

The Institute for Catechesis and Formation

ICF 105 – Christian Morality

Welcome all back...field any questions or concerns.

This course provides a basic introduction to the fundamental teachings of Catholic morality and its foundations in Sacred Scripture, Tradition and Natural Law. Participants will examine virtue, conscience formation and apply moral theology to contemporary moral issues in the areas of health care and human sexuality

Texts: Introduction to Catholicism for Adults, Rev. James Socias (ICA)
Supplemental Reading:

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC): <http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm>

The Bible: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/>

The first part of tonight's session will deal with a Catholic understanding of human sexuality in light of Divine Revelation and philosophical anthropology. In the following section, we will talk of artificial reproductive technologies and contraception/sterilization.

Week 4: Chastity in Relationships

ICA Chapters 22

Suggested Reading:

November 17, 2009, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Life-Giving Love in an Age of Technology

November 14, 2006, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan

God created man and woman in His image and likeness, equal in dignity, and united in marriage with natural sexual differences and a strong mutual attraction. We must have a proper understanding of our human nature in order to understand and uphold the dignity of the human person. The sixth and ninth commandments will be examined taking a look at the true meaning of sexuality as reflected by Pope Bl. John Paul II in his

Theology of the Body. He taught that the intimate union of a married man and woman reflects the community of divine Persons that is the Blessed Trinity.

This understanding of the link between man and woman and the Trinity is a great starting point. Satan has one goal, to divide man from God. And to pervert the very idea of love, God's essence, is tactic that works well.

Sacred Scripture records Satan tempting Jesus in the desert, just following His baptism by John (speak briefly about personal reflections on the sacrament as witnessed during a liturgy).

1. Turn these stones into bread. Bread in the desert is not an uncommon motif for us Christians, nor Jews. The Jews had to trust God every day, here Satan is tempting Jesus to trust not His Father, but His own self.
2. Throw yourself off of the pinnacle, so show the angels of God will protect Him. There is the hint here of Satan tempting Jesus to use God for His temporal purpose...to manipulate God. God must prove He exists by keeping Jesus from suffering.
3. Bow down and worship Satan to inherit power over all the kingdoms of earth. Accept all the visible, all the material things as greater than seeking only God.

(1) Don't trust God for all that we need, (2) don't believe God exists unless he keeps us free from suffering, and (3) the things of this world are greater. Satan could not separate Jesus from the Trinity...he tried. So now Satan must go after the image of that Trinity, i.e., the Nuptial Love of Man and Woman. The Trinity is what is at stake, if it is gone as a sign, then without being able to sever the intra-Trinitarian relationship, Satan will destroy the sign that points to it. In other words, if you remove the road sign that is necessary to arrive at a specific location, it has a similar effect in terms of man's love for God.

The Virtue of Chastity

Chastity is a moral virtue that empowers a person to have a loving relationship with God and to see Christ in every human person. It is to see others as complete human persons rather than viewing them as objects. The Catechism describes the virtue of Chastity as “the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being. CCC 2337

A short, but accurate definition of chastity is that it is “the properly ordered love according to one’s vocation or station in life”. It is so much better than teaching ‘abstinence’, not that abstinence is ‘wrong’ but that it is incomplete. You can’t ‘just not have sex’ until it’s okay ‘to have sex’. ‘Not having sex’ is not preparation for ‘having sex’. And it also overly emphasizes the sex, and doesn’t properly connect all the wonderful virtues chastity provides which offer a continuity between the single life and marriage, or the religious life.

Chastity is the worship of God in your body: It is a work of the Holy Spirit, and a stance of self-giving love which is fruitful; a stance of being a disciple of the Lord. Chastity never uses another or reduces him/her to a means to an end. Chastity is expressed in all of our relationships and every aspect of our lives.

Chastity is a **stance before the other person**, whereby I see him as a good; I desire and seek the good for him; I see him in his potential (the way God sees him); and I am willing to give myself totally, to take the risk by loving the other person. Chastity speaks of a **deeper commitment** that is essential to the endurance of a relationship, including marriage. It shows that there is a **willingness to sacrifice** for the other person.

