can and should do. The role that God calls the family to perform in history derives from what the family is […] family, become what you are."[832] The family discovers its identity in God's plan as "a community of life and love," and so recognizes that it "has the mission to *guard, reveal and communicate love*, and this is a living reflection of and a real sharing in God's love for humanity and the love of Christ the Lord for the Church His bride."[833] The better the family understands and live from its identity, the better it will be equipped to live out its mission within the Church and society.

The Second Vatican Council document *Gaudium et Spes* explores the themes of the dignity of the human person, the common good, and the unity of mankind. These themes are interrelated. The dignity of the human person is a primary value, however, there has been a post-Enlightenment overemphasis on the individual. Even as an individual, man recognizes that he lives in relation to others, as part of a family, nation and society. *Gaudium et Spes* points out that, "by his innermost nature man is a social being, and unless he relates himself to others he can neither live nor develop his potential."[834] Therefore, man's rights cannot be considered in isolation, but must be considered in relation to others.

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[831] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.
[832] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.
[833] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17. Cf. John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem* (15 August 1988), 7: "The fact that man 'created as man and woman' is the image of God means not only that each of them individually is like God, as a rational and free being. It also means that man and woman, created as a 'unity of the two' in their common humanity, are called to live in a communion of love, and in this way to mirror in the world the communion of love that is in God, through which the Three Persons love each other in the intimate mystery of the one divine life. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God through the unity of the divinity, exist as persons through the inscrutable divine relationship. Only in this way can we understand the truth that God in himself is love (cf. 1 *Jn* 4:16)."
[834] *Gaudium et Spes*, 12.

When considering the good of the individual, it must be considered in relation to the common good. As the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* defines it, the common good is "the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfillment"[835]. The common good is not to be confused with the sum total of the individual goods of each member of society. The common good "*belong*[s] *to everyone and to each person, it is and remains 'common,' because it is indivisible and because only together is it possible to attain it, increase it and safeguard its effectiveness with regard also to the future*."[836] The common good, by its very nature, is a good which one desires to share with others. It cannot be achieved at another's expense. Just as a person has a right to life and to live in freedom, they must recognize that it would be unjust to deny those same rights to another person. In so doing they would be weakening their own freedom. As Livio Melina writes, "[a] society built on the individualistic idea of one's rights, without thought of the common good, will in the end deny all the good of the person."[837]

In "The Common Good in St. Thomas and John Paul II," Michael Waldstein contrasts a private good with the common good. When people drink wine, it is their own personal or private good. If one person drinks it, another cannot. Even in sharing a bottle of wine, the wine is imperfectly common, because each is receiving only a part of the good. On the other hand, the Pythagorean theorem is an example of a common good. Each person may use it without any way depriving others from using it, lessening it, or making it their own private possession. The common good "is a good in which many persons can share at the same time without in any way lessening or splitting it."[838] Peace may also be a common good (for a family or nation), as long as everyone shares in it, and no one's share is lessened by others. If one person is denied the good, each person's share of the common good is lessened.[839]

The primacy of the individual, singular good is a false notion. Charles De Koninck explains that the common good "differs from the singular good by this very universality. It has the character of superabundance and it is eminently diffusive of itself insofar as it is more communicable: it reaches the singular more than the singular good: it is the greater good of the

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[835] *Gaudium et Spes*, 26.
[836] United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*, Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Washington, DC 2009: USCCB Publishing,164.
[837] L. Melina, *Building a Culture of the Family: The Language of Love*, New York 2011: Alba House, 69.
[838] M. Waldstein, "The Common Good in St. Thomas and John Paul II," in *Nova et Vetera*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (2005), 569.
[839] M. Waldstein, "The Common Good in St. Thomas and John Paul II," 569-570.

singular."[840] The greater number that shares in the good the more good it is for each individual. For example, "[t]he good of the family is better than the singular good, not because all the members of the family find in it their singular good: the good of the family is better because, for each of its individual members, it is also the good of the others."[841] Each shares in the good, and is able to receive the same benefits.

Most of all it will be families, the "essential cell of society,"[842] that witness to (and thus promotes and teaches) the truth about life and human dignity. In so doing, the Church will engage and reshape culture into a "civilization of love"[843]. John Paul II's *Letter to the Families* is a blueprint for creating a "civilization of love" and a "culture of life" in which all of human life is respected. Throughout this document, he gives reference to the common good and gift of self and their interrelation, as well as stressing the importance of the family for society. The family, he says, "is a path common to all, yet one which is particular, unique and unrepeatable, just as every individual is unrepeatable."[844] Therefore, there is a lot to be learned from the witness of the family, and a lot to be learned from living as part of a family. It is in the family that man learns his dignity, and how to participate in a personalistic way with others.

In marriage, a man and a woman join as a communion of spouses, giving to each other out of love. Both man and woman each have a unique and complimentary contribution to the common good of their marriage and family. The family, "as a community of persons, is thus the first human 'society'…the first and basic expression of man's social nature."[845] In the family, a husband and wife live in reference to each other, just as each member of the family has a role in reference to others: husband or wife, father or mother, son or daughter, brother or sister, grandparent or grandchild.

John Paul II identifies the marriage vows as defining the common good of the couple and of the family. The common good of the spouses includes "love, fidelity, honor, the permanence of union until death—'all the days of my life'."[846] The indissoluble character of

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[840] C. De Koninck, "The Primacy of the Common Good Against the Personalists," *The Writings of Charles De Koninck: Volume Two*, edited and translated by Ralph McInerny, Notre Dame, Indiana 2009: University of Notre Dame Press, 75.
[841] C. De Koninck, "The Primacy of the Common Good Against the Personalists," 75.
[842] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 13. For an analysis of the role of marriage and family in society, Cf. A. Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery*, translated by M.K. Borras, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2005: William B. Eerdmans, 141-189. Cf. L. Melina, *Building a Culture of the Family: The Language of Love*, New York 2011: Alba House, 3-21. Cf. R. Spinello, *The Splendor of Marriage: St. John Paul II's Vision of Love, Marriage, Family & the Culture of Life*, Brooklyn, NY, 2018: Angelico Press, 139-179. And for an analysis of healing the cultural errors, especially Manichaeism, Cf. D. Hajduk, *Healing the Culture and the Family*, Waterloo, ON 2022: Arouca Press.
[843] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 13.
[844] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 2.
[845] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 7.
[846] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 10.

marriage protects the common good, which "by its very nature, both unites individual persons and ensures the true good of each."[847] Marriage is where the personalistic norm and the law of gift find their full consummation, for in marriage a man and a woman become one flesh, and are united as a common subject with the same ends. "Concerning marriage, this end is procreation, progeny, the family, and at the same time the whole constantly growing maturity of the relationship between both persons in all the spheres brought by the spousal relationship itself."[848] When two people choose a common good and are united by it, they create equality between them and preclude the possibility of one person being used by the other.[849] Thus marriage allows for the procreative and unitive dimensions of human sexuality to reach their full moral value, through the mutual giving of self in love.

The common good is thus fostered by the marriage vows in the promise to accept children. John Paul II warns that "*[f]amilies today have too little 'human' life*. There is a shortage of people with whom to create and share the common good; and yet that good, by its nature, demands to be created and shared with others: *bonum est diffusivum sui*: 'good is diffusive of itself'."[850] The common good of the spouses includes the common good of the future of their family. The family realizes its common good through children.[851] As John Paul II points out:

> When a man and a woman in marriage mutually give and receive each other in the unity of "one flesh", the logic of the sincere gift of self becomes a part of their life. Without this, marriage would be empty; whereas a communion of persons, built on this logic, becomes a communion of parents. When they transmit *life to the child, a new human "thou" becomes a part of the horizon of the "we" of the spouses*, a person whom they will call by a new name: "our son…; our daughter…".[852]

The child unites the husband and wife as *parents*, extending the family as well as the common good. Their child "becomes a gift to [… the] entire family. *Its life becomes a gift for the very people who were givers of life* and who cannot but help feel its presence, its sharing in their life and its contribution to their common good and to that of the community of the family."[853] Thus the unity of the husband and wife in love, which is the intrinsic common good of marriage, is

[847] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 10.
[848] Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 14.
[849] Cf. T. Aquinas, *De veritate*, 5.3, c. "Whenever we see a multitude ordered to each other, it must be ordered to some external principle."
[850] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 10.
[851] Cf. T. Aquinas, *Sent*. IV.33.2.1 c. "offspring is the common good of the husband and wife."
[852] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 11.
[853] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 11.

ordered to the extrinsic common good of marriage, the child. The intrinsic and extrinsic feed into each other and are interrelated.[854]

Just as each child adds to the common good of the family, so each person adds to the common good of society. John Paul II asserts that "[t]he common good of the whole of society dwells in man"[855]. Man is a common good primarily for the family, but also for the various communities he belongs to, including the nation, the State, and the whole of humanity. It is good for the State and society when children are born, because they ensure the State's survival, while also helping develop the good of the communities to which they belong. Each human person must be welcomed into the world as a gift that adds to the common good, which in turn protects one's own good.

