

The Life Cycle: Vocation in Life



The[♂]ology
of the BO[♀]dy for families
& single people
plus Family Chastity Formation in Virtue & Purity of Heart

Universal Truths about Human Sexuality for People of All Ages
With extensive references to the official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church

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Published by
Communitas Dei Patris
3726 Birchwood Road
Kettle River, Minnesota 55757

Vocation in Life

What the Church Says

713 “Christian revelation presents the two vocations to love: *marriage and virginity*. In some societies today, not only marriage and the family, but also vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, are often in a state of crisis. The two situations are inseparable: ‘When marriage is not esteemed, neither can consecrated virginity or celibacy exist; when human sexuality is not regarded as a great value given by the Creator, the renunciation of it for the sake of the kingdom of heaven loses its meaning’” (TMHS, 34. The embedded quote is from *Familiaris Consortio*, 16).

714 “‘The intimate community of life and love which constitutes the married state has been established by the Creator and endowed by him with its own proper laws. . . . God himself is the author of marriage.’ The vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator” (CCC, 1603). God designed the body of men and women for “nuptial” or spousal love; that is, God inscribed in each person the vocation to be a total gift to another in love, and, for most men and women, this vocation to self-giving is fulfilled in marriage.

715 Chastity is “a virtue that develops a person’s authentic maturity and makes him or her capable of respecting and fostering the ‘nuptial meaning’ of the body. Indeed Christian parents, discerning the signs of God’s call, will devote special attention and care to education in virginity or celibacy as the supreme form of that

self-giving that constitutes the very meaning of human sexuality” (*Familiaris Consortio*, 37).

Wisdom of Parents

716 Sexuality is often understood as self-giving on a physical level, as in the marital act of love, so it is worth repeating that it is actually virginity or celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom that most fully satisfies and expresses bodily sexuality. The “nuptial” meaning of the male and female body (designed for spousal love) is most completely manifested when that body is totally sacrificed for the other as a gift out of pure love. When the “other” is God rather than one of His creatures (beautiful as they are), this nuptial or spousal union with God is then obviously of a much higher order. Everyone is called to the vocation of total self-giving love for the sake of a beloved, so the discernment lies in determining which kind of love one is being called to by God; marriage, or virginity for the sake of the Kingdom.

717 Most young men and women are called to the vocation of marriage. Those called to virginity or celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom will follow similar stages in the development of love—of friendship, courtship, engagement and vows—in order to become a bride of Christ (women) or to become “wedded” like Christ (men) to His Spouse, the Church, in total, virginal self-giving love.

718 Friendship with Christ can lead a young man or woman to show particular affection or attraction toward a specific religious

community or diocese. Friendship can lead to a period similar to courtship where exclusive time is spent in inquiry or getting to know the community or diocese of interest. Then, when a young man or woman decides to say yes to the proposal of virginity for Christ, and a community

or diocese says yes to them, a more intense period of “engagement” called formation takes place prior to making the final “nuptial” vow of consecration or ordination which, like marriage, is forever.