The Christian vision of human sexuality, as expressed in the virtue of chastity, is one which takes into account the human person as a whole, seeking what is good, true and beautiful in every person.

- **For the Unmarried Person**, chastity in one’s sexual life means **abstinence** from sexual relations (in anticipation of marriage in the future, or as a sacrificial gift of self to God if one remains unmarried).
- **Within the vocation of Marriage**, chastity is expressed both in the **sexual union** (which is unitive and procreative) and in **abstaining from sexual relations** during certain periods (for prayer and spiritual sacrifice, cf. 1 Cor 7:5; or, with good reason, to postpone for a time, - or indefinitely – conceiving a child, cf. *Humanae vitae* §16)

Marital Love

I would like to point out that when I teach the engaged couples here in Allentown Diocese, I like to point out that simply choosing marriage is a radical act in this contemporary world of ours. As odd as it seems, we have reached the point where marriage as an institution, a structure for family and or course, its imaging of God is severely diminished...Satan is on the offensive.

But any distinction between male and female is also falling prey to the modern mentality. I am not speaking of traditional roles, the woman in the kitchen sort of thing. I married a strong woman, who considers herself a feminist, but not that type that wishes to destroy any distinction between the man and woman. We're told in Genesis that God made us in His own image, in His own likeness, to have dominion over all the earth, and that He created us male and female. That has to mean something beyond biology and genitalia.

I would like to offer some of my own (not the Church's) reflection on those differences. I hope they are not stereotypes, but genuine generalizations [generalization are what can be said of a particular group, stereotypes are applying that generalization to each person within the particular group]. I offered this list to a philosophy professor (Dr. Ronda Chervin) in a Philosophy of the Human Person class, and she said that although she liked it, she found herself identifying with more of my 'male' characteristics. Anyway, they seem to apply very well to my own marriage, and I can't imagine that's an anomaly.

Female

Personal/Relationship Oriented
 Relational/Nurturing
 Identity Through Relationships
 Imminent-In the same time & place
 Bodily-Fertility/Estrogen
 Stimulated By Touch
 Multi-Level Relationship
 Intuitive in Relationships

Male

Practical/Logical Oriented
 Individual/Apart
 Identity Through Vocation
 Transcendent-Growth By Change
 Bodily-Non-Fertile/Testosterone
 Stimulated By Sight
 One-Dimensional Relationship
 Skill Oriented in Relationships

[This is not for reading to the class, unless it seems very natural to discuss it and there is time].

Lewis provides four types of relationships based on four Greek words for 'love' and their distinctions among them. Each of these relational loves has positive and negative possibilities. All are important for a human person's interaction with other persons and for that matter, all of creation. So, these four loves are not limited to person-to-person pairing, for Man is not just in relation with other Mankind, but all of Creation.

The first type is a relationship based on passion; it is known as *eros*. This is the love that draws Man to another; again, not just another subject as Man, or even a physical object, but can include concepts and ideas such as truth, beauty and goodness. The negative aspects of *eros* arise when conversely, lower things are pursued primarily or even first things are pursued inordinately making good things base.

The second love is *philia*. It is based on friendship and this friendship is based on a variety of things, but things that are desired or held in common. *Philia* love relationships can be from common experiences [sharing of a great joy, or tragic event, etc.], or pursuits of high goods. These types of friendships cannot be formed by the will of one person. These types of friendship appear to 'just happen', which makes them more of a gift than an intellectual construct or even a relationship based on like interests and pursuits [think of online dating services], though *eros* love may be operative and lead to *philia*, but it remains at the level of gift.

The third type of love is a love known as *storge*. *Storge* is a love relationship based on the familiarity a subject has with another person and/or thing. Because it is based on the amount of exposure one has, say with a pet [the dog has been part of our family for 11 years] or on a co-worker [we feel very comfortable with each other] it is a real experience of love, but not necessarily a deep relation. It is a grace to feel such a relation of comfort with other people and pets, but here the tragedy comes from the desire to

will our selves [motives and expectations] on another; perhaps this is where the phrase that familiarity breeds contempt has taken root.

