

The Crisis regarding Marriage in the Present Day

Introduction

It greatly pleases me to be with you and to speak with you about marriage and its incomparable fruit: the family. It is my hope that my presence and my words will offer inspiration and strength in fulfilling our common mission of safeguarding and fostering the integrity of marriage and the family as the cradle of human life and the first school of its growth and development.

I wish to address the current discussion regarding the fundamental truth of

marriage in the Church, indicating the importance of the studies provided in the book, *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church*, written to assist the Synod of Bishops in addressing the situation of marriage and the family in our time. I will address several related questions which are the cause of serious confusion in the matter.

Current Discussion regarding the Fundamental Truth of Marriage

At the present moment in the Church, there is perhaps no more critical issue for us to address than the truth about marriage. In a world in which the integrity of marriage has been under attack for decades, the Church has remained a faithful herald of the truth about God's

plan for man and woman in the faithful, indissoluble and procreative union of marriage. In the present time, certainly under pressure from a totally secularized culture, a growing confusion and even error has entered into the Church, which would weaken seriously, if not to-

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tally compromise, the Church's witness and that to the detriment of the whole of society.

The gravity of the situation is reflected in the review of Ross Douthat's recent book, *To Change the Church: Pope Francis and the Future of Catholicism*, by Professor Richard Rex of the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge. After discussing the steadfast and critical presentation and defense of the truth about the indissolubility of marriage by the Catholic Church throughout the Christian centuries, he concluded:

If, after all, marriage is not a divine union of male and female in one flesh, dissolved only by the inevitable dissolution of that flesh in death, then the Catholic Church has, in the name of Christ, needlessly tormented the consciences of untold numbers of the faithful for twenty centuries. If this teaching were to be modified in the name of mercy, then the Church would already have been outdone in mercy not only by most other religions but even by the institutions and impulses of the modern secular state. Such a conclusion would definitively explode any pretension to moral authority on the part of the Church. A church which could be so wrong, for so long, on a matter so fundamental to human welfare and happiness could hardly lay claim to decency, let alone infallibility¹.

Professor Rex's conclusion has been understood by many, both within and outside the Church.

The enemies of the truth and, therefore, of the Church, are delighted at the cur-

rent devastating attack on the divinely-given authority of the Church from within her very body and even at her head, that is, among her highest leaders. They do not publicly acknowledge their delight because it is to the advantage of their agenda that right-minded people not realize what is happening, until the destruction has been completed.

Those who love the truth and, therefore, the Church, are called as "co-workers of the truth"² – *cooperatores veritatis* – and living members of the Body of Christ, indeed soldiers of Christ, to do all within their power to defend the authority of Christ in His Church. There can be no place for silence or for an attitude of defeat. Professor Rex, in the same review, observes:

What we might bear in mind, if we are disturbed by the policies of the leaders of the Church in such a situation, is that the duties of conscience apply just as much to our relationship with the Church as to our relationship with the state. If our leaders fail, then we should criticize, appropriately and helpfully. If they need to be reminded of the truths that have been entrusted to them, then it is our duty to remind them. There may well be, there certainly will be – as there certainly have been only too recently – abuses within the Church and failures by its leaders. Faith in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church requires us to soldier on, minding our consciences, upholding the truth out of love, and avoiding evil and false doctrine.³

¹ Richard Rex, "A Church in Doubt," *First Things* (April 2018), 50. [Richard Rex].

² Jn 3, 8.

³ Richard Rex, "A Church in Doubt," *First Things* (April 2018), 50.

It is my hope that my presentation today will, in some small way, inspire and fortify us all “to soldier on” in defense of

the truth which Christ unfailingly teaches us in the Church.

Contemporary Confusion and Error regarding Marriage and the Family

The confusion and error became evident for the world during the sessions of the Third Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October of 2014 and of the Fourteenth Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October of 2015. The Assemblies, dedicated respectively to the discussion of the subjects, “The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization,” and “The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and in the Contemporary World,” found themselves addressing, in a confused and sometimes erroneous manner, practices which contradict the Church’s constant teaching and practice regarding Holy Matrimony. I refer to practices which would give access to the Sacraments to those who are living in a public state of adultery, and which would condone, in some manner, conjugal cohabitation outside of the Sacrament of Matrimony and genital relations between persons of the same sex.

The report given at the midpoint of the Extraordinary Assembly in 2014 made strikingly clear the gravity of the situation. The report itself, which lacked practically any consistent reference to the

constant teaching of the Church, was manifesto, a kind of incitement to a new approach in the Church to the fundamental questions regarding human sexuality. The proposed new approach is revolutionary, that is, it is detached from what the Church has always taught and practiced.⁴ The grave situation of the Church in her approach to serious questions regarding marriage and the family is manifested in the fruit of the Assemblies: the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, published on March 19, 2016.

The confusion and error was first expressed in a presentation by Cardinal Walter Kasper during the Extraordinary Consistory of Cardinals on February 20th and 21st of 2014. The heart of the Extraordinary Consistory was this lengthy presentation on marriage and the family by Cardinal Kasper which was followed by an intense discussion by the Cardinals present. Cardinal Kasper’s presentation was quickly published in various languages and became a focus of a wide discussion, especially in the secular media.⁵ His presentation raised a number of serious questions about what

⁴ Cf. “Relatio post disceptationem del Relatore generale, card. Péter Erdő,” 13 ottobre 2014, *La famiglia è il futuro. Tutti i documenti del Sinodo straordinario 2014*, ed. Antonio Spadaro (Milano: Ancora Editrice, 2014), pp. 151-166.

⁵ Cf. Cardinal Walter Kasper, *The Gospel of the Family*, tr. William Madges (New York: Paulist Press, 2014); Cardinal Walter Kasper, *L’Évangile de la famille*, tr. Joseph Hoffmann (Paris: Les Éditions

the Church has always taught and practiced regarding the indissolubility of marriage. It was based upon an erroneous interpretation of the Fathers of the Church and of the practice developed in the Eastern Orthodox Churches. Clearly, his presentation called for a discussion which began in earnest already during the Extraordinary Consistory.

