



Resource Booklet

PRIESTS

DEACONS

CATECHISTS

TEACHERS

Made For Each Other

A CATECHETICAL AND EDUCATIONAL AID ON
SEXUAL DIFFERENCE AND COMPLEMENTARITY



MARRIAGE
Unique for a Reason



ABOUT THE ART

Saints Joachim and Anne are the father and mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary is the fruit of their marriage. By a singular grace of God in view of the merits of Jesus, she was preserved from all stain of Original Sin from the moment of her conception. Thus it is in the context of married life and conjugal love that Mary is prepared to receive the Divine Logos, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus is the Logos, the "Reason" at the heart of all reason and truth, including the truth of marriage. The marriage between Joachim and Anne is a significant witness to why marriage is "unique for a reason."

The Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage is grateful to the artist Rev. Marko Rupnik for the use of this image.

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*A Resource Booklet for
Priests, Deacons, Catechists, and Teachers*

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MARRIAGE

Unique for a Reason

MARRIAGE: UNIQUE FOR A REASON

The *Made for Each Other* Resource Booklet for Priests, Deacons, Catechists, and Teachers was developed as a resource by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). It was reviewed by the committee chairman, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, and has been authorized for publication by the undersigned.

Msgr. David J. Malloy, STD
General Secretary, USCCB

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First Printing, June 2010

ISBN 978-1-60137-151-5

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This material is intended as a catechetical and educational aid to be used as a resource by a priest, deacon, catechist, or teacher. The video, viewer's guide, and resource booklet form an integrated whole, and as such, complete the proper context of this tool.



General Introduction

*But God did not create man a solitary being.
From the beginning “male and female he created them” (Gn 1:27).
This partnership of man and woman constitutes the first
form of communion between persons.*

— Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), no. 12¹

From generation to generation, the institution of marriage has been the cornerstone of family life and societal well-being. For two millennia the teaching of the Catholic Church on the meaning of marriage has positively influenced both culture and society. In a particular way, the teaching on marriage and the family from the Venerable Servant of God Pope John Paul II (+2005) has ignited a sustained excitement on the importance of this fruitful institution. His Wednesday catecheses known as the *Theology of the Body* (TOB), his Apostolic Exhortation on the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World (*Familiaris Consortio*), and his *Letter to Families* form the nucleus of his teaching on marriage and the family. Our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI has continued this rich teaching. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has sought to make the authentic teaching of the Church on marriage and the family more

available and to implement it in many ways. Through the USCCB's National Pastoral Initiative on Marriage, the bishops have issued a pastoral letter entitled *Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan* (2009) and continue to offer resources for building strong, healthy, and holy marriages — see *For Your Marriage* (foryourmarriage.org) and *Por Tu Matrimonio* (www.por-tumatrimonio.org).

As they seek to promote the teaching on marriage, the bishops also seek to protect the institution of marriage. In this present initiative, entitled *Marriage: Unique for a Reason*, the bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage, through the generous support of the Knights of Columbus, endeavors to answer the call of Pope John Paul II for a serious commitment to the urgent task of “rediscovering the value of the family and marriage” in the face of questions current in society today.² In particular, Pope John Paul II noted the challenges posed by ethical relativism and civil legislation toward the very concept of the “community founded on marriage between a man and a woman.”³ The protection of marriage has reached new intensity in view of the contemporary proposals to redefine marriage to include persons of the same sex. Given the contemporary challenges and modern day questions, *Marriage: Unique for a Reason* is a resource to assist Catholics and all people of good will to understand the basic elements of marriage as a fundamental institution authored by God and “written in the very nature of man and woman.”⁴ For more information on why marriage is unique for a reason, see www.marriageuniqueforareason.org.

RESOURCE BOOKLET

What is marriage?

The meaning of marriage is both timely and timeless. Marriage is the lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman . . . the font of love, life, and communion . . . the natural foundation of the family and society. Marriage is a fundamental institution, but as we know, various challenges and questions are raised today about the meaning of marriage. The most pointed of these questions arises in the context of the contemporary proposal to redefine marriage to include two persons of the same sex. This proposal involves many issues which deserve careful attention. Consideration of the inviolable dignity of every human person, including persons who experience same-sex attraction, is essential when approaching this topic.⁵ The topic can indeed be emotional and difficult, but at the heart is a radical question about the most basic and original of all institutions.

This Resource Booklet is a supplement to the Viewer's Guide which accompanies the video entitled "Made for Each Other." Together, these materials are the first in the *Marriage: Unique for a Reason* series. This Booklet provides additional and complementary reflections to the Viewer's Guide, which explores the topic of how sexual difference is essential to marriage. Each of the numbered headings in bold below corresponds to a particular quote from Josh and Carrie in the video.⁶

The reflections in this Booklet are intended to help those who serve the Church in areas related to marriage and family — priests, deacons, catechists, teachers, and others — to consider further the "great mystery" of marriage (see Eph 5:31-32) and reflect upon particular aspects in need of being handed on today.⁷ Though it does not serve as a teacher's guide *per se* and does not presume to offer a pedagogy or replace the critical role of every catechist, this Booklet can assist those who might preach and teach on this topic or share the video and Viewer's Guides in a group or class setting. With this in mind, the "Handing It On" sections have been included to stimulate consideration about specific themes related to sharing the truth about marriage. Further resources can be found at www.marriageuniqueforareason.org.