Finally there is agape; a deep relational love motivated by fulfilling a genuine need discovered in another. This type of love is not limited to those things that we passionately would pursue [*eros*], or be based on some commonality [*philia*] or be limited to those with whom we are familiar [*storge*]. In that regard then, it is a type of indifferent love, one that is satisfied or at least drawn to satisfying in the other something necessary for a flourishing life. It appears that that this type of love is limited to persons; in the case of pets, or creation in general; we are primarily motivated by a custodianship, not a fulfilling of a pet's needs. But this type of love is for the other, so when the need to love another [*agape*] becomes in itself the end and not the fulfillment of the other's need, the negative aspect of *philia* becomes present and is disordered in that our own happiness is sought over the other subject's.

In a Christian vision of marriage it is proper to speak of the marital act, because **marriage is the privileged place for sexual expression**. The current threats to our sexuality (artificial reproductive technologies, “gender reassignment” surgery, same-sex “marriage”) rest on a proper understanding of the human person and the natural and theological/sacramental meaning of marriage.

The purpose of the marital act is essentially three-fold: for the good of the couple and their bond, to maintain lasting unity between them, and to bear fruit (most concretely in bearing and raising children, but in numerous other ways, such as charity, communal living, hospitality, care for extended family, etc.) These are expressions of the **goods of marriage**: Unity, Indissolubility, and the Openness to children.

Sexual expression within marriage must respect the language of the body:

I would like here to offer you some insights into what is typically known as Theology of the Body...

What is different, and what has not changed?

- There is always a distinction between change and development. John Henry Newman's work speaks directly to that point. But here with the Church's understanding of marriage, might even be more nuanced than that understanding. There have been, it is more appropriate to say, different expressions and various distinctions of emphasis. Some have claimed that the Church has only in the past emphasized the procreative element, and only of late introduced the unitive-love element. That might be too simplistic, but yet contain a kernel of truth. But it's not as if the Church hasn't understood the Scriptural understanding of love and marriage. Anyway, that's another class...not tonight!
- So with Nuptial Theology, or what it is typically referred to as Theology of the Body, why does one need a new expression? What has changed?
 - The Modern Period (which is not merely the contemporary period, but a period beginning with Rene Descartes in the 17th century), there appeared a Copernican-like revolution. We have the onset of Rationalism and Empiricism.
 - What this means for us is that we have a shift in the basic worldview of man. These are undercurrents that often affect us unaware.
 - Man prior to this period understood truth as objective, his thinking was deductive, and his ethics guided by principles.
 - Today, truth is subjective, thinking is inductive and ethics is guided by experience.
- John Paul II introduced through his Wednesday Audiences a series of talks of a few years that have come to be known as Theology of the Body. It is properly titled "Human Love in the Divine Plan" and I often prefer to refer to it as "Nuptial Theology". What was different?
 - It was not founded primarily on Platonic philosophy (Augustine) or Thomistic philosophy (Aquinas), but on Phenomenology. Phenomenology studies not that thing separate from its environment or integrated self, but as a totality that presents itself to the conscience. For example, we never see all the sides of a building, but when we speak of knowing the building, we aren't simply referring to the sides that we are exposed to, but the entire building. So the empty intentions (back side of a building, the fourth leg of a

chair out of site, etc.), remain objects of givenness to man in his World. The world is a world of profiles but the consciousness receives the entirety of the object or experience.

