

Matrimony, Holy Orders, Religious Life, Single – OCIA

Vocation: a calling from the Lord to a plan He's prepared for one's life.

Universal Call to Holiness

- All people are called to the same vocation: to know, love, and serve God, and to be with Him in this life and the next.
- By virtue of our Baptism, we are invited into deep holiness and to be saints.
- How we attain that holiness is in & through our Vocations
 - 2 of them are through sacraments (Matrimony & Holy Orders), while 2 are through living out the sacrament of Baptism.

Four Identities of Each Person:

- i) Son / Daughter
 - ii) Brother / Sister
 - iii) Husband / Wife
 - iv) Father Mother
- Every person is called to spousal love and fruitfulness – it just depends on how.

Matrimony

-The Bible – the story of salvation – is bookended by marriage: the marriage of Adam & Eve at the beginning of Genesis, and the Wedding Feast of the Lamb (Jesus' marriage to the Church) at the end of Revelation.

-Jesus' first miracle is at a wedding & He preaches extensively on marriage – it is *very good*.

-Marriage reflects the love of God: both the relations of the Trinity & the love of Christ for His Church (cf. Eph. 5).

-Marks / Characteristics of Marriage

- 1) *Free*: The couple is free from both interior bondage & a previous marriage.
- 2) *Total*: The spouses give themselves to each other in mind, body, and spirit.
- 3) *Faithful*: The spouses promise to be faithful to each other in all things.
- 4) *Fruitful*: Marriage is ordered to the procreation and education of children.

-Two "Meanings" of Marriage: Procreation of Children (procreative) & the Union of the Spouses (unitive)...

-Any actions that are opposed to these meanings are considered immoral (we'll talk about this in a future class).

-All people can enter into marriage validly, regardless of religion. What makes the Sacrament of Marriage different is the infusion of grace and the elevation of marriage to something truly holy.

-St. John Chrysostom suggests that husbands should say the following to their wives: "I have taken you in my arms, and I love you, and I prefer you to my life itself. For the present life is nothing, and my most ardent dream is to spend it with you in such a way that we may be assured of not being separated in the life reserved for us... I place your love above all things, and nothing would be more bitter or painful to me than to be of a different mind than you."

Holy Orders

-Holy Orders concerns the priesthood. A priest (in any religion) is one who offers sacrifice and stands as a mediator between God and man.

-By Baptism, all Christians are priests: they can pray (offer sacrifice) and enter into the perfect Mediator, Jesus.

-The Sacramental Priesthood – Holy Orders – is the full configuration of man to the priesthood of Jesus, to serve and love His Church as He does.

-The priest receives the sacramental power and authority of Jesus to love His Bride as He does.

-The priest is thus a spiritual spouse to the Church and a spiritual father to the people.

-This is a primary reason why only men are ordained.

-Three Degrees of the Sacrament of Holy Orders:

a) Diaconate (deacons) – conformed to Christ the Servant. Deacons can baptize, preach, perform weddings and funerals.

b) Priesthood (priests) – priests are co-workers with the Bishop and serve in his mission.

c) Episcopate (bishops) – successors of the apostles, given the full authority of Jesus. They work as coworkers with the Pope.

-Diocesan priests make 3 promises:

a) Celibacy: a promise to remain unmarried (married to the Church).

b) Obedience: a promise to obey the Bishop in all things.

c) Prayer: to cultivate a life of prayer & serve the Liturgy as given by the Church.

Religious Life

-Since the early days of the Church, men & women have felt a call to live their Baptismal consecration in a radical way.

-Religious life is a radical living of what was given in Baptism: living as Christ in the world.

-Those in religious life often live in community under a certain way of life: Benedictines, Franciscans, Jesuits, Carmelites, etc.

-3 Promises of Religious: poverty, chastity, and obedience (to their superior).

-They live as an image and icon of our Heavenly vocation, yet here on this earth.

Single

-The single life rocks. Lol.

-This category of vocation is dedicated to those who are living out their baptismal vocation in the world, dedicated in loving way to some mission or community.

-It's also possible that there are people who aren't capable for some reason to enter into the other vocations. The Lord hasn't abandoned them – He's still called them to deep love and mission.