As noted in the Viewer's Guide, the video "Made for Each Other" focuses on the topic

of sexual difference and the complementarity of man and woman. Why start here? At first sight, this topic might appear to miss the core issues and questions at stake. For example, you might hear that everyone knows about sexual difference already and that the real concern is about rights, equality, and non-discrimination. For sure, this concern about rights, equality, and non-discrimination involves important principles⁸ and receives most of the attention today. However, popular misconceptions regarding rights, equality, and non-discrimination easily shift the attention from the central question at stake, which is marriage.

It is necessary to begin at the proper starting point. Without a proper understanding of the meaning of marriage, the topic of rights, equality, and non-discrimination cannot be dealt with adequately. In fact, the topic will remain at a superficial level and be misconstrued. Only when marriage is understood can its preservation be grasped as fundamental for the protection of basic human rights and the common good. Similar to Jesus' invitation to return to "the beginning" (Mt 19:4; Mk 10:6), this first video and materials do the same. The crucial starting point is sexual difference. While sexual difference alone doesn't say everything there is to say about marriage, it's indispensable for understanding marriage's meaning. In fact, sexual difference provides the essential foundation for recognizing why marriage is exclusive to one man and one woman. The difference is the difference.

Key talking points related to this booklet:

1. It's important always to *consider the human person*. Every human person, man and woman, is made in the image and likeness of God and has inviolable dignity.⁹
2. *The difference is the difference*. Sexual difference is essential to marriage.
3. Attempts to redefine marriage to include persons of the same sex miss *the fundamental question at stake*: What is marriage?
4. Marriage is the permanent and exclusive union of one man and one woman, for the good of the spouses and for the procreation and education of children.
5. The two-in-one-flesh union and the fruitful love of marriage are only possible through the sexual difference and complementarity of husband and wife, man and woman.
6. *Marriage is not a construct* of religion or the state, despite the cultural and historical variations over time. Marriage is grounded in the nature of the human person, created male and female by God.
7. So-called same-sex “marriage” and other forms of same-sex “unions” are contrary to right reason (the natural moral law) and revealed truth. They are contrary to the truth of the person and the language of the body.
8. *Treating different things differently is not unjust discrimination*. Standing for the truth of marriage does not ignore rights or the equal dignity of human persons. Rather, it is a stand for the rights of husbands and wives, the unique responsibilities of mothers and fathers, the good and rights of children, the dignity of all human persons, and the common good.
9. The question of rights begs the question of marriage. *There are many ways to protect basic human rights; sacrificing marriage is not one of them.*

1. "We were made for each other, as a man and a woman."

[O2:43]

Key topics: THE BASIC MEANING OF MARRIAGE;

THE ROLE OF REASON AND FAITH

As Carrie describes in the video, a man and a woman are made for each other, body and soul. This is a basic truth, accessible to both reason (through the natural moral law) and faith (through the gift of Divine Revelation). God, represented by the potter,¹⁰ created marriage when he created human life, the mystery of the human person as male and female.

Willed by God in the very act of creation, marriage and the family are interiorly ordained to fulfillment in Christ and have need of his graces to be healed from the wounds of sin and restored to their "beginning," that is, to the full understanding and the full realization of God's plan.¹¹

As Pope John Paul II taught, marriage is grounded in creation itself, *willed by God in the very act of creation*. Jesus himself showed us this when, in his teaching on marriage, he went back to the beginning, back to Genesis, back to the very creation of the human person (see Mt 19:4-6 and Mk 10:6-7).¹² Marriage is not "created" by a religious institution or human government. Religion and government confirm what was already present from the beginning: marriage based on the sexual difference between man and woman. Marriage is grounded in human nature as created by God. As such, the call to marriage depends upon the sexual difference between a man and a woman.¹³

Public policy and law are meant to serve and protect the truth of marriage.¹⁴ The Church's effort to promote and protect marriage in the public square is not a matter of forcing faith on anyone, nor is it specific only to the Church's purview or concerns. It is part and parcel of a civic and moral responsibility to uphold perennial truths of reason based in the natural law (the nature of the human person) — truths which must form the foundation of any society respectful of human dignity and the common good.¹⁵ The Church

also realizes that because of sin, human reason and judgment are often clouded and are in need of guidance and grace.

Human reason, with the help of grace, is capable of discerning the truth of marriage as the union of a man and a woman. The natural moral law, which is inscribed in the human heart and knowable through reason, witnesses to the truth of the human person and human sexuality. For instance, the fact that “sexuality is ordered to the conjugal love of man and woman”¹⁶ is a fact grounded in right reason, that is, the natural law. Reason can discern that the natural bond of marriage is ordered to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children. Faith does not contradict reason but rather complements and illuminates it.¹⁷ Christ has raised marriage between a baptized man and baptized woman to the dignity of a sacrament (see CCC*, no. 1601). Through faith, we see that Christian marriage is a sacramental image of Christ’s love for the Church (see Eph 5:21-33).¹⁸

Handing It On:

Catechesis on creation is greatly needed today. In fact, it is “of major importance” (CCC, no. 282). Creation properly situates anthropology: the human person, man and woman, made in the image and likeness of God.¹⁹ How many people live life without a real sense of creation and of God as Creator, and thus without a real sense of *who they are*? We know that the busyness of our own lives can sometimes hinder us from fully appreciating that we have been created out of love and for love, with purpose and meaning, to be a gift for others. Highlighting the foundational truth of creation is important when teaching or preaching about marriage, as exemplified by Christ himself. Faith and reason both assist us here.

**Catechism of the Catholic Church*

FEATURE TOPIC: *The Potter*

The image of the potter, who works with the elements of clay and water to mold and form a piece of pottery, is interspersed between Josh and Carrie's dialogue. This image includes various levels of meaning. God is the potter who has formed man from the dust of the earth (see Gn 2:6-7; Is 45:9, 12; Jer 18:6; Rom 9:20-21).

