

SEXUAL PLEASURE, THE VARIOUS SEXUAL ACTS, AND PROCREATION

Note: None of the teachings on our site must be deemed absolutely infallibly or true, and the reader must be advised to follow his own conscience. Even if our teachings proclaim this or that position to be true (according to our own interpretation), the reader must understand that this is our own private interpretation of saint quotes and church teachings: dogmas and encyclicals. Whatever the case may be, always follow what you think the church teaches on any matter; and do not trust blindly on what is taught on our site – even if our position may seem true and infallible (you may, however, follow what we teach blindly if you think this is the true position). If you have worries about any position, ask a knowledgeable friend or priest for guidance; and if you have further concerns, ask another priest or even several priests to see what he thinks about this or that position. No one can be forced to believe in any position that is uncertain, and the reader must be advised to follow his conscience. So if you think any position is uncertain according to your own conscience, make a reasonable judgment, and then ask for advice or continue to study the issue until you have made a right judgment – according to your conscience.

Even though Natural Family Planning (NFP), Sensual Kisses and Touches, Sexual Thoughts and Fantasies inside and outside of the marital act etc. are condemned in this article as a mortal sin (even in a marriage), this position is false, and I do no longer adhere to it. Both pre- and-post Vatican II theologians teach that such acts (Natural Family Planning (NFP), Sensual Kisses and Touches, Sexual Thoughts and Fantasies inside and outside of the marital act etc.) are licit in marriage and the marriage act, and as a preparation for the marriage act, provided the acts are made with a good conscience and for the sake of love.

McHugh and Callan's Moral Theology (vol. II): A Complete Course, sec. 2510 e, p. 522: "Hence, the rule as to married persons is that venereal kisses and other such acts are lawful when given with a view to the exercise of the lawful marriage act and kept within the bounds of decency and moderation; that they are sinful, gravely or lightly according to the case, when unbecoming or immoderate; that they are venially sinful, on account of the inordinate use of a thing lawful in itself (85

a), when only pleasure is intended; that they are mortally sinful, when they tend to pollution, whether solitary or not solitary, for then they are acts of lewdness."

St. Alphonsus Liguori, Moral Theology, Books 2-3, Kindle Locations 1151-1167: "25.— Quaeritur: II. Whether spouses are permitted to take delectation in the conjugal act, even if the other spouse were not present? The Salamancans (de matr. c. 15, p. 6, n. 90) with Navarre, Sa, Roncaglia, etc., (cited by Croix, l. 6, p. 3, n. 537) reject this when the delectation takes place with a commotion of the spirits, because they say such a commotion is not licit for spouses unless it were ordered to copulation. But Roncaglia and the Salamancans do not speak congruently, for they themselves admit (ibid. n. 84; Roncaglia tr. 12, p. 296, q. 6, r. 11 with St. Antoninus, Conc. Diana, **and it is a common opinion, as we will say in book 6, de matrimonio, n. 933), that unchaste touches (which certainly cannot be done without a great deal of arousal) among spouses, provided the danger of pollution is absent, are licit, at least they are not gravely illicit, even if they are done only for pleasure and hardly ordered to copulation.** I say, therefore, why is it not the same thing to speak about delectation? This is why I regard Busembaum's opinion as probable, which says it is permitted for spouses to take delectation, even carnally, from carnal relations they have had or are going to have, as long as the danger of pollution is always absent. The reason is, because (exactly as the Salamancans say in tr. 9, c. 15, p. 6, n. 84 when speaking about unchaste touches) **the very state of matrimony renders all these things licit; otherwise the matrimonial state would be exposed to excessive scruples.** Besides, Bonacina, Sanchez, Lessius and Diana hold this opinion, with Busembaum (as above, n. 23, in fine), St. Antoninus (p. 1, tit. 5, c. 1 §6.), Cajetan, (1.2. q. 74, art. 8 ad 4), Coninck (d. 34, dub. 11, concl. 1), Croix (l. 6, p. 5, num. 337) with Gerson, Suarez, Laymann and a great many others; likewise Vasquez, Aversa, etc., cited by the Salamancans (ibid. n. 89 and 90), who think it is probable. St. Thomas also favors this opinion in question 15 of de malo, art. 2, ad 17, where he says that for spouses, just as sexual relations are licit, so also delectation from them."

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PART 1. NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING, THE MARITAL SEXUAL ACT, AND PROCREATION

WHAT IS NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING?

Natural Family Planning (NFP) is the practice of deliberately restricting the marital act exclusively to those times when the wife is infertile so as to avoid the conception of a child. NFP is used for the same reasons that people use artificial contraception: to deliberately avoid the conception of a child while carrying out the marital act.

WHY IS NFP WRONG?

NFP is wrong because it's birth control; it's *against* conception. It's a refusal on the part of those who use it to be open to the children that God planned to send them. **It's no different in its purpose from artificial contraception**, and therefore it's a moral evil just like artificial contraception. Since the Church infallibly teaches that “**the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**” and that “those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural powers and **purpose** sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #54) in addition to teaching that “*any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offense against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin*” (*Ibid*), this makes it perfectly clear to us that NFP is not only a very serious mortal sin according to the teaching of the Church, but also a sin against the Natural Law that can never be excused or changed.

The Catholic Church has always been officially opposed to contraception or birth control in all its forms, but contrary to the practice of the Catholics of the first 1900 years of the Church, the great majority of self professed Catholics living in our debauched era in time, ignore this prohibition. However, as we will see from the teaching of the Church in addition to the Natural Law and the Holy Bible as well as the teaching of all the Saints and Church Fathers, the Catholic Church infallibly and officially condemns all forms of contraception as a heinous mortal sin against God, life and nature, thus firmly declaring that those who practice any kind of contraception, such as NFP, will lose their souls.

Indeed, *The Holy Bible* directly commands spouses when they perform the marital sexual act that “thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of**

children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children” (Tobias 6:22), and this totally condemns all contraceptive acts, such as NFP. As a matter of fact, the Holy Word of God in the Bible explicitly condemns spouses who are opposed to procreation, teaching that “**the devil has power**” over all spouses who selfishly come together for the purpose of gratifying their fleshly pleasures, giving “**themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding**” instead of being “**moved rather for love of children than for lust**” (Tobias 6:17) when they perform the marital act that Our Lord commands.

The best biblical example of God’s utter hatred of all forms of contraceptive acts is found in *The Book of Genesis*, where God Himself directly killed a man named Onan for practicing contraception: “*He knowing that the children should not be his, when he went in to his brother’s wife, spilled his seed upon the ground, lest children should be born in his brother’s name. And therefore the Lord slew him, because he did a detestable thing.*” (Genesis 38:8-10) Notice how clearly the biblical text shows that the reason he did this “detestable thing” was “lest children should be born in his brother’s name”, thus showing us that the act of performing the marital act while taking steps to hinder procreation is hated by God.

**THE SEXUAL ACT MUST BE EXCUSED BY THE MOTIVE OF PROCREATION
SINCE IT IS INTOXICATING LIKE A DRUG, SHAMEFUL, AND DESTINED BY
NATURE FOR PROCREATION**

There are three main reasons for why the Natural Law, the Holy Bible, Apostolic Tradition, as well as the Church and Her Popes and Saints infallibly teaches that for the marital sexual act to be lawful and without sin, spouses must always desire to beget children and make an explicit act of their will by excusing the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation before they perform every single marital act.

The first reason is that the Natural Law teaches that “**the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #54) and that “**the act of marriage exercised for pleasure only**” is condemned as a sin for both the married and unmarried people alike (Pope Innocent XI, Denz. 1159). Since even the normal, natural and procreative “**act of marriage exercised for [the motive of] pleasure only**” is condemned as a sin even though this act is directly procreative in itself, and the only intention and motive that excuses the marital sexual act from sin is the procreation of children, according to teachings of the Popes, Saints and Doctors of the Church, it is totally obvious that every single marital sexual act must be excused

by an explicit act of the will of having children before one performs the marital sexual act. The Church have always taught that “**the generative [sexual] act is a sin unless it is excused**” (St. Bonaventure, *Commentary on the Four Books of Sentences*) and that is why those who deny that “**the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...**” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*) commit a sin against the Natural Law which can never be excused.

The Natural Law is rooted in design. God, the Supreme Designer, has imprinted a design on all created things – including the human person, both in his spiritual and physical being – a purpose for which each has been created. Thus, with regard to the human person, the Creator has designed speech for communicating the truth and the mouth to swallow food etc. Likewise, the Creator has designed the sexual organs for something noble, namely, for procreating children.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 60), Dec. 31, 1930: “This sacredness of marriage which is intimately connected with religion and all that is holy, arises from the divine origin we have just mentioned, **from its purpose which is the begetting and education of children for God**, and the binding of man and wife to God through Christian love and mutual support; and finally it arises from the very nature of wedlock, whose institution is to be sought for in the farseeing Providence of God, whereby it is the means of transmitting life, thus making the parents the ministers, as it were, of the Divine Omnipotence.”

This means, according to the teaching of the Church, that spouses must actively think about the fact that they are performing the marital act for the sake of begetting children before they perform every single marital act, while also desiring to beget children for the love and glory of God. The Holy Bible even gives spouses a good example of a short prayer to use before they perform the marital act: “*And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity**, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.*” (Tobias 8:9)

This teaching of the Church is of course directly rooted in Holy Scripture and Apostolic Tradition, which are the two infallible sources of the Church. We see this truth being taught to us in the Holy Bible by God when He spoke to Tobias through the Archangel Raphael, saying: “thou **shalt** take [that is, perform the marital act with] the virgin with the **fear** of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said:] And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not**

for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.” (Tobias 6:22; 8:9) Our Lord’s words about “the seed of Abraham” is explained by St. Paul to refer to those who are going to be saved from Hell by Christ’s blood since God says in the New Testament that “if you be Christ’s, then are you the seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:29)

It is thus clear that the Holy Bible teaches us that spouses who perform the marital act **must make an explicit act of their will** before they perform every single marital act, desiring to beget children and being “*moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children.*” Notice how insistently and clearly the infallible, Holy Scripture commands spouses to perform the marital act for the explicit purpose and love of begetting children (and not for lust), teaching them to excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation and that “thou **shalt** take [that is, perform the marital act with] the virgin with the **fear** of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**”.

Thus, according to the Church, this act of the will or motive to beget children that renders the marital act lawful and moral and that are performed by the spouses before every marital sexual act, is used by them to excuse the shameful and intoxicating nature of the marital sexual act, just like a sick person excuses his usage of an intoxicating drug with the motive of alleviating his suffering or illness. St. Thomas Aquinas also confirms the truth that the marital act must be excused since it is intoxicating like a drug, teaching that: “**because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time, [as in the case of intoxication of drugs]... the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...**” (*Summa Theologica, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1, 5*)

The Magisterium of the Church also teaches that one must desire to beget children before one performs every single marital act in order for the act to be lawful and without sin since “**the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* #54) and since even the normal, natural and procreative “**act of marriage exercised for [the motive of] pleasure only**” is condemned as a sin for both the married and unmarried people alike (Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* # 9, 1679). Since even the normal, natural and procreative “**act of marriage exercised for [the motive of] pleasure only**” is condemned as a sin even though this act is directly procreative in itself, and the only intention and motive that excuses the marital sexual act from sin is the procreation of children according to teachings of the Popes, Fathers,

Saints and Doctors of the Church, it is totally obvious that every single marital sexual act must be excused by an explicit act of the will before one performs the marital sexual act.

This is also why Pope St. Gregory the Great (c. 540-604), who is one of the greatest Popes in human history as well as a Father and Doctor of the Church, teaches that: “**The married must be admonished to bear in mind that they are united in wedlock for the purpose of procreation, and when they abandon themselves to immoderate intercourse, they transfer the occasion of procreation to the service of pleasure.** Let them realize that though they do not then pass beyond the bonds of wedlock, yet in wedlock they exceed its rights. Wherefore, it is necessary that they efface by frequent prayer what they befoul in the fair form of conjugal union by the admixture of pleasure.” (Pope St. Gregory the Great, "Pastoral Care," Part 3, Chapter 27, in "Ancient Christian Writers," No. 11, pp. 188-189)

Pope Pius XI adds in *Casti Connubii* that the “sacredness of marriage which is intimately connected with religion and all that is holy, arises... **from its purpose which is the begetting and education of children for God**” (*Casti Connubii*, #60) and that all “Christian parents **must** also understand that they are destined... to propagate and preserve the human race on earth” (*Casti Connubii*, #13). Our Lord Jesus Christ, speaking through the mouth of Saint Paul in the New Testament of the Bible also connects the will to bear children to salvation, teaching that a woman: “**shall be saved through child-bearing; if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification, with sobriety.**” (1 Timothy 2:15)

The second reason why spouses must always desire to beget children before they perform the marital act (in order to be able to perform the marital act without any sin) is that all sexual acts (even marital, natural, lawful and procreative ones) are intoxicating and affects the person similar to the effect of a strong drug. In fact, the sexual act is many times more intoxicating than many drugs that are unlawful to abuse. But when people are performing the sexual act, not for the motive of begetting children, but for the sake of lust or for satisfying or quenching their fleshly desires, they are committing an act that is intrinsically sinful, selfish, and unreasonable, and are thus abusing the marital act in a similar way that a drug user abuses drugs, or a glutton abuses food. It is an inherently selfish act that are not founded on reason, but only on their unlawful, unbridled and shameful search for a carnal pleasure, similar to the action of a person that uses drugs in order to get intoxicated or high.

This is also why the Church teaches that even the normal, natural and procreative “**act of marriage exercised for pleasure only**” is condemned as a sin for both the married and

unmarried people alike and **“that those marriages will have an unhappy end which are entered upon... because of concupiscence alone,** with no thought of the sacrament and of the mysteries signified by it.” (Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos*, #12) Since the Church and the Natural Law condemns even the normal, natural and procreative marital act exercised for the motive of pleasure only, it is obvious that all sexual acts that is performed without the will to beget children are condemned by the Church as even worse sins, since they are utterly **unreasonable, shameful, and selfish.**

A sick person is allowed by God’s permission to take drugs in order to lessen his pain. But when this sick person uses more drugs than he needs in order to get intoxicated, or continues to use the drug after he gets well, he commits the sin of drug abuse. This is a perfect example of those who perform the marital act for the only sake of lust or for pleasing or quenching their sensual desires. They are gluttonous or overindulgent in the marital act, and are thus sinning against their reason and the Natural Law. For **“the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason...”** and **“lust there signifies any kind of excess.”** (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

A person who uses a drug that makes him intoxicated needs an absolutely necessary reason (such as a grave illness) to excuse his usage of the drug from being a sin, and when he does not have such an absolutely necessary excuse to excuse his drug usage, he commits the sin of drug abuse. It is exactly the same in the case of married people. When married spouses do not excuse the marital act (which is intoxicating in a way similar to a drug) with the honorable motive of begetting children, they perform an act that is inherently sinful, selfish, unreasonable, and unnatural since **“the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children”** and since **“the act of marriage exercised for pleasure only” is condemned as a sin by the Natural Law.** And so, the marital act needs an absolutely necessary excuse to legitimize and make moral the inherently evil act of getting intoxicated just like one needs an excuse like a grave illness to legitimize and make moral the inherently evil act of getting intoxicated by a drug.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1: **“Now there is a loss of reason incidental to the union of man and woman, both because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time, [as in the case of intoxication of drugs]** as the Philosopher says (*Ethic. vii, 11*); and again because of the tribulation of the flesh which such persons have to suffer from

solicitude for temporal things (1 Corinthians 7:28). Consequently the choice of this union cannot be made ordinate except by certain compensations whereby that same union is righted, and these are the goods [procreation, sacrament and fidelity] which **excuse** marriage and make it right.”

Therefore, the normal, natural and procreative marital act performed for the motive of begetting children by two married spouses is the only sexual act that can be excused from sin since man knows by nature and instinct that one must excuse an act of intoxication with an absolutely necessary motive. Anything contrary to this is unnatural and evil.

An inherently evil act (such as intoxication) must always be excused with an absolutely necessary motive or purpose. Otherwise, it will always be a sin. Two examples that clearly demonstrates this fact of “excusing” an otherwise evil act are found in the case of a man injuring another person, which is excused in the case of self-defense; or as in the case of a man getting intoxicated, which is excused when a man is sick and requires this intoxication in order to get pain relief. All other inherently evil acts than what is absolutely necessary are strictly condemned as sins, since they cannot be excused with an absolutely necessary motive. For example, a man cannot hurt another man if he wants his money, or if he does not like him, and a man cannot get drunk or intoxicated just because he is sad or unhappy, for none of these excuses are absolutely necessary. Thus, these excuses are not enough by themselves to excuse these acts from being sinful. In truth, some evil acts cannot even be excused at all, such as in the case of a man suffering from hunger, but who nevertheless is never allowed to kill another person in order to get food to survive. It is thus a dogmatic fact of the Natural Law that **“the generative [sexual] act is a sin unless it is excused.”** (St. Bonaventure, *Commentary on the Four Books of Sentences*, d. 31, a. 2, q. 1) It could not be more clear from the Natural Law as well as the teachings of the Church that **“Coitus is reprehensible and evil, unless it be excused”** (Peter Lombard, Archbishop of Paris, *Sententiarum*, 3, d. 37, c. 4) and that is also why all who commit the marital act without excusing it, will always commit sin. **“Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...”** (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica, Supplement*, Q. 49, Art. 5)

Someone might claim (in opposition to the teaching of Pope Innocent XI and the Natural Law) that the marital act for the sole purpose of pleasing or quenching one’s sexual desire or concupiscence is really necessary and allowed and not sinful because it helps people stay away from committing sins like adultery, fornication or other sexual sins, but this argument is false and easily refuted since no one will ever be so tempted that he cannot withstand the sensual temptation of the flesh. It is thus *not absolutely necessary* to perform the marital act for the

sole purpose of quenching one's sexual desire or concupiscence, and that is why this selfish act will always be sinful for all spouses who perform the act for this purpose. Everyone can withstand their sensual temptations with the help of God, and to say otherwise is blasphemous impiety and heresy and against God's Holy Word, since all the unmarried must do this every day.

James 1:13-15 "Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted by God. For God is not a tempter of evils, and he tempteth no man. **But every man is tempted by his own concupiscence, being drawn away and allured. Then when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.** But sin, when it is completed, begetteth death."

Even the married must be able to resist their sensual temptations every time their spouse is away from them, or when their spouse is sick or unable to perform the marital act for any other reason. In the case of a grave illness, however, the reason why a person needs to take a drug that makes him intoxicated is absolutely necessary. This proves that the act of marriage for the sole reason of sexual pleasure or for the purpose of quenching concupiscence is not absolutely necessary or that this motive by itself can excuse the marital act. All spouses can obviously remain chaste if they want to but they never (or almost never) choose to do so, but this is ultimately their own fault.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book 4, Chapter 83: "Now, in this life it is inordinate and sinful to make use of... vengery [the gratification of sexual desire] for mere pleasure, and not for the purpose of... begetting children. And there is reason in this: since the pleasure attaching to these actions is not their end... Consequently to do these things with the sole object of pleasure is altogether out of order and unbecoming."

