

with benefits” are obvious examples of using the other person for self-gratification. This is a blatant sin against human dignity, for God created human sexuality with a much greater purpose in mind.

There are millions of brokenhearted men and women who were “in love” and later found out something about that person that was a deal breaker (such as, infidelity). When two people engage in sexual activity, the body releases hormones that act as a bonding agent. In the safe confines of marriage, where spouses’ faults are well known, this bonding chemical that the body releases will help the couple to overlook and forgive each other’s faults more easily. But during the dating phase of the relationship, where a couple “interviews” each other as potential spouses, it is important to keep a clear head and see the faults the other person has, before deciding on possible marriage. Sex works against this intelligent manner of dating.

Children also enter into this definition of love. Children have a *right* to have both parents living together as husband and wife; when two people who are not married engage in intercourse, they are not loving the children that may result from this illicit union. There are now millions of children who are deprived of this fundamental right, because of their parents’ inability to truly love each other and their future children.

The Reason for Hope

“Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh” (Gen 2:24). The institution of marriage was given to mankind by God. The fall of man disrupted the original intent, but God provided a way for men and women to learn, with much difficulty, how to love each other again. It is no coincidence that Jesus performed His first public miracle at a wedding where He turned the water into wine. The wine signifies the merciful love of God. Jesus transformed 120–180 gallons of water into wine for just one wedding! Jesus wants to pour out His superabundant Love on all of humanity but, most especially, He wishes to bless the one-flesh union of husband and wife!

This is one of the reasons Jesus founded the Catholic Church: to provide stable means of receiving His grace through the Sacraments. Jesus Himself raised the institution of marriage to the level of a Sacrament. This means that Sacramental Marriage itself is a source of grace for those who are called to it. Sex outside of marriage does not have this grace and can truly be destructive. The battle for sexual purity is a difficult one, but through the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation (confession and absolution), God enables us to live the life He desires for us. When we do fall, He restores us to relationship with Him.

Answering the Call

“The call to sexual purity is not a call to follow a laundry list of “do’s and don’ts.” Rather, it is a call to discover how to love your fellow human being, most especially your spouse, as a person made in the image and likeness of God. The call to true love is a call to strive to love as Jesus loves. Jesus Himself said to us, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 15:12). Our merciful, loving Lord would not command us to do this if it were impossible.

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Prayer of consecration to Jesus:

God our Father, I believe that out of Your infinite love You have created me. In a thousand ways I have shunned Your love. I repent of each and every one of my sins. Please forgive me.

Thank you for sending your Son to die for me, to save me from eternal death. I choose this day to renew my covenant with you and to place Jesus at the center of my heart. I surrender to him as Lord over my whole life and over all things.

I ask you now to flood my heart and soul with the Gift of Your Holy Spirit and to grant me the gift of new life. Give me the grace and courage to live as a missionary disciple for the rest of my days. Amen.

Sexual Purity



St. Paul
Street Evangelization

Printed With Ecclesiastical Permission. Most Reverend Earl Boyea.
August 13, 2013.

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Introduction

The battle for sexual purity is one of the toughest battles in both the physical and the spiritual realm. This is especially true in modern times because the culture of the “sexual revolution” has made sex into a false god that is to be worshiped at the expense of the human being and of love. The Catholic Church, however, gives us a view of sex and human sexuality that elevates it to a plane infinitely more dignified than the cultural “uplifting” of human sexuality, which not only has degenerated sex, but also has made the human person into an object to be used rather than a person to be loved.

Love and the “Sexual Revolution” (or, Bloody Civil War)

Love is wanting and doing what is best for the other person at all times. Truly loving another person will always require self-sacrifice. When the “sexual revolution” swept through Western Civilization, the idea that a human being, especially the woman, is a person to be loved, was replaced by a false concept of freedom and love. Sex was equated with love. With this false and destructive premise, the “sexual revolution” put forth the notion that we are “free” to use a person to satisfy our sexual desires.

But our freedom to do as we wish ends where the other person’s *right* to be loved is violated. It is easy to see that the results of the “sexual revolution” have not been good for humanity and, especially, have not been good for women. It has pitted men against women, wives against husbands, mothers against their unborn babies, and society against both the family and children, which are the foundation of any civilized society.

Since the “sexual revolution” started in earnest with the widespread promulgation of the birth control pill, the divorce rate doubled (in the first ten years) and fathers have become absent from families in society, resulting in more violent crime: much of it against women (at least 80% of prisoners incarcerated for violent crime grew up fatherless). Also, pornography (which overwhelmingly shows women as objects to be used and discarded as soon as the man is satisfied) is now *hard to avoid* in our daily lives.

