



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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Viewer's Guide

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MARRIAGE: UNIQUE FOR A REASON

The *Made for Each Other* Viewer's Guide 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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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.portu-matrimonio.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.

VIEWER'S GUIDE

What is marriage?

This is the great question of our time. And there is an answer accessible to every human heart: marriage is the lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman.⁵ Some voices today claim this time-tested answer is outdated. We have seen the pain of broken marriages, divorce, and the rise of cohabitation. We have also seen most recently another troubling phenomenon: the current attempts to alter the definition of marriage from the union of a man and a woman to the union of two persons of the same sex. These attempts would seem to say that the time-honored answer that marriage is the union of one man and one woman has now become old-fashioned and obsolete. But does marriage really have nothing essentially to do with the relation between man and woman?

This Viewer's Guide accompanies the video entitled "Made for Each Other," the first video in the *Marriage: Unique for a Reason* series. In this video, Josh and Carrie talk about two simple yet deep concepts: the importance of sexual difference, and the complementarity between man and woman. In this Viewer's Guide, we will explore how sexual difference *is* essential to marriage. The ancient answer to the question of marriage is just as true and applicable and life-giving as ever: marriage can only be between one man and one woman. Everything else falls short. Efforts to redefine marriage misunderstand marriage or sex differences or sex itself.

Today there is frequent discussion about rights, equality, and the avoidance of discrimination. The principles of the common good are important and vital for any society concerned about justice. The Church herself is situated at the forefront of working for social justice. She stands for basic human rights, for respecting human equality, and for avoiding all unjust discrimination, all on the basis that every human person has equal and inviolable dignity, including persons with a homosexual inclination. The dignity of the human person is non-negotiable.

Is there a dichotomy between preserving the truth of marriage on the one hand and supporting the inviolable dignity of every human person on the other? Much of our current popular discourse seems to assert that there is a dichotomy. Those who stand for the truth

of marriage between one man and one woman are often accused of bigotry or of denying equality and civil rights. However, this is a language game not based in reality. Further videos in this series will examine this and other topics in more depth and will explain how these claims overlook both the meaning of marriage and the preservation of marriage as a fundamental social justice issue.

But to fully answer the false claim of discrimination, we have to start at the beginning (see Mt 19:4-6; Mk 10:6-8), at the proper starting point. Otherwise, we might jump into the middle of a topic without a true grasp of the essentials. It would be like trying to learn algebra before learning addition and subtraction, or calculus before algebra. In order to understand the meaning of marriage, we need to begin with sexual difference.

We might think that sexual difference is a commonplace notion. Why elaborate on it further? The reality is that sexual difference and complementarity are all too regularly presumed or dismissed from an honest consideration about marriage. Sometimes sexual difference and complementarity are seen as superficial or irrelevant. However, while sexual difference doesn't say everything there is to say about marriage, it's indispensable for understanding marriage's meaning.

Therefore, in this guide we approach the issue of same-sex "unions" through proclaiming the beauty of the two-in-one-flesh communion of persons between husband and wife as God intended. The numbered headings in bold below correspond to different sound bites from Josh and Carrie. The questions provided can be used for personal reflection or for group discussion.

For more information and further resources, go to www.marriageuniqueforareason.org.⁶

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In the beginning... [00:56] The video begins with the scene of a potter working with water and clay, forming a new piece of pottery. This scene is repeated throughout the video. God is the potter, who creates us out of love and in his image.⁷ "God created man in his image; / in the divine image he created him; / male and female he created them" (Gn 1:27). God created marriage in the very same moment that he created the human person.⁸ The meaning of marriage is inscribed in the very nature of the human person as man and woman. The two distinct elements of water and the dust of clay come together with God's help to

form a unique piece of artwork (see Gn 2:6-7), just as a man and woman can come together in a unique way to form something new, marriage. These latter two “elements” are needed for marriage to exist.

Discussion questions:

- a. What additional meanings might the image of the potter molding the clay as well as the completed piece of pottery have in reference to marriage?*
- b. What is the significance of the close tie between life and marriage from the moment of creation? What does it mean to say that God created marriage in the very same moment that he created the human person?*

Notes:

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

[02:43]

Key topics: THE BASIC MEANING OF MARRIAGE;
THE ROLE OF REASON AND FAITH

Carrie states something that is very basic. Man and woman are made for each other in a way that is absolutely unique. We see this through their sexual difference, even if we just look to the human body as male or female. God's plan for men and women is a great one.