Just like in the case of the person who uses drugs, one must have an absolutely necessary reason for using the drugs, such as an illness, and motives that aren't absolutely necessary such as "love", "pleasure" or "fun" can never be used as an excuse to excuse the marital act, just like one cannot use such **unnecessary** and evil excuses for the purpose of excusing one's drug abuse. "For **necessary** sexual intercourse for begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is **alone** worthy of *marriage*. **But that which goes beyond this necessity [of begetting children, such as sensual kisses and touches] no longer follows reason but lust.**" (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 11)

Thus, according to the teaching of the Church, the marital act must always be excused with the motive of procreation. The secondary motives of the marital act (such as the quenching or quieting of concupiscence) can follow the first motive of procreation, but performing the marital act for the sole motive of quenching concupiscence cannot excuse the sexual act as procreation always must excuse the sexual act.

“For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial right there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, # 59, Dec. 31, 1930)

The secondary ends or motives of the marital act can thus follow after the first motive of procreation, but performing the sexual act for the sole reason of quenching concupiscence cannot excuse the act from being a sin **since procreation is the only motive that always must excuse the act from being a sin, according to the teaching of the Church.**

Indeed, Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself also shows us in *The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 26, that those couples who are lustful and perform the marital sexual act for the sole motive of pleasure without excusing it with the motive of procreation before they perform every single marital act, are sinning against His Law and He says that “such a married couple will never see my face unless they repent”, which thus means that all who do not excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation will be damned unless they repent.

*Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to Saint Bridget, saying: “**Those who unite with divine love and fear for the sake of procreation and to raise children for the honor of God are my spiritual temple where I wish to dwell as the third with them.**”* Here we see Christ Himself making it perfectly clear that those who unite in the marital sexual act “**with divine love and fear for the sake of procreation and to raise children for the honor of God are my spiritual temple where I wish to dwell as the third with them**”.

These words clearly shows us that God requires all spouses to excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation for the act to be without sin. The reason why Our Lord only “**wish to dwell as the third**” with virtuous and unselfish spouses who excuse the marital act with the motive of procreation and do not commit any other sexual sins with each other,

such as foreplay or sensual touches or kisses, is that those who refuse to excuse the marital act are selfish pleasure seekers; and the Holy Spirit of God cannot stand being with such spouses who willfully defile themselves. God loathes and detests all selfish, sinful and lustful acts and His **“Spirit leaves them [lustful spouses] immediately and the spirit of impurity approaches instead, because they only come together for the sake of lust and do not discuss or think about anything else with each other”** (*Ibid*) when they – just like drug addicts – selfishly intend to satisfy their lust without first excusing it with the motive of procreation.

In truth, Christ makes the point that spouses must excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation (and avoid all impurity in their sexual acts) even more clear in the same Revelation when He continues to speak about damned, impure and lustful spouses who refuse to excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation, teaching us about such lustful and evil spouses that:

“They seek a warmth and sexual lust that will perish and love flesh that will be eaten by worms. Therefore do such people join in marriage without the bond and union of God the Father and without the Son’s love and without the Holy Spirit’s consolation. **When the couple comes to bed, my Spirit leaves them immediately and the spirit of impurity approaches instead, because they only come together for the sake of lust and do not discuss or think about anything else with each other** [and through this refusal to excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation, such a couple is damned]. ... **Such a married couple will never see my face unless they repent.** For there is no sin so heavy or grave that penitence and repentance does not wash it away.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget, Book 1, Chapter 26*)

Our Lord makes it perfectly clear in this Revelation that impure spouses who do not excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation and that are only after the sexual pleasure are committing a mortal sin since He says that **“Such a married couple will never see my face unless they repent.** For there is no sin so heavy or grave that penitence and repentance does not wash it away”. The reason for this condemnation is that **“They seek a warmth and sexual lust that will perish and love flesh that will be eaten by worms”** and that **“they only come together for the sake of lust and do not discuss or think about anything else with each other.”** Therefore, the act of not excusing the marital act, and performing the act only for lust, is not some trifling sin according to Our Lord, but a direct mortal sin that bars a person from heaven, and thus

damns a person.

This Revelation also shows us that Our Lord wants the spouses to be with each other when they perform the short prayer to God that their marital sexual act will beget children if this is His Holy Will, rather than only performing the prayer alone. Our Lord makes it perfectly clear that He wants spouses to come together before the marital act to pray to Him to grant them a child, since He condemns spouses who “**do not discuss or think about anything else [than lust] with each other**” before they intend to perform the marital act. Indeed, Our Lord wants spouses to pray both individually and together to Him to grant them children through their marital act if this is His holy will. In addition, this Revelation of Our Lord also shows us the inherent evil of NFP or contraception; for, since it is clear that the Church and Her Saints teaches that it is even sinful to perform the normal, natural and **procreative** sexual act without excusing it with the motive of procreation, even though this act is directly procreative in itself, how much more must not those who actively try to hinder procreation in a direct and material way, as in the case of those who use NFP, be guilty of a most grievous sin against God and nature?

Our Lord wants all spouses to fervently desire to beget children in order to first and foremost keep their love centered on others and being charitable to others, which is the heart of the Gospel, instead of themselves and their selfish lust; and secondly, in order to create a good environment for the newborn child. The more something is hoped and longed for, the more will also the joy and happiness be that fills the home of the newborn when a son or daughter is born to a couple, and this joy in turn will undoubtedly impact the child’s upbringing and the amount of love and affection the parents will show to their child. That is why Our Lord wants a good and loving couple to (in their thought process) first and foremost ask Our Lord to give them children by means of the marital act that they are intending to soon perform, and then, only secondly, if the spouses chooses this, consider the secondary ends of marriage “such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #59)

The Holy Bible makes it clear, though, that Our Lord wants spouses to perform the marital sexual act “***only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever***” rather than for the secondary purposes “such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence” that spouses can lawfully consider after the primary motive of procreation: “*And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust do I take***

my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.” (Tobias 8:9)

Pope Pius XI explains that there are two criteria for spouses to even be able to consider the secondary motives of the marital act. First, spouses must always subordinate the secondary motives and may never allow them to come before the thought of wishing to beget children, since this thought always must excuse the marital act, before one can consent to the secondary motives in one’s thought. Second, spouses can only lawfully consider the secondary motives “so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved” which means that spouses are free from all sin as long as they intend to only perform the normal, natural and procreative sexual act, without any unnecessary and non-procreative forms of sexual acts **(such as masturbation of self or of spouse, oral and anal sex, foreplay, and sensual touches and kisses)** either by themselves or in relationship to the marital act before, during or after the act.

These passages from the Holy Bible as well as the teaching of the Popes, Fathers and the Saints of the Church makes it evident that there must be a order in the thought process when one excuses the marital sexual act. The thought of wishing to beget children that excuses the marital act must always come first in the thought process after the secondary motives or purposes. It is not only the deed of performing the marital act only for pleasure that is sinful, but also the will to do this without first excusing the sexual act with an absolutely necessary motive. So, at the moment when a person gets the thought that urges him to satisfy his sensual longing with his wife, he must first excuse this thought with the motive of procreation, before he can consent to the thought of wanting to quench his concupiscence. If the consent to the thought or wish to satisfy or quench one’s sensual desire comes first in the thought process, sin will always be committed. Thus, a husband can make a short prayer to God: “Oh, Lord, Creator of Heaven and Earth, I pray that the marital act I intend to perform with my wife beget children to your honor *“in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever”* if it is your Holy Will for us to have children. Amen.”

This is amply demonstrated by the Natural Law in the following example of how and in what order the thought of wishing to become intoxicated must be excused, and this example suits our purpose perfectly, since the marital sexual act is much more intoxicating than many drugs that are unlawful to abuse. For example, a person who is having a thought on Monday about something he will do on Thursday, thinks to himself that he will use a drug to get intoxicated on Thursday. Can this person think or say to himself that he will or wishes to get intoxicated on Thursday without first excusing this thought with an absolutely necessary motive, such as pain relief? Of course not. The moment a person thinks to himself that he will become

intoxicated without first excusing this thought with an absolutely necessary motive, he commits an inherently evil and sinful act, since all evil acts (such as intoxication) must always first be excused by an absolutely necessary motive before consent to the act can be made in the mind. This absolutely proves that wishing to perform **“the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused”** (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*) if one wishes it in the mind **before** one can consent to performing the actual act, or consent to the secondary and unnecessary purposes of the marital sexual act.

If a person says to himself that he will kill another person or persons tomorrow, he must first excuse this act in his thought by an absolutely necessary excuse and motive (such as just war or wishing to defend other people who are going to be attacked by evil people) before he can consent to the thought of wishing to kill another person or persons tomorrow. He cannot first think that he will harm another person without having a moral basis in his mind for consenting to such a thought. It matters not whether the person will perform the evil act today or plan to do it in the future, for it is not only the evil act that is evil and sinful, but also the consent in the mind to the evil act.

This is also why St. Augustine teaches that **“The [marriage] contract is read... in the presence of all the attesting witnesses... that they marry "for the procreation of children;" and this is called the marriage contract. If it was not for this that wives were given and taken to wife, what father could without blushing give up his daughter to the lust of any man? But now, that the parents may not blush, and that they may give their daughters in honorable marriage, not to shame, the contract is read out. And what is read from it?--the clause, "for the sake of the procreation of children."”** (*Sermons on the New Testament*, Sermon 1:22) Here we see that when two people intend to get married and have sexual relations, they must promise each other that they intend to beget children. **“The [marriage] contract is read... in the presence of all the attesting witnesses... that they marry "for the procreation of children;"”** If either of the two people who intend to marry each other were to consent to lustful thoughts of the one they intend to marry before they were married and excused their future sexual act with the motive of children, they would commit fornication in their mind or thought, since all who are not married commit fornication or sexual sin if they either perform the sexual act or consent to lustful thoughts.

The Holy Word of God in the Bible is indeed true when it says that **“the devil has power”** over all spouses who selfishly come together for the purpose of gratifying their fleshly pleasures, giving **“themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not**

understanding” instead of being “**moved rather for love of children than for lust**” when they perform the marital act that Our Lord commands. The words “**as the horse and mule, which have not understanding**” signifies the truth that spouses who do not first excuse their sensual thoughts with the motive of procreation before they consent to the thought of wishing to quench their concupiscence, are like beasts who go after their desires without having a rational mind, having “**not understanding**” of the truth that God instituted the marital sexual act for the purpose of procreation.

Tobias 6:16-17 “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will show thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. **For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.**”

There must therefore be an order in the thought process by which the person first excuses the marital sexual act with an absolutely necessary motive before consent to the act can be made in the mind and the secondary motives can be considered; and if one inverts the order and places the motive of quenching of concupiscence before the motive of begetting children in the thought process, sin will always be committed.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: “For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial right there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.”

That is also why the Holy Bible’s teaching of how spouses should think before they perform the marital sexual act is best to follow in all, for it cuts out all secondary and selfish motives, and introduces only the unselfish and good motive in the thought process: “*And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity**, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.*” (Tobias 8:9)

So, is it really true that each and every marital sexual act must be excused by an explicit act of the will? Yes, each act must be excused by the motive of procreation, but how each act is excused is another matter all together. One can excuse several acts by a single act. St. Thomas explains that “the intention of nature which intends the offspring must needs be referred

either actually or habitually to the intention of having an offspring”, and this shows us that one can excuse several acts in the future by simply “habitually” excusing the act in one’s mind, such as by habitually thinking in one’s mind of why one performs the act, and by “habitually” praying to God for a child if this is His Holy Will.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5, Reply to Objection 1, Whether the marriage act can be excused without the marriage goods?: “The offspring considered as a marriage good includes something besides the offspring as a good intended by nature. For nature intends offspring as safeguarding the good of the species, whereas the offspring as a good of the sacrament of marriage includes besides this the directing of the child to God. **Wherefore the intention of nature which intends the offspring must needs be referred either actually or habitually to the intention of having an offspring**, as a good of the sacrament: otherwise the intention would go no further than a creature; and this is always a sin. Consequently whenever nature alone moves a person to the marriage act, he is not wholly excused from sin, except in so far as the movement of nature is further directed actually or habitually to the offspring as a good of the sacrament. Nor does it follow that the instigation of nature is evil, but that it is imperfect unless it be further directed to some marriage good.”

Thus, when spouses have an intention to beget children “either actually or habitually”, they are free from sin when they perform the marital act. A few examples from the Natural Law also proves that one can excuse many acts in the future by a single act of the will. If a man are about to go to war and his cause is just, he have excused in his mind the act of killing another person. But if one cannot excuse several acts with one intentional act as the spouses can with the marital act, then after each time a man kills a single person in a just war, he must perform an act of excusing his killing another new person before he can continue to fight, which is absurd. Thus, a man in a just war can perform a single act of the will of excusing the killing of people before he carries out many acts of killing other people.

Furthermore, a sick person who takes intoxicating or sleeping pills must excuse the evil acts of getting intoxicated or unconscious with an absolutely necessary motive. But if it is true that one cannot excuse many acts in the future with a single act of the will, then a sick man must make an act and excuse his drug taking before each time he takes a drug, which is clearly false. So if he takes a drug each 5 min or even oftener, then he must perform an act of excusing the drug taking for each time he takes the drug, which is absurd. One can clearly understand from reason alone that all the man must do is to have it in his intention why he takes the drug,

because he must think “either actually or habitually” on why he takes the drug. As long as a person knows in his conscience that it is a just and honest cause behind why he takes the drugs and thinks “either actually or habitually” on why he takes the drug, he is free from all sin. These examples clearly prove from the Natural Law that one can excuse many evil acts with a single act and motive of the will. Thus, “Just as the marriage goods, in so far as they consist in a habit, make a marriage honest and holy, so too, **in so far as they are in the actual intention, they make the marriage act honest...**” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5)

However, while it is lawful for spouses to have an intention to perform the marital act “either actually or habitually” and to pray “either actually or habitually” to God for children, spouses who wish to please Our Lord should always pray to God before every marital sexual act in addition to praying habitually since this is a much more virtuous act, and undoubtedly will help to purify the thoughts of the spouses, as those who concentrate on a pious and pure motive, rather than a impure and lustful motive, will always be rewarded by Our Lord with grace.

The third reason why spouses must always desire to beget children before they perform the marital act (in order for the marital act to be without any sin) is that all sexual acts (even marital, natural, lawful and procreative ones) are shameful, which is why people never perform any sexual acts in front of other people. “Now men are most ashamed of venereal acts, as Augustine remarks (De Civ. Dei xiv, 18), so much so that even the conjugal act, which is adorned by the honesty of marriage, is not devoid of shame... Now man is ashamed not only of this sexual union but also of all the signs thereof, as the Philosopher observes (Rhet. Ii, 6).” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art 4)

And so, when people are performing such inherently shameful acts not governed by a will to procreate children, but rather for lustful and selfish reasons, they are sinning against the Natural Law imprinted on their hearts since “**the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*) and since “**the act of marriage exercised for pleasure only**” is **condemned as a sin (Pope Innocent XI)**. Since the marital act is shameful by its own nature, it must be excused by a motive that is absolutely necessary – and this purpose is procreation of children.

Some people may object that there are many other events that are shameful and that are not yet inherently sinful such as soiling one’s pants or being forced to show oneself naked to other people against one’s own will. This objection, however, fails to notice the obvious difference

between 1) people committing acts of lust with a desire or longing; and 2) events which are shameful but who are not desired or longed for by a person in a sensual way.

Acts of lust are acts performed for the sake of a pleasure and are performed with the will and purpose of satisfying a sensual desire while the events or acts of soiling one's pants or being forced to show oneself naked to other people is not a desire or lust that is sought after. Thus, these people do not desire that these events should happen. If those people who endured the events of soiling their clothes or naked exhibition against their will would sensually desire or lust for that these shameful events would happen in the same way that a man or a woman lust for and desire that sexual acts or acts of lust happen, they would indeed be declared the most disgusting perverts. Who but a complete and satanic pervert would sensually desire or lust after soiling their pants or being exhibited naked? Consequently, it is not a mere shameful act or event that is sinful, but the shameful act that is performed with the intention of pleasing oneself sensually—that is sinful.

“For St. Augustine says (Soliloq. i, 10): ‘I consider that nothing so casts down the manly mind from its height as the fondling of a woman, and those bodily contacts.’” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 153, Art. 2)

St. Methodius taught that the marital act was “unseemly,” and St. Ambrose agreed with the Holy Bible that it causes a “defilement” (Leviticus 15:16). St. Augustine agreed with the Holy Bible that “It is good for a man **not** to touch a woman” (1 Corinthians 7:1) and that sexual pleasure, lust or concupiscence for both the married and unmarried people alike are *not* something “good” or “praiseworthy” but are truly the “*evil of concupiscence*” and the “*disease of concupiscence*” that arose as an evil result of the original sin of Adam and Eve.

This is also why the Holy Bible urges people to remain unmarried and in a life of chastity since the married man “**is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided**” (1 Corinthians 7:33). The sexual pleasure is very similar to the effect of a strong drug, and drugs as we all know are very easy to become addicted to by abusing them or overindulging in them. The stronger a drug is, the more is also our spiritual life hindered, and that is why the angelic life of chastity will always be more spiritually fruitful than the marital life according to the Bible and God's Holy Word. And so, it is clear that Holy Scripture infallibly teaches that marriage and the marital life is an impediment to the spiritual life, while the chaste and pure life “give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment.” (1 Corinthians 7:35)

Someone might say that it is the sexual member that is shameful or evil to expose to others, and not concupiscence or the sexual lust. But this argument is false and easily refuted since no one who is not a complete pervert would have sex in front of other people even though their whole body was covered by sheets or blankets. This proves to us that it is the **sexual pleasure or concupiscence itself that is shameful and evil**, and not only the exhibition of the sexual organ. For “man is ashamed not only of this sexual union but also of all the signs thereof,” (St. Thomas Aquinas) and this proves to us that not only the sensual desire is shameful, but also the very sexual act and “also of all the signs thereof”.

St. Jerome: “Thus it must be bad to touch a woman. If indulgences is nonetheless granted to the marital act, this is only to avoid something worse. But what value can be recognized in a good that is allowed only with a view of preventing something worse?”

The sexual pleasure is always an evil pleasure to experience in itself since it is a **shameful and intoxicating pleasure** that is very similar to the evil pleasure people experience when they abuse alcohol or drugs, and that is why it is always an evil pleasure to experience even for married couples, even though married spouses do not sin during their normal, natural and procreative marital acts, since “those who use the shameful sex appetite licitly are making good use of evil.” (St. Augustine, *Anti-Pelagian Writings*) St. Augustine in his book *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, explains this evil thus: “Wherefore the devil holds infants guilty [through original sin] who are born, not of the good by which marriage is good, but of the **evil of concupiscence [lust]**, which, indeed, marriage uses aright, but at which even marriage has occasion to feel shame.” (Book 1, Chapter 27)

St. Augustine’s reference to the lawful use of “the shameful sex appetite” means that spouses are only allowed to engage in marital intercourse as long as they perform the act for the sake of conceiving a child. Spouses who perform the marital act without excusing it with the motive or purpose of procreation are thus “making evil use of evil” according to St. Augustine. “I do not say that the activity in which married persons engage for the purpose of begetting children is evil. As a matter of fact, I assert that it is good, because it makes good use of the evil of lust, and through this good use, human beings, a good work of God, are generated. But the action is not performed without evil [that is, intoxicating and shameful lust], and this is why the children must be regenerated in order to be delivered from evil.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, 3.7.15) It is thus obvious that the cause of the shame that is inherent in the sexual act, as we have seen, is “the evil of the sex appetite.” (St. Augustine, *Anti-Pelagian Writings*)

PROCREATION IS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE

It is a divine law, a dogma of the faith (*de fide*), that the primary end of marriage is procreation (bearing children) and the education of children. Pope Pius XI decrees it “is beyond the power of any human law” to teach otherwise.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 8), Dec. 31, 1930: “To take away from man the natural and primeval right of marriage, to circumscribe in any way the principal ends of marriage laid down in the beginning by God Himself in the words ‘Increase and multiply,’ is beyond the power of any human law. ... This is also expressed succinctly in the [1917] Code of Canon Law [Canon 1013]: ‘The primary end [or purpose] of marriage is the procreation and the education of children.’”