After the Extraordinary Consistory, a number of Cardinals, including myself, decided to respond as fully and as profoundly as possible to the positions taken by Cardinal Kasper. Five Cardinals contributed to the study. We Cardinals also called upon the help of Archbishop Cyril Vasil', S.J., an expert in the practice of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, Father Paul Mankowski, S.J., an expert in the Sacred Scriptures, and Professor John M. Rist, an expert in the teaching of the Fathers of the Church. We also sought the help of Father Robert Dodaro, O.S.A., the then President of the Patristic Institute *Augustinianum* in Rome, for the editing of the book. Apart from his tireless and highly qualified work of editing so important a volume in various languages, Father Dodaro made two treasured additions to the book, a summary of the argument of

the entire book and an appendix, "Excerpts from Select Documents of the Magisterium."

The fruits of our efforts are found in the book, *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church*, published in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish editions in time for the study of the Synod Fathers.⁶ Subsequently, it has been published in several other languages, including Croatian, Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Portuguese, and Slovak. As I have already mentioned, Father Dodaro, the editor, at the very beginning of the book, gives a summary of the material presented in each of the nine essays which comprise the volume. The essays in turn present, in a thorough manner, the truth of Christ regarding the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony as contained in the Holy Scriptures and as taught and practiced in the early Church. They then address the particular practice of the Eastern Orthodox Churches and its failed coherence with doctrine, and the historical challenges to the Lord's teaching recorded in the Gospels. The beauty of the truth of Christ on Holy Matrimony is then illustrated by presentations of the Church's theological doctrine and her

du Cerf, 2014); Walter Kardinal Kasper, *Das Evangelium von der Familie. Die Rede vor dem Konsistorium* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Verlag Herder GmbH, 2014); Walter Kasper, *Il vangelo della famiglia*, tr. Gianni Francesconi (Brescia: Editrice Queriniana, 2014); Walter Kasper, *El evangelio de la familia*, tr. José Pérez Escobar (Maliaño, Cantabria: Editorial Sal Terrae, 2014).

⁶ Robert Dodaro, ed., *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014); Robert Dodaro, ed., *Demeurer dans la vérité du Christ. Mariage et communion dans l'Église catholique* (Paris: Artège Éditions, 2014); Robert Dodaro, Hg., *In der Wahrheit Christi bleiben: Ehe und Kommunion in der katholischen Kirche* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag GmbH, 2014); Robert Dodaro, ed., *Permanere nella verità di Cristo. Matrimonio e comunione nella Chiesa cattolica* (Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli S.r.l, 2014); Robert Dodaro, ed., *Permanecer en la Verdad de Cristo. Matrimonio y Comunión en la Iglesia Católica* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad S.A., 2014).

moral teaching. The last two essays take up the safeguarding and fostering of the truth of Christ regarding Holy Matrimony in the Church's discipline, her canon law.

I commend the book to your reading. While it is scientifically solid, every effort was made to edit the contributions in such a way that they would be accessible to the reading and understanding of serious Catholics and all persons of good will. The book has enjoyed a wide readership in the different language editions already published. The book is

truly a point of reference for the most serious matter discussed by the Extraordinary and Ordinary Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops.

To assist you in your reflection upon the current discussion, I now take up several general considerations which, in my judgement, are key to understanding the situation in which the Church presently finds herself. I offer these considerations in the context of the sound teaching contained in the book, *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church*.

The Relationship between Faith and Culture

Above all, as a presupposition of the discussion of Holy Matrimony in the current situation, it is important to have a correct understanding of the rapport between faith and culture. Many times, during the discussions before the first Assembly of the Synod, during the sessions of the Assemblies, and after the publication of *Amoris Laetitia*, it has been declared that the Church must update its practice and above all its language in order to address herself effectively to a totally secularized culture. Some have gone so far as to assert that the Church can no longer speak of the natural law, intrinsically evil acts, irregular unions and so forth. Their point is that the language itself already makes the culture hostile.

However, doing so, the Church gives the impression of wanting to draw near to the culture but without a clear identity of her own self and of what she has to say to the culture. According to divine wisdom, the Church must always speak the truth with love.⁷ Yes, the Church should go to the peripheries of today's culture but always secure in her identity, manifesting the greatest compassion which necessarily involves respect for the truth of the cultural situation which many times is marked by confusion and error regarding the most fundamental truths of human life and its cradle which is the family. The Church has to call things by their proper name, in order not to risk contributing to the confusion and error, instead of bringing light and order to them.⁸

⁷ Cf. Eph 4, 15.

⁸ Cf. Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Litterae encyclicae *Evangelium vitae*, "De vitae humanae inviolabili bono", 25 Martii 1995, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87 (1995), 466-467, n. 58.

Honest people who live in such a culture have a thirst for the truth and for its proclamation with charity. To encounter the protagonists of such a culture without manifesting the truth of Christ with clear words would be a serious lack of charity. It is a source of grave scandal in that it confuses others about the truth and leads them into error. For instance, we think of what the Gospel tells us about Christ's meeting with the people, that He found them to be like sheep witho-

ut a shepherd and that He, therefore, instructed them.⁹ We think also of the meeting of Our Lord with the Samaritan Woman at the Well of Jacob¹⁰ or with the woman discovered in open adultery.¹¹ The Lord is full of understanding for their situations, He pardons them, but, at the same time, he is attentive to indicate to them the necessity of leaving a life of sin, the necessity of sinning no more.¹²

Confusion Regarding the Nature of the Synod of Bishops

Oftentimes, in popular presentations of the work of the Synod of Bishops, the impression is given that the Church's teaching and practice can be altered by a majority vote of the Synod Fathers. But the Synod of Bishops has no authority to change doctrine and discipline. The nature and purpose of the Synod of Bishops is described in canon 342 of the Code of Canon Law. It reads:

Can. 342 - The synod of bishops is a group of bishops who have been chosen from different regions of the world and meet together at fixed times to foster closer unity between the Roman Pontiff and bishops, to assist the Roman Pontiff with

their counsel in the preservation and growth of faith and morals and in the observance and strengthening of ecclesiastical discipline, and to consider questions pertaining to the activity of the Church in the world.¹³

The Synod of Bishops is not convened by the Roman Pontiff to suggest changes in the doctrine and discipline of the Church but rather to assist the Roman Pontiff in safeguarding and promoting sound doctrine regarding faith and morals, and in strengthening the discipline by which the truths of the faith are lived in practice.