Without a notion of his own human value, man has taken on a utilitarian vision of the world. An unborn child is no longer seen as a person with dignity, because "persons" have been reduced to "things" which can be used or rejected according to man's purposes. John Paul II warns that in a civilization of use, "women can become an object for man, children a hindrance to parents, the family an institution obstructing the freedoms of its members."[856] As we saw earlier (3.1.4.), contraception has not led to a strengthening of the union of love in marriage, but has made it easier for men and women to use each other (though women are the largest victim), which has in turn led to unhappy and unfaithful marriages. When contraception fails, abortion permits unwanted children to be killed off, while the mothers are left with serious psychological, emotional, and sometimes physical repercussions, having been denied their motherhood. And even when children are born into the world, due to divorce they are often "deprived of a father or mother and condemned to be in fact *orphans of living parents*."[857] When individuals selfishly let their passions dictate their decisions, they are incapable of recognizing that love and freedom are linked to responsibility and duty. And other people often end up paying the consequences for their actions.

When the law does not include reference to objective, moral values, it does not resonate with man's deepest longings. Therefore, "[a]ll 'human rights' are ultimately fragile and ineffective, if at their root they lack the command to 'honor'; in other words, if they lack *an acknowledgment of the individual* simply because he is an individual, 'this' individual. *Of themselves, rights are not enough*."[858] Rights without any transcendental reference points

[854] Cf. M. Waldstein, "*The Common Good in St. Thomas and John Paul II*," 575.
[855] John Paul II*, Letter to Families*, 11.
[856] John Paul II*, Letter to Families*, 13.
[857] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 14.
[858] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 15.

remain only an obligation imposed by those in power. They do not encourage man to work to serve the common good, only to do what the law requires of him. When the law has "become nothing more than an obligation impose[d] from without, […] very soon we begin to look for its limits and try to find mitigating factors and expectations."[859] Rights are then consequently granted to some, but denied to others.

In a "civilization of love," man recognizes that he has freedom, but that he also lives in relation to other people, and thus must act in a way that serves the common good while respecting the freedom of others. In giving to others, man's freedom is not diminished, but "[f]reedom acquires new strength, by contrast, when a man consents to the unavoidable requirements of social life, takes on the manifold dimensions of human partnership, and commits himself to the service of human community."[860] In his freedom man realizes that he cannot simply do anything he wants, but that there are certain things he must do. He recognizes his own subjectivity, as a person with self-determination and free will, and thus respects the natural rights of others who have the same human dignity. Rather than society being composed of anonymous strangers and isolated individuals, man recognizes others as his "neighbor," as someone who is for him and with him. The civilization of love makes possible this "system of human life and coexistence: 'to be together' as a family, to be for one another, to make room in a community for affirming each person as such, for affirming 'this' individual person."[861] He recognizes that by destroying the freedom of one person, even an unborn person, man diminishes his own freedom and the capacity for freedom within society. "The more *common* the good, the *more properly one's own* it will also be: mine—your—ours. This is the logic behind living according to the good, living in truth and charity. If man is able to accept and follow this logic, his life truly becomes a 'sincere gift'."[862] Living according to the law of the gift is the foundation of society, sexual ethics, politics and international relations. It means living with and for others (solidarity) and governments being in the service of the human person (subsidiarity).

The essential witness to the common good and the gift of self is the family, because "*the family is at the center and the heart of the civilization of love.*"[863] The family is the foundation of society, and is the smallest society, in which people learn how to live in relation to others. Through the love and faithfulness of spouses and marriage, their acceptance of

[859] John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae* (25 March 1995), 48.
[860] *Gaudium et Spes*, 31.
[861] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 15.
[862] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 10.
[863] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 13.

children as a gift and continuation of the good of their family, and the loving way in which each member participates, giving to and assisting one another, the family provides the greatest witness to the truth about man's fulfillment. The family gives its members to society, allowing its members to start their own families while expanding the families they came from. Thus the family has a great effect on society, both in its functioning and in its witness. As Pope Paul VI observed, "[m]odern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he listens to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."[864] It is the responsibility of families, and thus of individuals within families, to witness to the truth of human freedom and human dignity, through an inner attitude of gift and love. For "[o]nly if the truth about freedom and the communion of persons in marriage and in the family can regain its splendor, will the building of the civilization of love truly begin".[865] The more the family lives out their identity, the more they can bring healing to the culture.

3.3.2. Mission: "To *Guard, Reveal and Communicate Love*"

By nature of its identity, the family has been given the mission "to *guard, reveal and communicate love*"[866]. The family has an "ecclesial task: the family is placed at the service of the building up of the Kingdom of God in history by participating in the life and mission of the Church."[867] The family does this by fulfilling its role as a "Domestic Church,"[868] that "is a living image and historical representation of the mystery of the Church."[869] Thus the family has the ecclesial task of participating "in the prophetic, priestly and kingly mission of Jesus Christ and of His Church"[870]. Through baptism, all Christians are united with Christ and share in his threefold mission or office (*munera*). As Janet Smith explains:

> *Munus* means much more than duty. One who knows classical Latin would as readily translate *munus* as "gift," "wealth and riches," "honor, or "responsibility" as "duty." One common classical Latin use of the word would be in reference to the bestowal of a public office or responsibility on a citizen. Being selected for such an office or

[864] Quoted in John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 23. Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Address to the Members of the Consilium de Laicis* (2 October 1974): AAS 66 (1974), 568.
[865] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 13.
[866] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.
[867] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 49.
[868] Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 11: "The family is, so to speak, the domestic church." Cf. John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 21: "The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason too it can and should be called 'the domestic Church.'" Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2204: "The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion. […] it can and should be called a domestic church."
[869] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 49. For a detailed study of the Domestic Church, Cf. J. Atkinson, *Biblical & Theological Foundations of the Family: The Domestic Church*, Washington, D.C. 2014: The Catholic University of America Press.
[870] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 50.

> responsibility would be considered an honor; the selection would entail certain duties, but ones that the recipient willingly embraces. The word is also often used synonymously for "gift" or "reward": it is something freely given by the giver and often, but not always, with the connotation that the recipient has merited the gift in some sense; it is given as a means of honoring the recipient. In Scripture and in the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, *munus* is used to refer both to gifts that men consecrate to God and to gifts and graces that men receive from God. […] Rather than being a burdensome duty, a *munus* is much closer to being an assignment or mission that is conferred as an honor on one who can be trusted and who is chosen to share the responsibility of performing good and important work.[871]

Married couples, having been united as one flesh *in* Christ, share in these three *munera* in a new and profound way. Marital and familial life becomes a true sharing in the ecclesial mission of the Church.

Priest

Of the three *munera* of Christ, Wojtyła directly highlighted only the priestly mission in his *Retreat for Engaged Couples*. He did this especially at the end of the retreat, reminding the couples that human love, family life, the generation and education of children, and human destiny all have something priestly to it, "because the Lord Jesus has treated marriage as participation in his priesthood, in his sacrifice."[872] In the retreat he does not go into what this means, but focuses rather on the symbol, the priest's stole, which is wrapped around then hands of the spouses as a sign of their participation in the priesthood of Christ.

In *Familiaris Consortio,* John Paul II highlights three aspects of participation in the priestly mission of Christ: "the sacraments, through the offering of one's life, and through prayer"[873]. First let us consider the "offering of one's life," which we see lived out in the mutual sanctification of the couple. John Paul II calls to mind the words of *Gaudium et Spes*:

> Jesus Christ "abides with them so that, just as He loved the Church and handed Himself over on her behalf, the spouses may love each other with perpetual fidelity through mutual self-bestowal.... For this reason, Christian spouses have a special sacrament by which they are fortified and receive a kind of consecration in the duties and dignity of their state. By virtue of this sacrament, as spouses fulfill their conjugal and family obligations, they are penetrated with the Spirit of Christ, who fills their whole lives with

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[871] Smith, J. *Self-Gift: Essays on Humanae Vitae and the Thought of John Paul II*, Steubenville, Ohio, 2018, Emmaus Road Publishing, 2. Cf. A. Perez-Lopez, *Procreation and the Spousal Meaning of the Body: A Thomistic Argument Grounded in Vatican II*, Eugene, Oregon 2017: Pickwick Publications, 15: "The word *communio* finds its true root, not in *unio* as is commonly thought, but in the word *munis, munia, and munus.* From the nominal viewpoint, 'communion' denotes a sharing in another's *munus* in another's office or mission, a sharing that is itself a gift, a good. What effects the common union inherent in communion is that exact sharing in another's mission or office, as in a common good. Thus, the very identity and mission of the church as Christ's body and God's people is envisioned in light of her participation in the *tria munera* of Christ."

[872] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 58.

[873] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 56.

> faith, hope and charity. Thus they increasingly advance towards their own perfection, as well as towards their mutual sanctification, and hence contribute jointly to the glory of God."[874]

Through the living out of the sacrament of Marriage in their daily life, the spouses are called to sanctification through the offering of their lives to each other and to their family. "Just as husbands and wives receive from the sacrament the gift and responsibility of translating into daily living the sanctification bestowed on them, so the same sacrament confers on them the grace and moral obligation of transforming their whole lives into a 'spiritual sacrifice' (*Lumen gentium*, 34)."[875] Everything that the couple does, from the most mundane to the most sublime, becomes an opportunity to offer themselves as a "spiritual sacrifice," giving glory to God.