- This applied to the person, allows us to consider the person in his or her totality. And it introduces an experiential approach, without reducing truth to something subjective. PJ II's approach has become to be known as Personalism (at least the Catholic vein of it). He understand that man is discovered in his acting (The Acting Person), and the person is a good towards which the only proper and adequate attitude is love (Love and Responsibility).
- Before I give you TOB *in nuce*, this has become a very popular topic and many have made a cottage industry out of it. One of the issues with its popular dissemination (share experience in grad class) is that it is so very dense, and quite layered. The caution then is that any time you take something that is dense, layered and resting on a foundation that is not understood prior, there is the tendency for misunderstanding, or as the 'popular presentation' is exported, rehearsed and repeated, TOB quite frankly loses its beauty.
 - Benedict XVI was one of the finest minds theologically as the Church has had in a Pope for many centuries. I am not a historian, but I am not aware of a philosophical mind who was Pope that would match John Paul II.
 - I guess what I am driving at, is that we easily accept things we don't understand when it comes to medicine and empirical science, technology and industry, but those things are central to the human person. With things of faith, we don't always have the heart of submission, not in a 'blind allegiance' sort of way, but in a 'trusting child' manifestation. So with that said, let me see if I can butcher it by reducing it down to 15 minutes...ha!
- Begin explanation...

What is this language spoken by the body? First, the body reminds us that we have been generated from others. Thus, it tells us that dependence is part of the human condition and prompts us to live in grateful acceptance of God's gifts. Then, the body

shows that it is possible to encounter other people and to share a common world with them, as it happens in the union between man and woman, where their masculinity and femininity reveal to them a call to mutual love.

Finally, the body tells us that love is fruitful, creative, able to open up new horizons, as when father and mother generate a child. In these experiences the body reveals also the presence of God, origin and destiny of our life, whose generosity entrusts to us the person of the beloved, and whose blessing makes our love fruitful.

In sum, when we listen to the language of the body we realize that we are not autonomous and isolated individuals, but persons who belong to others and are called to give themselves in love to them.

Fr. Jose Granados, DCJM

Issues in Marriage, Family and Human Sexuality

- **The importance of the family.**
 - The first and most essential cell of society.
 - Culture is built through the family.
 - Family is the place of care for spouses, children, extended family, and community.
 - Marriage is a covenant of life and love.

- **Human life and its absolute dignity.**
 - Human life begins at conception, i.e. fertilization.
 - Personhood does not rely on consciousness, intelligence, or cognizance. Personhood is not an arbitrary classification.
 - Potentiality – a person is not just stuff: a clump of cells or some biological material. Every person at conception contains the potentiality for self-development, and is unique and unrepeatable.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. ???
2. ???

The students, with the teacher than should participate in a class-wide discussion.

----- **10 MINUTE BREAK** -----

This last part of tonight's session will begin with ARTs and then we will close by discussing contraception and NFP.

We already breached this subject somewhat last week in addressing embryonic stem cell research. I think this outline starts our very good here, so let's read through it pointing out some important aspects.

- **Artificial Reproductive Technologies – ARTs** (ex. human cloning, IVF)
Artificial methods of reproduction deny the giftedness of the child, and its ultimate creator, who is God (The man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have produced a man with the help of the LORD." Genesis 4:1) They have the danger of viewing the child as a possession, or their motherhood or fatherhood as something to which they have a right – not something that is a privilege and a gift.

Man and woman have no explicit 'right' to a child. It is true that parents have a 'duty' to be open to children, and duties create rights, or better put, rights flow from duties. But that cannot be the case in terms of another human person.

It's important here to point out that too many married couples (and the engaged couples that I teach) have children as 'part of their plan'. They might say, we intend to get into established careers, buy a house in a good school district and then have two children. Children are not an extension of the couples ego. Their not 'part' of the plan. A couple once asked what is so wrong with wanting to have two children. Nothing, but that's not how one begins. It begins with asking what does God want of you as a married couple. Yes, again, the Church says that the couple must be open to children, but it's not a rule they established. It's acknowledging that God intends to work through the couple, cooperating with their love, for His plan for their lives. So it's not that it's wrong to have to children, it's just that that is not something that should be determined prior to even getting married. The danger is that we will try to fit God into that plan also.

The point to being a Christian, to what differentiates us from the world, is that we recognize the woman's whole person is the husband's (without losing her own identity), and the man's whole person is wife's (without losing his identity). Then the couple's whole life is God's (without losing their identity).

