

Catholic Church Documents on Marriage and the Family

In this document you will find a collection of quotes from different Church documents pertaining to the subject of marriage and family life.

The quotes come from the following documents:

Gaudium et Spes

Lumen Gentium

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Casti Conubii

Familiaris Consortio

Amoris Laetitia

*“Love is...the fundamental and innate vocation
of every human being.”*

(John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio, 11)

Gaudium et Spes

(Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

This document was composed at the Second Vatican Council and promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1965. It covers a broad range of topics, including an entire section on marriage and the family.

Click [Here](#) to Read the entire document (Particularly 47-52)

Quotes:

“The intimate partnership of married life and love has been established by the Creator and qualified by His laws, and is rooted in the conjugal covenant of irrevocable personal consent.

The intimate union of marriage as a mutual giving of two persons, and the good of the children demand total fidelity from the spouses and require an unbreakable unity between them. (GS, #48)

[Marriage] . . . is an institution confirmed by divine law and receiving its stability, even in the eyes of society, from the human act by which the partners mutually surrender themselves to each other; for the good of the partners, of the children, and of society, this sacred bond no longer depends on human decision alone. (GS, #48)

The intimate partnership of married life and love has been established by the Creator and qualified by His laws, and is rooted in the conjugal covenant of irrevocable personal consent....For, God Himself is the author of matrimony, endowed as it is with various benefits and purposes. All of these have a very decisive bearing on the continuation of the human race, on the personal development and eternal destiny of the individual members of a family, and on the dignity, stability, peace and prosperity of the family itself and of human society as a whole. (GS, #48)

The well-being of the individual person and of human and Christian society is intimately linked with the healthy condition of that community produced by marriage and family. (GS, #47)

Families too will share their spiritual riches generously with other families. Thus the Christian family, which springs from marriage as a reflection of the loving covenant uniting Christ with the Church, and as a participation in that covenant, will manifest to all men Christ's living presence in the world, and the genuine nature of the Church. This the family will do by the mutual love of the spouses, by their generous fruitfulness, their solidarity and faithfulness, and by the loving way in which all members of the family assist one another. (GS, #48)

The family is a kind of school of deeper humanity. But if it is to achieve the full flowering of its life and mission, it needs the kindly communion of minds and the joint deliberation of spouses, as well as the painstaking cooperation of parents in the education of their children. The active presence of the father is highly beneficial to their formation. The children, especially the younger among them, need the care of their mother at home. This domestic role of hers must be safely preserved, though the legitimate social progress of women should not be underrated on that account. (GS, #52)

Man's sexuality and the faculty of reproduction wondrously surpass the endowments of lower forms of life; therefore, the acts proper to married life are to be ordered according to human dignity and must be honored with the greatest reverence. (GS, #51)

Let all be convinced that human life and its transmission are realities whose meaning is not limited by the horizons of this life only; their true evaluation and full meaning can only be understood in reference to man's eternal destiny. (GS, #51)

Lumen Gentium

This document is the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church and was promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1964:

Click [Here](#) to Read the Entire Document (particularly section 11)

Quotes:

In virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, by which they signify and share the mystery of the unity and faithful love between Christ and the Church, Christian married couples help one another to attain holiness in their married life and in the rearing of their children. (LG, #11)

Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, whereby they signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church, help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children. By reason of their state and rank in life they have their own special gift among the people of God.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Details holy matrimony in sections 1601-1666 and 2331-2400.

The text begins [here](#) and the reader can move through subsequent and former sections by using the **Previous** or **Next** buttons at the bottom of the page.

Quotes:

The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament.

1659 St. Paul said: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church.... This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church" (Eph 5:25, 32).

1660 The marriage covenant, by which a man and a woman form with each other an intimate communion of life and love, has been founded and endowed with its own special laws by the Creator. By its very nature it is ordered to the good of the couple, as well as to the generation and education of children. Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of a sacrament (cf CIC, can. 1055 # 1; cf. GS 48 # 1).

1661 The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life (cf Council of Trent: DS 1799).

1662 Marriage is based on the consent of the contracting parties, that is, on their will to give themselves, each to the other, mutually and definitively, in order to live a covenant of faithful and fruitful love.