The second way of participating in the priestly mission of Christ is through the sacraments, most especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation. Just as in his *Retreat for Engaged Couples* Wojtyła said that it is "through the most magnificent of prayers, that of the Holy Mass, we prepare ourselves in the best way possible to receive this great sacrament,"[876] so also John Paul II encouraged couples to continue to find strength in the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass:

> The Eucharist is the very source of Christian marriage. The Eucharistic Sacrifice, in fact, represents Christ's covenant of love with the Church, sealed with His blood on the Cross. [Cf. *Jn* 19: 34] In this sacrifice of the New and Eternal Covenant, Christian spouses encounter the source from which their own marriage covenant flows, is interiorly structured and continuously renewed."[877]

Each time the family goes to Mass, they find in the Eucharist a source of strength and renewal, that helps them carry out their ecclesial mission, as a community of life and love.

The sacrament of Reconciliation is also a great help to the family. "An essential and permanent part of the Christian family's sanctifying role consists in accepting the call to conversion that the Gospel addresses to all Christians."[878] The family, the domestic church, is a place where mercy and forgiveness are shown, but also where members of the family recognize their own need to ask for forgiveness, find healing, and grow in holiness.

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[874] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 56. Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 48.
[875] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 56. Cf. K. Wojtyła, "Pastoral Reflections on the Family" (1975) in *Person and Community*, 350: "The liturgical expression of this universal priesthood takes the form of participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice, but the place for offering a spiritual sacrifice is life itself—in this case, married and family life."[875]
[876] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 28.
[877] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 57.
[878] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 58.

Sin means separation from God. Because humans are relational beings, sin is never private, but affects community. The family discovers that "sin contradicts not only the covenant with God, but also the covenant between husband and wife and the communion of the family"[879]. However, through going to confession, "members of the family are led to an encounter with God, who is 'rich in mercy,' who bestows on them His love which is more powerful than sin, and who reconstructs and brings to perfection the marriage covenant and the family communion."[880] This transforms penitents into peacemakers, who are able to bring healing within the family and within society, especially through the witness of the love of spouses and parents.

The third way of participating in Christ's priestly mission is through prayer, especially prayer as a family. "By reason of their dignity and mission, Christian parents have the specific responsibility of educating their children in prayer, introducing them to gradual discovery of the mystery of God and to personal dialogue with Him."[881] The domestic Church should help their children participate in the liturgical prayer of the whole Church, especially through going to Mass together on Sundays, praying the Liturgy of the Hours and celebrating the feasts throughout the liturgical year. This can also be fostered by reading Scripture, devotions, and praying the Rosary together. Through prayer, the family is healed of individualism, and learns to better recognize their lives as individuals and as a family as a gift from God, who calls us into relationship with Himself. This in turn leads to prayer for the intentions of the Church and the world, thereby spreading the love of the family beyond the walls of the home, the Domestic Church.

Prophet

Through marriage preparation the couple should "rediscover and deepen the faith received in Baptism"[882] as they learn to unite their love story with God's love story with humanity. As we saw above (3.2.4.), the celebration of the sacrament of Matrinony, "in essence, is the proclamation in the Church of the Good News concerning married love. It is the word of God that 'reveals' and 'fulfills' the wise and loving plan of God for the married couple, giving them a mysterious and real share in the very love with which God Himself loves

[879] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 58.
[880] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 58.
[881] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 60.
[882] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 51.

humanity."[883] Already in the celebration of the wedding, the couple is living out their prophetic role.

This profession of faith within the sacramental celebration of marriage is "prolonged in the life of the married couple and of the family," which "*fulfills its prophetic role by welcoming and announcing the word of God*: it thus becomes more and more each day a believing and evangelizing community."[884] There is a need within marriage and the family to continually be evangelized and to evangelize.

This begins in the home through "family catechesis," through reading the Bible together, educating children in the faith, and witnessing to the love of God through the love of spouses and their love for their children. This witness and education is extremely important, especially in societies and cultures that are hostile to the Christian message. "To the extent in which the Christian family accepts the Gospel and matures in faith, it becomes an evangelizing community."[885] John Paul II viewed this ecclesial mission of evangelization as so important, that he recognized that "the future of evangelization depends in great part on the Church of the home."[886] Here we see the great value of sexuality within marriage, which leads not just to procreation, but also the education of children. This is an important task, through which the parents are called to grow in holiness through the gift of self to their family, as they come to better live out their prophetic role as teachers and witnesses of the faith. Through this, they equip their children to also live out their prophetic role within society, their friendships, and their future vocations.

King

Married couples and the family share in the kingly mission of Christ primarily through service. John Paul II said that "Just as Christ exercises His royal power by serving us, so also the Christian finds the authentic meaning of his participation in the kingship of his Lord in sharing His spirit and practice of service to man."[887] At the Last Supper Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment: "love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34). Inspired by Jesus Christ, the Christian family "welcomes, respects and serves every human being, considering each one in his or her dignity as a person and as a child

[883] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 51.
[884] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 51.
[885] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 52.
[886] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 52.
[887] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 63.

of God."[888] The family is called to welcome all people into their home, especially those who are poor, weak, or suffering injustice.

The kingly mission is also lived out through using freedom to grow in the moral life. As *Lumen Gentium says*, "Christ has communicated this royal power to His disciples that they might be constituted in royal freedom and that by true penance and a holy life they might conquer the reign of sin in themselves (Cf. Rom 6:12)."[889] The family gives witness to the healing power of Christ, who frees us from enslavement to sin, and brings us to participate in his kingly mission, freeing others from the reign of sin so that they might live in the Kingdom of God.

This especially applies to the love expressed by the spouses through the conjugal act. Recall that in his introduction to *Love and Responsibility*, Wojtyła acknowledged that "a problem exists, which can be described as an 'introduction of love into love.' In the first instance the word 'love' signifies the content of the greatest commandment, whereas in the second instance all that is formed on the basis of the sexual drive between a man and a woman."[890] The challenge is introducing God's love, the virtue of charity, into marital and sexual love. But as John Paul II acknowledges, through the graces of the sacrament of Matrimony, "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."[891] The love of husband and wife is "elevated and assumed into the spousal charity of Christ, sustained and enriched by His redeeming power."[892] By participating in Christ's spousal charity, the spouses share in his kingly *munera*, no longer being enslaved to concupiscence, but allowing their desires to be healed so that they can be a free expression of sacrificial love, a total gift of self. Thus, "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."[893]

Through the sacrament of Matrimony, Christ gives to spouses a real participation in his charity, through which their redemption is accomplished. This can have a healing effect first on the couple, and then on the culture, through the witness of the couple's love, which signifies and participates in Christ's spousal love for the Church. However, redemption is a grace, a gift

[888] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 64.
[889] *Lumen Gentium*, 36.
[890] K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, xxiii.
[891] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 13.
[892] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 13.
[893] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 13.

given to man that requires a personal response. As Wojtyła exhorts the couples at the end of his *Retreat for Engaged Couples*, "God must give you the grace. […] Implore God, and implore with me, so that what is pronounced with the mouth becomes truly the foundation of your life."[894] And as John Paul II reminds couples, "Precisely to *this man of concupiscence* there is given in marriage *the sacrament of* redemption *as grace* and sign of the covenant with God—and *it is assigned* to him *as an ethos*."[895] The sacrament of Matrimony can indeed be a healing sacrament. But it is not automatic. In order for marriage as a sacrament to be fully efficacious and healing, there needs to be "better and more intensive programs of marriage preparation,"[896] so that couples will understand the nature of marriage, the graces available to them, and the ethos assigned to them.

[894] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 59.
[895] John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them*, 520 (100:7).
[896] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.

CONCLUSION

Pope John Paul II said that "it is necessary to prepare young people for marriage, it is necessary to teach them love. Love is not something that is learned, and yet there is nothing else as important to learn!"[897] Based on his extensive pastoral experience working with young people, students, married couples, and families, John Paul II knew that through catechesis on the sacrament of Matrimony, it was possible to "teach them love" in a way in which marriage could be experienced as a healing sacrament. First, by bringing healing to the couple, whose desires are often wounded by sin, self-interest, and from past experiences. Second, by bringing healing to the culture through the mission and witness of the family in the Church. Through marriage preparation, couples should learn to open themselves to the healing graces of the sacrament, and "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."[898]

From the start of John Paul II's papacy he made ministry to the family a top priority, recognizing that the domestic church must be at the center of evangelization. In order to meet the challenges of our time, the family needs to be better rooted in its identity as a "community of life and love," so that it can fulfill its mission to "*guard, reveal and communicate love*," as a sacrament and icon of God's love for humanity and Christ's love for the Church.[899] Therefore, in *Familiaris Consortio* John Paul II called for "better and more intensive programs of marriage preparation in order to eliminate as far as possible the difficulties that many married couples find themselves in, and even more in order to favor positively the establishing and maturing of successful marriages"[900] As we have seen, this call for a renewal of marriage preparation was not based on some ideal vision of marriage and family that was divorced from reality, but was rooted in John Paul II's extensive pastoral experience.