Likewise, "God himself is the author of marriage."²⁰ God created marriage in the very same moment that he created the human person.²¹ God brings man and woman together, forming and molding them and assisting them in their bond of marriage. The distinct elements of clay and water represent the distinct "elements" of every marriage, one man and one woman, who always stand in need of the Lord's care and assistance.

*The finished piece of pottery portrays the **unique bond** that arises from the exchange of vows, and it also signifies the **new reality** that comes about from different and complementary elements. At the same time, marriage involves something of the unfired piece of pottery, wherein the husband and wife continue to grow in their bond which is truly present (like the form of the pot) from their wedding day but lived throughout a lifetime. Such pottery is impossible without the water and dust of clay, just like the beautiful artwork of marriage is impossible without a man and a woman who give themselves to each other through a valid exchange of vows.*

2. "That connection . . . to be authentic, it has to be the whole person . . . Men and women are made for each other emotionally, sexually, psychologically."

[03:35]

Key topics: SEXUAL DIFFERENCE AND COMPLEMENTARITY

As Carrie states in the video, marriage is about one man and one woman entrusting their whole persons to the other. They can do this because they are made for each other, at every level. Sexual difference encompasses the whole person, and this difference and complementarity are essential to marriage.

The bond of marriage involves one man and one woman who give themselves to each other in a permanent and exclusive way. The "connection," or communion, of husband and wife — a communion that arises from their promises of fidelity, indissolubility, and openness to life "in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health" — necessarily calls forth the gift of one whole person to the other. The vows speak this wholeness.

Marriage depends upon sexual difference. In other words, the union and communion that marriage calls for, which is spoken in the vows, necessarily depends on the union of one man and one woman. True, people can unite with others in many ways. We speak of hearts joining through affection and friendship. Human beings join with others in enterprises great and small — as comrades, fellow citizens, neighbors, or colleagues. Every human heart longs for communion. But the heart of marriage is this mystery of communion in a very specific sense: A man and a woman really become one flesh. In the exclusive and permanent promise of husband and wife, they share a life together which is totally unique.

Thus, marriage is the radical vow to love one other human being the way that God loves every human being: permanently, faithfully, and fully, with life-giving love. Marriage is a total gift of the self, not a partial or provisional loan. It is a union not only of hearts and minds, but of bodies and souls.

Carrie remarks, "Our sexual difference doesn't compete; it complements." This is the beauty of marriage lived out in truth. In and through their sexual difference, men and

women complement each other in unique ways,²² and marriage shows how important this complementarity is, for the spouses, for family, for society, and for the world. In and through their difference, a man and a woman can become one as husband and wife.

Handing It On:

The meaning and value of sexual difference, as it relates both to the human person and to marriage, is often not reflected upon or is easily passed over. It is seldom acknowledged or appreciated in contemporary society. Audiences both young and old may find the topic somewhat new or may think the matter of sexual difference is rather uninteresting and irrelevant, and simply an insignificant phenomenon of nature or of biology, but without any meaning for the person. Connecting sexual difference to the whole person is important, as is sharing examples of the unique contributions of women and men. Mothering and fathering is a good place to start. Patient and creative repetition of key points on the topic of sexual difference will begin to address an area that has often lacked consideration.

FEATURE TOPIC: *Sexual Difference and Parenting*

Parenting, that is, fathering and mothering, is uniquely tied to sexual difference. For example, the importance of the father is shown to us when we see the spouses' mutual relationship with their child, the fruit of their union. The mother is entrusted from the beginning with the child's presence, which accompanies her during the time of pregnancy; the father, for his part, remains initially "at a distance." In this way, the mother represents the initial embrace that receives the child into existence, giving him or her the affirmation of love he or she needs. What is the role of the father? He lovingly affirms and identifies the distinction of the child within the embrace of the mother. Thus, the mother and the father, each in their own way, provide a loving space for the child, one by accenting union, the other by accenting distinction. More information on the indispensable place of mothers and fathers will be included in subsequent videos and materials.

3. "Making love and having children . . . that depends on our difference."

[O4:43]

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Key topics: SEXUAL DIFFERENCE AS THE AVENUE TOWARDS TRUE UNION
AND LIFE; MARRIAGE IS A UNIQUE COMMITMENT

As Josh relates, every other natural function of the body can be performed by the individual. The human reproductive system is the one system that is never individual. It is a system — an impulse, appetite, longing, and physical and personal reality — that can be completed only by going “outside” of one’s own body — by joining with the body of another.

Think for a minute about the body. By their sexual acts a man and woman become a single procreative unity. The two become “one flesh.” Only in marriage does this physical act constitute a true joining of *persons*, one where, in a human fashion, husband and wife commit not just physical organs but heart, mind, body, and soul to one another. This is why sex is intrinsically ordered to be a conjugal act, which is to say an act of true union.

Children are the “ultimate crown” of marriage,²³ one that the husband and wife promise to be open to, and, as mother and father, to care for and educate together. Marriage is deeply and intrinsically oriented towards the good of children — the good that is the creation of new life and also the care and connection of those children to their mothers and fathers. But marriage is good in itself even if the gift of a child is not granted to the husband and wife.²⁴ In both cases, openness to the child, openness to “the other,” is intrinsic to what marriage and conjugal love are about, and this depends on sexual difference.

Sexual difference is the way to life-giving love and union.

