

Broadcast on Friday 9th September 2016

You're very welcome to Legio Sanctae Familiae – The Legion of the Holy Family. This show was broadcast on Radio maria Ireland on Friday 9th September 2016. I would like to begin as always with a prayer to Our Lady asking her for guidance and protection for all married couples.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen

Young People no Longer Marrying

Over the last couple of weeks I have been looking at the phenomenon whereby young Catholics and young people in general, not just Catholics, in Ireland are no longer getting married at a young age. We saw that by 2014, that the average age for women to get married in Ireland was 33, and that the average age for men was 35. The number of Catholic marriages is also declining in favour of other options including civil marriage registrations. I also came across this week doing some research another marriage where there was a pagan ceremony. So paganism is coming back into Ireland. There are people getting married with these kind of wiccan and other sorts of pagan marriages so called.

Drastic Societal Changes

We saw that in the past the marriage rate amongst 24 year olds would have been as high as 72%, and that now it has fallen below 10%. I'm repeating that statistic in a lot of these programs because I'm trying to drive home just the fact of how drastically things have changed. When you think that in the early to late 1960s, 72% of twenty four years olds would have been married and that's now below 10% it's a colossal decline in the number of young people being married, and there's also other ancillary points that we could make on that. It's very, very interesting if you think back to the 1960s most married wouldn't have worked. So what that tells us is, that a married man, at 24 years of age, was actually able to earn enough to support a family. The cost of living was in such a way that a 24 year old young man was able to support a wife and family on a single wage. Nowadays, even in households where there are two people working they're finding it difficult to afford a mortgage.

We also looked at some of the talks given by Pope Pius XII to women, one from 1945 and the other from 1947. We saw that the second world war left Europe in particular with a shortage of men and that women began entering the workforce and politics in greater numbers. The Pope wanted particularly to encourage single women and widows without children to enter these areas in order to do battle to protect and to restore the family to its rightful place, to promote the dignity of women, particularly women as mothers and he wanted them to educate women on the true nature of woman's dignity and to give them a proper understanding of marriage as the Catholic church teaches.

Pope Pius XII did not encourage Married Women to Work

He wasn't looking at encouraging married women with children into the workforce unless there was an absolute economic necessity and he understood that sometimes the married woman with children, especially after the war, would have to enter the workforce in order to be able to provide for her children. But he was hoping that these other single women and widows without children who didn't have the responsibility of caring for children would be able to enter the political, social and the workforce in order to restore the family, in order to remove the necessity where a married woman with children would actually have to work.

Pope Pius XII noted the dangers present in the world and remarked on the fact that there were individuals and groups who sought to destroy the family and to undermine motherhood. Women were needed to counter act these evil currents by upholding and promoting the relevant Catholic truths. He noted the dangers that come about as a result of mothers working outside of the home. Their daughters will be less inclined to value marriage and motherhood and it is this aspect that I believe sowed the seeds for where we are now, with our young people either being uninterested in marriage or postponing marriage until they are into their thirties.

Pope Pius XII Allocution to Midwives

I now want to look at another address, given by Pope Pius XII, this time it's his allocution to Italian midwives on the nature of their profession. This address was given on October 29th 1951. Once again Pope Pius XII is looking at marriage and giving clear teaching on the nature of marriage as understood by the Church. Unfortunately, in our own day and age, the Church hierarchy seems to have fallen silent and no longer speaks these truths as clearly. This is having a detrimental effect on marriage as it leads many Catholics to an incorrect understanding of marriage which in turn can have a negative effect of their own marriages.

This current lack of teaching, also allows those within the church who dissent from correct teaching on marriage, to more easily spread their erroneous teachings on marriage thus corrupting the faithful.

Any of us who are trying to defend life in this country are aware of Church teaching on the sanctity of human life. But it is never any harm, every so often, to listen to that teaching again, especially when it is so masterfully presented as is the case here by Pope Pius XII. The Pope begins by speaking of the “admirable collaboration of the parents, of nature and of God, from which is born a new human being in the image and likeness of God...” and then he speaks about life's origin.

The Cradle of Life

“Therefore, he who approaches this cradle of life's origin and exercises his action in one way or another must know the order which the Creator wishes maintained and the laws which govern it. For here it is not a case of purely physical or biological laws which blind forces and irrational agents obey, but of laws whose execution and effects are entrusted to the voluntary and free cooperation of man.”

Here the Pope is reminding us that God has issued inviolable laws concerning marriage and family life and that man, having free will, is free to obey or to disobey these laws. Catholics are called upon to obey the laws of God, to always look to the supernatural and to seek to carry out God's Holy Will.