⁹ Cf. Mk 6, 34.

¹⁰ Cf. Jn 4, 1-42.

¹¹ Cf. Jn 8, 3-11.

¹² Cf. Jn 4, 17-18; 8, 11.

¹³ "Can. 342 - Synodus Episcoporum coetus est Episcoporum qui, ex diversis orbis regionibus selecti, statutis temporibus una conveniunt ut arctam coniunctionem inter Romanum Pontificem et Episcopos foveant, utque eidem Romano Pontifici ad incolumitatem incrementumque fidei et morum, ad disciplinam ecclesiasticam servandam et firmandam consiliis adiutricem operam praestant, necnon quaestiones ad actionem Ecclesiae in mundo spectantes perpendant." English translation: *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, New English Translation, ed. Canon Law Society of America, Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1998.

The Risk of Sentimentalism

Reflecting upon the situations of profound suffering in families which find themselves outside of the context of the truth of Christ, there is the risk of falling into a sentimentalism which, while it seems compassionate, is deeply harmful because of its lack of respect for the objective situation of the persons involved. Such sentimentalism blocks the encounter with Christ on the part of the person who is in sin. Sentimentalism sees the truth of Christ as something hurtful to the person and thus does not

speak the truth which is the only way for the person, in his time, to abandon the sin in question.

Sentimentalism also fails to respect the profound effect of the irregular situation of the person on so many other persons bound to him by relationships of family or friendship. Concentrating ourselves exclusively on the painful situation of the individual, we do not see reality in its integrity and thus bring about injustice not only to the individual but to the others bound to him.

The Radical Modification of the Process for the Declaration of Nullity of Marriage

Speaking of the temptation of sentimentalism or false compassion, I would like to say a word about the modification of the process for the declaration of nullity of marriage, so that the parties in a cause of nullity could receive more easily and quickly such a declaration. This modification was carried out between the two Assemblies of the recent Synod of Bishops by the publication of two *Motu Proprios*: *Mitis Iudex Dominus Iesus* and *Mitis et Misericors Iesus*, both published on August 15, 2015.

In his presentation to the Extraordinary Consistory and in his other declarations, Cardinal Kasper has asserted that the process for the declaration of nullity of marriage is not of divine law and therefore could be radically altered.¹⁴

He has suggested an administrative process, for example, a meeting of the Bishop or of a priest delegated by the Bishop with the party who accuses his marriage of nullity, on the basis of which the Bishop would declare the nullity of the marriage.¹⁵

While it is true that the process in its individual elements is not of divine law, a process apt for the discovery of the truth about the marriage accused of nullity is absolutely of divine law. The process in force before the just-mentioned reforms was the fruit of centuries of experience of the Church in the just treatment of an accusation of marriage nullity, and, as the Venerable Pope Pius XII brilliantly illustrated in his Address to the Roman Rota in 1944,¹⁶ it is compo-

¹⁴ Cf. Walter Kasper, *Il vangelo della famiglia* (Brescia: Edizioni Queriniana, 2014), p. 45.

¹⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁶ Cf. Pius PP. XII, *Allocutio ad Praelatos Auditores ceterosque Officiales et Administros Tribunalis S. Romanae Rotae necnon eiusdem Tribunalis Advocatos et Procuratores*, 2 Octobris 1944, *Acta*

sed of various elements all adapted to discovering the truth about situations of the breakup of marriage, which situations are normally quite complex.

For the more simple cases, for example, a case of a person who attempted a marriage when he was already bound to a preexisting marriage, there is the documentary process, with its appropriate speed.¹⁷ As I explain in my contribu-

tion to *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church*, to alter the actual process without respect for its historical development risks taking away from the process the possibility of arriving at a just conclusion: a judgment given with moral certitude, according to the truth discovered by means of the process.

The “Fullness of Power” and Absolute Power

In a similar way, some have suggested that the fullness of power (*plenitudo potestatis*) of the Roman Pontiff means that he is able to dissolve any marriage. Such a suggestion does not respect the necessary distinction between the fullness of power and absolute power. The fullness of power of the Roman Pontiff is at the service of the truth of the doctrine and the discipline of the Church. The Holy Father exercises his power with total obedience to Christ and cannot make

decisions contrary to the truth of Christ, appealing to an absolute and, therefore, arbitrary power. The discipline contained in can. 1141 of the Code of Canon Law remains true also for the Roman Pontiff: “A marriage that is *ratum et consummatum* can be dissolved by no human power and by no cause, except death.”¹⁸ The same discipline, of divine law, is contained in can. 853 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches.¹⁹

The Relationship between Doctrine and Discipline

In what regards the canonical process for the declaration of nullity of marriage, it

is frequently said that changes in the process can be introduced without to-

Apostolicae Sedis 36 (1944) 281-290. English Translation: William H. Woestman, ed., *Papal Allocutions to the Roman Rota 1939-2011* (Ottawa: Faculty of Canon Law, Saint Paul University, 2011), pp. 23-32.

¹⁷ Cf. cann. 1686-1688.

¹⁸ “Matrimonium ratum et consummatum nulla humana potestate nullaque causa, praeterquam morte, dissolvi potest”. “Codex Iuris Canonici auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus”, 25 Ianuarii 1983, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 75, Pars II (1983), can. 1141. English translation: *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, New English Translation, ed. Canon Law Society of America, Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1998.