One of the great insights into the pastoral experience of Karol Wojtyla, the future pope, comes from a three-day *Retreat for Engaged Couples* that he led in 1960. This retreat was only recently recovered from the archives and published for the first time in Polish in 2012 and in Italian in 2013. Through this dissertation, we have done a thorough analysis of the context and

[897] John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 122-123.
[898] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 49.
[899] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.
[900] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 66.

content of the retreat, in order to apply Wojtyla's approach and key themes to his later call as pope for the renewal of marriage preparation.

First, we considered the context (1.1.-1.3.). As a priest and college chaplain, Karol Wojtyła recognized a great need for education in love among young people and families. Within cultural and ethical contexts that did not support the flourishing of love, Wojtyła recognized that authentic education in love required the proposition of a living teaching rather than the imposition of sterile prescriptions, as found within an environment of lived presence and the accompaniment of mentors and guides where such love may genuinely be witnessed and experienced. Thus the group Środowisko was formed, as a community of young adults and young married couples that emerged from his service as a university chaplain. Common activities included trips to the theater, concerts, movies, dances, hiking, camping, kayaking, and bicycling. The group also provided Wojtyła the opportunity to converse about various topics, meet for spiritual direction, provide retreat days, as well as celebrate Mass, weddings, baptisms, and feast days.

Another contextual insight comes from two of Wojtyła's major works on marriage which were also published in 1960, the same year as his *Retreat for Engaged Couples*. The first, *Love and Responsibility*, was based on his lectures at the Catholic University of Lublin (*Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski*, or *KUL*) between 1957-1959. Although philosophical and dense, *Love and Responsibility* was also the fruit of conversations that Wojtyła had with students and young people from Środowisko. In the book, he explores the questions of human dignity and love, the nature of spousal love, the sexual drive, chastity, marriage and vocations. The second work, *The Jeweler's Shop*, was a play that Wojtyła also published in 1960, through which he explored many of the same themes as *Love as Responsibility*, but through the experiences of three couples, centered around love and marriage. Wojtyła utilizes many of the same words, phrases, and themes from these two works within his retreat.

Second, we considered the content of Wojtyła's *Retreat for Engaged Couples* (2.1-2.3). By focusing the retreat meditations on the liturgy from the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, Wojtyła was able to draw out the significance of the sacrament of Matrimony. He believed that "the sacrament of Matrimony is the introduction to married life, it is the threshold of this life. If we cross this threshold well, then it is very likely that also the successive path of marital life will unfold favorably."[901] Thus the three days of spiritual exercises are centered around the wedding vows.

[901] K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale*, 18.

In the first mediation, “To Swear to the Truth Before God,” Wojtyła focused on the vows themselves. The vows are a solemn oath that the bride and groom make before God and the Church. As ministers of the sacrament, it is important for the bride and groom to know what they are saying, because it is through speaking the words of the vows that they will become married. This helps us to understand the significance of what it means for the spouses to be the ministers of the sacrament of Matrimony, and the importance of imploring God’s grace, not just on the wedding day, but throughout the couple’s marital life.

In the second meditation, “Creative Love and Faithfulness to the End,” Wojtyła meditated on the connection between the vows of love and fidelity. Couples need to arrive at a point where there is active and mutual trust, built on accurate and reciprocal knowledge of each other. This requires personal maturity. Because the couple is joined together by God, marriage is indissoluble. This protects both the children and the love of the couple. In order to have a solid foundation, love cannot be built on immature sentiments or egoism, but must be a virtue. Reciprocity and uniting around the common good allows for love as a virtue to flourish and grow continually.

In the third mediation, “Conjugal Honor,” Wojtyła meditated on the ends of marriage: procreation, reciprocal help, and the satisfaction of the natural concupiscence of the flesh. Conjugal life must subordinate the third end to the first, in order to be faithful to man’s rational nature. The third end must also be subordinated to the second end, otherwise concupiscence of the flesh becomes the occasion for egoism and selfishness. Procreation not only means giving birth, but a responsibility to educate their children. The wedding rings symbolize a welding together of the couple, in which they both take on the end of the other as their own. Marriage is also a participation in Jesus’ priesthood and his sacrifice. Therefore, due to the greatness of the sacrament, the couple needs to approach the sacrament with humility, and prayerfully ask for the help of God’s grace throughout their marriage.

After analyzing the context and content of the retreat, we sought an application of its insights to the challenges of our times (3.1.). The foundations of marriage within contemporary society appear to be built upon unstable ground. Emerging adults are delaying marriage, resulting in a substantial time of separation from the influence of family and the witness of marital love. In the interim, many become immersed within a hookup culture of brief, uncommitted relationships and casual sexual encounters. This contributes to a void of formation and doubt regarding the capacity of self or others to enter into authentic lifelong marital commitment. Many are wounded by a consumerist, utilitarian, and/or temporary mentality, which thwarts their capacity for self-gift, reciprocity, and love.

Based on the context and content of Wojtyła's *Retreat for Engaged Couples,* we were able to apply his approach to marriage preparation in a way that can truly meet the cultural challenges of our time (3.2.). We saw that there needs to be a pastoral priority for preparing couples for marriage, if we want to reverse the trend of the near 70 percent decline in sacramental marriages in the United States over the past 50 years. Following Wojtyła's approach, this requires accompaniment, catechesis, and a focus on the liturgy of the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*. The liturgy itself is a great catechetical tool, that can heal the imagination of the couple. Through this, couples can come to see that the sacrament of Matrimony provides a way of human flourishing distinct from secular approaches to marriage. Marriage preparation needs to include sacramental instruction, helping to heal the desires of the spouses in order to prepare them to make sincere gifts of themselves to each other, as the ministers of the sacrament within the mission of the Church. This healing of desire is built into the concrete images, practices and narratives prescribed by the rite. Through sacramental marriage, couples seek to strengthen their love sacramentally by uniting it with Christ's love for the Church, while at the same time participating in and becoming a sacrament of that love. As they bring their love to the altar on their wedding day, their love can be transformed so that it will not merely be a self-enclosed love, but a love that leads both to look out together as they seek to transform the world through the fruitfulness of their marriage.

We also saw that marriage preparation should lead the couple to recognize their identity as "a community of life and love," in order to better live out their mission "to *guard, reveal and communicate love*"[902] (3.3.). As a community of life and love, the family bears witness to dignity of the human person, the common good, and the unity of mankind. Through this, a true "civilization of love"[903] and a "culture of life" can be built. The family lives out their mission as a domestic church, with the ecclesial mission to bear witness to the love of God in the world, through sharing in Christ's triple mission as priest, prophet, and king. The family is called to sanctification, announcing the word of God, and building up the kingdom of God. In doing so, the couple not only brings healing to the culture, but experiences healing itself, as the family learns to "become what you are"[904].

Wojtyła's pastoral approach and *Retreat for Engaged Couples* has shown us that we cannot evangelize and form lifelong disciples by negating the demands of marriage and the sacraments, nor simply by preaching the rules. It will take a lot of work of pastoral

[902] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.
[903] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 13.
[904] John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 17.

accompaniment and formation, as well as a lot of patience and prayer. However, as St. John Paul II said, "I see the dawning of a new missionary age, which will become a radiant day bearing an abundant harvest, if all Christians, and missionaries and young churches in particular, respond with generosity and holiness to the calls and challenges of our time"[905] I pray that this dissertation can provide a response to the challenges of our time, and be in service to the better training of priests and laity for helping form better marriages and families, thereby building up the Church.

[905] John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 92.

APPENDIX:

Build Your House Upon the Rock: Retreat for Engaged Couples[906]

First Meditation: To Swear to the Truth Before God

It is a very ancient custom in the Church that all who approach the holy sacraments should adequately prepare themselves first. This ancient custom dates back to the beginnings of Christianity. So it was in the first centuries of Christianity with those preparing for baptism, the so-called catechumens. They first went through a rather long preparation period, that lasted a year, two, or even longer. This is still the case today, for example, in the case of the Sacrament of the Altar. We know that children are prepared for their first Confession and for first Communion for a period that lasts a sufficient amount of time, in order to help them understand this mystery of faith. The same happens for the sacrament of Confirmation. Those who are anticipating receiving this sacrament first prepare themselves. It cannot be otherwise in the case of the sacrament of Matrimony. Given that marriage is a sacrament, those who are about to receive it must first prepare themselves. For this reason, catechesis is necessary.

The word "*catechesis"* is of Greek origin. It refers precisely to the word "*catechumen"* and to these ancient customs of preparing the faithful to receive the holy sacraments, to a sort of initiation to the sacraments. I want to highlight immediately that these three days of preparation, of catechesis, are intended to prepare for the sacrament of Matrimony in itself. I do not intend to prepare for marriage understood as a state of human life, as a series of tasks related to this state. These are all very broad topics, and I do not want to go into them here. I only intend this as preparation for the sacrament of Matrimony itself.

It is obvious that the sacrament in a certain sense projects its light on all of married life and that in preparing for the sacrament we are indirectly preparing ourselves for the whole of married life. Furthermore, the sacrament of Matrimony is the introduction to married life, it is the threshold of this life. If we cross this threshold well, then it is very likely that also the successive path of marital life will unfold favorably.

