

ARTICLE 21

Legio Sanctae Familiae – The Legion of the Holy Family

Marriage a gift from God

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Marriage a gift from God – through the eyes of the Magisterium

Beauty Discarded.

Imagine, if you will, that you are walking by your nearest town hall. You notice a skip outside the town hall and a wooden frame protruding from the skip. On closer inspection, you find that a masterpiece painted by the artist Rembrandt, which used to hang in the main reception area of the town hall, has been thrown out. In disbelief you enter the town hall to find that the masterpiece has been replaced by a modern art painting of some obscure and unknown artist (if you are a cynic you will imagine that the artist is related to the lord mayor). On querying the change, you are informed that the Rembrandt was old fashioned and not relevant to the times we live in and that the town hall needed to reflect a more modern view of life in order to bring it up to date. You walk away with a sense of sadness reflecting on how beauty no longer seems to be appreciated in this world.

This may seem like a strange way to begin a series of articles on Marriage as seen through the eyes of the Church's Magisterium, however, a little reflection will show you that the image above is very true to life. In the realm of human love, as it concerns the love of man and woman, marriage is God's most beautiful masterpiece. But modern society has thrown out the masterpiece as being an old fashioned model unfit for our purposes today, and seeks to replace it with a new model which permits, amongst other things, the changing of partners once one or other party wants to move on to better things, which seeks to create new models and definitions of the family, which seeks to allow men to 'marry' men and women to 'marry' women, and ultimately, which seeks explicitly to deny the creator of man and woman and to refuse to acknowledge His unerring judgement and goodness as it relates to the affairs of men and women.

Obedience

The key to love and to peace is *Obedience*. Obedience first and foremost to God, and then to the authorities established by God in the world namely, the Catholic Church, the State and parents. In St John's Gospel, chapter fourteen verse fifteen, Jesus says "If you love me, you will keep my commandments". The proof of love is obedience to the will of God and therefore to His commandments.

St Paul in his letter to the Romans says the following "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgement. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good." (Romans 13 1-3)

It is easy to obey the ruling authority, or any authority for that matter, when we agree with what is required of us. But the true test of humility is when we have to obey a command or instruction that does not suit us. It is in this situation that we learn if we truly desire to follow God's will or our own will. Now of course we are talking of commands and instructions which are not directly contrary to the Divine commands and for which those who command us have the necessary authority to issue those commands.

The Nature of the Church's Magisterium

How this relates to the current topic of marriage has to do with the nature of the Church's magisterium. It is the magisterium which constitutes the teaching authority of the Church and which decides on the rules and regulations which govern our lives in order that we may live as God wills us to live. The magisterium is charged with defending the 'deposit of the faith' and it is the magisterium which also resolves disputes on matters of doctrine and discipline as and when they arise. In the area of marriage, when the magisterium speaks, we have a duty to obey and it is this obedience which in the end guarantees us our place at the eternal banquet. The importance of this cannot be stressed enough, especially today, when there are so many opinions abroad which either directly contradict the magisterium or subtly undermine the authority of the magisterium.

The Church has lost the current battle for the West

It is clear to anyone who has eyes to see, that the battle for western society has been won and it has not been won by the Church. Most western societies now permit abortion, contraception, divorce, re-marriage, and most are moving towards euthanasia and so called 'same-sex marriage'. In any war, once a certain territory has been conquered, the conqueror looks around to see whether and where any opposition lies. Once opposition is found, the battle plan is drawn up in order to immobilise and conquer that opposition. In our own day, now that western society has been conquered, it only remains for the enemy to conquer the Church and so the battle ground has shifted and now the battle rages within the Church with Cardinals contradicting Cardinals, Bishops contradicting Bishops, priests contradicting priests, and lay groups contradicting lay groups and each person or group claims to speak for the Church.

The Three Pillars of Church Teaching

For some this causes great confusion however, there is no need for confusion where the Church is concerned. Her teachings are clear and are built on three pillars. Sacred Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium. It is these three pillars that protect us from error and allow us to proceed on our journey towards holiness and in Truth. Christ tells us that the Truth will set us free and so it does. But freedom can be a dangerous thing as it leaves us free to disobey as well as being free to obey. Lucifer's 'non serviam' was a free choice to disobey God. He then went to visit Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, told Eve lies, and Eve freely and in full truth chose to disobey God as did Adam. The resultant catastrophe of this disobedience has only been averted by the obedience of Mary and the obedience of Christ, even unto death.

Christ's obedience unto death is a profound act of love both for God the Father and for fallen mankind. Mary's act of obedience is an act of profound love for God, which in turn generates a profound love for fallen mankind. Both acts of love are founded on the rock of obedience which is submission to the will of God.

Some seek to undermine Church teaching

Why is all of this important as a way of introduction to the Church's magisterial teaching on marriage? Because there are many, both within and without the Church, who no longer accept all of the Church's teachings with regard to marriage and who undermine this beautiful teaching. There are those who openly defy the teaching and those, more subtle still, who appeal to individual conscience or state that such and such a teaching has not been declared infallible by way of a formal pronouncement and is therefore non binding.

Those who wish to follow Christ and who wish to help create a new society of Catholic families must submit with humility and docility to all of the Church's teachings on marriage otherwise they will be wasting their time and maybe lost. With this in mind let us proceed to examine God's beautiful masterpiece.

These articles are free to download, to print and to distribute provided that authorship is acknowledged and contact details for the author are provided as follows.

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