In discussions of marriage today, love and commitment are often emphasized as the most important qualities. There’s something true to this, but a vital key is to help people understand what lies at the basis of this love and commitment. What makes the love and commitment of marriage possible? As the Viewer’s Guide notes, love and commitment are ingredients to many relationships that we have with family and friends. Marriage involves a unique love and commitment, however, that only a man and a woman can make

to each other — a commitment of exclusive, permanent, and total union. This union finds its consummation and renewal in the total sharing of the spouses' bodily selves in the conjugal act. Only a husband and a wife can make such a personal gift of themselves to the other. This gift of self in marriage is not an isolated act but is part and parcel of the whole of married life, which itself calls for a love that is total and unique — the love between husband and wife. This gift of self in marriage has distinctive consequences and responsibilities which the state has rightly promoted and protected for millennia.

Handing It On:

There is a great desire for true love and commitment in marriage. Young adults, especially those who may have experienced the pain of broken marriages in their own families, yearn for this commitment — even in a culture where cohabitation is so prevalent. It's important to acknowledge the vital place of love and commitment — that the promise of marriage is possible with the help of God's grace! Within this acknowledgement, it then becomes possible to explore more deeply the “structural foundations” for such love and commitment (i.e., the starting place of sexual difference). We may often hear the phrase “people should be able to marry whomever they love.” It has never been the case in the history of the world that love alone without further qualification opens the door to marriage. In a culture of choice, truth is often overlooked. The challenge is to invite others to a rediscovery of the authentic truth at the foundation of married love—sexual difference and the complementarity of man and woman.

4. "That's why it's unique to a man and a woman."

[05:03]

Key topics: THE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MARRIAGE
AND SAME-SEX UNIONS; HELPFUL ANALOGIES

With simplicity, Josh speaks a basic fact. Marriage can only be between a man and a woman. The beauty of difference—like Josh's analogy of oxygen and hydrogen that make water . . . The beauty of complementarity—like Carrie's analogy of two different musicians playing in harmony . . . Only a man and a woman can come together to form the bond that is marriage.

Sexual difference is not like any other kind of difference. It's a primordial difference. It allows for and opens the entire human person to a true and authentic communion of persons.

The heart of marriage, the good that marriage consists of, is the bond that arises from the vows of husband and wife to give one's self in love fully to the other who is similar yet different. The sexual difference between man and woman, that is, husband and wife, opens love to an utterly unique reciprocity and communion. "It is not good that the man should be alone; I want to make him a help similar to himself" (cf. Gn 2:18).²⁵ Because marriage is a union that essentially includes the gift of the entire "body-person," it inherently and necessarily is a union of male and female, of husband and wife.

The Church has always and everywhere taught that sexual relationships between people of the same sex, as well as any sexual relationships or activity outside of marriage, are morally wrong, contrary to the true good of the human person. For one thing, such activity harms the persons involved, ignoring the true meaning of one's sexuality. There are greater consequences for society as well. This is no secret. Sex has public consequences. Both the Church and societies across the ages have acknowledged this.

But same-sex "marriage" is not merely wrong; it is impossible. When a government claims that two people of the same sex can be "married," it is founding the law on a lie. Civil authorities have an obligation to protect marriage because it is so central to the common good, but no one has a right to redefine it. Rights exist because of truth and

corresponding responsibilities. Truth matters.

For example, if a government — by a legislative decision, court ruling, or even by a people's vote — were to pass a law saying that a cat is a dog, that would not make it true. But it *would* make it very difficult, once the government assumed control over the very word, to teach the truth about cats to the next generation. Cultural power is the power to “name reality.” With same-sex “marriage,” civil authorities and others are proposing to change the very nature, meaning and purpose of marriage in the public square.

Let's make sure we're clear: Friendship is a great good, whether between persons of the same or opposite sex (see CCC, no. 2347). The Church calls persons who experience same-sex attraction, as she does all people, to a life of holy fulfillment, that is, to a deeper and fuller union with Jesus Christ. As support along the way in a life of chastity and virtue, the Church speaks to the importance and great good of healthy and holy friendships, family and community support, prayer and sacramental grace.

Unlike two persons of the same sex, only a man and a woman can commit to a true marital bond as husband and wife and create a one-flesh union. A man and a woman's “body-persons” (their whole person) are ordered to one another. A husband and a wife are able to speak a unique and authentic language of love through their bodies (i.e., through the “language of the body”²⁶). A current false assumption is that one has a personal, autonomous “right” to decide the meaning and purpose of one's body, of the sexual act, to separate deliberately sex from procreation and procreation from sex, as well as the child from a mother and a father. It's falsely presumed that there is a “right” to separate sex from the only context in which it can be truly unitive as well as procreative, hence the only context where it can be a true expression of love.

Marriage is not merely an appearance of union. It is not a temporary joining of the affections that can be withdrawn, or a partial 50/50 commitment. Nor is it simply friendship — as great a good as healthy and holy friendships are. Marriage involves the unique sharing of the whole person, man to woman and woman to man—not just the heart and the mind, but body and soul as well.

Handing It On:

The issue of same-sex “marriage” can be difficult and emotional. This issue affects our family and friends. The public side of the issue in popular media is familiar to all. The discussion is often shifted from marriage to “rights, discrimination, and bigotry.” In this context, it’s important always to consider the meaning of the *human person*. Every person is made in the image and likeness of God, with a dignity that can never be erased. It’s also important to affirm the Church’s support and pastoral outreach to persons who experience same-sex attraction.²⁷ In this light, we emphasize the renewed consideration of the meaning of the human person, created as male and female, which leads to a renewed consideration of marriage. We should never be ashamed for standing up for the truth of marriage, for it is really marriage that is at stake here. The truth, goodness, and beauty of marriage between one man and one woman deserve to be promoted and protected.

5. "It's not just about biology..."