Marriage is the lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman. It is more than a legal category. Marriage is a communion of persons, a communion of love between husband and wife meant to be the source of the family and society. God's vision and plan for marriage is not idealistic. That's why Jesus referred his interlocutors back to the beginning (see Mt 19:4-6; Mk 10:6-8).⁹

We are meant for union and communion, to be in relation with others.¹⁰ In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, God says, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Gn 2:18). God's solution to man's isolation is not to create another identical man. God's creation of the animals does not satisfy the longing Adam feels for communion. God creates woman from the body of the man and gives man and woman to each other. Then God says, "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; cf. Gn 2:24). This is the first marriage.

Even our friends and neighbors who do not accept the truth of the Bible can see the point here. The two becoming one flesh refers to the physical act of sexual intercourse, as well as to the spiritual communion between the man and the woman. People from every religion, or no religion at all, can confirm the power and uniqueness of a man and a woman "becoming one flesh" with each other in marriage.

In other words, the truth of marriage between one man and one woman can be known by human reason through the natural moral law (the law according to the *nature of the person*, not just biological or physical laws), always with the help of God's grace. The truth of marriage is not only a concern of the Church or religion — it's truth for everyone. As

Catholics, we also understand that faith sheds light on marriage. Christ raised marriage between the baptized to be a sacramental image of his love for the Church. Faith and reason don't conflict here. In fact, they never do.¹¹

Discussion questions:

- a. We might hear the argument today that marriage as the union of a man and a woman is solely a religious reality and that the state should be allowed to define and treat marriage in whatever way it chooses. Based on the above, why is this view incorrect?*
- b. How do reason and faith not conflict when it comes to marriage? In other words, how does the sacrament of marriage, which is between a baptized man and a baptized woman, build upon, and not detract from, the basic and reasonable truths at the heart of every marriage?*

Notes:

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

Carrie is talking about the “connection” or communion that is marriage. Marriage necessarily involves the whole person. That’s what the vows are about — a free and total promise of fidelity, permanence, and openness to life made to the other, in good times and bad, through thick and thin. Such vows can only be exchanged between a man and a woman. In other words, sexual difference is essential to marriage.

Sexual difference concerns the whole person, as Carrie points out. Only through this difference can a man and a woman give themselves fully and love each other as spouses. Only a man and a woman can commit to the other in such a way as to be married, to be husband and wife. This isn’t unjust discrimination; it’s distinction, a matter of simply respecting reality. The promise of marriage speaks a language. Part of the essential grammar of this language is sexual difference. Without it, marriage can’t be spoken of.¹²

Carrie later remarks, “Our sexual difference doesn’t compete; it complements.” Men and women are equal but they are also different. Difference here is not bad; it is a great and necessary good. “It’s constructive,” as Josh says. It’s the avenue for life-giving love, a fundamental reference point for all human relationships. Sexual difference is what enables a man and a woman to form a unique bond for life. A husband gives to his wife what only a husband can give. Likewise, a wife gives to her husband what only a wife can give.

Discussion questions:

- a. Do you think sexual difference, man to woman and woman to man, is understood and appreciated today? Why or why not?*
- b. How can we help others reflect on the importance of sexual difference and complementarity?*

Notes:

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

[04:43]

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

This is a key line. Let's pause to take in what Josh is saying . . . Life-giving love — the two-in-one-flesh communion of persons — depends on sexual difference. In simple terms, sex and babies depend on the difference between man and woman. The ability to "make love"¹³ assumes that the right context is already in place, that the vows have been exchanged, bringing about husband and wife. "Making love" is about self-giving. The husband gives his "body-person" (his whole self) to his wife; the wife gives her "body-person" to her husband. The spouses give themselves and receive each other *in and through their difference*.

As Josh says, "every natural process of the body" can be done naturally by oneself — "everything but making love and having children," which depends upon a *different body-person*. Sexual difference is the avenue towards real, "body-personal" union, a union that is also open to life.

