

THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Biblical Reflection: Eph 5:25-33



Sacred Scripture begins with the creation of man and woman in the image and likeness of God and concludes with a vision of “the wedding feast of the Lamb.” Scripture speaks throughout of marriage and its “mystery,” its institution and the meaning God has given it, its origin and its end, its various realizations throughout the history of salvation, the difficulties arising from sin and its renewal “in the Lord” in the New Testament of Christ and the Church. (CCC 1602)

The love of the spouses requires, of its very nature, the unity and indissolubility of the spouses’ community of persons... This human communion is confirmed, purified, and completed by communion in Jesus Christ, given through the sacrament of Matrimony. It is deepened by lives of the common faith and by the Eucharist received together. (CCC 1644)

“The unity of marriage, distinctly recognized by our Lord, is made clear in the equal personal dignity which must be accorded to man and wife in mutual and unreserved affection” (GS 49.2)... (CCC 1645)

The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason the family home is rightly called “the domestic church,” a community of grace and prayer, a school of human values and of Christian charity. (CCC 1666)

“How can I ever express the happiness of a marriage joined by the Church strengthened by an offering, sealed by a blessing, announced by angels, and ratified by the Father? ... How wonderful the bond between two believers, now one in hope, one in desire, one in discipline, one in the service! They are both children of one Father and servants of the same Master, undivided in spirit and flesh, truly two in one flesh. Where the flesh is one also is the spirit.” Tertullian (CIC 1642)*

Questions for discussion:

- **How would you explain Marriage as a sacrament?**
- **What is the difference between a civil matrimony and a Sacramental one?**
- **In the book of Genesis there are two stories about the creation of the first couple. Each one presents a different mandate to them: “and the two of them become one body” (Gn 2:24) and “Be fertile and multiply” (Gn 1:28). How do you interpret/understand each one of these mandates to the human couple?**
- **St. John Paul II spoke about the Christian family as the “Domestic Church”. What do you understand by this expression used by the Pope regarding the family?**

Further reading: Catechism of the Catholic Church, numbers 1601-1666