

## Month Four 2011 Bulletin Announcements The Gift of Children

WEEK ONE

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### *Marriage Minute:* What does marriage have to do with children?

Children are at the very heart of marriage. The “supreme gift” of marriage, a child comes precisely *through* the mutual, loving self-gift exchanged between husband and wife. It is only because of their sexual difference that spouses are able to cooperate with God in the awesome adventure of welcoming a child into the world. Marriage is not just about satisfying adult desires, but is a pro-child institution. The community of the family is built upon the communion of the spouses.

*(USCCB.org, Marriage: Unique for a Reason)*

[mncc.org/issues/marriage](http://mncc.org/issues/marriage)





## *Marriage Minute:* Does the Church think that marriage is a mere “instrument” for having children?

Certainly not. The Church does teach that the “proper mission” of husband and wife is having children and raising them. But spouses should never “use” each other in order to have a child, and even marriages not blessed with children can be fruitful through loving service to others. A child is neither a product nor a trophy, but a *gift* - a human person with great dignity and worth. Spouses are not the ultimate source of their children, but are called to receive them lovingly from God by exercising responsible parenthood (which can mean welcoming many children, as well as postponing pregnancy for serious reasons). (USCCB.org, *Marriage: Unique for a Reason*)

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**Marriage Minute: What's the difference between a husband and wife who can't have children, and two persons of the same sex, who also can't have children?**

Only a man and a woman, as husband and wife, can enter into the two-in-one-flesh communion of persons. Only a man and a woman are able to conceive a child *through each other*. That is to say, only a man and a woman can be joined so intimately that their bodies work together in the common task of procreation. Even when a husband and wife do not *in fact* conceive a child (due to infertility, age, and so on), their sexual acts are still the *kind of acts* by which children are naturally conceived. In contrast, two persons of the same sex may be perfectly healthy, but will *never* be able to enter a one-flesh communion and thus unite in such a way that a child is conceived. (USCCB.org, *Marriage: Unique for a Reason*)

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## WEEK FOUR

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### *Marriage Minute: Why is a child meant to have both a father and a mother?*

The fact is, every single child, without exception, does have a mother and a father. Sexual difference between a husband and wife is necessary to conceive a child. But its importance does not end there. Men and women bring unique gifts to the shared task of parenting, that is, of fathering and mothering. Only a woman can be a mother. Only a man can be a father. Each contributes in a distinct and unique way to the formation of children, helping them to understand their identity as male or female. Respecting a child's dignity means affirming his or her need for – and right to – a mother and a father. (USCCB.org, *Marriage: Unique for a Reason*)

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