¹⁹ Cf. “Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus”, 18 Octobris 1990, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 82 (1990), can. 853.

uching in any manner the doctrine on the indissolubility of marriage. But it is evident that an inadequate process for arriving at the truth regarding a marriage accused of nullity would bring with it a lack of due respect for the indissolubility of Holy Matrimony. In fact, in the United States, from 1971 to 1983, a very modified process, with the diminution of the figure of the defender of the bond and the effective elimination of the double agreeing sentence, was permitted by the Holy See. With time and not without reason, the process for the declaration of nullity of marriage became popularly known as “Catholic divorce.” In other words, in the common perception, while the Church was declaring the indissolubility of marriage in its teaching, in its practice it was permitting parties held to a marriage bond to marry another person without having first demonstrated the nullity of the prior marriage bond.

I served for many years at the Apostolic Signatura, first as Defender of the Bond from 1989 to 1995 and then as Prefect from 2008 until November of 2014. In a consistent manner, the experience of the Apostolic Signatura showed that, when a matrimonial tribunal has well-prepared staff, the causes proceed without unjustified delays. At the same time, a process to reach a decision in so important and delicate a matter has, of necessity, its proper times for gathering the proofs, for examining them, and, at the end, for giving a judgment with moral certitude. With sadness, many times I have seen that the Diocesan Bishop has not sufficiently taken care to prepare well the necessary personnel for his tribunal. In other words, it is not the process that has need of modifications, but the practice of some Bishops who do not provide well-prepared and just workers for their tribunals.

A New Evangelization and the Family

The discussion of Holy Matrimony and of the family during the Assemblies of the Synod was presented in terms of evangelization. The frequent appeal of Pope Francis to the Church to go to the peripheries has, as its scope, the evangelization of the people who live at the pe-

ripheries. Such evangelization, according to the teaching of Pope Saint John Paul II, leads us to attain the “*high standard of ordinary Christian living*”²⁰ which is “found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition” of the Church.²¹ As observed before, the Synod, therefore, had the task

²⁰ “... «superiorem modum» ordinariae vitae christianae.” Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Epistula Apostolica *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, “Magni Iubilaei anni MM sub exitum,” 6 Ianuarii 2001, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 93 (2001), 288, n. 31. [Hereafter, NMI]. English translation: Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, “At the Close of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000,” 6 January 2001 (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2001), p. 43, no. 31. [Hereafter, NMIEng].

²¹ “... quod de Evangelio derivatur semper vivaque Traditione.” NMI, 285, n. 29. English version: NMIEng, p. 41, no. 29.

of suggesting the ways for the Church to be more faithful to the truth of marriage and of the family, taught to us by the Gospel and by the living Tradition. Regarding Christian marriage and the family, and the call to evangelization, already in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope Saint John Paul II declared that “the Christian family, in fact, is the first community called to announce the Gospel to the human person during growth and to bring him or her, through a progressive education and catechesis, to full human and Christian maturity.”²²

Noting the multiple and grievous attacks on marriage and the family in our time, Pope John Paul II stressed the importance of witnessing to the truth about marriage and the family, so that the family may evangelize the whole of society. He declared:

At a moment of history in which the family is the object of numerous forces that seek to destroy it or in some way to deform it, and aware that the well-being of society and her own good are intimately tied to the good of the family, the Church perceives in a more urgent and compelling way her mission of proclaiming to all

people the plan of God for marriage and the family, ensuring their full vitality and human and Christian development, and thus contributing to the renewal of society and of the People of God.”²³

In the present moment when the attacks on matrimony and on the family seem the most ferocious, it is the Church which must show to the whole of society the truth in all its richness, and therefore the beauty and the goodness of marriage and of the family. The Church accomplishes its mission of evangelization of the family with its teaching, with the celebration of the Sacraments and with the life of prayer and devotion, and with its discipline.

The Church must give special attention to the holiness of marriage, to the fidelity, to the indissolubility and to the fecundity of the matrimonial union. Christian family life is necessarily a sign of contradiction in today’s culture. The Synod ought to have been the occasion for the universal Church to give inspiration and strength to Catholic couples for the witness to the truth of Christ, of which our culture has such great need. The Synod ought to have

²² “... christiana enim familia est prima communitas, cuius est Evangelium personae humanae crescent annunciare eamque progrediente educatione et catechesi ad plenam maturitatem humanam et christianam perducere.” Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Adhortatio Apostolica *Familiaris Consortio*, “De Familiae Christianae muneribus in mundo huius temporis,” 22 Novembris 1981, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 74 (1982), 823, n. 2. [Hereafter, FC]. English translation: Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, “Regarding the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World,” 22 November 1981 (Vatican City State: Vatican Polyglot Press, nd), p. 4, no. 2. [Hereafter, FCEng].

²³ “Hoc tempore historiae, quo familia multis impetitur viribus, eam delere aut saltem deformare nitentibus, Ecclesia, probe conscia salutem societatis suamque ipsius arcte cum fausta condicione familiae conecti, modo vehementiore et urgentiore munus suum percipit omnibus consilium Dei de matrimonio ac familia declarandi, cuius plenum vigorem et promotionem humanam et christianam in tuto collocet, ac sic conferat ad renovationem societatis ipsiusque Populi Dei.” FC, 84, n. 3. English translation: FCEng, pp. 6-7, no. 3.

been a help to Christian families in being, according to the ancient description, the Church at home (*Ecclesia domestica*), the first place in which the Catholic faith is taught, celebrated and lived. The faithful living in a marriage in difficulty must certainly enjoy the particular attention of the Church who, in imitation of the Savior, announces to them the truth of Christ and brings to them the grace of Christ to live faithfully and generously the marriage vocation to the end.

In the same *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope Saint John Paul II underlined the irreplaceable service of the family in the evangelization of the world. Citing the teaching of Pope Paul VI, he declared:

To the extent in which the Christian family accepts the Gospel and matures in faith, it becomes an evangelizing commu-

nity. Let us listen again to Paul VI: "The family, like the Church, ought to be a place where the Gospel is transmitted and from which the Gospel radiates. In a family which is conscious of this mission, all the members evangelize and are evangelized. The parents not only communicate the Gospel to their children, but from their children they can themselves receive the same Gospel as deeply lived by them. And such a family becomes the evangelizer of many other families, and of the neighborhood of which it forms part."²⁴

It is clear that, if evangelization is not found in marriages, in Christian homes, in families, it will not be found in the Church and in society. At the same time, marriages transformed by the Gospel are the first and most powerful force for the transformation of society through the Gospel and the living Tradition of the Church.