- The desire for children is a good one, and given us by God.
- This desire is caught up in our *sexual differentiation* and need for *communion*.

This desire ‘caught up in our sexual differentiation’ and ‘need for communion’ is a somewhat subtle, but very important point. The procreative and unitive dimensions of the human person are not extrinsic or alien to the desire to have concrete manifestation of love, i.e., children. Our longing is built into our design.

In short, in marriage we are built to love, built to welcome children into the world, be it by from the couple, foster care or adoption. The family is the context for this manifestation of love.

- The capacity for cooperating with God to bring a new life into being is His gift to us, and is uniquely ours to employ in freedom and love with a person to whom we have vowed to give ourselves completely.
- ARTs **separate the life-giving and unifying purposes of married love** and transform the creation of new life into a **transaction** in which the **child is manufactured** in a sterile, scientific environment by a **technician whose motive is not love**, but carrying out a **procedure**. The **child is not received as a gift**, but is produced – which **reduces the child to an object**.

I would like to read this paragraph from *Donum Vitae*, II. A.1. (a CDF document from 1987).

For human procreation has specific characteristics by virtue of the personal dignity of the parents and of the children: the procreation of a new person, whereby the man and the woman collaborate with the power of the Creator, must be the fruit and the sign of the mutual self-giving of the spouses, of their love and of their fidelity.(34) The fidelity of the spouses in the unity of marriage involves reciprocal respect of their right to become a father and a mother only through each other. The child has the right to be conceived, carried in the womb, brought into the world and brought up within marriage: it is through the secure and recognized relationship to his own parents that the child can discover his own identity and achieve his own proper human development. The parents find in their child a confirmation and completion of their reciprocal self-giving: the child is the living image of their love, the permanent sign of their conjugal union, the living and

indissoluble concrete expression of their paternity and maternity, (35) By reason of the vocation and social responsibilities of the person, the good of the children and of the parents contributes to the good of civil society; the vitality and stability of society require that children come into the world within a family and that the family be firmly based on marriage. The tradition of the Church and anthropological reflection recognize in marriage and in its indissoluble unity the only setting worthy of truly responsible procreation.

- The woman and man are also objectified: lack of respect for the conjugal union, reduction of their bodies, sexual organs and gametes to mere parts needed for the completion of a technical process.
- A child is a *gift of God*, and has the right to be the fruit of the conjugal act of his/her parents, with a right to be respected as a person from the moment of conception.

The most common ART is IVF. IVF first requires the sperm to be collected from the male. This is typically done through masturbation. The woman is given drugs (hyper-ovulation) and multiple eggs are harvested. The eggs are fertilized *in vitro* and a sampling of the embryos are placed in the woman's uterus, while the remaining are typically frozen for a future, or indeterminate use. Explain the issues...

There is also GIFT, which the Church has not settled on, though many, if not most, moral theologians strongly caution against. One method is that the woman is given drugs (hyper-ovulation), and during normal intercourse the sperm is collected (perforated condom). One of the ovas collected, along with the sperm are placed directly into the fallopian tube via a catheter. If fertilization occurs, then the embryo will move into the uterus and implant.

- **Contraception, Sterilization, and NFP**
 - Contraception purposely renders the procreative dimension of the marital act inoperable. In other words, the complete gift of self on the part of the spouses is unable to be fully shared because a part of who they are as persons is withheld. This is intrinsically evil because it denies the life giving aspect of marriage and the marital act, and it sets a very real (if not always tangible) barrier between husband and wife.

- Contraception acts to thwart the natural function of the body – to change it (in the case of the woman on the Pill, to *masculinize* it), and to treat the natural bodily functions as pathologies. It treats procreation as a disease.

What is contraception as a moral object? (Contrast with using similar hormones for legitimate therapy to treat other pathologies).