A Practical Commentary on Canon 1013 explains that: “there can be no controversy over the primary object of marriage. The perpetuation of the human race is willed by the Creator, who from the creation of mankind appointed the means for this purpose... The Holy Office condemned the opinion defended by some recent authors who deny that the procreation of children is the primary end of matrimony, and regard its secondary ends not subordinate to its primary end but independent of it.” (April 1, 1944; *Acta Ap. Sedis*, XXXVI, 103.)

It could not be more clear from both the Natural Law as well as the teachings of the Church that “The primary purpose of marriage is the procreation and education of children.” (*The 1917 Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1013) Therefore, it is heresy to teach that procreation and education of children is not the only primary end of marriage. Any deliberate plan by man to frustrate the marital act by attempting to make conception impossible is a grave sin against this primary purpose of marriage.

The 1917 Code of Canon Law, Canon 1081: “The matrimonial consent is an act of will by which each party gives and accepts the perpetual and exclusive right to the body for the performance of actions that of their nature pertain to the procreation of children.”

A Practical Commentary on Canon 1081 explains that: “The Canon, in specifying the purpose for which the right to the body exchanged, also indicates what is lawful and what is unlawful in this matter for married persons. Whatever contributes to the procreation of children is licit, while whatever use of each other’s body impedes procreations is illicit.” Any plan by spouses to prevent conception when they engage in the marital act is illicit. Since it impedes procreation, it does not contribute to the procreation of children, but works against it.

**THE TEACHING OF THE SOLEMN AND INFALLIBLE MAGISTERIUM OF THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH CONDEMNS ALL FORMS OF BIRTH CONTROL AS WELL
AS THE INTENTION THAT IS OPPOSED TO PROCREATING CHILDREN AS A
MORTAL SIN AGAINST NATURE**

A pope can teach infallibly, not just in matters of faith, but also in matters of morals.

Pope Pius IX, *First Vatican Council*, Session 4, Chapter 4. **Definition of infallibility:** “... we teach and define as a divinely revealed **dogma** that when the Roman pontiff speaks **EX CATHEDRA**, that is, when, **1. in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of *all Christians*, 2. in virtue of his *supreme apostolic authority*, 3. he defines a doctrine concerning *faith or morals to be held by the whole church*, he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed his church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals. Therefore, such definitions of the Roman pontiff are of themselves, and not by the consent of the church, **irreformable**. So then, should anyone, which God forbid, have the temerity to reject this definition of ours: **let him be anathema.**”**

A doctrine of faith or morals becomes part of the Solemn (Extraordinary) Magisterium when a pope infallibly defines it and hence makes it a dogma of faith or morals. Not only the Ordinary Magisterium (non-infallibly defined doctrines) but also the Solemn Magisterium (dogmas of faith), by an infallible definition from Pope Pius XI’s encyclical *Casti Connubii* in 1930, condemns the contraceptive intent and hence any method used to carry out that intent (which includes any new methods that science and medicine had not yet invented, such as birth control pills that were introduced to the public in the early 1960’s.)

Casti Connubii is an encyclical addressed to the **entire Church**. In this encyclical, Pius XI plainly states what the **Faith of the Church is on Christian Marriage**. When a Pope **plainly and authoritatively states what the Faith of the Church is** in an encyclical to **the entire Church**, that represents the teaching of the **Ordinary and Universal Magisterium**, to which a Catholic is **bound**. His teaching shows that **all forms of birth prevention are evil**. (We quote a long excerpt from his encyclical which sums up the issue below.) **In addition, there is solemn language used by Pope Pius XI in *Casti Connubii* which constitutes a solemn and infallible (ex cathedra) pronouncement. Note the bolded and underlined portions.**

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (#'s 53-56), Dec. 31, 1930: “And now, Venerable Brethren, we shall explain in detail the evils opposed to each of the benefits of matrimony. First consideration is due to the offspring, which many have the boldness to call the disagreeable burden of matrimony and which they say is to be carefully avoided by married people not through virtuous continence (which Christian law permits in matrimony when both parties consent) but by frustrating the marriage act. Some justify this criminal abuse on the ground that they are weary of children and wish to gratify their desires without their consequent burden. Others say that they cannot on the one hand remain continent nor on the other can they have children because of the difficulties whether on the part of the mother or on the part of the family circumstances.

“But no reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in *exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural powers and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.*

“Small wonder, therefore, if Holy Writ bears witness that the Divine Majesty regards with greatest detestation this horrible crime and at times has punished it with death. As St. Augustine notes, ‘**Intercourse even with one’s legitimate wife is unlawful and wicked where the conception of offspring is prevented.** Onan, the son of Judah, did this and the Lord killed him for it (Gen. 38:8-10).’

“Since, therefore, openly departing from the uninterrupted Christian tradition some recently have judged it possible solemnly to declare another doctrine regarding this question, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, TO WHOM GOD HAS ENTRUSTED THE DEFENSE OF THE INTEGRITY AND PURITY OF MORALS, standing erect in the midst of the moral ruin which surrounds her, in order that she may preserve the chastity of the nuptial union from being defiled by this foul stain, raises her voice in token of her divine ambassadorship and through Our mouth proclaims anew: ANY USE WHATSOEVER OF MATRIMONY EXERCISED IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE ACT IS DELIBERATELY FRUSTRATED IN ITS NATURAL POWER TO GENERATE LIFE IS AN OFFENSE AGAINST THE LAW OF GOD AND OF NATURE, AND THOSE WHO INDULGE IN SUCH ARE BRANDED WITH THE GUILT OF A GRAVE SIN.”

These sentences fulfill the conditions of an infallible teaching regarding a doctrine of morals.

The Pope is addressing the ***Universal Church***, “the Catholic Church.” He makes it clear he is ***proclaiming a truth***, “Our mouth proclaims.” The topic deals with ***morals***, “the Catholic Church, to whom God has entrusted the defense of the integrity and the purity of morals.” And lastly, he ***binds Catholics to this teaching under pain of grave sin***, “those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin.” **This is infallible, ex cathedra language**; anyone who denies this simply doesn’t know what he is talking about. This also serves to refute those many voices today who say things such as: “there have only been two infallible statements in Church history, the Assumption and the Immaculate Conception.” That is complete nonsense, of course, but one hears it quite frequently.

One can see that Pope Pius XI condemns all forms of contraception as mortally sinful because they frustrate the marriage act. Does this condemn NFP? Yes it does, but the defenders of Natural Family Planning say “no.” They argue that in using Natural Family Planning to avoid conception they are not *deliberately frustrating* the marriage *act* or designedly depriving it of its natural *power* to procreate life, as is done with artificial contraceptives. They argue that NFP is “natural.”

Common sense should tell those who deeply consider this topic that these arguments are specious because NFP has as its entire purpose the avoidance of conception. However, the attempted justification for NFP – the claim that it doesn’t interfere with the marriage act *itself* and is therefore permissible – must be specifically refuted. This claim is specifically refuted by a careful look at the teaching of the Catholic Church on marriage and **ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE**. It is the teaching of the Catholic Church on the primary purpose of marriage (and the marriage act) which condemns NFP.

Catholic dogma teaches us that the primary purpose of marriage (and the conjugal act) is the procreation and education of children.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 17), Dec. 31, 1930: “**The primary end of marriage is the procreation and the education of children.**”

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 54), Dec. 31, 1930: “Since, therefore, **the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural powers and *purpose* sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.”

Besides this primary purpose, there are also secondary purposes for marriage, such as mutual

aid, the quieting of concupiscence and the cultivating of mutual love. **But these secondary purposes must always remain subordinate to the primary purpose of marriage (the procreation and education of children).** This is the key point to remember in the discussion on NFP.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: “For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial right there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.”

Therefore, even though NFP does not directly interfere with the marriage *act itself*, as its defenders love to stress, it makes no difference. **NFP is condemned because it subordinates the primary end (or purpose) of marriage and the marriage act (the procreation and education of children) to the secondary ends.**

NFP subordinates the primary end of marriage to other things, by deliberately attempting to avoid children (i.e., to avoid the primary end) while having marital relations. NFP therefore inverts the order established by God Himself. It does the very thing that Pope Pius XI solemnly teaches may not lawfully be done. And this point **crushes** all of the arguments made by those who defend NFP; because all of the arguments made by those who defend NFP focus on the marriage act itself, while they blindly ignore the fact that it makes no difference if a couple does not interfere with the act itself *if they subordinate and thwart the primary PURPOSE of marriage*.

To summarize, therefore, the only difference between artificial contraception and NFP is that artificial contraception frustrates the power of the marriage *act itself*, while NFP frustrates its primary purpose (by subordinating the procreation of children to other things).

THE HOLY BIBLE INFALLIBLY CONDEMNS ALL FORMS OF BIRTH CONTROL AND TEACHES THAT BOTH THE INTENTION AS WELL THE ACT AGAINST PROCREATION OF CHILDREN IS DAMNABLE AND A MORTAL SIN

The best example of God’s utter hatred and detestation of all those who perform the marital act while trying to thwart the procreation of the children that God wanted to bless them with, is found in *The Book of Genesis*, where God Himself directly killed a man named Onan for

practicing contraception. The reason Onan in *The Book of Genesis* was killed was because “*He knowing that the children should not be his, when he went in to his brother’s wife, spilled his seed upon the ground, lest children should be born in his brother’s name.*” Notice how clearly the biblical text shows that the reason he did this “detestable thing” was “lest children should be born in his brother’s name”, thus showing us that the act of performing the marital act while taking steps to hinder procreation is hated by God. This absolutely proves that the act of trying to hinder conception (in action or thought) is condemned and sinful according to God’s Holy Law.

Genesis 38:8-10 “Juda, therefore said to Onan his son: ‘Go in to thy brother’s wife and marry her, that thou mayst raise seed to thy brother.’ He knowing that the children should not be his, when he went in to his brother’s wife, spilled his seed upon the ground, **lest children should be born in his brother’s name.** And therefore the Lord slew him, because he did a detestable thing.”

What deed was Onan killed for by God? Obviously, **he was killed for the wicked and selfish deed of having sexual relations while practicing contraception; and for being against conception; for,** “As St. Augustine notes, **‘Intercourse even with one’s legitimate wife is unlawful and wicked where the conception of offspring is prevented. Onan, the son of Judah, did this and the Lord killed him for it (Gen. 38:8-10).’**” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* # 55; St. Augustine, *De Conjugiis Adulterinis*, Book II, Chapter 12)

Since Onan wanted to selfishly and lustfully enjoy the sex act without intending having children as God’s holy law requires, the evil angel Asmodeus that kills lustful and wicked people, was permitted by God to slay him (cf. Tobias 3:8). Haydock commentary explains: “[Genesis 38] Ver. 10. *Slew him*, perhaps by the hand of *evil angels*, Psalm lxxvii. 49. Asmodeus, &c., who slew the libidinous husbands of Sara. (Tobias iii. 7[8].) (Menochius)”

In addition to this irrefutable biblical example from *The Book of Genesis* that shows that contraceptive marital sexual acts are hated by God, we read in the biblical *Book of Tobias* or *Tobit* (which not surprisingly is missing from most protestant “bible” versions, whereas in the few versions they are included, these verses shown below are nevertheless missing) that the holy youth Tobias was explicitly commanded by almighty God through the Archangel Raphael to never perform the marital act for the sake of lust and that “thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children.”

Tobias who was a holy and virtuous person consented to this admonishment by the holy angel and answered God in his prayer that “**not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity**”.

The Holy Bible, Tobias 6:22; 8:9 “And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said:] And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity**, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.”

This makes it perfectly clear that spouses must approach the marital sexual act with a will to beget children “moved rather for love of children than for lust” as well as with a “fear of the Lord” so that they do not allow their lust to erupt or gain a control over their minds by acts of non-procreative, unlawful or excessive sexual acts, such as sensual kisses and touches between two married spouses performed “***for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss***” which is condemned as a mortal sin for both the married and the unmarried people alike (Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Morals Condemned in Decree #40*, September 24, 1665; Denz. 1140).

The holy youth Tobias approached his bride Sara after three days of prayer in chastity and abstinence from the marital act, not for fleshly lust but only for the love of posterity, having been instructed by the Archangel Raphael that to engage in the marital act he shall “be moved rather for love of children than for lust”.

According to God’s will, spouses are to engage in the marital act for the “love of posterity” (children), not for lust. No, contrary to what most people today say, the Holy Bible is clear that spouses are to come together “**only for the love of posterity**” if they want to please Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Word of God in the Bible is indeed true when it says that “**the devil has power**” over all spouses who selfishly come together for the purpose of gratifying their fleshly pleasures, giving “**themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding**” instead of being “**moved rather for love of children than for lust**” when they perform the marital act that Our Lord commands.

Tobias 6:16-17 “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will show thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. **For they who in such manner**

receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.”

Haydock Commentary adds about: “**Verse 17.** *Mule*, which are very libidinous, [Showing excessive sexual drive; lustful.] Psalm xiii.”

The interesting thing about the sexual connection of a horse and a mule is that they cannot produce offspring, thus making their sexual relations completely sterile and unproductive. So what does this mean for marriage? It means that this verse alone proves that God’s Holy Word in the Bible condemns as sinful and unlawful all human sexual relations or acts that (1) are performed for the sole sake of lust; (2) that cannot produce offspring naturally (not referring to natural infertility or defects); and (3) that are done with an intention or mindset opposed to procreating offspring. St. Paul in the New Testament also connects the will to bear children to salvation, teaching that a woman: “***shall be saved through child-bearing; if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification, with sobriety.***” (1 Timothy 2:15)

We also see in *The Book of Tobit* that the Holy Bible teaches that both the intention as well as the act against procreation of children is damnable and a mortal sin since we see described in the Bible that the devil is able to both gain control and prevail over those vile and wretched people who commit lustful acts of birth control either in thought or deed. And so, it is certain that all spouses who are opposed to procreation while at the same time desiring to perform the marital act are committing a mortal sin. In truth, “I will show thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail” and who “give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding” that the “the devil hath power” over. “**For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.**” (Tobias 6:16-17)

God’s words are clear. Spouses are to engage in the marital act moved rather for love of children than for lust. So when a married couple goes out of its way to avoid children by deliberately avoiding the fertile times and restricting the marriage act exclusively to infertile times, they are committing a sin against nature – they are sinning against the God whom they know sends life. NFP is therefore a sin against God and nature, since God is the author of life, and NFP thwarts His designs. **This is so obvious that one can only marvel at how utterly unreasonable and stupid all those NFP defenders are who claim that one can practice birth control in one way, but not in another; and that by doing it in**

one way (which they deem lawful) one is not committing a sin, but while doing it in another way (which they deem unlawful) one is committing a sin! But is not the motive, purpose or intention exactly the same in both cases? Of course they are! How then can one be lawful and the other not lawful? Greater stupidity and unreasonable thinking is hard to imagine!

It is not a complicated matter to understand that using Natural Family Planning to avoid pregnancy is wrong. It is written on man's heart that such activity is wrong. It is also clear from the infallible word of God and the Bible that all forms of birth control are inherently evil and against nature.

Genesis 30:1-2 "And Rachel seeing herself without children, envied her sister, and said to her husband: 'Give me children, otherwise I shall die.' **And Jacob being angry with her, answered: 'Am I as God, who hath deprived thee of the fruit of thy womb?'**"

We all know that God is the One who opens the womb, the One who killeth and maketh alive. "*The Lord also remembering Rachel, heard her, **and opened her womb.***" (Genesis 30:22) In truth, "*The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to hell, and bringeth back again.*" (1 Kings 2:6)

So why would a woman who desires to fulfill the will of God make a systematic effort to avoid God sending her a new life? What excuse could such a person possibly make for going out of her way to calculate how to have marital relations without getting pregnant with the child God was going to send? Why would a woman (or a man) who believes that God opens the womb try to avoid His opening of the womb by a meticulous and organized effort, involving charts, cycles and thermometers? The answer is that those who engage in such behavior as NFP selfishly turn from God (which is the essence of sin) and refuse to be open to His will.

God, and not man, is the only one that can lawfully decide whether a couple shall receive a child or not. Can you imagine what Jacob would have said to Rachel if she had discovered a new way to avoid "the Lord opening her womb?" He would probably have rebuked her as an infidel.

Is the purpose of marriage to have children? Yes. The answer to this question can be found right in *The Holy Bible*. "And God blessed them saying: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it.'" (Genesis 1:28) "Be fruitful and multiply" is a command of God, indeed

the first command to a married couple. Birth control obviously involves disobedience to this command, for birth control attempts to prevent being fruitful and multiplying. Therefore birth control is evil, because it involves disobedience to the Word of God. Nowhere is this command done away with in the entire Bible; therefore it still remains valid for us today.

Contrary to the many heretics of our times, The Holy Bible does have quite a lot to say about the greatness and blessing of receiving children from God. The Bible presents children as a gift from God (Genesis 4:1; Genesis 33:5), a heritage from the Lord (Psalm 127:3-5), a blessing from God (Luke 1:42), and a crown to the aged (Proverbs 17:6). God sometimes blesses barren women with children (Psalm 113:9; Genesis 21:1-3; 25:21-22; 30:1-2; 1 Samuel 1:6-8; Luke 1:7, 24-25). God forms children in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16). God knows children before their birth (Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15)."

Birth control is a contravention of God's purpose for marriage and that all children conceived during routine sexual intercourse (without regard to time of the month during the ovulation cycle or other matters) should be welcomed as blessings. Based upon Bible verses that describe God acting to "open and close the womb" (see Genesis 20:18, 29:31, 30:22; 1 Samuel 1:5-6; Isaiah 66:9), all members of the Christian Church must believe that Divine Providence alone should control how many and how often children are conceived and born. It is a sad fact of our times, but use of birth control is directly and intimately connected with modern feminism, an anti-child mentality, worldliness, as well as abortion, because birth control is used for the same reasons why a woman aborts her child. When people who use birth control get pregnant, the chance for them getting an abortion is undoubtedly much higher than for those good and virtuous spouses who wish to get a child.

If you were to list all the reasons why so called Christians use birth control, you would see that they are the same reasons why a woman aborts her child. The number one reason (according to all studies ever done) a woman aborts her child is because the child is an inconvenience. The child interferes with the mother's (or the father's) pursuit of happiness or possessions. When we use birth control, we are embracing the same anti-child mentality. We are saying that our pursuit of so called happiness, our pursuit of possessions, is more important than obeying God. The question is, "How can we abrogate God's design for marriage and expect to really be happy?"

The first thing we must recognize is that children are a gift from God (Psalm 127:3-5). They are not burdens to bear, but blessings to receive with joy. From a biblical perspective, every married couple should "expect" to have children and at least be prepared for the possibility.

The inability to have children was considered a curse, and the ability to conceive a joy. No one was ever recorded in the Bible as being unhappy about bearing children.