Love and commitment are important in marriage, as they are important in many relationships among family and friends. But marriage involves a unique love and commitment. As counter-cultural as this may sound, marriage depends on the capacity to form a true union of persons through the body, that is, through sex. Such a true union is by its nature ordered toward life and is meant to remain always open to life. Why is this counter-cultural? Sex has so frequently been emptied of its real meaning and significance. It has become de-personalized, accepted as a casual or recreational occurrence. Sex's personal meaning and responsibilities are many times ignored, but this disregard bears harmful and tragic consequences, whether manifest in contraception, unhealthy attachment and broken relationships, STDs, the tragedy of abortion, depression . . . and the list could go on. This is not God's plan for sex. Sex has been made for marriage, and only a woman and a man are able to form through marriage an intimate union of love and life, a union that deservedly holds unique status and responsibilities in society.

Discussion questions:

- a. *What makes marriage distinctive compared to other relationships? Why are love and commitment in marriage unique?*
- b. *How can recovering the personal significance of the body help in recovering the personal meaning of sex as a conjugal act, i.e., an act of married love?*

Notes:

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

Josh here states a simple yet central fact of human life and history. Marriage is unique to a man and a woman. This is not arbitrary or fabricated. There's a *reason* for it: "That's why . . ." In fact, there are many reasons. But they rest first on sexual difference. *The difference is the difference*. Without sexual difference, one can't speak of marriage or anything analogous to marriage.

This clearly relates to the question of same-sex "marriage" and the various types of same-sex "unions." The Church recognizes that this can be an emotional and difficult issue. It's important always to consider the human person. Every human person is made in the image and likeness of God, with a dignity that can never be erased.¹⁴ Every person deserves love and respect, as well as truth. "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (Jn 13:34). When the Church teaches difficult truths, she witnesses to Christ who "loved to the end" (cf. Jn 13:1).

The Church intends no disrespect for our brothers and sisters who experience same-sex attraction. The Church reminds us that we are all called to the Lord's grace and mercy. Christ died for each and every one of us. The Church reaches out to persons who experience same-sex attraction.¹⁵ She calls 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. Any lack of respect, lack of compassion, or lack of sensitivity towards persons with a homosexual inclination is unacceptable. The protection and promotion of marriage as the union of one man and one woman is and must always be found within this context of love and respect for all persons.

Fundamentally, what's missing in the assumption that two persons of the same sex can marry is sexual difference. Two persons of the same sex are too similar to form a complementary

union of persons. Bodily, two men or two women are “the same,” not different or distinct. Healthy and holy friendship is possible, but not conjugal union. A conjugal or marital union comes about only through sexual difference. Sexual acts between persons of the same sex are neither unitive nor procreative in kind.¹⁶ Such acts can never form a true union of bodies and persons and are contrary not only to the Church’s teaching but also to the truth of the very persons who engage in them, as witnessed to by the language of the body.¹⁷ On the other hand, spouses give themselves to each other in a sexually and personally distinctive way. Only a husband and a wife have the space or capacity to receive truly each other’s distinctive sexual gift, and only a husband and a wife can make a gift of their selves to the other in that way.

Take Josh’s analogy. Marriage is like water. The distinct elements of oxygen and hydrogen combine to make water, something totally new and unique. Without the different elements, water cannot exist. Likewise, without the difference of man and woman, marriage cannot exist.

Carrie’s analogy also helps. A woman and a man are like a violinist and cellist, respectively, who play the same piece of music (i.e., their humanity) in different but harmonious ways (i.e., as woman and as man). A man and a woman complement each other in a totally unique way. Without this complementarity grounded in sexual difference, marriage simply cannot be.

There’s nothing mean-spirited in recognizing and protecting the unique truth of marriage. It’s the truth of love and the truth of the person, and living in accord with the truth will always be what’s best for us. Even when difficult, the truth sets us free.

Discussion questions:

- a. How is the truth of marriage between man and woman grounded in the truth of the human person?*
- b. How can the consideration above assist in helping others understand that preserving the truth of marriage between one man and one woman is not an issue of unjust discrimination?*
- c. What other analogies or explanations might help people understand the uniqueness of marriage?*

Notes:

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

[06:06]

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

Returning to sexual difference, Josh makes an important point. The difference between a man and a woman is not just an insignificant biological fact.¹⁸ "We're wired differently," as Josh says. Biology is important, but the body and the person are not reducible to biology. Sexual difference involves the whole person, body and soul.