Confidence in the Natural Law and in the Grace of Matrimony

Confronting the sufferings of individual persons and of families, the Church should not lose its confidence in the natural law inscribed in every human heart and in its full expression in the saving work of Our Lord. In our culture, there is a confusion about the meaning of human sexuality which is bearing the fruit of profound personal unhappiness

which often leads to the breakup of marriage, to the corruption of children and young people, and ultimately to self-destruction. Disordered sexual activity, sexual activity outside of marriage, and the media's constant, powerful and false messages regarding our identity as man and woman are all signs of the urgent need of a new evangelization which

²⁴ "Christiana familia, quatenus Evangelium amplectitur et ad maturitatem in fide progreditur, eatenus fit evangelizans communitas. Exaudiamus denuo Paulum VI: «Familia, haud secus atque Ecclesia, habenda est campus, quo affertur et unde diffunditur Evangelium. Quamobrem, apud familiam huius muneris consciam, omnia eiusdem familiae membra evangelizant atque evangelizantur. Parentes non tantum communicant cum filiis Evangelium, sed ab ipsis possunt recipere idem Evangelium penitus vita expressum. Eadem familia Evangelii nuntia fit apud alias multas familias, atque circumstantem, cui inseritur, convictum».» FC, 144, n. 52. English translation: FCEng, p. 97, no. 52.

begins in marriages, in families, and, through marriages, reaches the entire culture. There is need of the witness to the distinct gifts of man and of woman who both dispose themselves to the service of Christ and of His Mystical Body by means of a chaste life. Christian marriage is the first place of such necessary witness in our culture. By means of a sound family life our culture will be transformed. Without sound family life, the culture will never be transformed.

In the life of holy couples we see reflected all of the splendor of the truth about the union of a man and a woman in faithful, enduring and procreative love. In their life we see above all the truth of the teaching of Christ in response to the Pharisees who were putting him to the test, posing the question of the possibility of divorce. The Lord responded to the Pharisees, teaching the observance of the eternal law according to which God the Father created man and woman:

Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one"? So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.²⁵

When the disciples asked about the great exigency of the divine law for spouses, the Lord responded that, with the vocation to the married life, God grants, in abundance, the grace to live such faithful,

enduring and procreative love: "Not all men can receive this precept, but only those to whom it is given."²⁶

Father Paul Mankowski, at the conclusion of his essay on the Holy Scriptures in the book, *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church*, affirms:

Yet it is mistaken, or if not wholly mistaken seriously incomplete, to view Jesus as a disputant who championed the rigorist side of legal-moral controversy, and whose appeal was and is solely to the tough-minded. For he also promised a new and superabundant afflatus of grace, of divine help, so that no person however fragile should find it impossible to do God's will.²⁷

If we trust Christ's word to us, then we can be sure that His grace will never fail us, no matter how much we must suffer to live the truth about ourselves, about marriage, and about the family.

It is this objective reality which Saint Paul celebrates in the Letter to the Ephesians with these inspired words:

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it,

²⁵ Mt 19, 4-5.

²⁶ Mt 19, 11.

²⁷ Robert Dodaro, ed., *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014), p. 63.

as Christ does the Church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.²⁸

The mystery is Christ alive in each of us. Christ is the ever faithful Bridegroom of His bride the Church. We, the living members of the Church, His Mystical Body, experience daily His immeasurable and unceasing love. His love is particularly evident to us in the life of a man and a woman who have been united by Him through the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

Natural Law and the Formation of the Conscience in the Family

So often, today, a notion of tolerance of ways of thinking and acting contrary to the moral law seems to be the interpretative key for many Christians. Today's popular notion of tolerance is not securely grounded in the moral tradition, yet it tends to dominate our approach to the extent that we end up claiming to be Christian while tolerating ways of thinking and acting which are diametrically opposed to the moral law revealed to us in nature and in the Sacred Scriptures. The approach, at times, becomes so relativistic and subjective that we do not even observe the fundamental logical principle of non-contradiction, that is, that a thing cannot both *be* and *not be* at the same time in the same respect. In other words, certain actions cannot at the same time be both true to the moral law and not true to it.

In fact, charity alone must be the interpretative key of our thoughts and actions. In the context of charity, tolerance means unconditional love of the person who is involved in evil but com-

plete abhorrence of the evil into which the person has fallen.

Fundamental to the Catholic life of virtue is the understanding of human nature and conscience. Critical to the deplorable cultural situation in which we find ourselves is the loss of a sense of nature and of conscience. Pope Benedict XVI addressed the question of the loss of a sense of nature and conscience, with respect of the foundations of law, in his address to the *Bundestag* during his Pastoral Visit to Germany in September of 2011. Taking leave from the story of the young King Solomon on his accession to the throne, he recalled to political leaders the teaching of the Holy Scriptures regarding the work of politics. God asked King Solomon what request he wished to make as he began to rule God's holy people. The Holy Father commented:

What will the young ruler ask for at this important moment? Success – wealth – long life – destruction of his enemies? He chooses none of these things. Instead, he

²⁸ Cf. Eph 5, 31-33.

asks for a listening heart so that he may govern God's people, and discern between good and evil (cf. 1 Kg 3:9).²⁹

The story of King Solomon, as Pope Benedict XVI observed, teaches what must be the end of political activity and, therefore, of government. He declared: "Politics must be a striving for justice, and hence it has to establish the fundamental preconditions for peace.... To serve right and to fight against the dominion of wrong is and remains the fundamental task of the politician."³⁰

Pope Benedict XVI then asked how we know the good and right which the political order and specifically the law are to safeguard and promote. While he acknowledged that in many matters "the support of the majority can serve as a sufficient criterion,"³¹ he observed that such a principle is not sufficient "for the fundamental issues of law, in which the dignity of man and of humanity is at stake."³² Regarding the very foundations of the life of society, positive civil law must respect "nature and reason as the true

sources of law."³³ In other words, one must have recourse to the natural moral law which God has inscribed upon every human heart.