THE NATURAL LAW AND THE POPES AND FATHERS OF THE CHURCH INFALLIBLY AND UNANIMOUSLY CONDEMN ALL SPOUSES WHO DO NOT EXCUSE THEIR SEXUAL ACTS WITH THE MOTIVE OF PROCREATION, OR WHO PRACTICE BIRTH CONTROL, OR WHO DO NOT INTEND TO BEGET CHILDREN WHEN THEY MARRY AND DESIRE TO HAVE SEXUAL RELATIONS

There are three main reasons why NFP as well as all other contraceptive acts, whether in deed or thought, are mortally sinful according to the teaching of the Natural Law, the Holy Bible, Apostolic Tradition, as well as all the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Church. The first is that spouses must always excuse the sexual act with the motive of children. The second reason is that the Holy Fathers, Popes and Saints of the Catholic Church unanimously condemns all forms of birth control and contraception (in deed as well as in thought) as intrinsically evil and mortally sinful. Third, we must also learn about the truth that people who choose to get married (and that desire to have sexual relations) must also desire to beget and educate children for the glory and honor of God.

Since the Fathers of the Church unanimously teaches these three doctrines (as we will see) concerning marriage and the marital act, this means that these doctrines are infallible according to the councils of Trent and Vatican I. A doctrine of faith or morals that is taught by “the *unanimous* consent of the Fathers” is part of the Solemn Magisterium of the Church. The Catholic Church infallibly teaches that all biblical doctrines that have been held by the *unanimous* consensus of the Church Fathers are true and hence, binds all Catholics to believe them also.

Pope Pius IX, *First Vatican Council*, Session 2, January 6th, 1870, *ex cathedra*: “I, Pius, bishop of the Catholic Church, with firm faith... **accept Sacred Scripture according to that sense which Holy mother Church held and holds**, since it is her right to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; **nor will I ever receive and interpret them except according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.**”

The Council of Trent in the 16th century was the first to infallibly define that a consensus can indeed make a doctrine part of the Church’s Solemn Magisterium. And it was the first to infallibly define that the only kind of consensus that can do this is the *unanimous* consensus

of the Church Fathers.

Pope Paul III, *Council of Trent*, Session 4, AD 1546, *ex cathedra*: “Furthermore, in order to restrain petulant spirits, It decrees, that no one, relying on his own skill, shall, in matters of faith, and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, wresting the sacred Scripture to his own senses, **presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which holy mother Church, whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures, hath held and doth hold; or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers**; even though such interpretations were never (intended) to be at any time published. Contraveners [that is, those who oppose or contradict this] shall be made known by their Ordinaries, and be punished with the penalties by law established.”

As we will see, the unanimous consent of the Fathers, and therefore the Solemn Magisterium, condemns the contraceptive intent and hence any method used to carry out that intent (which includes the new methods that modern science has invented, such as NFP, foams, and birth control pills).

All the fathers and saints teach that the sin of contraception is committed in thought (intent) as well as in deed. St. Augustine sums it up well: “I am supposing, then, although you are not lying [with your wife] for the sake of procreating offspring, you are not for the sake of lust obstructing their procreation by an evil prayer or an evil deed...” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence* 1:15:17, A.D. 419)

The intent, plan, deed, desire, or prayer (thought or wish) that conception does not occur during conjugal relations is when and where the mortal sin of contraception is first committed, even if no contraceptive method is used, because “*evil thoughts are an abomination to the Lord.*” (Proverbs 15:26) Spouses who are having marital relations must always desire to beget children (and cannot be against it in their will, thoughts or actions), even if for some reason it is humanly impossible to beget children. **This is the unanimous teaching of the Fathers and of the Saints.**

1. The Church and the fathers infallibly and unanimously teach that all sexual acts must be excused by the motive of procreation

First, the Holy Fathers of the Church all agree with the Holy Scriptures and the Magisterium of the Church that every marital sexual act must be excused by the motive of procreation

before spouses can lawfully perform the act, thus making this doctrine infallible since the “*unanimous consent of the Fathers*” in a doctrinal matter is the official teaching of the Church.

St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 198 A.D.): “**To have coitus other than to procreate children is to do injury to nature.**” (*The Paedagogus* or *The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X.--On the Procreation and Education of Children)

St. Caesarius of Arles (c. 468-542 A.D.): “AS OFTEN AS HE KNOWS HIS WIFE WITHOUT A DESIRE FOR CHILDREN...WITHOUT A DOUBT HE COMMITS SIN.” (W. A. Jurgens, *The Faith of The Early Fathers*, Vol. 3: 2233)

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, A.D. 419: “**It is one thing not to lie [with one’s wife] except with the sole will of generating [children]: this has no fault.** It is another to seek the pleasure of the flesh in lying, although within the limits of marriage: this has venial fault [that is, venial sin as long as one is not against procreation].” (Book I, Chapter 17.--What is Sinless in the Use of Matrimony? What is Attended With Venial Sin, and What with Mortal?)

St. Jerome, *Against Jovinian*, A.D. 393: “But I wonder why he [the heretic Jovinianus] set Judah and Tamar before us for an example, unless perchance even harlots give him pleasure; or Onan, who was slain because he grudged his brother seed. **Does he imagine that we approve of any sexual intercourse except for the procreation of children?** ... He who is too ardent a lover of his own wife is an adulterer [of his God and of his wife].” (Book 1, Section 20; 40)

St. Augustine, *De Conjugiis Adulterinis*, A.D. 396: “**Since, therefore, the institution of marriage exists for the sake of generation, for this reason did our forebears enter into the union of wedlock and lawfully take to themselves their wives, only because of the duty to beget children.**” (Book II, Chapter 12)

Pope St. Clement of Rome (1st century A.D.): “**But this kind of chastity is also to be observed, that sexual intercourse must not take place heedlessly and for the sake of mere pleasure, but for the sake of begetting children.** And since this observance is found even amongst some of the lower animals, it were a shame if it be not observed by men, reasonable, and worshiping God.” (*Recognitions of Clement*,

Chapter XII, Importance of Chastity)

St. Caesarius of Arles (c. 470-543 A.D.), *Sermon* 42:4 : “If it is a sin for a man to be intimate with his wife except through a desire for children, [when they perform the normal, natural and **procreative** marital act] what can men think or what hope can they promise themselves, if being married, they commit adultery? **By this means they descend to the depths of hell, refusing to hear the Apostle when he says: ‘The time is short; it remains that those who have wives be as if they had none’**; [1 Cor. 7:29] **and: ‘every one of you learn how to possess his vessel in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who have no hope.’** [1 Thess. 4:4,5,12]”

Athenagoras the Athenian (c. 175 A.D.): “Therefore, having the hope of eternal life, we despise the things of this life, even to the pleasures of the soul, each of us reckoning her his wife whom he has married according to the laws laid down by us, **and that only for the purpose of having children. For as the husbandman throwing the seed into the ground awaits the harvest, not sowing more upon it, so to us the procreation of children is the measure of our indulgence in appetite.**”
(*A Plea For the Christians*, Chapter XXXIII.--Chastity of the Christians with Respect to Marriage)

St. Finnian of Clonard (470-549 A.D.), *The Penitential of Finnian*, #46: “We advise and exhort that there be continence in marriage, since marriage without continence is not lawful, but sin, **and [marriage] is permitted by the authority of God not for lust but for the sake of children**, as it is written, ‘And the two shall be in one flesh,’ that is, in unity of the flesh **for the generation of children, not for the lustful concupiscence of the flesh.**”

St. Athanasius the Great (c. 296-373 A.D.), *On the Moral Life*: “Marriage is good, as long as sexual relations are for procreation and not for pleasure. ... The law of nature recognizes the act of procreation: **have relations with your wife only for the sake of procreation, and keep yourself from relations of pleasure.**”

St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215 A.D.): “For it [the Holy Scripture] regards it not right that this [sexual intercourse] should take place either in wantonness or for hire like harlots, **but only for the birth of children.**” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XVIII.--The Mosaic Law the Fountain of All Ethics, and the Source

from Which the Greeks Drew Theirs)

St. Augustine, *Against Faustus* 22:30, A.D. 400: “For thus the eternal law, that is, the will of God creator of all creatures, taking counsel for the conservation of natural order, not to serve lust, but to see to the preservation of the race, permits the delight of mortal flesh to be released from the control of reason in copulation **only to propagate progeny.**”

Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* 5:8, A.D. 307: “There would be no adulteries, and debaucheries, and prostitution of women, if it were known to all, that **whatever is sought beyond the desire of procreation is condemned by God.**”

Lactantius, *The Epitome of the Divine Institutes*, A.D. 314: “**Moreover, the passion of lust is implanted and innate in us for the procreation of children;** but they who do not fix its limits in the mind use it for pleasure only. Thence arise unlawful loves, thence adulteries and debaucheries, thence all kinds of corruption. **These passions, therefore, must be kept within their boundaries and directed into their right course [for the procreation of children], in which, even though they should be vehement, they cannot incur blame.**” (Chapter LXI.--Of the Passions)

Lactantius, *The Epitome of the Divine Institutes*, A.D. 314: “**Let lust not go beyond the marriage-bed, but be subservient to the procreation of children.** For a too great eagerness for pleasure both produces danger and generates disgrace, and that which is especially to be avoided, leads to eternal death. Nothing is so hateful to God as an unchaste mind and an impure soul.” (Chapter LXII.--Of Restraining the Pleasures of the Senses)

Apostolic Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, A.D. 375: “And fornication is the destruction of one’s own flesh, **not being made use of for the procreation of children, but entirely for the sake of pleasure, which is a mark of incontinency, and not a sign of virtue. All these things are forbidden by the laws;**” (*The Sacred Writings of Apostolic Teaching and Constitutions*, Book V, Chap. XXVIII)

Apostolic Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, A.D. 375: “When the natural purgations do appear in the wives, let not their husbands approach them, out of regard to the

children to be begotten; for the law has forbidden it, for it says: "Thou shalt not come near thy wife when she is in her separation." [Lev. xviii. 19; Ezek. xviii. 6.] Nor, indeed, let them frequent their wives' company when they are with child. **For they do this not for the begetting of children, but for the sake of pleasure. Now a lover of God ought not to be a lover of pleasure.**" (*The Sacred Writings of Apostolic Teaching and Constitutions*, Book V, Chap. XXVIII)

St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 198 A.D.): "Marriage in itself merits esteem and the highest approval, for the Lord wished men to "be fruitful and multiply." [Gen. 1:28] **He did not tell them, however, to act like libertines, nor did He intend them to surrender themselves to pleasure as though born only to indulge in sexual relations.** Let the Educator (Christ) put us to shame with the word of Ezekiel: "Put away your fornications." [Eze. 43:9] Why, even unreasoning beasts know enough not to mate at certain times. **To indulge in intercourse without intending children is to outrage nature**, whom we should take as our instructor." (*The Paedagogus or The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X.--On the Procreation and Education of Children)

St. Augustine, *On The Good of Marriage*, Section 11, A.D. 401: "For **necessary** sexual intercourse for begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is **alone** worthy of marriage. **But that which goes beyond this necessity [of begetting children] no longer follows reason but lust.**"

Pope St. Gregory the Great (c. 597 A.D.): "**Lawful copulation of the flesh ought therefore to be for the purpose of offspring, not of pleasure; and intercourse of the flesh should be for the sake of producing children, and not a satisfaction of frailties.**" (*Epistles of St. Gregory the Great*, To Augustine, Bishop of the Angli [English], Book XI, Letter 64)

St. Jerome, A.D. 387: "**The activities of marriage itself, if they are not modest and do not take place under the eyes of God as it were, so that the only intention is children, are filth and lust.**" (*Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, Book III, Chapter 5:21)

St. Maximus the Confessor (c. 580-662 A.D.): "Again, vice is the wrong use of our conceptual images of things, which leads us to misuse the things themselves. **In relation to women, for example, sexual intercourse, rightly used, has as its purpose the begetting of children. He, therefore, who seeks in it only**

sensual pleasure uses it wrongly, for he reckons as good what is not good. When such a man has intercourse with a woman, he misuses her. And the same is true with regard to other things and one's conceptual images of them." (*Second Century on Love*, 17; *Philokalia* 2:67-68)

St. Maximus the Confessor (c. 580-662 A.D.): "There are also three things that impel us towards evil: passions, demons, and sinfulness of intention. **Passions impel us when, for example, we desire something beyond what is reasonable, such as food which is unnecessary or untimely, or a woman who is not our wife or for a purpose other than procreation.**" (*Second Century on Love*, 33; *Philokalia* 2:71)

St. John Damascene (c. 675-749 A.D.): "**The procreation of children is indeed good, enjoined by the law;** and marriage is good on account of fornications, for it does away with these, **and by lawful intercourse does not permit the madness of desire to be inflamed into unlawful acts.** Marriage is good for those who have no continence; but virginity, which increases the fruitfulness of the soul and offers to God the seasonable fruit of prayer, is better. "Marriage is honourable and the bed undefiled, but fornicators and adulterers God will judge" [Hebrews 13:4]." (St. John of Damascus, also known as St. John Damascene, *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Book IV, Chap. 24)

Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law* (c. 1140 A.D.): "Also, Jerome, [on Ephesians 5:25]: C. 14. **The procreation of children in marriage is praiseworthy, but a prostitute's sensuality is damnable in a wife. So, as we have said, the act is conceded in marriage for the sake of children. But the sensuality found in a prostitute's embraces is damnable in a wife.**"

Venerable Luis de Granada (A.D. 1505-1588): "Those that be married must examine themselves in particular, if in their mind thinking of other persons, **or with intention not to beget children, but only for carnal delight, or with extraordinary touchings and means, they have sinned against the end, and honesty of marriage.**" (*A Spiritual Doctrine, containing a rule to live well, with divers prayers and meditations*, p. 362)

Thus, as we have seen, the "unanimous consent of the Fathers" in this matter infallibly teaches that every single marital sexual act must be excused by the motive of procreation

before one performs the act; and that is also why anyone who dares to deny this, must be regarded as an excommunicated heretic since he denies not only the Natural Law and an infallibly defined dogma of the Church, but also the infallible teachings of Trent and Vatican I, which explicitly declared that the “*unanimous consent of the Fathers*” in any doctrinal matter is the official teaching of the Church.

2. The Church and the fathers infallibly and unanimously condemns all forms of birth control as evil and a mortal sin

Second, we must also learn about the truth about that the Holy Fathers, Popes and Saints of the Catholic Church **unanimously condemns all forms of birth control and contraception (in deed as well as in thought) as not only intrinsically evil and mortally sinful, but also as an act worthy of hellfire, since it is of the divine law that “the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children”** (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*). Thus, anything or any act that is opposed to the primary end of marriage, is a sin against nature.

St. Augustine, *De Conjugiis Adulterinis*, Book II, Chapter 12, A.D. 396: “... **intercourse, even with one’s lawfully wedded spouse, can take place in an unlawful and shameful manner, whenever the conception of offspring is avoided.** Onan, the son of Juda, did this very thing, and the Lord slew him on that account. **Therefore, the procreation of children is itself the primary, natural, legitimate purpose of marriage.** Whence it follows that those who marry because of their inability to remain continent ought not to so temper their vice that they preclude the good of marriage, **which is the procreation of children.**”

St. Epiphanius, *Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, A.D. 375: “They [certain Egyptian heretics] exercise genital acts, **yet prevent the conceiving of children. Not in order to produce offspring, but to satisfy lust, are they eager for corruption.**” (*Panarion or Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, Book I, Chapter 26:5:2.--Epiphanius Against the Gnostics, or Borborites)

St. Epiphanius, *Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, A.D. 375: “**There are those who when they have intercourse deliberately prevent having children.** They indulge in pleasure not for the sake of offspring but to satisfy their passion. To such an extent has the devil deceived these wretched people that they betray the work of God by perverting it to their own deceptions. **Moreover, they are so willing to satisfy their**

carnal desires as to pollute each other with impure seed, by which offspring is not conceived but by their own will evil desires are satisfied.”
(*Panarion or Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, Book I, Chapter 26:5:2-3.--Epiphanius Against the Gnostics, or Borborites)

St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Paedagogus* (c. 198 A.D.): “Because of its divine institution for the propagation of man, **the seed is not to be vainly ejaculated, nor is it to be damaged, nor is it to be wasted.**” (*The Paedagogus* or *The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X.--On the Procreation and Education of Children)

St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 28:5, A.D. 391: “... **and that which is sweet, and universally desirable, the having of children, they esteem grievous and unwelcome. Many at least with this view have even paid money to be childless, and have mutilated nature, not only killing the newborn, but even acting to prevent their beginning to live [by birth control methods such as NFP or contraception].**”

St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Romans* 24, A.D. 391: “**Why do you sow where the field is eager to destroy the fruit [NFP], where there are medicines of sterility [oral contraceptives], where there is murder before birth? [birth prevention] You do not even let a harlot remain only a harlot, but you make her a murderess as well... Indeed, it is something worse than murder, and I do not know what to call it; for she does not kill what is formed but prevents its formation.** What then? Do you condemn the gift of God and fight with his [natural] laws, and follow after what is a curse as if a blessing, and make the chamber of procreation a chamber for murder...”

St. Caesarius of Arles [A.D. 468-542], *Sermon* 51:4: “They sin still more grievously when they kill the children who are already conceived or born, **and when by taking impious drugs to prevent conception they condemn in themselves the nature which God wanted to be fruitful. Let them not doubt that they have committed as many murders as the number of the children they might have begotten.** ... As many as they kill after they are already conceived or born, before the tribunal of the eternal Judge they will be held guilty of so many murders. If women attempt to kill the children within them by evil medicines, and themselves die in the act, they become guilty of three crimes on their own: suicide, spiritual adultery, and murder of the unborn child.”

St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 1:12, A.D. 522: “Who is he who cannot warn that no woman may take a potion so that she is unable to conceive or condemns in herself the nature which God willed to be fecund? **As often as she could have conceived or given birth, of that many homicides she will be held guilty, and, unless she undergoes suitable penance, she will be damned by eternal death in Hell.** If a woman does not wish to have children, let her enter into a religious agreement with her husband; for chastity is the sole sterility of a Christian woman.”

St. Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies* 9:7, A.D. 225: “**Whence women, reputed believers, began to resort to drugs for producing sterility,** and to gird themselves round, so to expel what was being conceived **on account of their not wishing to have a child** either by a slave or by any paltry fellow, for the sake of their family and excessive wealth. **Behold, into how great impiety that lawless one has proceeded, by inculcating adultery and murder at the same time!**”

St. Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies* 9:12, A.D. 225: “... **the so-called faithful want no children [but want to have sexual relations]**... [so] they use drugs of sterility or bind themselves tightly in order to expel a fetus which has already been engendered.”