Finally, these catecheses are dictated from a deep concern for the needs of our time. In fact, these days, Christian sacramental marriage seems to be subjected to particular trials. We must therefore do everything in order to resist these trials. That is all for the introduction, which

[906] My working translation of K. Wojtyła, *Budować dom na skale: rekolekcje dla narzeczonych*, Kraków – Rzym 2014: Instytut Dialogu Międzykulturowego im. Jana Pawła II.

explains the theme of our meditations for these three days. And now let us get to the heart of it.

The Religious Character of the Marriage Vows

What is Sacramental Marriage Preparation actually preparing for? I would say that it prepares us to make a vow. Every marriage, wherever it is celebrated, is always a certain agreement, a contract. Sacramental marriage is also a contract, a religious one. This contract is stipulated between two people: a man and a woman. They must stipulate it after mature reflection, when they have already completely decided to live together as spouses and to form a family. And so this decision of two people, whether it be in civil or primitive societies, possesses a social significance because it serves the existence of this or that society. For this reason, society watches over the stipulation of the marriage contract.

However, a religious, sacramental marriage is not just any ordinary contract, but a particularly solemn contract. In itself the contract is something similar to secular, civil, non-religious marriage. What constitutes the specificity, the peculiarity of sacramental ecclesial marriage, is its religious character, and this religious character is visible above all in the vows.

It would serve us here to mention the words that the man and woman pronounce in the church when they contract the marriage. Certainly, everyone knows these words by heart, but here I will mention them anyway.[907] Each of the two persons pronounce the following words:

> "I N. take you N. as my wife (husband)
> and to you I vow love, faith, and honor in marriage,
> and to not abandon you until death.
> Help me, O Lord God Almighty,
> One and Three, with all the Saints."[908]

[907] Note that I retain the formula that Wojtyła uses, since this will be the basis of his catecheses and reflection. Although different from the current English version of the rite, it has similarities: "I, N., take you, N., to be my wife (husband). I promise to be faithful to you, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love you and to honor you all the days of my life." *The Roman Ritual, The Order of Celebrating Matrimony: English Translation According to the Second Typical Edition*. Catholic Book Publishing Corp., New Jersey 2016, 30.

[908] The liturgy of the sacrament of Matrimony has undergone changes regarding the sequence of the individual rites and the subsequent introduction in the Polish language. For example, in the rite in effect in 1960, when Bishop Karol Wojtyła held the spiritual exercises, the rite of the exchange of rings preceded the pronunciation of the matrimonial formula. In the formula appeared the word "faith," while the word "fidelity" was introduced in the marital vows in 1963, with the new ritual of sacraments and sacramentals. The marriage liturgy was enriched so as to emphasize above all the active participation of the spouses, who are the ministers of the sacrament. Cf. *List Episkopatu Polski w związku z zatwierdzeniem nowego wydania Rytuału* (24 marca 1963 r.), [w:] „Notificationes e Curia Metropolitana Cracoviensi" nr 7-8 (1963), s. 202-205. Footnote made by editors of the text.

During these three days we will reflect only on the words of these vows, the marriage formula. By analyzing it we will come to grasp the essence of sacramental marriage.

Vows Pronounced Before God

In the words that you have just heard, four stand out very clearly: "to you I vow". This "to you I vow" is addressed to the other person. The man addresses it to the woman, and she addresses it to him. She addresses him saying: "to you I vow". For this reason, in Polish the sacrament of Matrimony is often called "*ślubem*" (vow/marriage).[909]

However, the vows are contained also in the other words of the formula just cited. At the end we hear the words: "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the Saints". While these words are spoken it would be natural to raise your right hand. This is always done while making an oath.[910] The fiancées in this moment do not raise their hands, in fact they have their right hands joined by the stole of the priest.[911] This is an even deeper symbol. Therefore [the words] "Help me, O Lord God Almighty," determine the character of the entire formula; they attribute to it the value of an oath. It is in these words that each of the persons that contract marriage invokes God as a witness, and swearing, as you know, means precisely to call on God as your witness. [Witness] of what? Either of one's own sincerity, or of one's will to make this decision. In the first case it is a matter of the truth of the intellect, in the second case of the authenticity of the will. [In contracting marriage] it is mainly the second case. Therefore, when at the foot of the altar we say: "Help me, O Lord God" – we call God to witness our intention of will and not only the truthfulness of our words: "I am telling the truth." Because one could speak these words with a poverty of intention: "this is true now, and later it will no longer be true." Thus we call upon God as a witness to the authenticity of our will and of our decision, as if we would say: "I truly want this which I vow here. I really want it." Only then, the final words, "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the Saints," constitute a frame that encapsulates the words of the marriage vows. We call on God as our witness.

My dear ones, we need to reflect on the marriage vows, because they are a great thing. The vows determine the magnitude of your decision, the greatness of the whole matter. If you

[909] In Polish the word "*ślub"* means both "marriage" and "vow".
[910] Here Wojtyła literally says "raise two fingers," reflecting the Polish custom of raising two fingers while swearing an oath. Since the American and British custom is to raise one's right hand when swearing an oath, I have adjusted it so that it is clearer.
[911] During the exchange of vows (consent), the Polish custom is for the priest to place a stole over the right hands of the bride and groom, which are joined. This is to signify that they are the minsters of the sacrament of Matrimony, and that they are united through the priestly love of Christ the Bridegroom for his bride, the Church. Wojtyła will explain this custom in the last section of his third meditation.

call on God to be a witness, it is not possible to reach any higher. And one cannot base your decision, your promise, on something higher. It cannot be verified more fully. A person cannot say anything higher than what is said in this moment; this is the maximum. It cannot be verified more fully. This means that in this moment she and he are so permeated by the greatness of this decision that no human authority is sufficient for them. They have need of God Himself as a witness to their readiness and maturity: "Help me, O Lord God". We need to reflect well on this, because these words, pronounced only once in a lifetime, determine the greatness of marriage and the greatness of the commitment lived out in everyday life.

The Ministers of Marriage and their Witnesses

Every marriage, wherever it is contracted, including civil marriage, is contracted in the presence of witnesses, official witnesses. This is also the case in the Church. Sacramental marriage is contracted before official witnesses. The official witness of the marriage on behalf of the Church is the priest. In addition, two other persons are usually called upon to sign the marriage document on behalf of all the other participants in the act. And the priest, after having received the matrimonial vows of the betrothed, addresses all present with these words: "I take you, that are here present, as witnesses, so that you may be witnesses of the present marriage hereby legally contracted and confirmed by the Church."[912]

So these persons serve as witnesses. In the name of the Church the official witness is the priest. He should be, if possible, the pastor of the bride's home parish, but can also be a substitute or another [priest] delegate. Furthermore, the witnesses are the laity who participate in the act [the celebration] of marriage.

Perhaps it surprises you that the priest is a witness. Normally it is said that the priest imparts the holy sacraments, just as he imparts baptism or administers Holy Communion. This is not the case with marriage. The one who imparts the sacrament is called a minister. The priest is not the minister of the sacrament of Matrimony. Keep this in mind. This is the only sacrament of which the Catholic priest not only is not, but cannot be the minister.[913]

[912] These words are not in the current English formula of *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*.
[913] Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1623: "According to Latin tradition, the spouses as ministers of Christ's grace mutually confer upon each other the sacrament of Matrimony by expressing their consent before the Church. In the tradition of the Eastern Churches, the priests (bishops or presbyters) are witnesses to the mutual consent given by the spouses, but for the validity of the sacrament their blessing is also necessary." Footnote made by editors of the text.

The ministers of the sacrament of Matrimony, those who impart the sacrament, are the spouses themselves, that is, the persons who contract the marriage. And this is another particularity on which we need to reflect. Remember that when you find yourself at the foot of the altar, you yourselves impart on one another the sacrament of Matrimony. If there were an exceptional situation – and sometimes there are certain situations, at least during the last war – in which the Catholic Christians intend to contract the sacrament of Matrimony, but there wasn't a priest, I repeat: if a situation of this type would occur, then the sacrament could be celebrated even without him. Even without him, but I repeat: only in an exceptional situation. They are in fact the ministers of the sacrament of Matrimony. And so we see that there are present in this sacrament the ministers: the spouses – the betrothed, and the witnesses: the official witness – the priest, and in addition to him also other persons who participate in the wedding celebration.

However, due to the fact that the couple contracts the sacrament of Matrimony by pronouncing vows, the whole act tends upward, it rises toward a majesty greatly unmeasurable, toward a Witness without equal: toward God. It is He that they call on as a witness saying: "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the Saints," help me! And also for this reason before the sacrament of Matrimony it would be necessary to repeat what the bishop says to the deacons that receive holy orders: he says to them: "Be attentive to that which you do!" I today repeat it to you, my dear ones: Be attentive to that which you do! All of this does not remain on the level of man, it is not only a human question. If it is a sacrament, it is also a divine thing. God here is called upon as a witness, and one cannot call God a witness in vain. We must have a solid foundation for what we do, what we want, and what we intend to do, if we are to call upon God as a witness.