What Pope Benedict XVI observed regarding the foundations of law in the concepts of nature and conscience points to the fundamental work of education, namely, the work of fostering in students "a listening heart" which strives to know the law of God and to respect it by development in the life of the virtues. Time does not permit me to address the place of education in bringing the human person "to full human and Christian maturity."³⁴ Suffice it to say that parents must be vigilant that the education given to their children be coherent with the Christian education and upbringing in the home. Even as the family is essential to a new evangelization, so also is education because of its intrinsic connection with the growth and development of the child in Christ.

The thoroughly galvanized anti-life and anti-family agenda of our time

²⁹ "Was wird sich der junge Herrscher in diesem Augenblick erbitten? Erfolg – Reichtum – langes Leben – Vernichtung der Feinde? Nicht um diese Dinge bittet er. Er bittet: „Verleih deinem Knecht ein hörendes Herz, damit er dein Volk zu regieren und das Gute vom Bösen zu unterscheiden versteht“ (1 Kön 3,9)." Benedictus PP. XVI, Allocutio "Iter apostolicum in Germaniam: ad Berolinensem foederatum coetum oratorum," 22 Septembris 2011, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 103 (2011), p. 663. [Hereafter, Bundestag]. English translation: *L'Osservatore Romano Weekly Edition in English*, 28 September 2011, p. 6. [Hereafter, BundestagEng].

³⁰ "Politik muss Mühen um Gerechtigkeit sein und so die Grundvoraussetzung für Frieden schaffen.... Dem Recht zu dienen und der Herrschaft des Unrechts zu wehren ist und bleibt die grundlegend Aufgabe des Politikers." Bundestag, p. 664. English translation: BundestagEng, p. 6.

³¹ "...kann die Mehrheit ein genügendes Kriterium sein." Bundestag, p. 664. English translation: BundestagEng, p. 6.

³² "...in den Grundfragen des Rechts, in denen es um die Würde des Menschen und der Menschheit geht." Bundestag, p. 664. English translation: BundestagEng, p. 6.

³³ "...Natur und Vernunft als die wahren Rechtsquellen." Bundestag, p. 665. English translation: BundestagEng, p. 6.

³⁴ "... ad plenam maturitatem humanam et christianam" FC, 823, n. 2. English translation: FCEng, p. 4, no. 2.

advances, in large part, because of a lack of attention and information among the general public. The pervasive mass media, the powerful promoter of the agenda, confuse and corrupt minds and hearts, and dull consciences to the law written by God upon every human heart.

In his Encyclical Letter on the Gospel of Life, Pope John Paul II declared:

What is urgently called for is a general mobilization of consciences and a united ethical effort to activate a great campaign in support of life. All together, we must build a new culture of life: new, because it will be able to confront and solve today's unprecedented problems affecting human life; new, because it will be adopted with deeper and more dynamic conviction by all Christians; new, because it will be capable of bringing about a serious and courageous cultural dialogue among all parties. While the urgent need for such a cultural transformation is linked to the present historical situation, it is also rooted in the Church's mission of evangelization. The purpose of the Gospel, in fact, is "to transform humanity from

within and to make it new." Like the yeast which leavens the whole measure of dough (cf. Mt 13:33), the Gospel is meant to permeate all cultures and give them life from within, so that they may express the full truth about the human person and about human life.³⁵

What Pope John Paul II affirmed about the mobilization of consciences regarding the inviolability of innocent human life surely applies as well and as strongly to the mobilization of consciences regarding the integrity of marriage and family life.

Pope John Paul II did not fail to note that such efforts must begin with "*the renewal of a culture of life within Christian communities themselves.*"³⁶ The Church herself must address the situation of so many of her members who, even though they may be active in Church activities, "end up by separating their Christian faith from its ethical requirements regarding life, and thus fall into moral subjectivism and certain objectionable ways of acting."³⁷

³⁵ "Quam primum inducantur necesse est *generalis conscientiarum motus moralisque communis nisus*, qui excitare valeant *validum sane opus ad vitam tuendam: omnibus nobis simul coniunctis nova exstuenta est vitae cultura: nova*, quae scilicet possit hodiernas de vita hominis ineditas quaestiones suscipere atque solvere; nova, utpote quae acriore et alacriore ratione omnium christianorum conscientiam permoveat; nova demum, quae accommodata sit ad gravem animosamque culturalem suscitandam comparationem cum omnibus. Huius culturalis conversionis necessitas coniungitur cum aetatis nostrae historica rerum condicione, at praesertim inhaeret in ipso evangelizandi munere quod proprium est Ecclesiae. Evangelium enim eo spectat «ut perficiat interiorem mutationem» et «humanitatem novam efficiat»; est velut fermentum quo pasta tota fermentatur (cfr Mt 13, 33), atque, qua tale, perfundere debet omnes culturas easque intus pervadere, ut integram declarent de homine deque eius vita veritatem." EV, 509, n. 95. English translation: EVEng, pp. 168-169, no. 95.

³⁶ "... *vitae cultura renovanda intra ipsas christianas communitates.*" EV, 509, n. 95. English translation: EVEng, p. 169, no. 95.

³⁷ "... *seiuunctionem quandam inferunt inter christianam fidem eiusque moralia circa vitam postulata, progredientes hac ratione ad moralem quandam subiectivismum adque vivendi mores qui probari non possunt.*" EV, 509-510, n. 95. English translation: EVEng, p. 169, no. 95.

Conclusion

We live in a time when the fundamental truth of marriage is under a ferocious, indeed, I would not hesitate to say, a diabolical attack which seeks to obscure and sully the sublime beauty of the married state as God intended it from the Creation. Divorce is a common place in society, as is the pretension to remove from the conjugal union, by mechanical or chemical means, its procreative essence. And now, society has gone even further in its affront to God and His law by claiming the name of marriage for liaisons between persons of the same sex.