John the Faster, Patriarch John IV of Constantinople (6th century): “If someone to satisfy his lust or in **deliberate** hatred does something to a man or woman **so that no children be born** of him or her, or gives them to drink (pharmakon), **so that he cannot generate or she conceive, let it be held as homicide.**” (Penitential of John IV Nesteutes)

St. John Climacus (c. 525-606 A.D.): “God neither caused nor created evil and, therefore, those who assert that certain passions come naturally to the soul are quite wrong. What they fail to realize is that we have taken natural attributes of our own and turned them into passions. **For instance, the seed which we have for the sake of procreating children [which is the natural attribute of the sexual act] is abused by us for the sake of fornication [or by any sexual act without intending having children].**” (*The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, "Step 26: On Discernment," by St. John Climacus, p. 251)

Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, Book VI, Chapter 23, A.D. 307: “God gave us eyes not to

see and desire pleasure, but to see acts to be performed for the needs of life; so too, the genital [generating] part of the body, as the name itself teaches, has been received by us for **no other purpose than the generation of offspring.**

St. Jerome, *Letter 22:13, To Eustochium*, A.D. 384: **“Some go so far as to take potions, that they may insure barrenness, and thus murder human beings almost before their conception.”**

St. Caesarius of Arles [A.D. 468-542], *Sermon 44*: **“Moreover, women must not take diabolical draughts [contraceptive drugs] with the purpose of not being able to conceive children. A woman who does this ought to realize that she will be guilty of as many murders as the number of children she might have borne.”**

St. Epiphanius, *Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, A.D. 375: “The like of this fornication and licentiousness may be seen in the extremely dreadful snake the ancients called the pangless viper. For the nature of such a viper is similar to the wickedness of these people. **In performing their filthy act** either with men or with women **they forbear insemination, rendering impossible the procreation God has given his creatures**—as the apostle says, "receiving in themselves the recompense of their error which was meet" [Rom. 1:27], and so on.” (*Panarion* or *Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, Book I, Chapter 26:5:19:2-3.--Epiphanius Against the Gnostics, or Borborites)

St. Epiphanius, *Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, A.D. 375: **“But if the apostle says to bear children [1 Tim. 5:11; 14], but they decline procreation, it is the enterprise of a serpent and of false doctrine. Because they are mastered by the pleasure of fornication** [fornication is often mentioned by the Fathers as the desire for sexual relations but without desiring or intending having offspring] **they invent excuses for their uncleanness**, so that their licentiousness may appear to fulfill Paul’s commandment. Really these things should neither be said nor considered worth mentioning in treatises, but buried like a foul corpse exuding a pestilent vapour, to protect people from injury even through their sense of hearing. **And if a sect of this kind [which teaches the heresy that non-procreative sexual acts are moral or that they are without sin] had passed away and no longer existed, it would be better to bury it and say nothing about it at all. But since it does exist and has practitioners, and I have been urged by your Honors to speak**

of all the sects, I have been forced to describe parts of it, in order, in all frankness, not to pass them over but describe them, for the protection of the hearers—but for the banishment of the practitioners.” (*Panarion* or *Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, Book I, Chapter 26:5:14:3-5.--Epiphanius Against the Gnostics, or Borborites)

Thus, since the Fathers of the Church unanimously teaches that contraception or birth control in all its forms are mortally sinful in deed as well as in thought, this doctrine is infallible according to the councils of Trent and Vatican I. And this is not even mentioning the fact that the Holy Bible and the Papal Magisterium of the Church infallibly condemns birth control as well, as we have seen!

3. The Church and the fathers infallibly and unanimously teaches that spouses who intend to get married and have sexual relations must desire to beget and educate children

Third, we must also learn about the truth that the Fathers, Popes and Saints of the Catholic Church all teach that people who choose to get married (and that desire to have sexual relations) must also desire to beget and educate children in the Catholic religion for the glory and honor of God, since it is of the Divine Law and the teaching of the Church and of Pope Pius XI that **“Christian parents *must* also understand that they are destined not only to propagate and preserve the human race on earth, indeed not only to educate any kind of worshippers of the true God, but children who are to become members of the Church of Christ, to raise up fellow-citizens of the Saints, and members of God’s household, that the worshipers of God and Our Savior may daily increase.”** (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #13)

This is also expressed succinctly in *The 1917 Code of Canon Law*: “The primary purpose of marriage is the procreation and education of children.” (Canon 1013) The following Fathers and Saints of the Church teach the same as Pope Pius XI and *The 1917 Code of Canon Law*.

St. Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament*, Sermon 1:22: **“The [marriage] contract is read... in the presence of all the attesting witnesses... that they marry "for the procreation of children;" and this is called the marriage contract. If it was not for this that wives were given and taken to wife, what father could without blushing give up his daughter to the lust of any man?**
But now, that the parents may not blush, and that they may give their daughters in

honorable marriage, not to shame, the contract is read out. **And what is read from it?--the clause, "for the sake of the procreation of children."** And when this is heard, the brow of the parent is cleared up and calmed. Let us consider again the feelings of the husband who takes his wife. The husband himself would blush to receive her with any other view, if the father would blush with any other view to give her."

St. Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, Chapter 29 (c. 160 A.D.): "We **Christians either marry only to produce children**, or, if we refuse to marry, are completely continent."

St. John Chrysostom, A.D. 347-407, *Homilies on Colossians*: "**Thou marriest a wife for chastity and procreation.**" (Homily XII; PG 62.386; NPNF p. 318)

St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, Chapter IV, A.D. 107: "For I pray that, being found worthy of God, I may be found at their feet in the kingdom, as at the feet of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; as of Joseph, and Isaiah, and the rest of the prophets; as of Peter, and Paul, and the rest of the apostles, that were married men. **For they entered into these marriages not for the sake of appetite, but out of regard for the propagation of mankind.**"

St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Paedagogus* (c. 198 A.D.): "**The procreation of children is the remit and ordinance of those who are joined together in marriage; and their objective is that their children be good.... It is lawful for you to take sensual pleasures only from your wife in order to beget legitimate offspring, for only these pleasures are lawful according to the Word....** For this reason, Moses himself prohibited his people from sleeping even with their own wives in cases where they were subject to menstrual flows.... For pleasure alone, when experienced in marital intercourse, is unlawful, unjust and foreign to reason. Again, Moses ordered men not to sleep with pregnant women until they gave birth.... In fact, it [sexual pleasure] spreads a cloud over the senses and weakens one's strength.... However, marriage is indeed allowed and accepted: for the Lord wishes the human race to be replenished; but He does not say, "Be lustful", nor is it his will that you be dedicated to pleasure as if you were born for intercourse.... **However, to have intercourse for purposes other than to beget children is to do an injury to nature....** Marriage constitutes an endeavour to beget children, not an undisciplined ejaculation of semen, which is unlawful and foreign to reason...."

St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Art of Dying Well*, Chapter XV, On Matrimony, A.D. 1619: “There are three blessings arising from Matrimony, if it be made a good use of, viz: Children, fidelity, and the grace of the sacrament. **The generation of children, together with their proper education, must be had in view, if we would make a good use of matrimony; but on the contrary, he commits a most grievous sin, who seeks only carnal pleasure in it.**”

St. John Damascene (c. 676-749 A.D.), On Marriage: “**Marriage was devised that the race of men may be preserved through the procreation of children.**” (*An Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Book IV, Chapter XXIV)

St. Caesarius of Arles (c. 470-543 A.D.), *Sermon 44:3*: “**A man takes a wife for the procreation of children, not for the sake of lust. Even the marriage rite mentions this: ‘For the procreation of children,’ it says. Notice that it does not say for the sake of lust, but ‘for the procreation of children.’** I would like to know, dearly beloved, what kind of a harvest a man could gather if he sowed his field in one year as often as he is overcome by dissipation and abuses his wife without any desire for children. If those *who are unwilling to control themselves* plowed and sowed repeatedly their land which was already sown, let us see in what kind of fruit they would rejoice. As you well know, no land can produce proper fruit if it is sown frequently in one year. Why, then, does a man do with his body what he does not want done with his field?”

St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 6, A.D. 401: “Therefore **married persons owe one another not only the faith of their sexual intercourse itself for the begetting of children**, which is the first fellowship of the human kind in this mortal state; but also, in a way, a mutual service of sustaining one another’s weakness, [that is, paying the marital debt when it is asked for] in order to shun unlawful intercourse.”

St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* (c. 180 A.D.): “**God made the male and female for the propagation of the human race.**” (Book I, Chapter XXVIII, Section 1)

St. John Chrysostom, A.D. 347-407, *On Virginitly*, #19: “**So marriage was granted for the sake of procreation...**”

St. Clement of Alexandria, On Marriage (c. 199 A.D.): “**Marriage is the first union**

of man and woman for the procreation of legitimate children.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XXIII)

St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 32, A.D. 401: “**Therefore that marriage takes place for the sake of begetting children, the Apostle is a witness thus, "I will," says he, "that the younger women be married." And, as though it were said to him, "For what purpose?" Straightway he added, "to have children, to be mothers of families."** ... All these are goods, on account of which marriage is a good; offspring, faith, sacrament. But now, at this time, not to seek offspring after the flesh, and by this means to maintain a certain perpetual freedom from every such work, and to be made subject after a spiritual manner unto one Husband Christ, is assuredly better and holier...”

St. Clement of Alexandria, *On Marriage* (c. 199 A.D.): “**For every one is not to marry, nor always.** But there is a time in which it is suitable, and a person for whom it is suitable, and an age up to which it is suitable. **Neither ought every one to take a wife,** nor is it every woman one is to take, nor always, nor in every way, nor inconsiderately. **But only he who is in certain circumstances, and such an one and at such time as is requisite, and for the sake of children,** and one who is in every respect similar, and who does not by force or compulsion love the husband who loves her.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XXIII)

St. Methodius (died c. 311 A.D.), *On Genesis 1:28*: “**Increase and multiply is the command, and we may not spurn the command [if we are married and intend to perform the marital sexual act].**” (*Symp.*, 31; SC 95, p. 70; Musurillo (1958), p. 49)

St. John Chrysostom, A.D. 347-407, *Homilies on Timothy*: “**Shall not women then be saved? Yes, by means of children.** For it is not of Eve that he says, "If they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." [1 Tim. 2:15] What faith? what charity? what holiness with sobriety? It is as if he had said, "Ye women, be not cast down, because your sex has incurred blame. **God has granted you another opportunity of salvation, by the bringing up of children,** so that you are saved, not only by yourselves, but by others." [cf. 1 Tim. 2:15]” (*Homilies on the First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy*, Homily IX, 1 Timothy 2:11-15)

St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 19, 32, A.D. 401: “**Marriage itself**

indeed in all nations is for the same cause of begetting sons, and of what character soever these may be afterward, yet was marriage for this purpose instituted, that they may be born in due and honest order... Therefore the good of marriage throughout all nations and all men stands in the occasion of begetting [children], and faith of chastity: but, so far as pertains unto the People of God, also in the sanctity of the Sacrament, by reason of which it is unlawful for one who leaves her husband, even when she has been put away, to be married to another, so long as her husband lives, no not even **for the sake of bearing children: and, whereas this is the alone cause, wherefore marriage takes place...**”

The main reason why the Church and Her Popes and Saints all teach that a man and a woman who intends to marry **and have sexual relations** must also desire to beget children and educate them in the Catholic religion for the glory and honor of God, is that a “marriage” without this desire would be similar to the cohabitation of unmarried people who only live with each other for the motive of gratifying their sensual desires. In truth, **“the aforesaid [marital sexual] act does not differ from the act of fornication... But the act of fornication is always evil. Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...”** (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5*) Thus, what separates fornication from a true marriage is the active wish to beget and educate children for the love and honor of Our Lord Jesus Christ. This is also why St. Augustine writes that **“the [marriage] contract is read... in the presence of all the attesting witnesses... that they marry ‘for the procreation of children’”** (*On the New Testament 1:22*).

A good advice to all men and women who intend to marry (or who are already married) is that they read the marriage vows several times either with their future spouse or by themselves, and seriously considers the reason for their marriage, so that they know what is obligated of them when they get married. It is important for all who intend to marry to know that marriage is about a lot of obligations, and that spouses many times are forced to be without sex for the rest of their life if the other spouse dies, or gets hurt or suffer some other debilitating problem or illness that hinders them from being able to perform the marital act, so that this does not come as a shock when trouble happens. Marriage was never intended to be about selfishness or sensuality, but rather about family, companionship and responsibility, so people who intend to marry must make sure that they adopt the life of marriage in order to love and serve their spouse, instead of seeing or treating their spouse as a fleshly object given to them to satisfy their sensual longings. “Marriage constitutes an endeavour to beget children, not an undisciplined ejaculation of semen, which is unlawful and foreign to reason... It is therefore

not just to be held bound by sexual things, nor to cling stupidly to lusts, nor to be moved by appetites that are foreign to reason, nor to desire to be defiled. It is permitted to him alone who has married a wife... to sow his seed, when the time allows him to sow.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Paedagogus*, A.D. 198)

The necessity to beget and educate one’s offspring in the true Catholic Faith cannot be understated; and especially so today since almost all people reject the true Catholic Faith, which is also why the world has been allowed to fall into such degradation. Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *Arcanum (on Christian Marriage)* teaches that: “the Christian perfection and completeness of marriage are not comprised in those points only which have been mentioned. For, first, there has been vouchsafed to the marriage union a higher and nobler purpose than was ever previously given to it. By the command of Christ, **it not only looks to the propagation of the human race, but to the bringing forth of children for the Church, ‘fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God’; so that ‘a people might be born and brought up for the worship and religion of the true God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.’**”

St. Clement of Alexandria further explains that, “for the married He [the Lord] goes on to say, “My elect shall not labour in vain nor bear children to be accursed; for they are a seed blessed by the Lord.” [Isaiah 65:23] For him who begets children and brings them up and educates them in the Lord, just as for him who begets children by means of the true teaching, a reward is laid up, as also for the elect seed. ... Those who are in truth the Lord’s elect neither teach doctrines nor beget children to be accursed, as the [heretical] sects do.” (*The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XV, Section 98)

If we take upon us the heavy burden of Matrimony, we are obligated under pain of mortal sin to educate our children in the Catholic Faith. “For a person does not become a father simply because he helped to bring about the birth of a child, but by raising the child correctly.” (St. Chrysostom, *Sermon regarding Anna, Homily 1*, PG 54, 636) In truth, St. Chrysostom is completely right in saying that those who refuse to educate their children in the true Catholic Faith are the very reason for all kinds of evils in society. “The reason for the overturning of all things is that we aren’t caring for our own children. We take care of their bodies, but we ignore the upbringing of their souls.” Chrysostom goes on to ask, “Do you want a child that is obedient? From their first steps, feed them on the wisdom and counsels of the Lord.” If we showed the same interest in the spiritual education of children as we do in their education in other spheres, we would forestall many evils. “When the father of a very gentle child only gives him sweets, refreshments, and whatever he likes when he’s ill, but not what he actually needs

for his sickness; or if a doctor checks him out and confesses, "What can I do? I can't stand to see the child cry." Poor, foolish traitor! The only name I can't give such a person is that of father. How much better it would be for you if you upset your child a little bit so that he might be healthy for all time, rather than making this fleeting pleasure the foundation for continuous sorrow." (St. Chrysostom, *On the Acts of the Apostles, Homily 30*, PG 60, 226)

With the satisfaction of the child's every desire, we make him egocentric, and with such a character, he will be unhappy in the world. The Saint encourages us to "be like sculptors and make every effort to make your children wonderful sculptures that look like God. It will happen if you take away everything that is unnecessary, if you add whatever is necessary, and if you check daily to see what physical defects they have that you can fix." (St. John Chrysostom, *On Vanity and the Upbringing of Children*)

The Constitutions of the Holy Apostles also teaches us that all parents who disregard correcting and educating their child in the Lord "will be guilty of their souls", thus showing us that educating our children in the Lord is not something we choose to do, but something we are obligated to do under pain of mortal sin:

"Ye fathers, educate your children in the Lord, bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and teach them such trades as are agreeable and suitable to the word, lest they by such opportunity become extravagant, and continue without punishment from their parents, and so get relaxation before their time, and go astray from that which is good. Wherefore be not afraid to reprove them, and to teach them wisdom with severity. For your corrections will not kill them, but rather preserve them. As Solomon says somewhere in the book of Wisdom: "Chasten thy son, and he will refresh thee; so wilt thou have good hope of him. Thou verily shalt smite him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from death." (Prov. 29:17, 19:18, 23:14.) And again, says the same Solomon thus, "He that spareth his rod, hateth his son;" (Prov. 13:24) and afterwards, "Beat his sides whilst he is an infant, lest he be hardened and disobey thee." (Ecclus. 30:12) He, therefore, that neglects to admonish and instruct his own son, hates his own child. Do you therefore teach your children the word of the Lord. Bring them under with cutting stripes, and make them subject from their infancy, teaching them the Holy Scriptures, which are Christian and divine, and delivering to them every sacred writing, "not giving them such liberty that they get the mastery," (Ecclus. 30:11) and act against your opinion, not permitting them to club together for a treat with their equals. For so they will be turned to disorderly courses, and will fall into fornication; and if this happen by the carelessness of their parents, those that begat them will be guilty of their souls. For if the offending children get into the company of debauched

persons by the negligence of those that begat them, they will not be punished alone by themselves; but their parents also will be condemned on their account. For this cause endeavour, at the time when they are of an age fit for marriage, to join them in wedlock, and settle them together, lest in the heat and fervour of their age their course of life become dissolute, and you be required to give an account by the Lord God in the day of judgment.” (*Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, Book IV, Section II, Chapter XI.--On Domestic and Social Life Of Parents and Children)

Pope Pius XI also teaches this noble truth in great detail in his marvelous Encyclical called *Casti Connubii*, which means “Chaste Marriage”.

Pope Pius XI *Casti Connubii* (#’s 10-13), Dec. 31, 1930: “Now when We come to explain, Venerable Brethren, **what are the blessings that God has attached to true matrimony, and how great they are**, there occur to Us the words of that illustrious Doctor of the Church whom We commemorated recently in Our Encyclical *Ad salutem* on the occasion of the fifteenth centenary of his death: “These,” says St. Augustine, “are all **the blessings of matrimony on account of which matrimony itself is a blessing; offspring, conjugal faith and the sacrament.**” And how under these three heads is contained a splendid summary of the whole doctrine of Christian marriage, the holy Doctor himself expressly declares when he said: “By conjugal faith it is provided that there should be no carnal intercourse outside the marriage bond with another man or woman; **with regard to offspring, that children should be begotten of love, tenderly cared for and educated in a religious atmosphere;** finally, in its sacramental aspect that the marriage bond should not be broken and that a husband or wife, if separated, should not be joined to another even for the sake of offspring. This we regard as the law of marriage by which the fruitfulness of nature is adorned and the evil of incontinence is restrained.”

“Thus amongst the blessings of marriage, the child holds the first place. And indeed the Creator of the human race Himself, Who in His goodness wishes to use men as His helpers in the propagation of life, taught this when, instituting marriage in Paradise, He said to our first parents, and through them to all future spouses: “Increase and multiply, and fill the earth.” As St. Augustine admirably deduces from the words of the holy Apostle Saint Paul to Timothy when he says: **“The Apostle himself is therefore a witness that marriage is for the sake of generation:** ‘I wish,’ he says, ‘young girls to marry.’ And, as if someone said to him, ‘Why?’, he immediately adds: ‘To bear children, to be mothers of families’.”

“How great a boon of God this is, and how great a blessing of matrimony is clear

from a consideration of man's dignity and of his sublime end. For man surpasses all other visible creatures by the superiority of his rational nature alone. Besides, **God wishes men to be born not only that they should live and fill the earth, but much more that they may be worshippers of God, that they may know Him and love Him and finally enjoy Him for ever in heaven; and this end, since man is raised by God in a marvelous way to the supernatural order, surpasses all that eye hath seen, and ear heard, and all that hath entered into the heart of man. From which it is easily seen how great a gift of divine goodness and how remarkable a fruit of marriage are children born by the omnipotent power of God through the cooperation of those bound in wedlock.**

“But Christian parents ***must*** also understand that they are destined not only to propagate and preserve the human race on earth, indeed not only to educate any kind of worshippers of the true God, but children who are to become members of the Church of Christ, to raise up fellow-citizens of the Saints, and members of God's household, that the worshippers of God and Our Savior may daily increase.”