The Pope continues

The Order of Marriage Fixed by God

“This order, fixed by the supreme intelligence, (in other words God) is directed to the purpose willed by the Creator. It embraces the exterior work of man and the internal assent of his free will; it implies action and dutiful omission. Nature places at man's disposal the concatenation of the causes from which will rise a new human life, it is for man to release its loving force, for nature to develop its course and lead it to its completion. When man has completed his part and placed in action the marvellous evolution of life, his duty is to respect its progress in a religious manner, a duty which forbids him to arrest nature's work or halt its natural development.”

Once again we see the stress on man's free will. Man is called on at times to act and at other times to refrain from acting in accordance with God's laws. Once human life has begun, that is, at the moment of fertilisation, God's law forbids us from doing anything to prevent that child being born.

Pope Pius XII then elaborates on this most important point.

The Right to Life

“Besides, every human being, even the child in the womb, has the right to life directly from God and not from his parents, not from any society or human authority. Therefore, there is no man, no human authority, no science, no "indication" at all—whether it be medical, eugenic, social, economic, or moral—that may offer or give a valid judicial title for a direct deliberate disposal of an innocent human life, that is, a disposal which aims at its destruction, whether as an end in itself or as a means to achieve the end, perhaps in no way at all illicit. Thus, for example, to save the life of the mother is a very noble act; but the direct killing of the child as a means to such an end is illicit.”

“The direct destruction of so-called "useless lives," already born or still in the womb, practised extensively a few years ago, can in no wise be justified. Therefore, when this practice was initiated, the Church expressly declared that it was against the natural law and the divine positive law, and consequently that it was unlawful to kill, even by order of the public authorities, those who were innocent, even if on account of some physical or mental defect, they were useless to the State and a burden upon it. The life of an innocent person is sacrosanct, and any direct attempt or aggression against it is a violation of one of the fundamental laws without which secure human society is impossible.”

God is the Author of All Life

Now quite a long quote that one but there's great depth to these writings of Pope Pius XII. He's telling us it is never lawful to directly kill an unborn child. When the Pope speaks of the extensive practice of the direct destruction of useless lives, he is referring to the second world war and the concentration camps. God is the author of all life and no man, no state, no authority, can ever over-rule God. God gives and takes life as He sees fit and man is called to respect God and His laws. As Job said in the book of Job, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” (Job 1:21)

Pope Pius XII continues to speak about the value of new life, but I want to move on to where he discusses marriage, and particularly 'the primary end of marriage'. It is precisely on this teaching about the primary end of marriage where the Church seems to have fallen silent in recent decades. Not only that, many Catholics promote a false notion of marriage which they falsely claim was sanctioned by the second Vatican council. Let me give you an example.

My Own Experiences

When I began writing about Catholic marriage, I thought it would be good idea to do a course and to get a certificate or a diploma from a Catholic college. I applied for a course in family evangelisation at a very well known and highly reputable Catholic institute. The first basic module went OK and then I began the second module which was about marriage and family.

I'm going to give a short quotation from the course manual, and remember that this is a highly regarded Catholic institute. I don't want to mention names as I want to concentrate on the content. The course manual at the end of a section on marriage said, and I quote

“In summary, the Church now speaks of two purposes of Christian marriage: the love between the spouses and their openness to create and educate new life. It is a both/and notion. Neither is given priority over the other.”

Most Catholics not well Versed in Church Teaching

So, two ends, the love between the spouses is listed before openness to create and educate new life, and it says the ends are equal and that neither is given priority over the other. Now I would imagine that most Catholics who do this course are not at all that familiar with the writings of Pope Pius XII and therefore they would not notice anything wrong with this statement. In fact it is probably what they will have heard in their own local Church setting or what they will have been taught if they did a pre-marriage course here in Ireland.

So let's hear what Pope Pius XII says to see if these statements are in agreement. I am quoting the Pope directly again here Pope Pius XII he's addressing midwives.

Primary End of Marriage is Children

“Now, the truth is that matrimony, as an institution of nature, in virtue of the Creator's will, has not as a primary and intimate end the personal perfection of the married couple but the procreation and upbringing of a new life. The other ends, inasmuch as they are intended by nature, are not equally primary, much less superior to the primary end, but are essentially subordinated to it. This is true of every marriage, even if no offspring result, just as of every eye it can be said that it is destined and formed to see, even if, in abnormal cases arising from special internal or external conditions, it will never be possible to achieve visual perception.”

Catholic Institute Directly Contradicts Infallible Church Teaching

The statement from the reputable Catholic institute is in direct contradiction to the teaching of the Pope. They said it's and/or all are on the same level that nothing is primary, the Pope says that this is false, that the primary end of marriage is children and that the other ends are subordinated to it. This also applies even when there's no children in the marriage, in those difficult situations. But again the fact that Catholic Institutes or Catholics are contradicting church teaching is nothing new, and the Pope continues, and this is very interesting in light of what this 'Catholic' institute is teaching, the Pope is writing in 1951, I was doing this course in 2015. So here's the Pope again.

