



# *The Gift of Married Love*

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## An Introduction to the Theology of the Body

ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE  
Marriage and Family Enrichment



# Theology of the Body

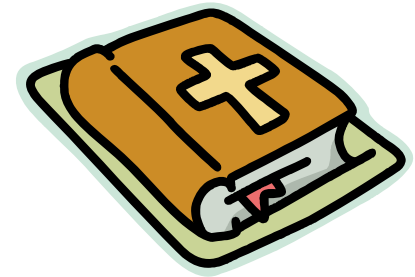
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“The human person is meant for love, not for use; it is always a serious wrong to use another person.”

- *Love and Responsibility,*
  - Karol Wojtyła, Pope John Paul II

# Scriptures Guide Intimate Relations

- Genesis 2:18-25
  - Women and men created in God's image
- Exodus 20:12
  - Upholding fidelity in family life
- Song of Songs
  - Goodness of erotic love
- Matthew 19:4-6
  - Jesus upholds marriage and commitment
- Ephesians 5:25-34
  - Respect the treasure of God's gift.





# Christians Respect Sex

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- 1 Corinthians 6:15-20
  - We belong to Christ, not to ourselves.
  - Each person deserves respect, not exploitation.
  - Sexual behavior can express either truth or lies.
- Romans 12: 1-2
  - Christians know that God desires chastity
  - Do not model yourselves on society's values,



*They'll know we are Christians...  
by our chaste behavior.*

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- “Christ calls all members of the Church to proclaim Christ to every generation.
- Christians evangelize by professing faith in Christ, celebrating the Christian mysteries in the Liturgy, praying, and **embracing the Christian way of life.**”

-- National Directory for Catechesis, Ch. 2

# Jesus, Model of Healthy Sexuality

- Jesus honors marriage and embraces single life.
- He shows how our separateness from others can be overcome



Drawing by Ralph Kovac



## *Not only a private matter...*

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- Choices about sexual behavior
  - Have consequences for others
  - Involve matters of life and death
  - Shape character and personal well-being.



# Called to on-going conversion

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- **Discipleship** entails a life-long journey from “me-centeredness to other-centeredness.”
- We seek the Church’s **wisdom** in our decision making.
- When we make mistakes, we can rely on God’s **mercy**.



# Language of Sexuality

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- "The body, in fact, and it alone is capable of making visible what is invisible, the spiritual and divine.
- It was created to transfer in the visible reality of the world, the invisible mystery hidden in God from time immemorial, and thus to be a sign of it."
  - Pope John Paul II, audience of February 20, 1980.



# We communicate God's Love

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- The body is sacramental, revelatory of the mystery of creation and the mystery of the Creator.
- The human body - through the reality of sexual difference and our call to sexual union - possesses a "language" inscribed by God that proclaims his own eternal mystery and makes that mystery present, visible, experiential in our world.



# Centrality of human love

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- "Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love and make it his own." – John Paul II



# Participating in Creation

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- Consider:
  - What was God trying to say to us by creating us male and female?
  - God does more than give us a chance to participate in procreation. He is also telling us that we need one another in order to participate.
  - Our bodies tell us that we are not completely independent.



# Self-donation and Marriage

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- Self-interest tells us to ask,
  - "What's in it for me?"
- Self-giving tells us to ask,
  - "How can I help?"

The **self-giving** philosophy of life has a far higher likelihood of producing a happy marriage.



# Key Insights

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- Sexuality is essential to identity.
- Essential for relating to others
- Not just “what are the rules?” –
- What kind of person do I want to be?
- Love of self; body comfort
- Faithfulness to others and God
- Deepening balance and compassion