The 1917 Code of Canon Law also accurately describes the nature of the Sacrament of Marriage: “Marital consent is an act of the will whereby each party grants and accepts a permanent and exclusive right over the body regarding its acts which are of themselves apt for the generation of offspring.” (*Codex Iuris Cononici*, 1081.2) Thus, marriage is understood as a lawful contract in which the two parties handed over to each other the right to use one another for acts suitable for the generation of children. If two persons were to use the vocabulary of the Church's canonical definition in their wedding vows, the bride and groom might say to each other, “I understand our marrying as an act in which I hand over to you the right to use my body for acts that are apt for generating children. I want to do this in a contractual context before these gathered witnesses.” Canon 1013 fittingly combined the teachings of both St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, teaching that: “The primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of children; its secondary end is mutual help and the remedying of concupiscence.” (*Codex Iuris Cononici*, 1013)

St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 1, A.D. 401: “The first natural bond of human society is man and wife. Nor did God create these each by himself, and join them together as alien by birth: but He created the one out of the other, setting a sign also of the power of the union in the side, whence she was drawn, was formed. For they are joined one to another side by side, who walk together, and look together whither they walk. Then follows the connexion of fellowship in children, which is the one alone

worthy fruit, not of the union of male and female, but of the sexual intercourse. For it were possible that there should exist in either sex, even without such intercourse, a certain friendly and true union of the one ruling, and the other obeying.”

Pope Gregory XVI in his encyclical *Mirari Vos*, which exposed liberalism and religious indifferentism explains that those marriages that are devoid of the “**thought of the sacrament and of the mysteries signified by it [that is, the procreation and education of children, faithfulness, and mutual love and help]**” or that was entered into because of “**concupiscence alone,**” will have “***an unhappy ending***” since these kinds of selfish, lustful and impious “marriages” in effect are nothing but fornication in disguise of a marriage, thus firmly contradicting and exposing the modernistic and heretical teachings of certain impious men and women who dared to assert that one could marry for mere selfish, lustful or worldly motives, rather than for pious and good motives that a true and honorable marriage always is based on.

Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* (# 12), Aug. 15, 1832: “Now the **honorable marriage** of Christians, which Paul calls “a great sacrament in Christ and the Church,” [Heb. 13:4, Eph. 5:32] demands our shared concern lest anything contrary to its *sanctity* and *indissolubility* is proposed. Our predecessor Pius VIII would recommend to you his own letters on the subject. However, troublesome efforts against this sacrament still continue to be made. The people therefore must be zealously taught that a marriage rightly entered upon cannot be dissolved; for those joined in matrimony God has ordained a perpetual companionship for life and a knot of necessity which cannot be loosed except by death. Recalling that matrimony is a sacrament and therefore subject to the Church, let them consider and observe the laws of the Church concerning it. Let them take care lest for any reason they permit that which is an obstruction to the teachings of the canons and the decrees of the councils. **They should be aware that those marriages will have an unhappy end which are entered upon contrary to the discipline of the Church or without God’s favor or because of concupiscence alone, with no thought of the sacrament and of the mysteries signified by it.**”

In truth, Pope Gregory IX (1145-1241) also affirms the Church’s teaching on the sacrament of marriage, saying that: “As much as the contract of marriage is favored, it lacks effect if conditions are stipulated against the substance of marriage. For example, **if one says to the other, “I contract with you if you will *prevent the conception of children,*”** or, “until I find another woman more worthy in honor or riches,” or, “if you will sell yourself in

adultery for money.”” (Gratian, *Marriage Canons From The Decretum*, Case Thirty-Two, Question IV, Conditions Set in Betrothals or Other Contracts)

Pope Gregory IX’s three examples here shows us the three goods of marriage: *proles* (offspring), *sacramentum* (indissolubility), and *fides* (fidelity) without which a marriage contract is invalid. “It seems evident that a woman taken merely to have sex is not a wife, because God instituted marriage for propagation, not merely for satisfying lust. For the nuptial blessing is, “Increase and multiply.” [Gen. 1:28] ... It is shameful for a woman when her marriage bears no fruit, for this alone is the reason for marrying. ... bearing children is the fruit of marriage and the blessing of matrimony is without doubt the reason that [the Blessed Virgin] Mary’s virginity defeated the Prince of this World [the Devil]. Thus anyone who joins himself to another, not for the sake of procreating offspring, but rather to satisfy lust is less a spouse than a fornicator. ... As no congregation of heretics can be called a Church of Christ because they do not have Christ as their head, so no matrimony, where one has not joined her husband according to Christ’s precept, can properly be called marriage, but is better called adultery.” (Gratian, *Marriage Canons From The Decretum*, Case Thirty-Two, Question II)

St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book V, Chapter 12:46, A.D. 421: “Nevertheless, because human soundness agrees that the motive in taking a wife is the procreation of offspring, regardless of how weakness yields to lust, I note, in addition to the faithfulness which the married owe to each other so that there be no adultery, and the offspring, for whose generation the two sexes are to be united, that a third good, which seems to me to be a sacrament, should exist in the married, above all in those who belong to the people of God, so that there be no divorce from a wife who cannot bear, and that a man not wishing to beget more children give not his wife to another for begetting, as Cato is said to have done [Plutarch, *In vita Catonis*; Lucan 2]. ... I say that there is another way in which marriage is good when offspring can be procreated only through intercourse. If there were another way to procreate, yet the spouses had intercourse, then they evidently must have yielded to lust, and made evil use of evil. But, since the two sexes were purposely instituted, man can be born only from their union, and thus spouses by their union for this purpose [of procreation] make good use of that evil [of lust]...”

Thus, Pope St. Gregory the Great (c. 540-604), in his work “*Pastoral Rule*”, which deals with sexual sins from a biblical perspective, could rightly admonish Christians to never marry or perform the marital act for carnal or lustful motives: “**The married must be admonished to bear in mind that they are united in wedlock for the purpose of procreation,**

and when they abandon themselves to immoderate intercourse, they transfer the occasion of procreation to the service of pleasure.

Let them realize that though they do not then pass beyond the bonds of wedlock, yet in wedlock they exceed its rights.

Wherefore, it is necessary that they efface by frequent prayer what they befoul in the fair form of conjugal union by the admixture of pleasure. For hence it is that the Apostle, skilled in heavenly medicine, did not so much lay down a course of life for the whole [of humanity] as point out remedies to the weak when he said, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman: but on account of fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (1 Cor. 7:1-2). For in that he premised the fear of fornication, he surely did not give a precept to such as were standing [in the greater and more blessed life of chastity], but pointed out the bed to such as were falling, lest haply they should tumble to the ground.

Whence to such as were still weak he added, "Let the husband render unto the wife her due; and likewise also the wife unto the husband" (1 Cor. 7:3). And, while in the most honorable estate of matrimony allowing to them something of pleasure, he added, "But this I say by way of indulgence, not by way of command" (1 Cor. 7:6). Now where indulgence is spoken of, a fault is implied; but one that is the more readily remitted in that it consists, not in doing what is unlawful, but in not keeping what is lawful under control.

"Which thing Lot expresses well in his own person, when he flies from burning Sodom, and yet, finding Zoar, does not still ascend the mountain heights. For to fly from burning Sodom is to avoid the unlawful fires of the flesh. But the height of the mountains is the purity of the continent. Or, at any rate, they are as it were upon the mountain, who, though cleaving to carnal intercourse, still, beyond the due association for the production of offspring, are not loosely lost in pleasure of the flesh. For to stand on the mountain is to seek nothing in the flesh except the fruit of procreation. To stand on the mountain is not to cleave to the flesh in a fleshly way. But, since there are many who relinquish indeed the sins of the flesh, and yet, when placed in the state of wedlock, do not observe solely the claims of due intercourse, Lot went indeed out of Sodom, but yet did not at once reach the mountain heights; because a damnable life is already relinquished, but still the loftiness of conjugal continence is not thoroughly attained... married life is neither far separated from the world, nor yet alien from the joy of safety... They are therefore to be admonished that, if they suffer from the storms of temptation with risk to their safety, they should seek the port of wedlock. For it is written, "It is better to marry than to burn" (1 Cor. 7:9). They come, in fact, to marriage without blame, if only they have not vowed better things [chastity]." (Pope St. Gregory the Great, *Pastoral Rule*, Book III, Chapter XXVII.--How The Married And The Single Are To Be Admonished.)

While there are many dangers and temptations in marriage, there are also good things, such as faithfulness, offspring, and the Sacrament: "Now this is threefold, faithfulness, offspring,

and the Sacrament. For faithfulness, it is observed, that there be no lying with other man or woman, out of the bond of wedlock: for the offspring, that it be lovingly welcomed, kindly nourished, religiously brought up: for the Sacrament, that marriage be not severed, and that man or woman divorced be not joined to another even for the sake of offspring. This is as it were the rule of Marriages by which rule either fruitfulness is made seemly, or the perverseness of incontinence is brought to order.” (St. Augustine, *On Genesis*, Book 9, Chapter 7) However, even though marriage is good, the marital act is still intoxicating and shameful, which are truly evil defects that men must endure, and this shows us that children “is the one alone worthy fruit... of the sexual intercourse”. Thus, the motive of “children, which is the one alone worthy fruit, not of the union of male and female, but of the sexual intercourse” must excuse the marital act. (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 1)

In A.D. 191 St. Clement of Alexandria (a Greek theologian of considerable influence in the early Church) referred to Onan’s evil act in these words: “He broke the law of coitus.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *Comments on Genesis* 6, PG 69:309) He went on to explain that “Because of its divine institution for the propagation of man, the seed is not to be vainly ejaculated, nor is it to be damaged, nor is it to be wasted.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *Pedagogus*, "The Educator", 2.10.91.2)

St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215) agrees with the Popes and Saints of the Church in this regard concerning the procreation and education of children, teaching us that: “it remains for us now to consider the restriction of sexual intercourse to those who are joined in wedlock. Begetting children is the goal of those who wed, and the fulfillment of that goal is a large family, just as hope of a crop drives the farmer to sow his seed, while the fulfillment of his hope is the actual harvesting of the crop. But he who sows in a living soil is far superior, for the one tills the land to provide food only for a season, the other to secure the preservation of the whole human race; the one tends his crop for himself, the other, for God. We have received the command: "Be fruitful" [Gen. 1:28], and we must obey. In this role man becomes like God, because he co-operates, in his human way, in the birth of another man.” (*The Paedagogus* or *The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X) And so, it should be absolutely clear to all pure servants of Christ that “Marriage is the first conjunction of man and woman for the procreation of legitimate children. Accordingly Menander the comic poet says: "For the begetting of legitimate children, I give thee my daughter."” (St. Clement of Alexandria, "On Marriage", *The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XXIII)

Origen (a theologian of the early 3rd century Alexandrian Church considered by many to be the most accomplished biblical scholar of the early church) refuted the teachings of the pagan

philosopher Celsus by reference to God's people in the Old Testament: "nor were there among them women who sold their beauty to anyone who wished to have sexual intercourse without offspring, and to cast contempt upon the nature of human generation." (Origen, *Contra Celsum*, Book 5, Chapter 42) In the early Church it was clear that **to have sexual intercourse without wishing to beget offspring was to commit an evil act.**

SAINT AUGUSTINE CONDEMNS ALL SPOUSES THAT ARE AGAINST PROCREATION AND THAT PRACTICE A TIME-BASED METHOD OF CONTRACEPTION SIMILAR TO NFP AS ADULTERERS, CALLING THEIR BED-CHAMBER A "BROTHEL"

Arguing against the Manicheans on contraception, St. Augustine appears to refer to a timing-based method as practiced by the Manicheans. His view on the matter is clear.

St. Augustine, *On the Morals of the Manichaeans* 18:65, A.D. 388: "**Is it not you who used to counsel us to observe as much as possible the *time when a woman, after her purification, is most likely to conceive, and to abstain from cohabitation at that time, lest the soul should be entangled in flesh?* This proves that you [Manicheans] approve of having a wife, not for the procreation of children, but for the gratification of passion. In marriage, as the marriage law declares, the man and woman come together for the procreation of children. Therefore, whoever makes the procreation of children a greater sin than copulation, forbids marriage and makes the woman not a wife but a mistress, who for some gifts presented to her is joined to the man to gratify his passion. Where there is a wife there must be marriage. But there is no marriage where motherhood is not in view; therefore neither is there a wife."**

Here, the exact Manichean method is unknown, though it sounds like a rhythm method similar to NFP. Manicheans disdained any procreation, which is the point of Augustine's argument. He condemns marriage with permanent or temporary contraceptive intent.

St. Augustine, *Against Faustus* 15:7, A.D. 400: "... [the Manichean heretics] directly opposes the next precept, "Thou shalt not commit adultery"; for those who believe this doctrine, in order that their wives may not conceive, are led to commit adultery even in marriage. They take wives, as the law declares, for the procreation of children; but... their wives is not of a lawful character; **and the production of children, which is the proper end of marriage, they seek to avoid.** As the apostle long ago

predicted of thee [the heretic Faustus], thou dost indeed forbid to marry, for thou seekest to destroy the purpose of marriage. **Thy doctrine [against childbearing] turns marriage into an adulterous connection, and the bed-chamber into a brothel.**”

Here we see that the true teaching of the Church and the Holy Saints condemns those who perform sexual acts where conception is hindered, calling their marriage “**an adulterous connection**” and their bed-chamber a “**brothel**”. In truth, “For what gratification is there (except perhaps for lascivious persons, and those who, as the apostle says with prohibition, possess their vessel in the lust of concupiscence [1 Thess. 4:5]) in the mere shedding of seed as the ultimate pleasure of sexual union, unless it is followed by the true and proper fruit of marriage—conception and birth?” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 19)

The Manicheans and the other gnostic heretics of the early Church that St. Augustine fought against and refuted was one of the greatest haters and rejecters of the goodness of procreation. The Fathers and Saints of the Church, however, fought fearlessly against them in debates and writings and condemned their impious doctrine which turns family life, society and her laws upside down, and that is why this unnatural doctrine was almost completely obliterated until our time—the last days—when this practice again was adopted by the worldly and sensual people of our time. St. Augustine, in his work *Against Faustus*, (A.D. 400) could rightly condemn these unnatural heretics for hating offspring, which is a true blessing of the Lord: “**Moreover, the only honorable kind of marriage, or marriage entered into for its proper and legitimate purpose [that is, for the procreation of children], is precisely that you hate most [since procreation of children is regarded as one of the greatest of evils by the Manichean heretics]. So, though you may not forbid sexual intercourse, you forbid marriage; for the peculiarity of marriage is, that it is not merely for the gratification of passion, but, as is written in the contract, for the procreation of children.**” (*Against Faustus*, Book XXIX, Section 6)

Confirming that only the normal, natural and procreative marital sexual act is allowed to be performed in a marriage, St. Thomas Aquinas, who quotes St. Augustine in his *Summa Theologica*, speaks about chastity, and he explains that the right, proper and pure use of the sexual organs is when one uses them for the sake of procreation, which of course refutes all those lustful perverts of our own day and age that defend non-procreative or unnecessary forms of sexual acts, such as foreplay and sensual kisses and touches, as well as all acts where the spouses deliberately try to hinder the procreation of children. Thus, in contrast to these

lustful and impure spouses: “Augustine says (De Perseverantia xx): “We must give praise to purity, that he who has ears to hear, may put to **none** but a lawful use the organs intended for procreation.” Now the use of these organs is the proper matter of chastity. Therefore purity belongs properly to chastity.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4.--Whether purity belongs especially to chastity?)

As we have seen from all the Fathers and Saints of the Catholic Church, contraceptive practices are nothing new. St. Hippolytus, in his book “*Refutation of All Heresies*,” (A.D. 225) describes how wicked people and so-called faithful committed this mortal sin even in the beginning of the third century: “... **the so-called faithful want no children... [so] they use drugs of sterility or bind themselves tightly in order to expel a fetus which has already been engendered.**” (Book IX, Chapter 12) Heretics and mortal sinners of this kind have always existed, “**For they forbid chaste wedlock and procreation, but are seared in their consciences since they have sex and pollute themselves, and yet hinder procreation.**” (St. Epiphanius, *Panarion or Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, Book I, Chapter 26:5:16:4.--Against the Gnostics, or Borborites, A.D. 375)

It should now be clear that marriage was created for chastity, procreation, and partnership. “Thou marriest a wife for chastity and procreation” (Chrysostom, *Hom. XII. in Col.*; PG 62.386; NPNF. p 318). Chrysostom explains that it was in response to Adam’s new fallen condition that the Lord God established marriage as we know it. The establishment of marriage was designed by God for a redemptive purpose: to tame man’s wild and out-of-control nature. “The profit of marriage is to preserve the body pure, and if this be not so, there is no advantage of marriage” (Chrysostom, *Hom. LIX in Mt.*; PG 58.583; NPNF, p. 371). This is contrary to the opinions of many modern scholars who labor in vain to “discover” modern and romantic notions in St. John Chrysostom’s theology of marriage.

St. Augustine, *Adulterous Marriages*, Book II, Chapter 12, A.D. 396: “It is that weakness, namely, incontinence, that the Apostle wished to remedy by the divinity of marriage. He did not say: If he does not have sons, let him marry, but: “If he does not have self-control, let him marry.” Indeed, the concessions to incontinence in marriage are compensated for by the procreation of children. Incontinence surely is a vice, while marriage is not. So, through this good [procreation], that evil [concupiscence or sexual pleasure] is rendered pardonable. Since, therefore, the institution of marriage exists for the sake of generation, for this reason did our forebears [ancestors] enter into the union of wedlock and lawfully take to themselves their wives, only because of the duty to beget children. There then was a certain necessity for having children which does not

exist now, because "the time to embrace," [Esdras 3:5] as it is written, was in those days, but now is "the time to refrain from embracing." Alluding to the present age, the Apostle says: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remains that those who have wives be as if they had none." [1 Cor. 7:29] Whence, with perfect conviction, the following can be said: "Let him accept it who can," [Matt. 19:12] but "let her marry who cannot control herself." [1 Cor. 7:9] In former times, therefore, even continence was made subordinate to marriage for the sake of propagating children. Now, the marriage bond is a remedy for the vice of incontinence, so that children are begotten by those who do not practice continence, not with a disgraceful display of unbridled lust, but through the sanctioned act of lawfully wedded spouses. Then why did the Apostle not say: If he does not have sons let him marry? Evidently, because in this time of refraining from embrace it is not necessary to beget children. And why has he said: "If he cannot control himself, let him marry"? Surely, to prevent incontinence from constraining him to adultery. If, then, he practices continence, neither let him marry nor beget children. However, if he does not control himself, let him enter into lawful wedlock, so that he may not beget children in disgrace or avoid having offspring by a more degraded form of intercourse. There are some lawfully wedded couples who resort to this last, for intercourse, even with one's lawfully wedded spouse, can take place in an unlawful and shameful manner, whenever the conception of offspring is avoided. Onan, the son of Juda, did this very thing, and the Lord slew him on that account. [Cf. Gen. 38:8-10] Therefore, the procreation of children is itself the primary, natural, legitimate purpose of marriage. Whence it follows that those who marry because of their inability to remain continent ought not to so temper their vice that they preclude the good of marriage, which is the procreation of children.