Even within the Church, there are those who would obscure the truth of the indissolubility of marriage in the name of mercy, who would condone the violation of the conjugal union by means of contraception in the name of pastoral understanding, and who, in the name of tolerance, would remain silent about the attack on the very integrity of marriage as the union of one man and one woman. There are even those, too,

who deny that the married receive a particular grace to live heroically in faithful, enduring and life-giving love, while Our Lord Himself has assured us that God gives to the married the grace to live daily in accord with the truth of their state in life.

In our day, our witness to the splendor of the truth about marriage must be limpid and heroic. We must be ready to suffer, as Christians have suffered down the ages, to honor and foster Holy Matrimony. Let us take as our examples Saint John the Baptist, Saint John Fisher and Saint Thomas More, who were martyrs in defending the integrity of the fidelity and indissolubility of marriage. Before the confusion and error about Holy Matrimony, which Satan is sowing so widely in our society today, let us follow their example and let us invoke their intercession, so that the great gift of married life and love will be ever more revered in the Church and in society.

Thank you for your kind attention. May God bless you and your homes.

The Crisis regarding Marriage in the Present Day (Abstract)

Keywords: marriage, marital unity, marital unity, Church teaching

It greatly pleases me to be with you and to speak with you about marriage and its incomparable fruit: the family. It is my hope that my presence and my words will offer inspiration and strength in fulfilling our common mission of safeguarding and fostering the integrity of marriage and the family as the cradle of human life and the first school of its growth and development.

I wish to address the current discussion regarding the fundamental truth

of marriage in the Church, indicating the importance of the studies provided in the book, *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church*, written to assist the Synod of Bishops in addressing the situation of marriage and the family in our time. I will address several related questions which are the cause of serious confusion in the matter.

Współczesny kryzys małżeństwa

Słowa kluczowe: małżeństwo, nierozzerwalność małżeńska, jedność małżeńska, nauka Kościoła.

Przedmiotem artykułu jest małżeństwo oraz jego niezrównany owoc: rodzina. Celem tekstu jest zaproponowanie inspiracji dla wzmocnienia misji ochrony i wychowania integralności małżeństwa i rodziny jako kolebki ludzkiego życia i pierwszej szkoły jego rozwoju i wzrostu. Fundamentalną prawdę o małżeństwie w Kościele można znaleźć w publikacji: *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church*, napisanej jako pomoc na Synodzie Biskupów w dyskusji o małżeństwie i rodzinie w naszych czasach. Artykuł opiera się na ustaleniach zawartych w recenzji profesora Richarda Rexa z (Faculty of Divinity z Uniwersytetu w Cambridge) publikacji Rossa Douthat'a pt. *To Change the Church: Pope Francis and the Future of Catholicism*. Autor artykułu za Richardem Rexem wskazuje na nierozzerwalną jedność małżeństwa i sugeruje, że rozpoznanie problemów małżeństwa przez współczesnych przywódców Kościoła jest błędne.

Zamieszanie powstało sesji III Nadzwyczajnego Zgromadzenia Synodu Biskupów w październiku 2014 r. oraz XIV Zgromadzenia Zwyczajnego Synodu Biskupów w październiku 2015 r. Zebrania te poświęcone były dyskusjom wokół tematów „Wyzwania duszpasterskie rodziny w kontekście ewangelizacji” oraz „Powołanie i misja rodziny w Kościele i w świecie współczesnym”.

Dyskusje te odnosiły się w mylący i czasami błędny sposób, do praktyk sprzecznych z dotychczasowymi nauczaniem i praktykami Kościoła dotyczącymi Świętego Małżeństwa. Artykuł odnosi się do praktyk, które umożliwiłyby dostęp do sakramentów tym, którzy żyją w publicznym stanie cudzołóstwa, i które w pewien sposób godziłyby się na współżycie małżeńskie poza sakramentem małżeństwa i na stosunki płciowe między osobami tej samej płci.

Raport przedstawiony w połowie sesji Nadzwyczajnego Zgromadzenia w 2014 r. wyraźnie wypuklił powagę sytuacji. Sam raport, w którym praktycznie brakowało spójnego odniesienia do stałego nauczania Kościoła, był manifestem, rodzajem zalecenia do nowego podejścia w Kościele do podstawowych pytań dotyczących ludzkiej seksualności. Proponowane nowe podejście jest rewolucyjne, to znaczy odejście od tego, czego Kościół zawsze nauczał i praktykował. Poważna sytuacja Kościoła w podejściu do kwestii dotyczących małżeństwa i rodziny przejawia się w owocach zgromadzeń: w posynodalnej adhortacji apostołskiej *Amoris Laetitia*, opublikowanej 19 marca 2016.

Zamieszanie i błąd zostały po raz pierwszy wyrażone w wystąpieniu kardynała Waltera Kaspera podczas Nadzwyczajnego Konsystorza Kardynałów w dniach 20 i 21 lutego 2014 r. Prezen-

tacja kardynała Kaspera została szybko opublikowana w różnych językach i stała się przedmiotem szerokiej dyskusji, szczególnie w życiu świeckim. Jego wystąpienie wywołało szereg poważnych pytań na temat tego, czego Kościół zawsze nauczał i praktykował w odniesieniu do nierozzerwalności małżeństwa. Po Nadzwyczajnym Konsystorzu wielu kardynałów, w tym Autor niniejszego tekstu, zdecydowało się odpowiedzieć na wszystkie stanowiska przyjęte przez kardynała Kaspera w sposób możliwie jak najbardziej dogłębny. Owoce naszych wysiłków znajdują się w książce *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church* opublikowanej w językach angielskim, francuskim, niemieckim, włoskim i hiszpańskim. Następnie została opublikowana w kilku innych językach, w tym w chorwackim, czeskim, węgierskim, polskim, portugalskim i słowackim. Choć publikacja jest rzetelna pod względem naukowym, dołożono wszelkich starań, aby redagować zapisy w taki sposób, aby były dostępne dla lektury i zrozumienia szerokich rzesz katolików i wszystkich ludzi dobrej woli. Książka cieszy się ogromną popularnością w swoich różnych wydaniach językowych.