The Church seeks to Correct these erroneous opinions

“It was precisely to end the uncertainties and deviations which threatened to diffuse errors regarding the scale of values of the purposes of matrimony and of their reciprocal relations, that a few years ago (March 10, 1944), We Ourselves drew up a declaration on the order of those ends, pointing out what the very internal structure of the natural disposition reveals. We showed what has been handed down by Christian tradition, what the Supreme Pontiffs have repeatedly taught, and what was then in due measure promulgated by the Code of Canon Law. Not long afterwards, to correct opposing

opinions, the Holy See, by a public decree, proclaimed that it could not admit the opinion of some recent authors who denied that the primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of the offspring, or teach that the secondary ends are not essentially subordinated to the primary end, but are on an equal footing and independent of it.”

Marriage is in Trouble because of Dissent

This is very clear and it once again shows up the reason why marriage is in such trouble in our time. Catholic institutions, along with many cardinals & bishops, many Catholic organisations which are supposed to promote marriage, are teaching the faithful what is contrary to Church teaching. In the quote I gave from the 'Catholic' institute, it said that the two ends of marriage were on an equal plane. Pope Pius XII says that those who teach that the secondary ends are not essentially subordinate to the primary end but are on an equal footing with it are teaching false and the Holy See issued a public decree rejecting that false teaching.

We also need to be very clear as to what the Pope is saying. When the Pope speaks of what is handed down by Christian tradition, of what the Supreme Pontiffs have repeatedly taught, of canon law and of a public decree issued by the Holy See, he is telling us that this teaching is infallible. That it cannot change. It has always been this way. It comes from Christian tradition, previous Popes, many of them, have repeatedly said this, it was inculcated into the Code of Canon Law, a public decree was issued defending it. We can't argue against this. We can't develop doctrine in a way that contradicts what the Church has taught what has come down from Christian tradition.

A Big Fat Zero

For my course I wrote an essay in which I pointed out these errors. I submitted it to my spiritual director who happens to be is a professor and doctor of moral theology, as well as a Benedictine monk and priest. He replied “As for the assignment, to tell the truth, I find it remarkably well-done. It will probably land you a zero, but that will only be to your honour. And who knows, it may have some effect on somebody in a position to do something.”

He was correct. I got a zero for my essay and I was told that if I wanted to get the qualification I would have to re-submit the essay in accordance with what the course taught. Part of the reply I received also stated “You are perfectly entitled to your own views and opinions but this course is preparing students to engage in the Church's mission of evangelisation and ministry so it necessary for us to see evidence that they can faithfully 'echo' the faith of the Church.”

But again here's a contradiction. The course itself directly contradicts Pope Pius XII and directly contradicts Church teaching, and what I said in my assignment was not my opinion, but accurately reflected the unchanging teaching of the Catholic Church quoting several popes not just Pope Pius XII, I quoted several Popes and official church documents.

Dissenters are Being Promoted to Positions of Authority

Now, the reason that I mention this is not to highlight myself or not to give myself praise or anything to do with that, but it's to highlight that we have a very serious problem within the Catholic church right now, and this problem has been with us for some time. Those who contradict church teaching are being appointed to positions of influence within the Church, whilst those who seek to uphold Church teaching, especially Church teaching on marriage, are being marginalised. After my assignment had been rejected I did a little bit of research into this Catholic institution. The course director was specifically appointed by the local bishop and the course director was also publicly involved with an organisation called ACTA – a call to action. I found out that this organisation promotes women's ordination to the priesthood and disagrees with Catholic teaching

on contraception. This was no secret, so it is hard not to draw the conclusion that this director was appointed to the college on account of those views which contradict church teaching.

I also subsequently found out that sometime after this appointment that several of the lecturers at the college who would be loyal to Church teaching resigned. They left.

I am fond of quoting from chapter 7 and 24 of St Matthew's Gospel where Our Lord says,

Beware of False Prophets

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit. A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.” (Matthew 7:15-20)

Jesus repeats this warning, twice, in Matthew 24 when He says

“Take heed that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. (Matthew 24:4-5)

And then after speaking of wars, famines and earthquakes Christ continues

“And then many will fall away, and betray one another, and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because wickedness is multiplied, most men’s love will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved.” (Matthew 24:10-13)

Many are being Led Astray by Catholics

When a Catholic institution teaches what is contrary to Church teaching in the area of marriage, with the seeming approval of the local bishop, they will lead many astray as Christ has warned us. He also warned us to take heed, and this is my message for you today. Take heed, for there are many today within the Church who claim to speak for Christ and for His Church but who are promoting a false message and a false interpretation of what the Church teaches on marriage, and if we are not careful, we too will be led astray.

I'm John Lacken

May God bless you

Thanks for listening