"The Apostle was certainly speaking of the incontinent where he said: "I desire, therefore, that younger widows marry, bear children, rule their households, and give the adversary no occasion for abusing us. For already some have turned aside after Satan." [1 Tim. 5:14,15] So, when he said: "I desire that the younger widows marry," [1 Cor. 7:29] he surely gave the advice to bolster their collapsing self-control. Then, lest thought be given only to this weakness of carnal desire, which would only be strengthened by the marital act, while the good of marriage would be either despised or overlooked, he immediately added: "to bear children, rule their households." [1 Tim. 5:14] In fact, those who choose to remain continent certainly choose something better than the good of marriage, which is the procreation of children. Whence, if the choice is continence, so that something better than the good of marriage is embraced, how much more closely is it to be guarded so that adultery may be avoided! For, when the Apostle said: "But if they do not have self-control, let them marry, for it is better to marry than

to burn," [1 Cor. 7:9] he did not say that it is better to commit adultery than to burn."

THE SECOND COUNCIL OF BRAGA EXCOMMUNICATES ALL SPOUSES WHO PRACTICE NFP AND ANY FORM OF BIRTH CONTROL

One of the earliest extant documents of formal Church legislation (that we know of) on the use of contraceptives comes in the sixth century. Its originator in canonical form was St. Martin, Archbishop of Braga in Spain (520-580). Drawing on previous episcopal synods of the East and West, he simplified the existing laws and codified them for the people of Portugal and Spain.

Martin's condemnation of contraception and the contraceptive intent first occurred in the famous collection *Capitula Martini*. It was later incorporated in the laws of the Second Council of Braga (June, 572), at which he presided as the head of twelve bishops.

His reference to *earlier* more severe penalties implies that ecclesiastical authority had condemned the practice long before the sixth century.

St. Martin, Archbishop of Braga, *Second Council of Braga*, Canon 77, June, 572: "If any woman has fornicated and has killed the infant who was born of her; or if she has tried to commit abortion and then slain what she conceived; **or if she contrives to make sure she does not conceive, either in adultery or in legitimate intercourse**—regarding such women the *earlier* canons decreed that *they should not receive communion even at death*. However, we mercifully judge that both such women and their accomplices in these crimes shall do penance for ten years." (Mansi IX, 858)

In truth, "she (the wife) is the only one with whom it is lawful to enjoy the pleasures of the flesh for the purpose of begetting lawful heirs. This is to share in God's own work of procreation, and in such a work the seed ought not to be wasted nor scattered thoughtlessly nor sown in a way it cannot grow." (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Paedagogus* or *The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X.--On the Procreation and Education of Children, A.D. 198)

THE FIRST COUNCIL OF NICAEA EXCOMMUNICATED ALL PRIESTS THAT DELIBERATELY CASTRATED THEMSELVES

The First Council of Nicaea (which is the first Ecumenical Council in Church history) rejected already in the Fourth Century priests who had consented to the act of **castrating**

themselves. This teaching is very relevant for our time since many people nowadays perform operations or undergo different procedures castrating themselves.

*The First Council of Nicaea, Canon 1, A.D. 325: “[I]f anyone in sound health has castrated himself, it behooves that such a one, if enrolled among the clergy, should cease [from his ministry], and that from henceforth no such person should be promoted. **But, as it is evident that this is said of those who willfully do the thing and presume to castrate themselves,** so if any have been made eunuchs by barbarians, or by their masters, and should otherwise be found worthy, such men this canon admits to the clergy.”*

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS CONDEMNS NFP AND BIRTH CONTROL AS A SIN SECOND IN NATURE ONLY TO MURDER

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), who is considered as one of the most important doctors of the Church, is abundantly clear on that any completed sex act without the proper goal of procreation is sinful.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Section 1.3.122: “**Hence it is clear that every emission of the semen is contrary to the good of man, which takes place in a way whereby generation is impossible; and if this is done on purpose, it must be a sin.**” He concludes: “... the inordinate emission of the semen is repugnant to the good of nature, which is the conservation of the species. Hence, after the sin of murder, whereby a human nature already in actual existence is destroyed, this sort of sin seem to hold the second place, whereby the generation of human nature is precluded. The above assertions are confirmed by divine authority. The unlawfulness of any emission of semen, upon which offspring cannot be consequent, is evident from such texts as these: Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: Thou shalt not lie with any beast (Levit. xviii, 22, 23): Nor the effeminate, nor sodomites, shall possess the kingdom of God (1 Cor. Vi, 10).”

Thus, it is clear that St. Thomas teaches that: “Matrimony was instituted for the begetting of children.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supp., Q. 42, Art. 2) “Therefore, since in matrimony man receives by Divine institution the faculty to use his wife **for the begetting of children**, he also receives the grace without which he cannot becomingly do so.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supp., Q. 42, Art. 3)

THE CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT CONDEMNS ALL FORMS OF BIRTH CONTROL AS A “WICKED CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT MURDER”

We also find some references in the 16th century Roman Catechism of the Council of Trent, designed for parish priests. In the section on the Sacrament of Matrimony, the section on the use of marriage teaches spouses to abstain from the marriage debt before they will receive the Body of Our Lord in the Most Holy Eucharist. For instance, there is to be no marital sexual relations before Communion since, “**The dignity of so great a Sacrament also demands that married persons abstain from the marriage debt for some days previous to Communion.** This observance is recommended by the example of David, who, when about to receive the showbread from the hands of the priest, declared that he and his servants had been clean from women for three days.” (*The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, Preparation Of Body) Married as well as unmarried are also taught to “approach the Holy Table fasting, having neither eaten nor drunk anything at least from the preceding midnight until the moment of Communion.” (*The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, Preparation Of Body) The unitive and natural aspect is mentioned, under the **Motives and Ends of Marriage**: “First of all, nature itself by an instinct implanted in both sexes impels them to such companionship.” Desire of family and avoiding lust is also mentioned. Though there is a reminder that “**marriage is not to be used for purposes of lust or sensuality**, but that its use is to be restrained within those limits which, as we have already shown, have been fixed by the Lord” and “therefore married persons who, to prevent conception... are guilty of a most heinous crime—**nothing less than wicked conspiracy to commit murder.**” (*The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, The Motives And Ends Of Marriage) Wikipedia also makes the interesting claim that “[all] Canon law until 1917 labeled contraception as murder.”

The Catechism of the Council of Trent: “The faithful are moreover to be taught, that there are three advantages of marriage — **offspring**, faith, the sacrament — which alleviate, by compensating for, those disadvantages which the Apostle points out in these words: “Such [that is, married people who perform the sexual act] shall have tribulation of the flesh ” (1 Corinthians 7:28); and by which sexual intercourse, which, without marriage, would be deservedly reprobated, becomes an honourable union. **The first advantage, then, is offspring, that is, children begotten from a true and lawful wife; an advantage so highly appreciated by the Apostle, that he says: “The woman shall be saved by bearing children”** (1 Timothy 2:15). This, however, is not to be understood solely of the procreation of children, but also of the education and discipline by which children are reared to piety. Thus the Apostle immediately subjoins: “If she continue in faith;” for the Scripture admonishes: “Hast

thou children? Instruct them, and bow down their neck from their childhood" (Ecclesiasticus 7:25). The Apostle teaches the same; and of such an education the Scripture affords the most beautiful examples in the persons of Tobias, Job, and other Patriarchs eminent for holiness. But what are the duties of parents and children shall be more fully explained in the exposition of the fourth commandment.

“... Matrimonial faith also demands, that husband and wife be united by a certain singular, and holy, and pure love, a love not such as that of adulterers, but such as that which Christ cherishes towards his Church; for this is the model which the Apostle proposed, when he said: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church" (Ephesians 5:25); **and very great indeed was the love with which Christ embraced his Church, not a selfish love, but a love that proposed to itself the sole interest of his spouse...**” (*Catechism of Trent – What Are The Advantages Accruing To Married Persons From This Sacrament*)

POPE SIXTUS V CONDEMNS BIRTH CONTROL

In the late sixteenth century, Pope Sixtus V (1521-1590) passed a series of laws to curb the immorality of his day. Among these laws was one that simultaneously covered abortion and contraception.

There is nothing new about the legislation, except the added solemnity of its being passed by direct order of the pope. Abortion and contraception are equally called crimes.

Pope Sixtus V, *Bull Effranatum*, Oct. 27, 1588: “Who does not abhor the lustful cruelty or cruel lust of impious men, a lust which goes so far that they procure poisons to extinguish and destroy the conceived fetus within the womb, **even attempting by a wicked crime to destroy their own offspring before it lives**, or, if it lives, to kill it before it is born?”

Pope Sixtus V: “Who, finally, would not condemn with the most severe punishments the crimes of those who by poisons, potions and evil drugs induce sterility in women, **so that they might not conceive** or, by means of evil-working medication, that they might not give birth?” (Quoted in *Bullarium Romanum*, Vol. 1)

THE BELGIAN, GERMAN, FRENCH AND AMERICAN BISHOPS UNANIMOUSLY CONDEMN ALL FORMS OF BIRTH-CONTROL

By the early years of the twentieth century the Catholic Church had developed a standard confessional practice regarding the sin of contraception. Catholics who chose to have intercourse while taking steps to avoid the primary purpose of marital intercourse were refused absolution (forgiveness) in the sacrament of Penance or Confession, and were thus considered damned in the eyes of the Church and of God. Considered “habitual sinners,” those who “practiced birth control” were also barred from the reception of the sacrament of the Eucharist (Holy Communion). Addressing their priests in 1909, the Belgian bishops condemned the “most evil sin of Onan” in every form of birth control. The bishops then instructed priests to teach the laity to avoid a materialistic understanding of life. Priests were to remind husbands that “those who have wives should use them as if they had them not.” (1 Cor. 7:29–30) Some married couples attempted to justify limiting their offspring on the grounds that they would have more children than they could feed. Citing the words of Jesus that we should not be anxious about what we would eat or how we would be clothed (Matt. 6:31), the Belgian bishops asked husbands and wives to put their faith in divine Providence. It could be the case that some husbands would fear that further pregnancies would endanger the health of their wives. In such cases, priests were instructed to point out the advantages of modern medical care. However, if another pregnancy was truly a serious danger to the wife’s health or life, the husband and wife, by mutual consent, should courageously abstain from the marital act. (*Instruction des Evêques de Belgique sur l’onanisme*,” the Bishops of Belin in *Nouvelle-Revue Theologique* 41 (1909), 617)

In their 1913 pastoral letter the German bishops declared: “It is serious sin to will to prevent the increase of the number of children, so that marriage is abused for pleasure alone and its principal purpose knowingly and willingly frustrated.” (See Joseph Laurentius, S.J., “*Das Bischofswort zum Schutze der Familie*,” in *Theologisch Praktische Quartalschrift* 67 (1914), 517–28)

The French bishops joined the crusade against birth control in May of 1919. Reminding the married that “the principal end of marriage is the procreation of children,” the bishops of France declared: “It is to sin seriously against nature and against the will of God to frustrate marriage of its end by an egotistic or sensual calculation.” All practices that led to the restriction of births were seen to be “as disastrous as they are criminal.” (*Documentation Catholique* 1 (1919), 578–79)

In September 1919, the American bishops met in Washington, D.C., and produced their first joint pastoral letter since 1884. Referring to *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, the bishops stated that procreation was the first and most serious obligation of marriage. Using

the traditional Catholic teaching of the biblical account of Onan's sin, the bishops condemned all forms of birth regulation because "the selfishness which leads to race suicide . . . is, in God's sight, a 'detestable thing.'" According to the American bishops, the increase of children brought about such good effects as a "fresh stimulus given to thrift" brought about by the virtuous necessity of stretching the family income as well as the "industrious effort" of mother and father who had to work harder. Indeed, more children necessitates making more "sacrifices," but sacrifices are "sources of blessing." (National Council of Catholic Bishops, *The National Pastorals of the American Hierarchy*, 1792–1919, 313)

POPE GREGORY IX CONDEMNS CONTRACEPTION AND THE CONTRACEPTIVE INTENT AS A MORTAL SIN OF MURDER AGAINST THE NATURAL LAW

Pope Gregory IX (1148-1241), who was a personal friend of St. Francis of Assisi, ordered St. Raymond of Penafort to collect all the papal decrees published until that time and edit them in systematic form. *The Decretals of Gregory IX* as they are called was published in 1234 by order of the Pope, and were a summary of the Church's legislation in the lifetime of St. Thomas Aquinas. Like the *Summa Theologica* they synthesize the Church's whole past tradition. Two things are noteworthy about the decree quoted: 1) it summarily and simply identifies as contraception whatever is taken to prevent generation or conception or birth; 2) it distinguishes between taking a drug out of lust (instead of abstaining from intercourse) and giving a drug from hostile motives; and 3) it calls all of these actions homicidal, in the technical sense of destroying life at any state of the vital process.

The Decretals of Gregory IX, Book V, A.D. 1234: "**If anyone, to satisfy his lust** or in meditated hatred, does something to a man or woman or gives them something to drink **so that he cannot generate or she conceive, or the offspring be born**—let him be held a homicide."

A significant principle was also enunciated under Pope Gregory IX on the validity of marriage. Already in the thirteenth century, a marriage was null and void if the couple had agreed (or even if one partner insisted) to marry but avoid having children. It was presumed they would have intercourse, but contraceptively. "If conditions are set against the substance of marriage—for example, if one says to the other, "I contract with you if you avoid offspring"—the matrimonial contract, as much as it is favored, lacks effect." (*The Decretals of Gregory IX*, Book IV)

THE HOLY OFFICE UNDER POPE PIUS IX CONDEMNS CONTRACEPTION AND THE CONTRACEPTIVE INTENT AS A SIN AGAINST THE NATURAL LAW

During the pontificate of Pius IX (1792-1878), at least five decisions were made by the Holy See with regard to contraception in one or another form. The following was made by the Holy Office and approved by the Pope. It touches on one type of contraception, but in doing so clarifies two important elements: that Onanism is against the Natural Law, and that confessors have a duty to inquire about this practice if they have a good reason to suppose that it is being done.

The question is asked what theological note the following three heretical propositions deserve:

1. It is permissible for spouses to use marriage the way Onan did, if their motives are worthy.
2. It is probable that such use of marriage is not forbidden by the natural law.
3. It is never proper to ask married people of either sex about this matter, even though it is prudently feared that the spouses, whether the wife or the husband abuse matrimony.

The officials of the Holy Office ordered the following to be stated:

1. The first proposition is scandalous, erroneous, and contrary to the natural right of matrimony.
2. The second proposition is scandalous, erroneous, and elsewhere implicitly condemned by Innocent XI: “Voluptuousness is not prohibited by the law of nature. Therefore if God had not forbidden it, it would be good, and sometimes obligatory under pain of mortal sin” [Condemned Statement by Innocent XI] (March 4, 1679).
3. The third proposition, as it stands, is false, very lax, and dangerous in practice (*Decisiones S. Sedis de Usu et Abusu Matrimonii*, Rome, 1944, pp. 19-20; May 21, 1851).

THE CHURCH ALWAYS PUNISHED THOSE WHO COMMITTED THE SIN OF BIRTH-CONTROL WITH EXCOMMUNICATION FOR A LONG TIME

From the very beginning of the Catholic Church, anyone who dared to commit the act of birth-control while they chose to perform the marital act had to do penance for a long time since

this was considered such an evil act.

Around the year 1000, *The Decretals of Burchard* was compiled by Burchard, (965-1025) Bishop of Worms in Germany. This collection of canon law called the *Decreta* exercised great influence for centuries in the history of the Church. Several features of the following legislation are significant. The penalty is less severe than it had been, i.e., ten years of penance instead of pardon only at death; abortion and contraception are equally reprehended; and a distinction is made in the culpability (always grave) of a woman who aborts or interferes with conception because she is poor, and a woman who does the same to avoid the humiliation of having a child out of wedlock:

“Have you done what some women are accustomed to doing when they fornicate and wish to kill their offspring; they act with their poisons (*maleficia*) and their herbs to kill or cut out the embryo, or, if they have not yet conceived they contrive not to conceive? If you have done so, or consented to this, or taught it, you must do penance for ten years on legal ferial days. Legislation in former days excommunicated such persons from the Church till the end of their lives. As often as a woman prevented conception, she was guilty of that many homicides. It makes a great deal of difference, however, whether the woman in question is a pauper who acted the way she did for lack of means to nourish (her offspring) or whether she did so to conceal the crime of her fornication.” (*The Decretals of Burchard, Decreta*, num. 19; PL 140, 972)

The evilness of all forms of birth-control cannot be understated, and that is also why the Church from the beginning severely punished all Her children who committed this crime. It is an act that is similar to playing God, an outright mockery of God and His creation and a perversion of nature. Just as we ourselves wish to continue to live, so we have no right to hinder another soul from also living. Thus, “He who does this [that is, he who drinks a contraceptive potion] in order not to have children shall do penance for twelve years. (*Poenitentiale Vigilantium*, num. 79-80 (A.D. 850); PL 129, 1123ff.)

CONCLUSION

The Fathers as well as the tradition of the early Church are so unanimous in interpreting the Bible as condemning as sinful and forbidden the evil use of birth control that it is unbelievable how some people calling themselves “Christian” or “Catholic” can deny that it is sinful, evil or condemned, and especially so, since *The Councils of Trent* and *Vatican I* infallibly teaches that the Fathers must be obeyed when their teachings unanimously agree with one another. In

this context, Saint Jerome condemns all those who see nothing wrong about fornication, or contraception or even abortion. *St. Jerome's letter to Eustochium* contains a typical patristic condemnation of contraception. It is associated with the defection from the Church of those women who find the Church's position on chastity too demanding.

First he cites those who have intercourse out of wedlock, but make sure they do not become pregnant by taking appropriate drugs to prevent conception. Others become pregnant and then commit abortion to avoid exposure of their guilt.

Most pertinent is Jerome's quoting such women as saying they see nothing particularly wrong about fornication, or contraception or even abortion. Their conscience approves of what they are doing; so how can these be sins?

The final reference to food and drink points out the fact that these women are critical of those who practice mortification. Consistent with their attitude on sex, they argue that all of this is God's gift—so why not use it?

St. Jerome, *Letter 22:13*, To Eustochium, A.D. 384: "It becomes wearisome to tell how many virgins fall daily; what important personages Mother Church loses from her bosom; over how many stars the proud enemy sets up his throne [Isaiah 14:13]; how many rocks the serpent makes hollow and then enters through their openings. You may see many who were widowed before they were wed, shielding a guilty conscience by a lying garb. Did not a swelling womb or the crying of their infant children betray them, they would go about with head erect and on skipping feet. But others drink potions to ensure sterility and are guilty of murdering a human being not yet conceived. Some when they learn they are with child through sin, practice abortion by the use of drugs. Frequently they die themselves and are brought before the rulers of the lower world guilty of three crimes: suicide, adultery against Christ, and murder of an unborn child. These are the women who are accustomed to say: "Unto the pure all things are pure.' [Titus 1:15] The approval of my conscience is enough for me. A pure heart is what God desires. Why should I abstain from foods which God created to be used with thanksgiving?" [1 Timothy 4:3] And whenever they wish to appear bright and festive, and have drowned themselves in wine, they say—adding sacrilege to drunkenness: "God forbid that I should abstain from the blood of Christ." And whenever they see a woman pale and sad, they call her a poor wretch, a nun, and a Manichean: and with reason, for according to their belief fasting is heresy."