Przed wszystkim jako założenie dyskusji o Świętym Małżeństwie w obecnej sytuacji, ważne jest właściwe zrozumienie relacji między wiarą a kulturą. Wielokrotnie podczas dyskusji deklarowano, że Kościół musi aktualizować swoją praktykę, a przede wszystkim jej język, aby skutecznie zająć się całkowicie zsekularyzowaną kul-

turą. Czyniąc to jednakże, Kościół sprawia wrażenie, że chce zbliżyć się do kultury, ale bez wyraźnej tożsamości siebie i tego, co ma kulturze do powiedzenia. Według Bożej mądrości Kościół musi zawsze mówić prawdę z miłością. Tak, Kościół powinien udać się na peryferie dzisiejszej kultury, ale zawsze musi zabezpieczyć swoją tożsamość. Niekiedy myślimy o tym, co mówi nam Ewangelia o spotkaniu Chrystusa z ludem, że są jak owce bez pasterza i dlatego On ich prowadzi. Myślimy także o spotkaniu Naszego Pana z Samarytanką u Studni Jakuba lub z kobietą przyłapaną na cudzołóstwie. Pan jest pełen zrozumienia dla ich sytuacji, On im przebacza, ale jednocześnie zwraca uwagę na konieczność odejścia z życia w grzechu, konieczność nie grzeszenia więcej.

W popularnych prezentacjach pracy Synodu Biskupów często pojawia się wrażenie, że nauczanie i praktyka Kościoła mogą zostać zmienione większością głosów Ojców synodalnych. Ale Synod Biskupów nie ma uprawnień do zmiany doktryny i dyscypliny (kanon 342 Kodeksu Prawa Kanonicznego).

Zastanawiając się nad sytuacjami głębokiego cierpienia w rodzinach, które znajdują się poza kontekstem prawdy Chrystusa, istnieje ryzyko popadnięcia w sentymentalizm, który choć wydaje się współczujący, jest głęboko szkodliwy z powodu braku szacunku dla obiektywnej sytuacji zaangażowanych osób. Taki sentymentalizm blokuje spotkanie z Chrystusem ze strony osoby, która jest w grzechu. Koncentrując się wyłącznie na bolesnej sytuacji

jednostki, nie widzimy rzeczywistości w jej integralności, a tym samym niesprawiedliwości nie tylko wobec jednostki, ale także wobec innych z nią związanych.

W konfrontacji z cierpieniami poszczególnych osób i rodzin, Kościół nie powinien tracić zaufania do prawa naturalnego wpisanego w każde ludzkie serce i jego pełny wyraz w zbawczym dziele Naszego Pana. W naszej kulturze panuje zamieszanie związane ze znaczeniem ludzkiej seksualności, która rodzi owoce głębokiego osobistego nieszczęścia, które często prowadzi do zerwania małżeństwa, zepsucia dzieci i młodzieży, a ostatecznie do samoza-głady. Nieuporządkowana aktywność seksualna, aktywność seksualna poza małżeństwem oraz stałe, mocne i fałszywe przesłania dotyczące naszej tożsamości jako mężczyzny i kobiety są oznakami pilnej potrzeby nowej ewangelizacji, która rozpoczyna się w małżeństwach i w rodzinach, a poprzez małżeństwa i poprzez rodziny dociera do całej kultury. Potrzeba świadectwa różnych darów mężczyzny i kobiety, którymi oboje rozporządzają w służbie Chrystusa i Jego Mistycznego Ciała za pomocą czystego życia. Małżeństwo chrześcijańskie jest pierwszym miejscem tak niezbędnego świadectwa w naszej kulturze. Za pomocą zdrowego życia rodzinnego nasza kultura zostanie przekształcona. Bez zdrowego życia rodzinnego kultura nigdy nie zostanie przekształcona.

Żyjemy w czasach, gdy podstawowa prawda o małżeństwie jest pod wpływem diabolicznego ataku mające-

go na celu zaciemnienie i podeptanie wysublimowanego piękna stanu małżeńskiego, tak jak Bóg zamierzał to w dziele stworzenia. Rozwód jest powszechną praktyką w społeczeństwie, podobnie jak pretekst do usunięcia ze związku małżeńskiego środkami mechanicznymi lub chemicznymi jego prokreacyjnej istoty. A teraz społeczeństwo posunęło się jeszcze bardziej w zniewadze dla Boga i Jego praw, twierdząc, że małżeństwo jest nazwą związku między osobami tej samej płci.

Nawet w Kościele są tacy, którzy ukrywają prawdę o nierozzerwalności małżeństwa w imię miłosierdzia, którzy w imię duszpasterskiego zrozumienia łączą je z pogwałceniem związku małżeńskiego za pomocą antykoncepcji i którzy w imię tolerancji milczą wobec ataku na integralność małżeństwa jako związku jednego mężczyzny i jednej kobiety. Są nawet tacy, którzy zaprzeczają, że małżeństwo otrzymuje szczególną łaskę, aby żyć heroicznie w wiernej, trwałej i życiodajnej miłości, podczas gdy sam Pan zapewnił nas, że Bóg daje małżonkom łaskę codziennego życia zgodnie z prawdą ich stanu.

W naszych czasach nasze świadectwo blasku prawdy o małżeństwie musi być klarowne i heroiczne. Musimy być gotowi cierpieć, tak jak chrześcijanie cierpieli przez wieki, aby szanować i wspierać święte małżeństwo. Weźmy za przykład św. Jana Chrzyciela, św. Jana Fiszera i św. Tomasza More'a, którzy byli męczennikami w obronie integralności wierności i nierozzerwalności małżeństwa. By zapobiec pomieszaniu i błędom o Świętym Małżeństwie, któ-

re Szatan tak szeroko zasiewa w dzisiejszym społeczeństwie, podążajmy za ich przykładem i wzywajmy ich wstawienictwa, aby wielki dar życia małżeńskiego i miłości był coraz bardziej szanowany w Kościele i w społeczeństwie.

Tłum. Magdalena Płotka

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