Furthermore, as Pope John Paul II taught, the body has a "spousal meaning."¹⁹ The body, in its masculinity or femininity, reveals that we are persons who are made to be a gift to others and to be received as a gift by others. This spousal meaning of the body speaks an essential truth relevant to all people, not only those called to marriage. It also indicates what was said above, that the body is more than just a biological reality. The body reveals the person. We're not souls trapped in bodies. We're "body-persons." We don't just *have* a body. We *are* our bodies in a real sense. Our bodies are fundamental to who we are. The body of a man and the body of a woman are distinct, *personal* realities.

A husband and a wife have unique and personal gifts that they offer to each other. Not only do they give each other their physical bodies, but they give their distinct persons to each other, as man and woman, *in and through their bodies*, in and through their sexual difference. Their bodies speak a unique language of love, reserved specifically for marriage. Neither biology nor culture alone can explain this. It has to do with the nature of the human person as a unity of body and soul, created as man and woman.²⁰

That being said, it is a curious phenomenon of our time that, while the natural sciences have advanced in so many areas, including in the study of the human person, an appreciation and application of these sciences in relation to sexual difference and human sexuality in general are often lacking in our contemporary society. Why is this? It's a worthy question to consider. For example, when it comes to food and diet these days, we do not hear things like "eat whatever and however much you want because there won't be any consequences"

or “we’ll handle the consequences as they come.” Medically and scientifically speaking, no one buys that.

But what about the body and sex? Our culture’s prevailing philosophy seems to deny that there are powerful consequences to sex. Even when faced with the facts of such consequences, the dominant philosophy continues to say “do whatever you want with your body — in fact, we’ll do whatever it takes to let you do anything to your body, regardless of the consequences . . .” Sounds like a disconnect here and a lack of medical and scientific rigor. And what about sexual difference? While some play down the reality of sexual difference or limit it to the difference between female and male anatomy, sciences such as neurobiology, gynecology, evolutionary psychology, endocrinology, and reproductive physiology — to name a few — point to the intricate, unique, and complementary physiologies of women and men.

Sexual difference is more than a surface difference in human anatomy. Contemporary attempts to explain sexual difference as a socially constructed reality fall short of simple science. The body/person dualism of today (i.e., which holds that the body is separable from the person and that we can therefore do whatever we want to with our bodies) is neither realistic nor scientific. All of this is to say that while sexual difference is more than a biological fact, biology and the related sciences can be of great help in appreciating the unique gifts of men and women.

Discussion questions:

a. How is the human body more than just biology? What does it mean to say that “the body reveals the person”? Do we see ourselves as gifts?

b. In light of our culture’s growing awareness of the importance of bodily health and medically up-to-date information (e.g., dieting, exercise, addressing obesity), do you think the same awareness is operative when it comes to treating the topic of sex and sexual difference? Why or why not?

Notes:

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

[06:27]

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

Carrie's line says something significant about men and women. Every woman and man share the same humanity and the same dignity as human persons made in the image of God. Each is a complete human person. They're equal in their humanity and dignity, but they're not simply the same. Their sexual difference, as a man or a woman, remains important at every level. This is why talk about sexual difference not only concerns marriage. Our sexual identity as a man or a woman is meant to be acknowledged and accepted.²¹ It has significance for all the various ways we relate to others, whether we're married or not, whether we're a mother or father or not.

For example, the significance of male and female differentiation goes beyond reproduction or procreation. Various branches of science, such as those mentioned above, can show that men and women differ in a whole variety of dimensions. We may have conversations differently; take risks differently; form and process relationships differently; respond to threats differently. These differences do not imply that one sex is superior to the other. Men and women are different, validly different. Admitting this does not diminish either sex but serves to enhance their unity.

Of course, men and women differ among themselves, as well as differing from each other. Sex differences in each and every trait need not be present in each and every individual woman or man. But the structural differences between male and female bodies allow a husband and a wife to join together in the one-flesh union and bring forth new life together.