[06:06]

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Key topics: SEXUAL DIFFERENCE IS MORE THAN ANATOMY;
SPOUSAL MEANING OF THE BODY; ROLE OF SCIENCE

Josh is attempting to describe a simple but deep, and today often overlooked or profoundly misunderstood, truth. Sexual difference is about the whole person, body and soul.

Sexual difference, man to woman and woman to man, is neither an insignificant biological fact nor an arbitrary social construct.²⁸ Sexual difference is rooted in the nature of the human person as man and woman (see CCC, no. 2361), and it is manifested in many ways: genetically, biologically, physiologically, psychologically, culturally, and socially.

On a related note, marriage, and the love and goods proper to marriage, are truly personal realities. "Conjugal love involves a totality, in which all the elements of the person enter" (CCC, no. 1643, quoting *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 13). The conjugal act should be a sign of the love manifest in all parts of the marital relationship, and each aspect of this spousal love carries within itself the necessary difference of either the love of a husband for his wife or the love of a wife for her husband. Spousal love hinges upon this deeply personal "love in and through difference" which makes possible the two-in-one-flesh communion of persons which is marriage.

Grasping the significance of the body is crucial for appreciating the meaning of the human person. We are *body-persons*. The body reveals the person. This is what Pope John Paul II taught especially when speaking of "the spousal meaning of the body."²⁹ The body is imbued with meaning. In its femininity or masculinity, the body reveals that the person has been made to be a gift and to be received as a gift.

One common misconception is the idea that a person is simply his or her "consciousness." The significance of the body is lost in this one-sided emphasis on one's interiority and psyche. This in turn has led to a consideration of the person that overlooks the significance of being a man or being a woman — a significance, nevertheless (as noted in the Viewer's Guide), that is being recognized and appreciated by a variety of sciences,

including neurobiology, gynecology, evolutionary psychology, endocrinology, and reproductive physiology.

The contemporary claim for same-sex “marriage” is one instance of a prevalent dualistic anthropology, which views the *body* as separated from the *person*. Such a perspective reduces the meaning and value of the body, and hence of the person. The body is seen as an instrument that can be used as one would like. It is viewed as independent of the person, thus having a life of its own. This dualistic anthropology is manifest in numerous areas of contemporary life.

Ironically, when it comes to issues of human sexuality, many today ignore (due to popular misconceptions, confusion, and sin) the reality that the body reveals the person, even though they witness to the value of the body in other areas relating to general bodily health (e.g., the importance of a healthy diet and exercise for the overall health of the person). Unfortunately, what underlies even some of this positive emphasis on the body today is a false “cult of the body” which falls into the same error of separating the body from the person, “worshipping” the body to the reduction and detriment of the person. Young people are sometimes taught or persuaded to think that their body has to look or be a certain way for them to be happy. Physical health often is extolled without proper attention to spiritual health.

Effective formation is needed to help young people understand the dangers and dead-ends of these false views of the body. This formation includes education and a critical eye towards entertainment and pop-culture industries. Preachers and teachers should not neglect to address the scourge and damage inflicted by pornography in all of its forms, especially in the form of internet pornography, which continues to distort the eyes and hearts of our young people.

Handing It On:

There’s a reason for this repeated emphasis on the person and on the deeper meaning of sexual difference. When it comes to sex and to a person’s sexual identity, our culture has a difficult time appreciating *the nature of the human person* and what it means to be a man or a woman. Reductive and dualistic visions of the person and of the body are quite

common today. The body is often instrumentalized. The body is not seen as the revelation of the person, of the gift, but is frequently understood simply as an object to be used. This is the case especially when it comes to sex. The challenge is to invite people to consider the deeply personal reality of the body and its profound implications for relating to other people. As St. Paul teaches, the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19). The Church's teaching on the profound unity of soul and body can be of assistance here (see CCC, nos. 362-365),³⁰ as well as Pope John Paul II's teaching on the spousal meaning of the body (which is relevant to all people, not only those called to marriage). Science can also be of assistance here, as noted in the Viewer's Guide. Catechesis and education on the person and marriage must continually return to these themes. Conveying the deeper truth of the body in relation to the person, as man and woman, is key to appreciating the meaning and value of sexual difference and the absolute uniqueness of the spousal union.

FEATURE TOPIC: *Understanding the "Natural Law"*

A common misunderstanding of the Church's teaching on the natural moral law reduces it to a mere biological or physical norm. This misunderstanding often surfaces in connection to the Church's teachings on chastity, and it may explain why young people sometimes do not understand what is meant by the term "natural law." Natural law has to do with the nature of the human person; it is "present in the heart of each man and established by reason" (CCC, no. 1956; see also nos. 1954-1960). It is a genuinely personal reality — a law according to the person and not just to biological laws. Likewise, the body is a profoundly personal reality. Biology is involved, yes, but the body is not reducible to biology. Pope John Paul II's phrase "the language of the body" can be a helpful way of conveying the personal reality of the body as well as truths about chastity and human sexuality.

6. "We share a common humanity, but our sexual differences are essential to who we are."

[06:27]

.....

Key topics: EQUALITY OF MAN AND WOMAN;
SEXUAL DIFFERENCE IS RELEVANT NOT ONLY TO MARRIAGE

This talk about sexual difference, as Carrie notes, is not only relevant to marriage. Sexual difference is important for everyone, whether called to marriage, consecrated celibacy or virginity, or the committed single life. Every person is meant to acknowledge and accept his or her sexual identity.³¹

Men and women are equal, but they are not the same. The difference between man and woman is important. As Carrie says, even when men and women are involved in the same profession, the significance of their unique gift, either as a man or as a woman, still matters. This is because one's identity *as a person*, either as a man or a woman, always matters.