There are side effects. There are always side effects. They are not the argument. Contraception is an intrinsic evil by its object. But the side effects must be weighed especially when we are talking about a drug that is unnecessary. A neighbor of ours, who was 20 years old (on YAZ) did have a stroke.

How does contraception work? Synthetic hormones have three basic goals.

- Suppression of Ovulation - They stop the pituitary gland from producing the luteinizing hormone (LH) in order to prevent ovulation.
- Cervical Mucus Thickens - They can thicken the cervical mucus to hinder sperm movement into the fallopian tube.
- Makes the endometrium (lining of the uterus is too thin) hostile to embryo implantation.
 - If there is break through ovulation, then due to the last goal of the 'pill' there occurs a spontaneous abortion.
 - **Q.** So how do you prove that the pill acts as an abortifacient?
 - **A.** The answer to this question can be found by comparing the rate of break-through ovulation and the detected pregnancy rate. The ovulation rate has been reported to be about 27 ovulations in 100 women using the pill for one year. But the detected pregnancy rate is much lower at around 4 pregnancies per 100 women using the pill for one year.
 - As you can see, there is a big difference between the number of women who ovulation (27) and the number of detected pregnancies (4). What has happened within the woman's body to reduce the high ovulation rate to such a low number of detected pregnancies? I suggest that one answer to this important question is that pregnancies have begun, because ovulation and fertilization have occurred, but some of these pregnancies are

terminated because implantation cannot take place. The pill has damaged the lining of the womb, stopping implantation.

- Pharmacists for Life International.

Briefly share the Christian long-standing opposition to contraception. The Lambeth Conferences of 1920 and 1930. Also some brief comments on Margaret Sanger.

I always think at this point, a line from C. S. Lewis' book, *The Abolition of Man*, that it is not a matter of man's conquest over nature, but of man's conquest over other men, using nature.

- There is a very real separation that occurs between spouses who contracept, even if it is not always tangible, or if they are not fully conscious of it.
- Direct sterilization is never morally permissible ("Direct sterilization" means that it is done for the purposes of preventing conception; a person may be rendered sterile as a result of an intervention to treat a disease. The intention is not to prevent conception in the future, but it is the foreseen but unintended result. This is the principle of double-effect).

I just want to briefly address NFP.

- NFP respects the integrity of the person and fosters the love of the spouse.
- "Natural" doesn't just mean "it's green," or it isn't "artificial." It is "natural" because it respects the integrity of the person, does not treat either man or woman as an object, does not interfere with the body's natural processes, or create a barrier (physical or symbolic/spiritual) between husband and wife.
- NFP fosters communication, shared responsibility, and promotes a deeper relationship between the couple and with God.
- NFP addresses the true meaning of being responsible in regard to being open to the gift of children: listen to your bodies, listen to the Lord, and use your freedom to be open to the gift that God desires you to receive.
- NFP entails *listening* to the body, **and** *listening* to the Lord; accepting the body, and how God has made us for love which is **fruitful**.

I would like to end with two thoughts...

First, life is not about simply being 'good'. We're not Boy Scouts. This is about carrying out the mission of Christ and proclaiming the Gospel. The Gospel is a truth in love, and that love can never be disconnected from truth. To disconnect truth from love leaves only a sentiment. When reduced to a sentiment, it is then easy to conflate tolerance and acceptance. To tolerate something is to endure it as an evil. To accept it is to approve of the thing. Tolerance may be necessary in a pluralistic world, but it is not a Christian virtue.

Secondly, life is not simply a series of moral acts. We can't add them up, and hope we have more in the 'good' column. This is about the transformation of the human person; to be like God - *theosis*! This connects our moral life back to love.

In the end we have to answer, "Who are we as human persons?" So much of what we studied is determined and known by one's understanding as to what it means to be a human person. That knowledge is our foundation, our home, our address if you may. There has never been a golden time when even Christendom stayed in rank. People have always gone astray. In the words of G. K. Chesterton, "Man has always lost his way. That is nothing new. But today, man has lost his address."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. ???
2. ???

The students, with the teacher than should participate in a class-wide discussion.