Our maleness or femaleness is essential to our identity as persons. Our gender is not something that is pasted onto us as an after-thought, or that is an incidental part of who we are. Male and female are two different ways of being a human person, body and soul. When we deny our identity as sexually differentiated beings, we diminish our humanity.

Discussion questions:

- a. In the video, Carrie presented a positive experience of a daughter's relationship with her father, though unfortunately this is not always the case. How is sexual difference important when it comes to the roles and responsibilities of parenting, that is, mothering and fathering?*
- b. How do equality and difference go together when speaking of man and woman? How does complementarity depend upon difference?*

Notes:

**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

While not every husband may put into words what Josh expressed, Josh is speaking about more than just personal experience. He's getting at the deeper meaning of sex, of conjugal love, the love between husband and wife. The unique bond of spousal love *is itself* life-giving. This is what the Church means by the inseparability of the unitive and procreative aspects of the conjugal act.²²

The Church's teaching on marriage and sexual difference is deeply connected with her teaching on sex itself. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (no. 2360), "Sexuality is ordered to the conjugal love of man and woman. In marriage the physical intimacy of the spouses becomes a sign and a pledge of spiritual communion." Human sexuality is an organic, holistic reality, and the sole proper context for sexual activity in marriage. Sex is both procreative and unitive, meaning that sex can lead to new life and unite the spouses.²³

How about we go deeper: Within the context of marriage, these three elements, sexual difference, spousal love, and natural procreation (fruitfulness), work together.²⁴ A husband and wife's love for each other directs their sexual energies exclusively toward their spouse. Spouses' sexual activity brings them closer together, and may result in a child whom they both love. The child is equally the child of both husband and wife, now father and mother. And when these elements are together and respected, the child is welcomed as a gift. Also, as expressed by Josh and Carrie in their openness to life, married love is still called to be fruitful even without the blessing of a child.²⁵

The modern alternative to the Church's teaching is that sex is a private recreational activity, that it may be deliberately made sterile and has no moral or social significance. In this view, it is "perfectly proper" to disconnect sex from marriage, from procreation, and even from love. Sexual difference becomes reduced to a superficial and arbitrary social

construct. The modern world teaches that we can have sex without babies, have babies without sex, and have either without any connection with one's husband or wife. The modern world considers these legitimate expressions of our independence and freedom.

This downgrading of the sexual act to immediate pleasure, rather than the true and complete union of two persons, man and woman, has gone hand in hand with the increasing isolation between men and women. Sex in the context of marriage creates a deep and meaningful connection between the sexes. But in modern society, sex is often focused on the self and on personal pleasure, rather than on mutual self-giving. In this environment, where sex is detached from marriage, sex ceases to be a union of anything, but rather simply and exclusively an occasion for mutual stimulation. Sex in such circumstances does not create a union of persons but deters such a union. Instead of being a couple who give to each other, objectively the people are a pair of individuals who take from each other.

In this context as well, authentic and holy friendship, a good for all people, has suffered and has been devalued. The heroic recovery of the inseparable connection between chastity and true, virtuous friendship is needed today.

Discussion questions:

- a. Have you heard it said that the Church's teaching on sex and marriage is only concerned about procreation? The commonplace view about sex seems to reject procreation as important, but in the process it also reduces the unitive significance of sex. What areas of the Church's teaching are being missed or misunderstood? How can the wisdom of the Church on the inseparability of the unitive and procreative aspects of conjugal love be fostered today?*
- b. The public proposal to "redefine" marriage to include persons of the same sex is fairly recent. How is it connected to a larger confusion around the meaning of the person and sex?*
- c. How can a recovery of the true meaning of chastity and friendship assist in a rediscovery of the authentic meaning of the human person?*

Notes:

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

[09:57]

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

Josh sums everything up in these concise words. Marriage is the gift for life and the gift of life. It's unique and irreplaceable — the fundamental institution for life. There is nothing else like it.

The Church affirms that the love of husband and wife is a great good in and of itself, even if, for non-deliberate reasons, they do not receive the gift of a child. Marriage uniquely bridges sexual difference without emptying the difference of man and woman of its meaning and value.

The Church also teaches that human marriage is a foreshadowing of the marriage between Christ and his Church and that sacramental marriage actually participates in and shows forth the love between Christ and his Church (see Eph 5:28-33).