Think of an analogy like the one mentioned by Carrie: a woman and a man can be compared to a violinist and cellist, masters in their art, who can play a duet together. Like the cellist and violinist, both man and woman share in the same piece of music (the same human life), and therefore are equal in dignity and value. On the other hand, only by playing it together, in different ways, can they interpret the melody intended by the Composer, the melody of human love and happiness. They need each other, and, in this mutual reference and reciprocity, they learn to overcome their selfishness.

This analogy has a further element: the musicians are both inspired by music; they both play according to the beauty of art, which is greater than both of them. In the same way, man and woman are not meant to remain enclosed in their mutual gaze. They are not meant just to look into each other, but to walk together in the same direction, towards God, the only one who can fulfill their restless hearts. When the Book of Genesis says that the woman was given by God as a "suitable partner" for the man (Gn 2:18), it refers to a unique kind of partnership and help, a true communion of persons open to and in service to the other.

On a further note, to recognize the goodness of sexual difference is to recognize that

man and woman are called to accept each other as gifts from God. We don't invent the language of love; we receive it from Another, who is our Father, the source of our being. When we understand the truth that marriage is exclusively the union of one man and one woman, we are then not afraid to love, because we know that God's love enables us to give ourselves, to enter into the adventure of love according to his plan.

Handing It On:

Teaching about sexual difference and about its importance for all persons can assist others in understanding the bigger picture of marriage. Marriage is what it is because of *who we are* in our sexual difference. Recent decades have brought further light on the equal dignity of women and men. Unfortunately, the unique value of sexual difference has been neglected, which in turn has made it difficult to appreciate the true dignity of women and men. In speaking about the value of sexual difference, we might receive the reaction that attention to sexual difference ignores the value of equality. However, both are intertwined, necessary and good, and willed by God (see CCC, no. 369).

**7. "Every time we make love . . . we're making life . . . giving life . . .
It's not just sex . . . I come alive, and there's a sense of forever in that."**

[09:00]

.....

Key topics: MARRIED LOVE IS UNITIVE AND PROCREATIVE;
THE DEEPER MEANING OF SEX; THE GOOD OF FRIENDSHIP

Here, Josh is conveying the deeper meaning of sex, of conjugal love, the love between a husband and wife. He's expressing what the Church teaches about the inseparability of the unitive and procreative aspects of the conjugal act.³²

Men and women are made for each other, to reveal in the gift of the self to the opposite sex what it means to be not only human, but fully man and fully woman. "Husband" is a word that points to wife, as "mother" is a word that points to father — and each declares that our sexual passions are not mere appetites or playthings that point to pleasure — they call us forth on a great mission to give ourselves to each other and to the possibility of new life.

The Church has always taught that it is wrong to separate the unitive and procreative meanings of marriage — "the two become one flesh." This is because the unitive and procreative meanings of marriage *cannot* be separated. Sex speaks a language that only makes sense in marriage. Marriage is the context for sexual union, in which by a voluntary act of the will a man and woman consecrate their bodies and their whole lives simultaneously to each other and to the children who may arise from their sexual union.³³ Marriage is indeed the giving of the whole person to the other, husband to wife and wife to husband, including one's reproductive capacity. This unique gift of self makes marriage a good in itself.

"Husband" is not a word that means "I love some adult a lot and want to take care of her or him." It is a word that means "My manhood is now in the service of this woman, and of our children." The body of the husband belongs to the wife; the body of the wife belongs to the husband. As St. Paul teaches, "A wife does not have authority over her own body, but rather her husband, and similarly a husband does not have authority over his own body, but rather his wife" (1 Cor 7:4).

As noted in the Viewer's Guide, the trivialization of sex and its separation from marriage have had drastic effects for human relationships. In particular, the value of healthy and holy friendships wherein chastity flourishes seems a tough sell today. However, it is in the heroic recovery of the inseparable connection between chastity and virtuous friendship that a new springtime is possible. Despite what the culture says, our young people can model these friendships.

Handing It On:

In focus groups of Catholic young adults in their 20s, the question was asked, "What does the Church teach about marriage?" The most common answer given was that the Church teaches that "marriage is for procreation." Three things were missing. First, the understanding as expressed was that marriage was simply an instrument or a functional means to having children. In other words, there was not a sense of the *gift* of the child as the "ultimate crown" of marriage.³⁴ Also absent was the sense of the *full teaching* about openness to life, which includes spiritual fruitfulness to which those who are infertile and beyond child-bearing years are called. Third, the unitive dimension was missing from most of the answers. A renewed catechesis on the "inner truth of conjugal love" (CCC, no. 2370, quoting *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 32) and the link between the unitive and procreative dimensions of married love is needed. The *Theology of the Body* and related resources are great assets here.

8. "The gift for life . . . the gift of life."

[09:57]

Key topics: MARRIAGE AS GIFT; INDISPENSABLE MODEL FOR THE WORLD

Josh captures the basic meaning of marriage in these two simple phrases. Marriage is the foundational institution for life, for promoting and protecting the gift that human life is, precisely because it is the gift of loving communion of husband and wife, which, with God's grace, is a source of life for the spouses and for all who know them. Marriage is a great good and is unique for a reason.

Marriage is good for many things, but it is also, simply speaking, good. The union of husband and wife is not merely an instrumental good, that is, a benefit because it simply is a source of stability, comfort, satisfaction, and happiness for spouses. Marriage is not only good because it provides important benefits for society and children. Marriage is good in itself.