To Implore the Grace of God for a Lifetime

Perhaps by putting the question in such terms I have scared you a little. Therefore, I immediately want to draw attention to another moment of the same vows and even of these same words. Here, you say these words: "I take you as my spouse, and to you I vow love, faith, and honor in marriage, and to not abandon you until death." In this there is something great, there is a very distant perspective. Here, the two young spouses kneel, young people on whom life is smiling, and we hear them make the promise, "to not abandon you until death." It is a very distant perspective, one that is once and for all, irrevocable. But immediately after: "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the Saints." I said before that this "help

me" means to call on God as a witness. I will say more: it is making an appeal to God to be a witness. An appeal, but to "help me." What do we find when we emphasize the same word differently? A supplication: "Help me!"

My dear ones, when you find yourself at the foot of the altar on the day of your wedding, both meanings resound in these words of the marriage vows. The invocation resounds – to call on God to be a witness. You are mature for marriage to the extent that you may resonate with this invocation. But the other meaning of this "help me!" can also resound. As expression of supplication: "Help me, O Lord God Almighty, One and Three, with all the Saints." An expression of supplication. And this supplication is even more an intention. After all, this long perspective of life, of a shared life, maybe at first is seen only from the perspective of happiness. But this long perspective of life is certainly also linked to suffering and sadness, to disappointment, and various difficulties that you must go through. For this the words "help me" are pronounced with a tone of profound supplication. And this tone, dear ones, is appropriate here. Why? Because marriage is a sacrament, and you know well that a sacrament is a visible, exterior sign of grace. Thus the words "help me," the supplication "help me," is appropriate here. Christ, the Lord God, has instituted marriage precisely as a sacrament with the intention of helping, to help all those that contract it, who receive this sacrament.

Sanctifying grace renders us children of God, it is therefore a supernatural state of souls. And this is given to us also through the sacrament of Matrimony. As with any other sacrament. The difference is that marriage deepens, it strengthens the state of grace in us if we are well prepared for it. We should therefore receive this sacrament in a state of grace. For this reason, we first go to confession and receive Holy Communion, in order to be in a state of grace. And the marriage itself, as a sacrament, deepens this state of grace within us. And when we say, "help me," we not only mean in the moment in which we contract the sacrament of Matrimony. Rather, we mean for our entire future: the various moments, instances, and situations that we cannot even imagine now, these difficult and critical situations, which will lead us to invoke God in a loud voice: "help me!" And with this in a certain sense we already predispose ourselves for the future, for the active grace that this sacrament guarantees us. Naturally, it guarantees it for the future, but on the condition that you are bound by a life [together]. In the beginning of our reflections I mentioned this: that in reality I intend to speak only about the preparation for the sacrament of Matrimony, but this preparation in a certain sense affects the entirety of marital life. This moment is projected [on married life] until the end.

Here we interrupt the catecheses, which we will continue tomorrow. Now I invite you to participate in the Holy Mass, since I have linked these catecheses for engaged couples that

approach the sacrament of Matrimony within the period of the festivity of the Christmas holidays with the Holy Mass, so that we do not limit ourselves to listening, but also praying, and, through the most magnificent of prayers, that of the Holy Mass, we prepare ourselves in the best way possible to receive this great sacrament. Amen.

Second Meditation: Creative Love and Faithfulness to the End

The theme of the first pre-matrimonial catechesis, that of yesterday, was the fact of the vows in themselves. We must prepare ourselves for the sacrament of Matrimony, that is, we must concretely prepare ourselves to make the vows. Today we will seek to penetrate the content of these vows, that is to understand, at least in part, what each person who contracts marriage promises to the other person with whom they unite in marriage. We will return therefore to the words of the matrimonial formula: "To you I vow love, faith, and honor in marriage, and to not abandon you until death."

And therefore "to you I vow," that is I promise – I promise solemnly. I promise in the religious sense, because to vow signifies exactly to promise. To promise in the secular sense is not [the same as] to make a vow. To make a vow signifies to promise in the religious sense, recalling the Lord God. We know already from yesterday's meditations that this vowing is at the same time an oath, in which you call on God as a witness. Therefore "to you I vow love". This is the first object of the marital vows. When the spouses pronounce these words at the foot of the altar, they usually find in themselves a rich foundation of feelings that sustain that which is promised, what they vow. "To you I vow love" – when they say this, they also usually experience a very vivid feeling of love. But perhaps exactly due to the fact that they feel love, they don't understand with the intellect the fundamental sense of that which they promise. And therefore, today we will try to analyze this essential sense of love, in order to understand that which the spouses vow in the moment of marriage.

Trust as the Fruit of Faithful Love

From the vow to love, we must immediately pass to the second word, as well as the second element of the vow, of the promise of marriage. And therefore "to you I vow love, faith". Of which faith do you speak here? We know that faith indicates a certain religious attitude toward the Lord God. To recognize as true that which God says. In this part of the marriage vows we don't intend faith in this sense. It is about something else. It is about

faithfulness. And therefore “to you I promise faith” means more or less “to you I promise fidelity”. Love and fidelity. Two things, two substances, two attitudes, two forms of commitment that are interrelated, of which the second is the consequence of the first. Consequence and confirmation, or, in other words, preparation for the first, a way toward it. What does fidelity signify – to you I vow fidelity, faith? To have faith in a person means to have trust in the person, that is to rely on a person. When therefore in the moment of marriage each of these two persons, each of the spouses promise faith, that is fidelity, it means: “To you I give the assurance that you can count on me in life. To you I assure that you can entrust yourself to me. To you I vow faith.” Naturally this promise in this moment is essential, indispensable. “You can count on me”. It is even a very ambitious promise. Marriage in general is an ambitious thing. And this promise, also, is ambitious. But a person has a right to be ambitious in this way; not only the right, but the need. In this moment man must be ambitious, that is, he must be mature to the point that he can count on himself.

So it is from the point of view of those who make vows. I want to be the man, that person on whom you can count on in life. I want to be the woman on whom you can count on in life. From the point of view of the other, that is from the one who receives this promise, from her point of view, if we consider the promise made by the groom, or from the groom’s point of view, if we consider the promise made by the bride. This is active trust. On the one hand there is the foundation of trust, of security, and on the other hand there is the active trust: I trust a person, I count on them – this must be the point at which you arrive.

My dear ones, this must be the end point of a long process. It cannot be a casual thing, it cannot happen from today to tomorrow, nor from one month to the other. It must be the outcome of a long process. It must be based on accurate knowledge of the other. Of accurate knowledge of their values and – I will say also – of their weaknesses. Because otherwise there cannot be confidence. You can respect a person highly, but to have faith in them, to count on them for your whole life, requires much more.

It is therefore something that one arrives at after a long process, a process of knowledge. Of reciprocal knowledge of each of the persons that speak these vows and that receive the vows: since one speaks and the other accepts these vows, then conversely the second speaks the vows and the other accepts them. Each of the persons that speak and accept these words must be secure of that which is said and of that which they hear. Therefore, if you know the defects and the weaknesses of the one who speaks these words, or if the one speaking knows their own defects and their own weaknesses, they must have at the same time the conviction that despite this they can remain together always. Despite this I promise love and faith. Faith,

that is fidelity. The fidelity that I will be with you, that we are together, that I will be a support for you, I will be a help for you, I will be the person closest to you. We see that an analysis of this second word contained in the marital promise, of faith, tells us much more about the first word of the vows, of love.

This second word is juxtaposed, for contrast, with the concept of betrayal. To be faithful is the positive. Contrary to this positive concept is to betray, that is, to be unfaithful. And we know well this concept in relation to marriage. At times we may speak about and hear talk of marital infidelity. Marital betrayal is truly the loss of respect for the need of fidelity. It signifies to break the foundation on which the martial promise is based. You can count on me, I am the person, the man, the woman, on whom you must count on in life.

In analyzing this marital vow, it is good to reflect also on the opposite. Maybe in the moment in which the spouses are full of emotions, the possibility of betrayal does not even pass through their heads. But man is a weak being and must defend himself from this possibility in a more concrete and profound way than the simple feelings or emotions of the moment. And it is precisely this deeper defense that leads to a fuller understanding of the content of the marriage vows.

The Indissolubility of Marriage

With the second word of the promise, with the fidelity that we promise at the foot of the altar, is connected, even more strictly, the last element of the promise: the fact of "to not abandon you until death". It is an expression of fidelity in its full consequences. The fact of not abandoning you until death means: we will remain faithful until death. In other words: we will be together until the moment in which death take one of us away. We will be together. You speak of the indissolubility of the sacramental marital bond.

Christian Marriage as Christ the Lord instituted it is a monogamous marriage. Monogamy, the bond of one man and one woman, is an indissoluble marriage. It signifies that it does not allow for divorce. There is no possibility of divorce. If the marital bond was contracted, and contracted validly, in a way that neither of the parties can contest the validity, then the bond cannot be dissolved. And for this reason, when the priest accepts the marital promise of both of the spouses, he then repeats the words of the book of Genesis, the words of the Gospel: "What God has joined together let no man put asunder" (Cf. Genesis 1:27; 2:24; Matthew 19:6). And therefore marriage is indissoluble.

