

Month Three 2011 Bulletin Announcements The Common Good and Human Dignity

WEEK ONE



Marriage Minute: Why does the Catholic Church care so much about marriage?

The Catholic Church cares about marriage because marriage is a fundamental good in itself and foundational to human existence and flourishing. Following the example of Jesus, the Church cares about the whole person, and all people. Marriage (or lack thereof) affects everyone. Today, people all over the world are suffering because of the breakdown of the family—divorce, out-of-wedlock childbearing, and so on. Marriage is never just a “private” issue; it has public significance and public consequences. One only has to think of the connection between fatherless families and young men in jail to know that this is true. In addition, the proposal to “redefine” marriage to include two men or two women is really a proposal to “redefine” the human person, causing a forgetfulness of what it means to be a man or a woman. This is a basic injustice to men and women, children, and fathers and mothers.

Marriage is truly one of the most important social justice issues of our time.

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

mncc.org/issues/marriage





Marriage Minute: What does marriage have to do with human dignity?

Marriage protects and promotes the dignity of men and women, the dignity of children, and the dignity of all persons in society. First, the lifelong partnership of marriage is the only place where men and women can truly “speak” the language of sexual love – total, faithful, forever, and open to children. Only within marriage can sexual relations mean what they are supposed to mean as an expression of self-giving love between a man and a woman (not selfish use). The promises of a husband and a wife speak a high level of mutual trust and invite the confidence that sex will not be exploitative but will manifest true union and life-giving love. Second, marriage provides a context within which the rights of children to a mother and a father are legally protected. Marriage also helps assure that children will be welcomed as gifts; apart from the life-long commitment of marriage, children are likely to be viewed as threats or acquired as products. Finally, the family, founded on marriage, is a place where a person can exist for his or her own sake. Marriage teaches society not to value persons only for their usefulness. (USCCB.org, *Marriage: Unique for a Reason*)

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WEEK THREE



Marriage Minute: Does the Church believe that people who experience same-sex attraction have equal dignity?

Of course! Every single human person has great inviolable dignity and worth, including those who experience same-sex attraction. All persons should be treated with respect, sensitivity, and love. The Church calls everyone to a life of holiness and chastity, and to live in accord with God's will for their lives. For more information on the Church's ministry to persons with same-sex attraction, see USCCB, *Ministry to Persons with a Homosexual Inclination* (2006) or a local *EnCourage* chapter, which offers support for family and friends of persons with same-sex attraction. (USCCB.org, *Marriage: Unique for a Reason*)

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Marriage Minute: What does the common good mean?

Quoting Pope Benedict XVI, the common good is “the good of ‘all of us,’” the good of every member of society. A society focused on the common good upholds the fundamental dignity of each person, and progresses “from less human conditions to those which are more human.” In short, the common good is “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.” (*USCCB.org, Marriage: Unique for a Reason*)

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