Husband and wife make a gift of their whole selves to one another, including their bodies and their capacity to share in the creation of new life. This unique and mutual gift of self is for the good of their marriage and for the good of their children. It is based on their sacred bond that is significant for its own sake.

Marriage is the fabric of human history and every human society. Marriage is a personal relationship with great, public significance—for spouses, for children, for families, for neighborhoods, for communities, for society, for the state, for the Church, and for the world.³⁵

As Catholics, we understand that the mystery of bodily and personal union in marriage is also good because it reflects something of the mystery of God Himself and of the Church. Men and women are made in the image of God, and their union in marriage can also be said to image God, who is a communion of Divine Persons.³⁶ In addition, the mystery of marriage — how two can become one flesh — also teaches us about the mystery that is the mystical oneness of the Church as the Body and Bride of Christ.

So [also] husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nour-

ishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. / “For this reason a man shall leave [his] father and [his] mother / and be joined to his wife, / and the two shall become one flesh.” / This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband. (Eph 5:28-33)

Man and woman are made for each other. Their sexual difference is the avenue through which the two become one in marriage. This two-in-one-flesh communion has no parallel among human relationships and serves as the essential font of life and love in society. Marriage is unique for a reason.

Handing It On:

Today, public discussion about marriage often loses sight of the central issue at stake: marriage itself. The “right to marry” is often cited without a consideration of what marriage is, as the lifelong and exclusive union of one man and one woman. (A “right to marry” presumes the capacity for marriage, which then begs the question of marriage.) The protection and promotion of marriage concerns the protection and promotion of an incomparable good, marriage itself. This good is absolutely unique. With respect and love for all people, we can help others see that marriage is and needs to remain at the center of the discussion. The truth of marriage matters.³⁷

*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and
be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.*
(Mt 19:5)

For More Information:

Scriptural background on marriage:

Matthew 19 and Genesis 1–2 form a key Scriptural foundation for the true nature of marriage as the permanent and exclusive union of one man and one woman. These passages witness to the unique truth, goodness, and beauty of sexual difference and complementarity between man and woman, which serve as the doorway to the one-flesh communion of persons only realizable between a man and a woman in marriage. Scripture also manifests the fact that, in light of sin, a proper and full appreciation of marriage and human sexuality has not always been apparent in human history. For example, there are passages in Scripture which indicate the harm and sinfulness of sexual activity outside of marriage and in particular between persons of the same sex.³⁸ These passages reflect truths often rejected or confused throughout history up to our present day. In particular, the significance of marriage became especially visible in the developing understanding of God's covenant with his people in spousal terms, which foreshadowed the relationship between Christ and his Bride, the Church.³⁹ The Bible confirms that marriage is a relationship constructed on the basis of heterosexual difference. Instances of polygamy and abusive conduct in the Old Testament demonstrate the limited consciousness and societal practices of the time. Even when committed by those whom God called, such acts are always presented as born of hardness of heart and in need of right ordering. The subsequent teaching of the prophets and of the Wisdom literature rebuilt the consciousness of the people about the true nature and dignity of marriage. In Matthew 19 Jesus confirms the teaching of the book of Genesis that from the beginning man was created “male and female” (cf. Gn 1:26–27) and that for this reason “the two shall become one flesh” (cf. Gn 2:24).

Recent Church teaching on marriage and the family and other resources:

Most notably, Pope John Paul II taught about the “theology of the body” and the “nuptial or spousal meaning” of the human body.⁴⁰ In service to the gifts of Divine Revelation and human reason, the Magisterium has taught about the nature of marriage, the family, the dignity of the human person, and human sexuality in various instances.⁴¹



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NOTES

1. See Austin Flannery, ed., *Vatican Council II: Volume 1: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, new rev. ed. (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1996). All subsequent citations of Vatican II documents refer to this edition.

2. See Pope John Paul II, General Audience (December 1, 1999), www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/1999/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_01121999_en.html.

3. Ibid.

4. *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: Libreria Editrice Vaticana–United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2000), no. 1603.

5. See CCC, nos. 2357–2359. See also United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *Ministry to Persons with a Homosexual Inclination: Guidelines for Pastoral Care* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2006); USCCB, *Between Man and Woman: Questions and Answers about Marriage and Same-Sex Unions* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2003), no. 6.

6. The video serves as an artistic tool to assist in beginning a conversation, discussion and/or teaching about sexual difference, complementarity, and the truth of marriage. The video is not meant to stand alone but should be accompanied by the materials found in the viewer's guide, this resource booklet, and on the Web site. Our culture today is often scripted to the detriment of truth, goodness, and beauty — even in our so-called “reality” TV shows. While the couple in the video represents a particular demographic and situation, their talent as actors and the dialogue they share touch upon basic truths of human nature.

7. In her teaching, the Church in faithfulness to the Lord continues to stand for truth, justice, and mercy, even when it is difficult. The Church must continue to reach out to every person in love and mercy, as she fulfills her mission to be the Body of Christ. While we may experience controversy as we preach and hand on these teachings on chastity and marriage, we are promised the help of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Church. Priests and deacons in particular are encouraged to approach these teachings with empathy and in a pastoral spirit, in a way that seeks to call believers to faithfulness to the authentic teaching of the Church. At their root, these truths about marriage, the person, and human sexuality are paths to freedom. All who teach the faith have the important responsibility to hand on these truths in love and compassion, thus bearing witness through mercy to the freedom that is attainable in the truth.

8. Indeed, the Church decries all unjust discrimination (see CCC, no. 2358).

9. See Gn 1:26–27; 5:1–2; 9:6b–7; Wis 2:23; Sir 17:1; and Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), no. 12.

10. See Gn 2:7; Is 45:9, 12; Jer 18:6; and Rom 9:20–21.

11. Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 1982), no. 3.