In addition, STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) are at epidemic rates and AIDS has killed more than 30 million people. Abortion has become the deadliest and most horrific result of the “sexual revolution.” Since abortion was legalized, more than 50 million human beings have been brutally massacred in the womb. Mothers who have had abortions are victims of abortion as well, and deserve our compassion. (If you are a woman

who is a victim of abortion, please contact Project Rachel for counseling and healing.) It has been nearly fifty years since the “sexual revolution” engulfed Western Civilization and the world. With the great division that this evil belief system has caused, and the bloody brutality on all levels of human existence, the “revolution” has become the bloodiest civil war in human history!

Foundation of the Teaching of God and Church

Two-thirds of all that has been written by the Church on human sexuality was written by Saint John Paul II. The underlying truth that supports the Church’s teaching in all areas of sexuality, including the beauty of the marital embrace and the immorality of any stimulation of the sexual organs outside of the marital covenant, is that each human being is a person to be loved. To use persons in a way that violates human dignity is a sin against the high nobility of man, man made in the image and likeness of God. Saint John Paul II wrote, “Man becomes the image of God not so much in the moment of solitude as in the moment of communion. Right ‘from the beginning,’ he is . . . essentially, an image of an inscrutable divine communion of persons” (General Audience, November 14, 1979).

It is not easy to understand the mystery and nature of the eternal *spiritual* union of the Father and the Son, which has as its eternal fruit the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. However, the union of husband and wife, usually producing children, *dimly* reflects this union of love within the Trinity. This reflection should give us a glimpse of the marital union as sacred, precisely because of what it reflects. It is sacred because its original design was to show the “image and likeness” of the triune God, even though, through the fall of man, we have disfigured and obscured the original truth, goodness, and beauty of God’s design.

The sacred character of the marital embrace reflects the unwavering love that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have for each other. The love of the husband, wife, and the children is intended to be a sign of the permanent character of the love within the triune God. This is why Catholics believe that a true, sacramental marriage is indissoluble. The whole family is meant to be a visible sign of the permanent, internal, unseen love of God.

True Love

In order for love to be true, it must have a permanent character. When a person we truly love dies (such as, a parent or a brother or sister), we do not simply stop loving them because they have gone on to their eternal reward; the love we have for them continues.

It is because of this permanent character that true love cannot be tied only to our temporary emotions, and certainly not to our temporary physical urges. If we say that we “love” someone today and six hours, or six weeks, or six months, or six years later we no longer “love” him or her, how can we say that we truly loved him or her in the first place?

For sure, true love will have times of deep emotion and deep physical attraction and times when it doesn’t. However, within a lifelong committed marriage, the times when emotions and physical affection are in a lull do not jeopardize the relationship in any way. Love is based on a lifelong commitment of two people: whether a friend or, most especially, a spouse. The two choose definitively to “do what is best for the other person at all times.” This will mean that, at some point, we will have to lay aside our wants or desires to fulfill someone *else’s* need or want. That is true love.

Certainly, there are different levels of love, but the more personal the relationship, the more permanent the character of love is. The love we have for our parents is greater and has a more permanent nature than the love we have for a co-worker. The love we have for a co-worker is greater and more permanent than the love we have for an acquaintance. The love we have for our spouse, being the most intimate love we can have, is the greatest and should have the most permanent nature of all other loves here on earth. Our model for this sacrificial spousal love is Jesus. We should be willing to lay down our lives for our spouse, just as Jesus laid down His life for His love. That is, for you and me.

The Problems

Once again, we return to the fundamental definition: Love is wanting and doing what is best for the other person at all times. Implied in the definition of love is another person to love. Thus, we should say to those who engage in masturbation, “Who is it that you are loving? You are not loving another human being, for there is no one there but you. What you are ‘loving’ is a fantasy, and you can’t have a lifelong committed relationship with a fantasy.” This is one of the problems with pornography: it does not depict reality, but a fantasy. This hurts the individual who is learning that the woman in the fantasy, whether on the screen or in the mind, will do whatever is desired for her to do. If the woman on the screen, or what she is doing, isn’t liked, “she” is simply discarded for another fantasy.

This is not a good way to learn self-sacrificing true love. If we take any situation where sex exists outside of committed marriage, we run into a host of problems. One-night stands, “just hooking up,” or having “friends