1663 Since marriage establishes the couple in a public state of life in the Church, it is fitting that its celebration be public, in the framework of a liturgical celebration, before the priest (or a witness authorized by the Church), the witnesses, and the assembly of the faithful.

1664 Unity, indissolubility, and openness to fertility are essential to marriage. Polygamy is incompatible with the unity of marriage; divorce separates what God has joined together; the refusal of fertility turns married life away from its "supreme gift," the child (GS 50 # 1).

1665 The remarriage of persons divorced from a living, lawful spouse contravenes the plan and law of God as taught by Christ. They are not separated from the Church, but they cannot receive Eucharistic communion. They will lead Christian lives especially by educating their children in the faith.

1666 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 virtues and of Christian charity.

Casti Connubii

Pope Pius XI's Encyclical on Christian Marriage.

This encyclical teaches about the virtue of chastity, specifically "marital chastity." The Holy Father includes a reflection on the threats to marriage and holds up God's will for marriage as the defense. The dignity of marriage and its spiritual benefits are also treated. The Holy Father encourages Christian couples to embrace the call of Christ in their daily lives.

Click [Here](#) to Read the Entire Document.

Humanae Vitae

Promulgated in 1968 by St. Paul VI, this encyclical teaches about God's design for married love and the gift of life. The Holy Father teaches that the modern question about spacing and limiting births in marriage is important. It must, however, be considered within the context of God's design for married love. Married love is faithful, total, permanent, and fruitful. Its nature exists to create a "communion of persons" (the marriage) and to participate with God in bringing new life into the world (procreation). Included in the teaching is a discussion of the immorality of contraception, direct sterilization, and abortion (which are always intrinsically evil), and the morality of Natural Family Planning

The whole of this encyclical is worth reading to gain an understanding of this Church's teaching on marriage and family life.

Click [Here](#) to Read the Entire Document.

Marriage is not, then, the effect of chance or the product of evolution of unconscious natural forces; it is the wise institution of the Creator to realize in mankind His design of love. (HV, #8)

Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the procreation and education of children. Children are really the supreme gift of marriage and contribute in the highest degree to their parents' welfare. (HV #8)

Familiaris Consortio

This apostolic exhortation by Pope John Paul II in 1980, addresses the place of the Christian family both in the Church and in the modern world. At the service of both life and love, the Christian family must seek its identity in the Divine Creator, participate in the mission of the Church, and work to effect change in society. Catholic teachings on marriage, conjugal love and responsible parenthood, and the methods of Natural Family Planning are also discussed. Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation on the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World.

Click [Here](#) to Read the Entire Document.

Quotes:

By virtue of the sacramentality of their marriage, spouses are bound to one another in the most profoundly indissoluble manner. Their belonging to each other is the real representation, by means of the sacramental sign, of the very relationship of Christ with the Church. (FC, #13).

The Sacrament of marriage is the specific source and original means of sanctification for Christian married couples and families. (FC, #56)

The gift of Jesus Christ is not exhausted in the actual celebration of the sacrament of marriage, but Christian marriage like the other sacraments, "whose purpose is to sanctify people, to build up the body of Christ, and finally, to give worship to God. (FC, #56)

The family which is founded and given life by love, is a community of persons: of husband and wife, of parents and children, of relatives. (FC, #18)

Thus the fundamental task of the family is to serve life, to actualize in history the original blessing of the Creator - that of transmitting by procreation the divine image from person to person. (FC, #28)

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Sexuality, by means of which man and woman give themselves to one another through the acts which are proper and exclusive to spouses, is by no means something purely biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such. It is realized in a truly human way only if it is an integral part of love by which a man and a woman commit themselves totally to one another until death. (FC, #11)

In the context of a culture which seriously distorts or entirely misinterprets the true meaning of human sexuality, because it separates it from its essential reference to the person, the Church more urgently feels how irreplaceable is her mission of presenting sexuality as a value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God. (FC, #32)

Amoris Laetitia

Amoris Laetitia is Pope Francis's Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on Love in the Family. In this document Pope Francis shares with the Church his teaching and encouragement regarding pastoral ministry to marriages and families, and the great vocation and mission that married couples and families are called to live out.

Click [Here](#) to Read the Entire Document.

“Few human joys are as deep and thrilling as those experienced by two people who love one another and have achieved something as the result of a great, shared effort.” [130]