In effect, the institution of marriage in various eras has suffered from deformations and deviations under the form of polygamous marriage, polygamy, and by allowing for divorce, but no one would affirm that this state of things witnesses to the perfection of the married life, and no one would affirm that this state of things witnesses to a high moral culture of a certain era or of a certain society. Monogamous marriage and indissolubility are always proof of the high moral culture of an age or of a specific pair of human beings. Why? This thesis is supported by various reasons. But there are two reasons which we need to highlight.

The first reason is concern for the children. Marriage is in fact the beginning of the family. The spouses give life to a new human being. And the children that grow from them have an important human right to have their parents. And they can have their parents only on the condition that the spouses, both father and mother, live together with stability. If they divorce, if they contract other bonds, above all another marriage, then the children will become deprived of this right. They are deprived of a great fundamental human right, the right of children. It is an immense injustice.

The second reason to favor the indissolubility of marriage, for refusing divorce, is the consideration of human love. If love – that which unites a man and a woman – is worthy of its name, if it is to be true love and not only an investment of passion sanctioned by the law, it must be indissoluble. We rightly feel that the dissolubility of love is a contradiction. Between dissolubility and love there is a contrast. If you admit dissolubility, then you do not effectively speak of love. In this case it is an adventure that lasts more or less long, but you cannot call such an adventure love. And therefore there is another reason: the consideration of human love, of the genuineness of love, of its authenticity – using an expression loved today – this second reason justifies the indissolubility of marriage.

Naturally we could much more deeply analyze both the first, and above all the second reason, especially from the psychological point of view. Marital life involves a particular unity, a particular intimacy of coexistence. Breaking, annihilating, erasing all this, is equivalent to trampling on the personalities, to trample on our humanity. And here even the most talented journalist, publisher or writer would not be able to conceal the bareness of this fact.

"And to not abandon you until death" – it is the last consequence of fidelity and is, as we have seen, also the last consequence of love. In the concept of love, of love that is full and complete, both loyalty and indissolubility are found. And it is necessary to keep this in mind, to be aware of it, to want it, when you make this promise so binding, great, and formulated before the divine majesty: to you I vow love, faith, and honor in marriage – of which we will speak tomorrow – and to not abandon you until death.

Reciprocity and the Common Good of the Spouses

My dear ones, usually when the spouses find themselves at the foot of the altar, they pronounce these great words, full of substance for their life, with a certain easiness and also lightness. This is due to the fact that they have a casual basis for these words, usually they find a basis in feelings. And they build on this. However, this material for construction is only raw material, and is not yet a finished construction, a finished creation – while love is creation. It is terrible that the innocence that accompanies the sublime words of the marital promise can be transformed into hate. But let us leave aside this extreme possibility.

There is another enemy of love that can ruin a lot, that can destroy much of the inner work of human life. This second enemy, a hidden enemy, a conspirator latent in each of us without exception, we call egoism. It is the adversary of love. What does egoism bring? It makes me seek only my own good, I seek myself. Instead, in marriage we must seek the common good together. Marriage is not my "I" and your "I" – my good and your good – as two opposing poles. Marriage is: us and our good.

There must be here a great unity between your I and my I. When I pronounce the words: "to you I vow love," there is a very great unity, a maturity, that must already be "us". Not only my I and your I, but the desire for the common good, the desire for a development, for a development of life through the common good, our good. This background explains the role of the child very well. Of this we will speak again further on – the child becomes exactly an expression of this commonality, of our good. In order for there to exist a true desire for the common good, there must be reciprocity. What does reciprocity mean? Reciprocity means that I want your good as if it was my own good, and on the other hand you want my good as if it was yours.

Fidelity and friendship – reciprocal friendship – all this must exist so that you can say: "to you I promise love". And my dear ones, here this must be a project, a long-term project. The mood of the moment is not enough, the fact that I now feel committed, and especially when these feelings are carried away by passion. It must be a long-term creation project. And for this it is a good thing to examine this love, at its development, because feelings oscillate, and sometimes go away by themselves, but virtue can create continually. And love is a virtue. Which is why I appreciate so much, for example, the phrase I hear from a young person after a few years of marriage, "love grows continuously." What does this signify? Passion grows?

Feelings grow? No, it means that the unity grows. The reciprocity grows, the comprehension grows, the desire for the common good and the common creation of this good grows.

At the conclusion of today's catecheses I want to read to you and leave you with a text from Sacred Scripture, to which I exhort you to return often, every so often, to meditate on these words, verifying the development of your love in marriage in light of them. It is the text of the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 13. The apostle writes:

> "Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." (1 Cor 13:4-8)

Love never fails.

Third Meditation: Conjugal Honor

We have dedicated the second of the catecheses on preparation for the sacrament of Matrimony, that of yesterday, on the explanation, at least in part, of the content of the marital promise. We know that the vows in their entirety sound like this:

> "I N. take you N. as my wife (husband)
> and to you I vow love, faith, and honor in marriage,
> and to not abandon you until death.
> Help me, O Lord God Almighty,
> One and Three, with all the Saints."

The first day, in the first catecheses, we analyzed this matrimonial formula as an oath, and therefore as an act in which we call on God as a witness. Yesterday we analyzed its content, and that which is meant by "to you I promise love, faith, […] and to not abandon you until death." We have tried to understand how the question of the love of the spouses, of fidelity, of the indissolubility of the marriage, is configured in light of the marital promise. We have seen that all these objects of the marital promise, because they are the object of an oath, of its content, contain each other, reciprocally give rise to each other, and in a certain sense compose the complete image of conjugal love. Today we will submit to a similar analysis the last element of the martial vows which we have left: honor. "To you I vow love, faith, and honor in marriage, and to not abandon you until death."

The Ends of Marriage

How should we understand conjugal honor?[914] The word *honor* in common language has a rather broad sense. We define a man as honorable that diligently attends to his duties, above all the duties that derive from his state. It is such a person that we call an honorable person. Above all the marriage vows speak expressly of conjugal honor, thus restricting this concept. It is a matter of obliging oneself to the honor that springs from the conjugal state. Even this conjugal honor can be understood in a more or less broad sense. In a broader sense this honor, that derives from the fact of entering into the conjugal state, coincides especially with human honor. In marriage one needs to be a just person, an honorable person. We need to be all the more honorable because we have, as it were, bound ourselves to another person.

Yesterday we talked about this fact, of this **"**wager**"** on the other, of the security and trust that marriage demands. Therefore, you must be an honorable person due to the fact that another person is bound to you in an indissoluble way. Such honor is simply part of the love and fidelity that the marital vows emphasize so strongly. But in a higher, more exact meaning, this conjugal honor is very closely related to the realization of the ends of marriage.

Marriage is a particular human state, a special one. We know that there are other states, but marriage is the state of man, of people, most common in human life. And within this state certain ends are characteristic. Usually there are considered the following three ends of marriage: the first end is procreation, in Latin *procreatio*. The second end is reciprocity and the reciprocal help of the spouses – of the husband of the wife. The third end, which is highlighted above all by St. Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 7:1-2, 9)[915] – the third end is the satisfaction of the natural concupiscence of the flesh. These are the three ends, in this order.[916]

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[914] Within the formula of the vows, I translate "uczciwość małżeńską" as "honor in marriage," reflecting the three promises made in the words of consent: love, fidelity, and honor. However, when Wojtyła refers to "uczciwość małżeńską" as a term that goes beyond ordinary "honor" (uczciwość), I refer to it as "conjugal honor" for clarity. This could also be translated as "integrity" or "conjugal integrity," as it is in John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. M. Waldstein. Boston 2006: Pauline Books and Media, 539, 543, 546, 614, 615 (Audiences 105:1; 106:2 107:4; 117b2, 6).

[915] 1 Corinthians 7:1-2: "Now in regard to the matters about which you wrote: 'It is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman,' but because of cases of immorality every man should have his own wife, and every woman her own husband." 7:9: "but if they cannot exercise self-control they should marry, for it is better to marry than to be on fire."

[916] The Code of Cannon Law of 1917 mentions the generation and the education of the children as the first end and the reciprocal help and the mitigation of concupiscence as secondary ends (Can. 1013). The Code of Canon Law of 1983 indicates two ends: the good of the spouses and the generation and education of children (Can. 1055 and 1061). The Church in her doctrine highlights that the ends of marriage are strictly interconnected (cf. *Gaudium et spes* 48, *Humanae vitae* 11, *Familiaris consortio* 32). Cf. John Paul II, *Gratissimam Sane* [Letter to Families], 10: "The words of consent define the common good of the *couple and of the family.* First, the common good of the spouses: love, fidelity, honor, the permanence of their union until death—"all the days of my life". The good

St. Paul, [as] I said, also highlights the third end, which conforms to nature. In themselves, the concupiscence of the flesh is not focused on generation. It is a simple consequence of a natural impulse, of the sexual impulse, which has been given to mankind by the Creator for great ends, that is, for the preservation of the existence of humanity. Therefore, when we speak of physical desire or even the concupiscence of the flesh and its satisfaction, this must not immediately be associated with something morally negative, with a sin, with something morally evil.