Marriage lived in truth is an indispensable model of communion for the world and is always an affirmation of life. The love of husband and wife reminds the couple and the rest of the world that no one is a completely isolated individual, that we need one another at the most fundamental level. This love is meant to be the context for welcoming, forming, and educating new life. This is why marriage, as a personal relationship, has always been recognized to have great public significance. The love of spouses, the responsibilities of mothers and fathers, and the rights of children — all are tied to the unique truth of marriage and its protection and promotion.

The Church will never waver in her teaching that marriage is the union of a woman and a man. Marriage is the union of two distinct persons: man and woman, who, in the sacrament, signify Christ and his Church and embody the very love between them. From the beginning, man and woman are made for each other. To abandon sexual difference in marriage would be to abandon the quest for unity between men and women.

Discussion questions:

a. How is marriage the “gift for life” and the “gift of life”?

b. How is this meaning inseparable from the truth of marriage as the union of one man and one woman?

Notes:

TRUTH MATTERS

Truth matters. This is why the Church teaches that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. This truth is absolutely essential for respecting the dignity of every person.²⁶ It's a truth grounded in our identity as human persons, as man and woman. But even more: The total body and soul sharing of life between husband and wife, which includes their sexual union, reflects and mirrors in some way the divine communion of persons. The Church invites all people to promote, strengthen, and protect the truth and beauty of marriage. Marriage is unique for a reason.²⁷

*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)



MARRIAGE
Unique for a Reason

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).

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. 1601–1605.

6. In addition, for those interested in further references, a Resource Booklet for priests, deacons, catechists, and teachers also accompanies this Viewer's Guide.

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

8. Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops [USCCB], 1982), no. 3. See also CCC, nos. 1602–1605.

9. See Pope John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* (TOB), trans. Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2006), 1–4 (audience numbers); Pope John Paul II, Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 1993), nos. 22 and 53.

10. See CCC, nos. 45, 371–372, 1603–1604, and 1877–1879.

11. See CCC, no. 159.

12. This is also why sex outside of marriage doesn't make any sense. Sex itself speaks a language of total commitment and gift — faithful and indissoluble love. That's the language of marriage. Sex outside of marriage always says something that is untrue. It's pretending. Real love depends on truth, and truth depends on love (see Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* [Washington, DC: USCCB, 2009], nos. 1–9).

13. "Making love" is a colloquial phrase used to capture in simple language the uniqueness of the marital embrace or the conjugal act. Of course, since God is love (see 1 Jn 4:8, 16), all love is a gift from God. The love between husband and wife is only possible because God has "first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19).

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

15. See CCC, nos. 2357-2359. See also USCCB, *Ministry to Persons with a Homosexual Inclination: Guidelines for Pastoral Care* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2006).

16. “Procreative in kind,” meaning, “with the capacity to make life,” or “ordered to life.” Even spouses who are infertile or sterile (for non-deliberate reasons) or beyond child-bearing years still express their love in sexual acts that are “procreative in kind,” open to life, open to the other.

17. See TOB, 103:4-6; 104:1, 4, 7-9; 105:1-6; 106:1-4; and others throughout the text.

18. See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), *Letter on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World* (2004), no. 8, www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20040731_collaboration_en.html.

19. See TOB, 13:1-16:2. See also Pope John Paul II's *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 37, and *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 15.

20. See CCC, nos. 362-372. See also Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, nos. 48-50.

21. See CCC, nos. 2332-2333.

22. See 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).

23. For more information on married love and the Church's teaching on the difference between Natural Family Planning and contraception, see USCCB, *Married Love and the Gift of Life* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2006).

24. See Angelo Cardinal Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery*, trans. Michelle K. Borras (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 82-109 and 362-367.

25. Even when a child does not come forth (for non-deliberate reasons), authentic married love is still fruitful. On the different ways married love can be fruitful in service to life, see Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 41.

26. A subsequent video in this series will treat the importance of marriage in its service to human dignity and to the common good.

27. For catechists and teachers who may be using this Viewer's Guide for a class or study group, further notes and references, as well as teaching helps, may be found in the *Made for Each Other* Resource Booklet for Priests, Deacons, Catechists, and Teachers.

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