12. See also Gn 1:26-27 and 2:24; Pope John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* (TOB), trans. Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline, 2006), 1-4 (numbers correspond to audiences); Pope John Paul II, *Encyclical Veritatis Splendor* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 1993), nos. 22 and 53.
13. See CCC, no. 1603: "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' (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 48 § 1). The vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator. Marriage is not a purely human institution despite the many variations it may have undergone through the centuries in different cultures, social structures, and spiritual attitudes. These differences should not cause us to forget its common and permanent characteristics. Although the dignity of this institution is not transparent everywhere with the same clarity (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 47 § 2), some sense of the greatness of the matrimonial union exists in all cultures."
14. See CCC, nos. 2207-2213.
15. A subsequent video in this series will treat the importance of marriage in its service to human dignity and to the common good.
16. CCC, no. 2360.
17. See CCC, no. 159.
18. See CCC, nos. 1612-1617.
19. See note 9 above. See also Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter Mulieris Dignitatem* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 1988), no. 6.
20. Cf. CCC, no. 1603 (see note 13 above).
21. See Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 3.
22. See Pope John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, no. 7.
23. Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 48.
24. On the various aspects of fruitful married love, see Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 41.
25. See TOB, 8:3.
26. See TOB, 103:4-6; 104:1, 4, 7-9; 105:1-6; 106:1-4 and other references.
27. See notes 5 and 7 above.
28. See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), *Letter on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church*

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and in the World (2004), no. 8, www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20040731_collaboration_en.html.

29. See TOB, 13:1 – 16:2. See also *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 37, and *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 15.

30. See also Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, nos. 48–50.

31. See CCC, nos. 2332–2333.

32. See CCC, nos. 2363, 2366, and 2369. See also Pope Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Humanae Vitae* (1968), no. 12, www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html; CDF, Instruction *Donum Vitae* (1987), part 2, no. 4, www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html; and CDF, Instruction *Dignitas Personae* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2008).

33. On responsible parenthood and the gift of the child, see CCC, nos. 2368 and 2378.

34. Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 48.

35. See Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Washington, DC: Libreria Editrice Vaticana–USCCB, 2004), nos. 209–254. See also Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2007), no. 29: “Marriage and the family are institutions that must be promoted and defended from every possible misrepresentation of their true nature, since whatever is injurious to them is injurious to society itself.”

36. See Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Families* (1994), nos. 6–7, www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_02021994_families_en.html; see also his *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 11, 13, 15, and 21.

37. Subsequent videos and materials in this series will treat marriage in relation to the good of children, human dignity and the common good, and religious liberty.

38. Injunctions against homosexual acts are included in the Holiness Code of Leviticus (Lv 18:22; 20:13), the book of Deuteronomy (Dt 23:17), and St. Paul’s Letters (Rom 1:26–27; 1 Cor 6:9–10; 1 Tim 1:9–10).

39. See Hosea 1–3; Jeremiah 2:2; Ezekiel 16; Isaiah 54:1–8; Song of Songs; Psalm 45; Mark 2:19–20 (cf. Mt 9:14–15 and Lk 5:33–35); Matthew 25:1–13 (cf. Lk 12:35–38); Matthew 22:1–14 (cf. Lk 13:29, 14:7–24); John 3:28–30; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:21–33; and Revelation 19:6–9, 21:1–2, 9–11.

40. See *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 37; TOB, 13:1, 14:5–6, 15:3–4, and subsequent references; *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 15. Pope John Paul II’s series of Wednesday General Audiences on human love in the divine plan, more popularly known as the “Theology of the Body,” remains a source of continual reflection and renewal for the Church in her mission of a New Evangelization and a renewed catechesis on marriage and the human person in light of the mystery of Christ and his call to go back to the “beginning,” to creation itself. Other sources for helping understand and hand on the Church’s teaching include the following works: Angelo Cardinal Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery*, trans. Michelle K. Borras

(Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005); Marc Cardinal Ouellet, *Divine Likeness: Toward a Trinitarian Anthropology of the Family*, trans. Philip Milligan and Linda M. Ciccone (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006); and Carl Anderson and José Granados, *Called to Love: Approaching John Paul II's Theology of the Body* (New York: Doubleday, 2009).

41. For example, see CCC, nos. 355, 369-373, 1601-1666, 1702, 2201-2213, and 2331-2400. See also Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* on the Church in the Modern World (1965), nos. 12 and 47-52; Pope Paul VI, Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* on the Transmission of Human Life (1968); CDF, Declaration *Persona Humana* on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics (1975), www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19751229_persona-humana_en.html; CDF, *Letter on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons* (October 1, 1986), www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19861001_homosexual-persons_en.html; CDF, Instruction *Donum Vitae* on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation (1987); Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* on the Dignity and Vocation of Women (1988); CDF, *Some Considerations Concerning the Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-Discrimination of Homosexual Persons* (1992); Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Families* (1994); Pope John Paul II, Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life (1995), no. 2; Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Women* (1995); CDF, *Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions between Homosexual Persons* (2003), www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20030731_homosexual-unions_en.html; CDF, *Letter on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World* (2004); Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004), nos. 144-148 and 209-254; CDF, Instruction *Dignitas Personae* on Certain Bioethical Questions (2008); and Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* on Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth (2009), nos. 15, 44, and 51. For a compilation of Pope Benedict XVI's reflections on marriage and the family, see Pope Benedict XVI, *Family* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2009). See also USCCB, Pastoral Letter *Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2009).

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Publication No. 7-151
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Washington, D.C.
ISBN 978-1-60137-151-5

ISBN 978-160137-151-5

