

Spring 2012 Month Two Bulletin Announcements Love and the Church

WEEK ONE



Marriage Matters: God's Law and Our Well Being

God is not predictable; that truth comes through clearly in today's Gospel. He will always surprise us. But we can always be sure of one thing: all of God's creativity is dedicated to our genuine happiness. His loving mercy is oriented to pulling us, every last one of us, into His Kingdom. If we believe that, we can follow Him and His commandments whole-heartedly. Sometimes we don't understand God's will for us: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord." Sometimes he asks difficult things of us, especially in matters related to the moral law. But every aspect of the Christian life is designed, according to the Father plan of loving goodness, to getting us into that vineyard and giving us the reward he has in store for us. Let us "magnify Christ" in our bodies, like Paul, and trust in God's wise and loving will.

Bulletin: "The Lord Jesus... opened up vistas closed to human reason, for He implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons, and the unity of God's sons in truth and charity. This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself."

Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, §24

For more information, visit: mncc.org/issues/marriage and [Facebook](#).



Marriage Matters: God and the Church Want to Heal Us

Remember your mercies, O Lord,” the psalm implores. The Gospel reading from Matthew assures us that God does indeed remember His mercy. Even “tax collectors and prostitutes” can enter the Kingdom of God—thieves and those guilty of sexual sin, in other words. Can we trust Jesus is eagerly waiting to forgive and heal us of our sins, including our sexual sins? God makes his mercy abundantly available in the sacrament of Confession. Go to our loving God; He is eager to forgive. He who became “obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross,” in order to save us, will not forget his mercy.

Bulletin: “The characteristic traits of marriage are: *totality*, by which the spouses give themselves to each other mutually in every aspect of their person, physical and spiritual; *unity* which makes them “one flesh” (Gen. 2:24); *dissolubility* and *fidelity* which the definitive mutual giving of self requires; the *fruitfulness* to which this naturally opens itself.”

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, §217

For more information, visit: mncc.org/issues/marriage and [Facebook](#).



Purity and Chastity: True Freedom

The first reading reminds us of the absolute necessity of producing good fruit in our lives. We are to bring forth grapes, not “wild grapes.” How do we bring forth good fruit? The second reading from Philippians points to the way: to keep our hearts and minds fixed on Christ Jesus. Cling to Jesus, especially in the sacraments of the Eucharist and Confession. God’s grace makes it possible for us to live up the demands of true love. We are to think only of “whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious...” It is imperative that we guard the purity of our minds and our imaginations, especially from demeaning sexual images found in the mass media and in pornography. This will serve the growth of chastity in us, which brings forth the good fruit of purity and freedom. Yes, freedom! Chastity frees us to truly give of ourselves. As the Australian bishops have said, sex “is the language of total gift. If one or both persons are not yet ready to say ‘I give all that I am, including my body’ and ‘I accept from you the gift of all that you are, including your body,’ then they are not ready for sex. If a couple does not fear becoming a real gift to each other, they should not fear marriage.”

Bulletin: “We should say what we mean and mean what we say with sex. And sex says marriage. Sexual intercourse is the body language which accompanies and expresses, again and again, the wedding vows. It is the language of total gift. If one or both persons are not yet ready to say ‘I give all that I am, including my body’ and ‘I accept from you the gift of all that you are, including your body,’ then they are not ready for sex. If a couple does not fear becoming a real gift to each other, they should not fear marriage.”

Pope John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis*, §10

For more information, visit: mncc.org/issues/marriage and [Facebook](#).



Marriage Matters: Christ is the Bridegroom

The Kingdom of Heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son.” So begins this week’s parable. Why does Jesus draw the comparison between a wedding feast and God’s kingdom? Think what we celebrate in a wedding banquet: the fidelity of the husband and wife, the promise of new life. Likewise, God’s Kingdom is marked by His fidelity to us, His Church, and by the new spiritual life that He brings about in us. The Church is Christ’s Body, because Christ and the Church are one flesh. Christ has married the Church by loving all of humanity faithfully until death on the Cross. His love is faithful and fruitful; it is a life-giving love that never ends. Human marriage is meant to be the same: it is meant to be a total self-gift that produces new life. And in Christian marriage, God gives us His own loves as the animating power of this faithful love of husband and wife.

Bulletin: “It can seem difficult, even impossible, to bind oneself for life to another human being. This makes it all the more important to proclaim the Good News that God loves us with a definitive and irrevocable love, that married couples share in this love, that it supports and sustains them, and that by their own faithfulness they can be witnesses to God’s faithful love.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, §1648

For more information, visit: mncc.org/issues/marriage and [Facebook](#).