However, the satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh is not an end unto itself in marriage, nor is it the primary end of marriage. We can easily agree. Those who adhere to the principles of morality, those who allow themselves to be guided by respect for the dignity of women, cannot accept the idea that a person can contract marriage only or above all to satisfy the concupiscence of the flesh. Nobody will accept this. This approach to the problem – we sense it and we understand it clearly – would be beneath human dignity.

The satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh is itself an end of marriage, but it is not an autonomous end, nor is it a primary end. Yes, it is an end, but an end subordinated to the first two that I mentioned. And only on this condition can conjugal life have its moral foundations: if this third end – the satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh – is subordinated to the first two.

Conjugal Life and Offspring

Above all, there is a need to subordinate this third end of marriage to the first end. The first end, as we have heard, is the generation of offspring, procreation. The physical communion of the spouses, or conjugal life, by its nature is oriented to procreation. By its nature it serves to bring offspring to the world. And thus, if we must remain faithful to nature, this faithfulness to nature is for man faithfulness to reason, because man is a rational being. Therefore, if we men, rational beings, must remain faithful to nature, in the field of conjugal life we must subordinate the third end to the first. I mean, to subordinate the satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh to the generation of offspring, to procreation.

How should this be understood in more detail? We need to understand this from the sense that when the spouses join together, they must take into account the possibility of procreation. Simply this. The Church does not pretend that spouses only join in order to

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of both, which is at the same time the good of each, must then become the good of the children." Footnote made by editors of the text.

procreate. It does not pose the question in these terms: conjugal intimacy is only right if the spouses want to have children, only in this case and on this condition. It is always right if, lying together, they keep in mind that they can become a father and a mother, that they can have children. This is the first principle that we need to introduce here.

Second principle: the subordination of the third end to the first allows for the so-called family planning or the so-called just, moral regulation of conception. In any case it doesn't exclude it. What is intended?

It is a question which borders on biology and medicine. I do not want to explore this problem here, because it is not the role of the priest; of this aspect is needed biologists, naturalists, doctors, and it is up to them to expose couples to this, to give instruction to the fiancées and then to the spouses in this regard. It is even a moral obligation of the doctor to give instruction to the engaged couple or to the spouses on all that medicine knows about this subject, when he or she is asked for advice.

Naturally, he must communicate it according to the correct state of medical knowledge. Considering all this, the question of the so-called family planning or regulation of births, from the moral point of view, consists in the fact that the spouses who have just reasons for not wanting more children or for not wanting children in a certain period can plan the conception of the child, exploiting the periods of the woman's cycle in which she, by nature, is infertile. This regulation, the natural regulation, demands however the constant subordination of the third end to the first. In fact, it is only possible when the spouses are able to preserve continence while living together. Therefore, the principle of subordination of the third end of marriage, that of the satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh, to the first end, that of the generation of offspring, procreation – this principle is realized in continence, even in so-called periodic abstinence. The Church, based on what it draws from the Gospel and from Divine Revelation on the theme of conjugal morality, of sexual morality – basing itself on these presuppositions, the Church approves of the principle of periodic abstinence, and this periodic abstinence can serve as a method of regulating births and, consequently, of family planning.

This is a problem that certainly connects to the vow of conjugal honor. Conjugal honor in great measure consists in this. Therefore, when at the foot of the altar the man vows to his fiancée – and her to him: "to you I vow honor in marriage" – in large part these words regard the morality of conjugal intimacy. And conjugal honor expresses itself in the submission of the third end of marriage to the first. Submission according to the key that I have exhibited here, however briefly.

Naturally, we could speak much more on this theme, but it would be necessary to introduce a whole series of concepts drawn from the fields of biology and medicine. I will not do it here, however, as I have said, leaving it up to competent persons in these fields. I only shed light on the moral aspect and the moral side of this problem as it connects to the promise of conjugal honor.

Spiritual and Physical Unity

The subordination of the third end of marriage, that of the satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh, to the first end, is strictly connected to the subordination of the third end to the second. In the second end of marriage we speak of the reciprocal help, rather, of the reciprocity of the spouses. It is understood that they must create a harmonious and concordant unity, they must live in a deep agreement and mutual understanding. They must simply love each other or want the good of each other, but not in the flattened sense of the word, in which love primarily signifies a passion. Rather, in the full sense of the term, according to the sense of the word "love" as we illustrated yesterday.

The third end of marriage must be subordinated to the first also so that the second end can be realized; so that what unites the couple is truly love, and not bilateral egoism. We must therefore admit that the satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh, if it is not controlled, if it is not subordinated to the first and to the second end of marriage, becomes the occasion for an egoism that is at times vast in marriage. And egoism, as we said yesterday, is the opposite of love. Therefore, if married life is not to become sick with selfishness, unbridled egoism, and unrestrained by the uncontrolled craving of the flesh, the third end of marriage must constantly be subordinated – the satisfaction of the concupiscence of the flesh – to the first and the second [end]. It cannot be that in marriage each of the parties [at the expense of the other satisfies his concupiscence], and particularly the man, because he is more subject to the threat of abandoning himself to his egoism. Each of the parties must take into account also the other, the other human being, of his dignity. In particular the man must take count of the dignity of the woman. This is the explanation of the concept of conjugal honor in the strict sense: "To you I promise conjugal honor". In its more precise, restricted sense, conjugal honor refers to this, it means this.

Responsibility for the Marriage and for the Family

As I already said before of this conjugal honor, all that is part of it, in a very broad sense, is connected to the realization of all the ends of marriage, and above all of the first end. In fact, if the spouses live in intimacy, and they try to have children, give them birth, then they have to do everything, all that is necessary, to maintain and educate their offspring. Honor in a certain sense grows in intimacy, becomes honor in familial life, as well as the honor and responsibility of the father and of the mother. This honor in familial life is also the content of the marital promise, of the marital vows. In fact, we need to consider that which is contained in these vows in all of its scope, applying to it all of marital life and all that comes with it. We speak exactly of this: of the awareness of all that comes with marital life.

These consequences must be in the mind, in the heart, in the will, in the sense of responsibility of the two persons who make the marital vows at the foot of the altar. They must penetrate it deeply. This is strictly connected to the question presented in the first catechesis. The marital promise has in fact the character of an oath. You invoke God as witness. A witness to what? To witness the authenticity of my will, that is of the fact that I truly want that which to you I promise, to you I vow here. And precisely for the fact that it is an oath made in reference to an authority so elevated, whose majesty we call upon as a witness, precisely by virtue of all this we must have the sense, the full awareness of the consequences.

The Sacrament of Sacrificial Love

Marital life is a unity, a body, a complex of human existence, created one step after the other between two persons, of the woman and of the man who are obliged towards each other in front of God, who have committed themselves in this sense through the vows made in the presence of God. These two persons become a single thing, for this rite of the sacrament of Matrimony in grand measure indicates the unity of the two. In fact, they reciprocally place a ring on each other's fingers. These wedding rings are like the last link in the chain that will bind them, moreover, they will weld them to each other; this is what they want to express. Love confers on them to this bond, to this "welding". They are welded to each other for all of their earthly existence. In good times and in bad, in joy and in sorrow. Here is what the symbol of the wedding rings expresses. Moreover, when they slip the ring on each other's finger as a sign of their vows, the priest wraps the two hands with his stole, to put on what is human, on what the betrothed spontaneously and before God make and constitute, a seal - the symbol of the priesthood.

My dear ones, above all of you who listen to me, since in these weeks approaching Christmas you will approach the sacrament of Matrimony, my dear ones, this marriage, this sacrament which you will receive, has something priestly to it. It is as the priest of familial life, the priesthood of human love, the priest of human destiny, the priest of the generation and education of children.

All of this is priestly, certainly, in the broadest sense of the term, but it is. It is because the Lord Jesus has treated marriage as participation in his priesthood, in his sacrifice. And for this also we that participate in this great sacrament must be pervaded**,** when we participate, with a deep religious conscience. And of this I beg you, at the end of these catecheses in preparation for the sacrament of Matrimony, I beg you to prepare yourself for this sacrament in a religious way, profoundly religious, as if to say, divinely. To live it divinely. It is a great thing. It is a great sacrament. You cannot approach it superficially, you cannot approach it with levity. You need to see the greatness that is truly of this sacrament, the greatness of all its consequences.

And for this, concluding these meditations, I desire to again turn your attention once more to the particular significance of the last [words of the vow]. It can be pronounced effectively, fruitfully, only by the humble person, the person on their knees. Because it is a truth that constitutes a certainty: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6). And rightly God must give you the grace, if what one day, very soon, you will say, if this will then materialize into the building of your entire life. He must give you the grace. Both when you speak these words and later, throughout your life, when you have to put this into practice – sometimes encountering hardships and resistance – receive the grace.

Implore Him, imploring Him already and indeed especially during the Holy Mass that I celebrate for the intention of all the engaged couples who are here, in this city, in all the parishes of Krakow, who during the Christmas period will welcome this great sacrament. Implore God, and also implore with me, so that what is pronounced with the mouth becomes truly the foundation of your life. Amen.

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