Another good quotation from St. Caesarius of Arles condemns all spouses that are against procreation and that practice abortion and says that “the only sterility of a very pious wife is chastity”. The second passage from Caesarius deals with abortion, but of a contraceptive kind. Some women took medication to destroy unborn life already conceived in the womb. Others took drugs by anticipation; they would not mind becoming pregnant, but provided that the child would not reach viability.

St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon 52:4*: “Does not the Devil clearly exercise his deceits still further, dearly beloved, when he persuades some women, after they have had two or three children, to kill either any more or those already born, by taking an abortion draught? Apparently, such women fear that if they have more children they cannot become rich. For, what else must they think when they do this, except that God will not be able to feed or direct those whom He has commanded to be born? Perhaps some are killed who could serve God better or obey those same parents with a perfect love. Instead, by an impious, murderous practice women take poisonous draughts to transmit incomplete life and premature death to their children through their generative organs. By such an exigency they drink a cup of bereavement with the cruel drug. O sad persuasion! They maintain that the poison which has been transmitted through their drinking is unconnected with them. Moreover, they do not realize that they conceive in sterility the child which they receive in death, because it was conceived in their flesh. However, if there is not yet found a tiny infant that could be killed within the womb of its mother, it is no less true that even the natural power (of generation) within the woman is destroyed. Why unhappy mother—or, rather, not even the step-mother of a new-born son—why did you seek, from outside, remedies that would be harmful for eternity? You possess within you more salutary remedies, if you wish. You do not want to have a child? Settle a pious agreement with your husband; let him agree to an end of childbearing in accord with the virtue of chastity. The only the sterility of a very pious wife is chastity.”

All other quotations from the Popes, Fathers and the Saints of the Church unanimously teach the same on the subject of the primary end or purpose of marriage and the marital act. Not a single one of them teaches that God allows spouses to have marital relations while also hindering conception from taking place.

Saint Augustine sums it up as follows: “It is, however, one thing for married persons to have intercourse only for the wish to beget children, which is not sinful: it is another thing for them

to desire carnal pleasure in cohabitation, but with the spouse only, **which involves venial sin.** For although propagation of offspring is not the motive of the intercourse, there is still no attempt to prevent such propagation, either by wrong desire or evil appliance. They who resort to these, although called by the name of spouses, are really not such; they retain no vestige of true matrimony, but pretend the honourable designation as a cloak for criminal conduct. Having also proceeded so far, they are betrayed into exposing their children, which are born against their will. They hate to nourish and retain those whom they were afraid they would beget. This infliction of cruelty on their offspring so reluctantly begotten, unmasks the sin which they had practised in darkness, and drags it clearly into the light of day. The open cruelty reproves the concealed sin. Sometimes, indeed, this lustful cruelty, or, if you please, cruel lust, resorts to such extravagant methods as to use poisonous drugs to secure barrenness; or else, if unsuccessful in this, to destroy the conceived seed by some means previous to birth, preferring that its offspring should rather perish than receive vitality; or if it was advancing to life within the womb, should be slain before it was born. Well, if both parties alike are so flagitious, they are not husband and wife; and if such were their character from the beginning, they have not come together by wedlock but by debauchery. But if the two are not alike in such sin, I boldly declare either that the woman is, so to say, the husband's harlot; or the man the wife's adulterer." (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 1, Chapter 17, A.D. 419.--What is Sinless in the Use of Matrimony? What is Attended With Venial Sin, and What with Mortal?)

The intention, deed or *desire* of the spouses that conception does not occur during conjugal relations is the crux of the matter, the root of the mortal sin of contraception. Even before conjugal relations, spouses have committed the mortal sin of contraception if they had planned or only desired that conception should not take place during conjugal relations. Jesus teaches that sin is first committed in the heart even before a man carries out his sinful deed. He says, "*You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.*" (Matthew 5:27-28)

Tragically, however (as if the proof wasn't clear enough already), some bad willed people will indeed try to excuse themselves and object to these clear statements, some perhaps by saying that the Holy Bible and Apostolic Tradition, as well as all the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Catholic Church couldn't have referred to the modern practice of NFP (since it was invented by modern science), and hence that their condemnation couldn't have been about NFP, but about something else, such as Onanism, sterilization, drugs and potions.

However, this objection is easily refuted for just because men have invented new ways to commit murder, such as with modern weapons that didn't exist in the days of many of the saints and Catholic writers, doesn't mean that men who commit murder with these weapons are not guilty since the saints or Church tradition did not specifically condemn murder by the use of these new killing methods. (St. Augustine however did condemn a timing-based method of contraception, as we saw before.) It is the same with NFP. Spouses commit the mortal sin of contraception no matter what weapon (method) they use to attempt to prevent conception during conjugal relations. If people cannot see this, it is because they are like the evil, blind, and obstinate Pharisees during Jesus' first coming who made laws to break God's laws and thus lost all common sense. NFP contradicts reason, the law in our heart, the Word of God (the Bible) and the teachings of the ordinary and solemn magisterium. The gift of many children from the Lord is truly a great blessing, and it is truly vile and unnatural to try to hinder this blessing from Our Lord by selfish and lustful acts inspired by the devil. "Far more excellent, in my opinion, than the seeds of wheat and barley that are sown at appropriate seasons, is man that is sown, for whom all things grow; and those seeds temperate husbandmen ever sow. Every foul and polluting practice must therefore be purged away from marriage; that the intercourse of the irrational animals may not be cast in our teeth, as more accordant with nature than human conjunction in procreation. Some of these, it must be granted, desist at the time in which they are directed, leaving creation to the working of Providence." (St. Clement of Alexandria, "On Marriage", *The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XXIII)

St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus*, Book 1, Section 27, A.D. 393: "Adam was first made, then the woman out of his rib; and that the Devil could not seduce Adam, but did seduce Eve; and that after displeasing God she was immediately subjected to the man, and began to turn to her husband; and he points out that she who was once tied with the bonds of marriage and was reduced to the condition of Eve, might blot out the old transgression by the procreation of children: provided, however, that she bring up the children themselves in the faith and love of Christ, and in sanctification and chastity... For if the woman is saved in child-bearing, and the more the children the greater the safety of the mothers, why did he add "if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with chastity"? [1 Tim. 2:15]"

People Know that NFP is a Sin

Below are a few very interesting testimonies from people who have either used NFP or were taught NFP. Their comments have been taken from "the letters to the editor" section of a

publication which carried an article on NFP. (Their names were given in the original letter.) Their letters demonstrate that the women who use NFP, as well as the men who tolerate or cooperate with it, are convicted of its sinfulness by the law written on their hearts. Those who use NFP know that they are thwarting the will of God and practicing contraception.

“Dear Editor... I was a non-religious divorced pagan before I met my husband who was, at the time, a minimal practicing Catholic. I became Catholic in 1993 and we were married in 1994. I had no idea at that time that Catholics were allowed to do anything to prevent a child. I had never even heard of NFP until the priest we were meeting with during the six months prior to our wedding handed me a packet of papers and basically said, “here, you’ll want to learn this.” When I got home, I briefly thumbed through the papers. I saw calendars, stickers, and charts. To be honest, it was mind-boggling all the effort people would go through just so they could have intimacy without consequence. It was also shocking to me that this was being promoted before I even took the vows on my wedding day! I threw the packet away and have never looked back. I am thankful that I never learned NFP... I wonder which of my children wouldn’t be here had I chosen to keep those papers and learn NFP?”

“Dear Editor... I am a mother to seven children and can share my own experiences. NFP did NOT bring my marriage closer. I struggled with reconciling myself to the fact that scripture states a husband and wife should be submissive and not separate unless for prayer. We were avoiding pregnancy.....plain and simple. There can be nothing spiritual about telling your spouse that you can’t participate in the marital embrace for fear of a child being conceived. Webster’s dictionary defines contraception as: “deliberate prevention of conception or impregnation”. Systematically charting and watching out for those fertile days is the deliberate prevention of conception. I know friends who use it. I’ve talked to them in a very personal way. They do not want any more children. They are using NFP as birth control, which it is. And one friend has been using it for 11 years and “hasn’t had any accidents.”... I can say that St. Augustine was right on target when he wrote in *The Morals of the Manichees*: “Marriage, as the marriage tablets themselves proclaim, joins male and female for the procreation of children. Whoever says that to procreate children is a worse sin than to copulate thereby prohibits the purpose of marriage; and he makes the woman no more a wife than a harlot, who, when she has been given certain gifts, is joined to a man to satisfy his lust. If there is a wife, there is matrimony. But there is no matrimony where motherhood is prevented, for then there is no wife.”... My favorite comment recently was made by another author comparing NFP to a farmer who plants his corn in the

dead of winter so as to avoid a plentiful harvest.”

“Dear Editor... Let me put the NFP debate simply: if it is your intention to avoid having children, it really doesn't matter what method you use. You've already committed the sin. If, however, you use contraception as your method of choice, you add to the first sin a second one. As to the oft-repeated mantra of “grave reasons”, allow me to say this: name one. Look deep into your heart and name one that is really, truly grave... We did the NFP bit for awhile... and have felt revulsion over it ever since. During that time we might have had at least two more children.”

“To the Editor: NFP is one of the chief infiltrations of the new-age sex cult into the Church, along with sex-ed and immodest dress... As modern Catholics have been conditioned to embrace mutually contradictory ideas while defending them as consonant, they have been easily deceived by the notion that NFP, as commonly practiced, is somehow different from birth control. I have no training in moral theology, but even I know that the goal of an action determines its substance. When a couple engages in deliberately sterile relations, this is known as birth control, plain and simple.”

Origen (c. 184-254), in his *Homilies on Genesis*, comments on a similar passage of *The Book of Tobias* found in Psalm 31:9 (Psalm 32:9), and he says that people who have marital relations for any other purpose than the procreation of children are even worse than “dumb beasts”. Therefore, “Let the married women examine themselves and seek if they approach their husbands for this reason alone, that they might receive children, and after conception desist. For those women... when they have attained conception, do not later assent to copulation with a man. But some women, for we do not censure all equally, but there are some who serve passion incessantly, like animals without any distinction, whom I would not even compare to the dumb beasts. For even the beasts themselves know, when they have conceived, not to further grant opportunity to their males. The divine Scriptures also censures such when it says: "Do not become like the horse and the mule who have no understanding," [Ps. 31:9 (Ps. 32:9)] and again, "They have become stallions." [Jer. 5:8] But, O people of God, "who love Christ in incorruption," [Eph. 6:24] understand the word of the Apostle in which he says: "Whether you eat or drink or whatever else you do, do all to the glory of God." [1 Cor. 10:31] For his remark after eating and drinking, "whatever else you do," has designated with a modest word the immodest affairs of marriage, showing that even these acts themselves are performed to the glory of God if they are attended to with a view to posterity alone.” (Origen, *Homilies on Genesis*, Homily V, Section 4, On Lot And His Daughters)

Planned Parenthood and NFP of the same cloth

Have you noticed the similarities between Planned Parenthood (the world's largest abortion provider) and Natural Family Planning? Artificial contraceptives and abortifacients are found under store aisles marked "Family Planning." Like abortionists, family planners consider children as something undesirable, at least temporarily; whereas the true faithful have always considered them as an undeniable blessing from God Himself, planned by His providence from all eternity. "*Behold, children are the inheritance of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward... Blessed is the man whose desire is filled with them; he shall not be confounded.*" (Psalm 126:3,5)

In publications promoting NFP, the fertile period of the wife is sometimes classified as "not safe" and "dangerous," as though generating new life were considered a serious breach of national security and a little infant a treacherous criminal. This is truly abominable.

"However, you say: 'It is no sin to know one's wife except with the desire for children.' So great a sin is it, that the repentant Prophet exclaims: 'I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me.' [Ps. 50.7]... Now, since we have all been created interiorly in our soul according to God's image, as often as we say or do something shameful we defile God's image. Consider, then, whether this is becoming or proper for you [that is, performing the sexual act for the purpose of concupiscence without a desire for children]. I say truly, brethren, that God does not deserve this of us, that His image in us should suffer insult through evil concupiscence." (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 44:5,6)

Could it be more clear that those who subscribe to this type of behavior and this method shut God and children out and replace them with their own selfish agenda? "Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will show thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. For they who in such manner receive *matrimony*, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power." (Tobias 6:16-17)

The word *Matrimony* means "the office of Motherhood." Those who use NFP try to avoid Matrimony (the office of Motherhood) and shut out God from themselves. Indeed, "You may see a number of women who are widows before they are wives. Other, indeed, will drink sterility and ***murder*** a man not yet born." (St. Jerome, *Letter* 22:13, To Eustochium, A.D. 384)

NFP has eternal and infinite consequences

The following facts may be the most incriminating to the practice of “Natural Family Planning.”

If family planners had their way, there would be no St. Bernadette of Lourdes who was born from a jail flat; nor St. Therese of Lisieux, who came from a sickly mother who lost three children in a row; nor St. Ignatius Loyola, who was the thirteenth of thirteen children; **and most certainly not a St. Catherine of Siena, who was the twenty-fourth child in a family of twenty-five children!** Examples of Saints who were the last of many children or second to last could probably be multiplied for pages. St. Catherine of Siena and the rest of the Saints who would have been phased out of existence by NFP will rise in judgment against the NFP generation. Natural Family Planners would have been sure to inform St. Catherine’s mother that there was no need having twenty-five children (let alone five), and that she was wasting her time going through all those pregnancies.

Only in eternity shall we know the immortal souls who have been denied a chance at Heaven because of this selfish behavior. The only thing that can foil the will of the all-powerful God is the will of His puny creatures; for He will not force offspring on anyone, just as He will not violate anyone’s free will. NFP is a crime of incalculable proportions.

If family planners had their way, the appearances of Our Lady of Fatima would not have occurred, as she appeared to Lucia (the 7th of 7 children), Francisco (the 8th of 9 children) and Jacinta (the 9th of 9 children). Family Planners, by their selfish thwarting of the will of God, **would have erased from human history the entire message of Fatima** as well as: the incredible miracle of the Sun; the extraordinary lives of these three shepherd children; and all the graces of conversion obtained by their heroic sacrifices. How many saints, conversions and miracles have been erased by this abominable birth control practice? Only God knows.

A mother of many children, who was about to be a mother once more, came to Ars (the place where St. John Vianney (1786-1859) resided) to seek courage from him. She said to him, “Oh, I am so advanced in years Father!” St. John Vianney responded: “*Be comforted my child, if you only knew the women who will go to Hell because they did not bring into the world the children they should have given to it!*” These true words of the great St. John Vianney of course agrees perfectly with Holy Scripture which teaches us that a woman “**shall be saved**

through child-bearing; if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification, with sobriety.” (1 Timothy 2:15)

After reading such words in the Holy Bible itself—that is, in God’s Holy Word—no one who is not a complete liar can deny that Holy Scripture teaches that a woman shall be saved through child-bearing (if she is Catholic and in the state of grace). But NFP advocates, however, would have us believe that a woman is saved through child-avoiding. Moreover, just as a woman who fulfills the will of God and maintains the state of grace in the state of Matrimony is saved by her childbearing, so too are countless women going to be damned for not bearing the children that God wanted them to have. *“Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice and all things will be added unto you.”* (Matthew 6:33)

Sexual intercourse is given for the procreation of children (St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. XXI in Col.*; PG 62.387). The essential unity between sexual intercourse and procreation of children is everywhere upheld by Chrysostom to be the natural end and purpose of marriage. This is evidenced, for example, in St. Chrysostom’s explanation of the sin of Sodom. Rather than focusing only on the functional “unnaturalness” of the sex of the Sodomites, Chrysostom writes, “Sodom devised a barren intercourse, not having for its end the procreation of children, so did God bring on them such a punishment, as made the womb of the land even barren, and destitute of all fruits.” (*Stat. Hom. XIX*; PG 49.191; NPNF, p. 467). Indeed, it should thus be clear now to all of good will that the Church and Her Saints teaches that, “As often as he [the husband] knows his wife without a desire for children... without a doubt he commits sin.” (Saint Caesar of Arles, *The Faith of The Early Fathers*, Vol. 3:2233)

The sin of inflaming concupiscence

As we have seen, the Catholic Church teaches that the marital act cannot be used to inflame concupiscence. If the marital act is used to inflame concupiscence, sin is committed. The goal of a godly couple’s marital relations is to put out the fire of lust by committing the act with a sense of shame and acknowledgment of the weakness of the flesh in order *“That... you may be made partakers of the divine nature: flying the corruption of that concupiscence which is in the world.”* (2 Peter 1:4) The sinful goal of inflaming concupiscence is to ignite the fire of lust to greater levels, higher excitement, exalting the flesh while suppressing shame and the weakness of the flesh.

Examples of sinful inflaming of the flesh are fore-or-after play, dressing sensual, striptease, masturbation of self or spouse, touching oneself or the spouse at inappropriate places, taking

part in sexual role playing games, inappropriate sexual positions, shaving the genital hair for the sake of enhancing sexual pleasure and the sexual experience, or to kiss each other for the sake of enhancing sexual pleasure or “for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss”, and using aphrodisiacs for the evil purpose of enhancing sexual pleasure rather than for a just cause, such as impotence. (In case of impotence, however, a husband should not use the compounds which he knows will increase his pleasure, but should first and foremost use the compounds that will increase his blood flow without necessarily affecting his lust, such as PDE-5 inhibitors.) None of these perverted acts mentioned are necessary for fulfilling the primary purpose of the marital act, that is, the procreation and education of children, but serves only lust, and are therefore considered as mortal sins.

If spouses do not work toward perfection by trying to eliminate concupiscence, then, when one dies, the other is very susceptible to commit mortal sin by illicitly quelling concupiscence. When I told a married man that NFP is a mortal sin, he said that this couldn't be true because he cannot control his lust and he cannot afford to have any more children; therefore, he had to practice NFP. Sad to say, this man mocks and denies God's grace by saying he cannot control his lust, and he has no true faith in God who feeds the birds who neither reap nor sow nor gather into barns. Jesus Christ is the divine physician and healer who can cure any and all faults and sinful conditions. I asked him, “If you cannot control your lust now, what would you do if your wife dies tomorrow?” “How would you fulfill your lust then?” If, as he said, he cannot control his lust, he would commit mortal sin by finding a way to fulfill his lust one way or another.

Take note, however, that what this man said about himself is not really true, that is, that he cannot control his lust, for the fact of the matter is that all people who practice NFP must control their lust at least at certain periods of time every month in order to avoid the wife's fertile period. Thus, this man is not really unable to control his lust but only chooses to control it on those days of the month that he fears that a child may be conceived. However, even if this man would be unable (or rather unwilling) to control his lust through faithlessness or weakness of the flesh, he should still not be so rash and even more faithless as to claim that he cannot afford more children or provide for them, as if the means to provide for his family really was in his own hands. God is perfectly aware of the needs of the family. He will not burden it with anything it cannot handle, provided it does not incur God's wrath for other purposes, one being contraception, another faithlessness. Through faithlessness, overindulgence and lack of restraint in the marital act, this man has sadly allowed the lust of the flesh to take so much control over his will that he now claims he cannot control it. Truly, if this man had any faith in God, he would not be so faithless as to claim that he cannot control

his lust. For him it might be impossible, but for God, all is possible.

Indeed, one of the reasons why so many married couples have such problems restraining themselves is because they want to have marital relations too often or more than what is necessary. The consequence of this is that their overindulgence in sexual pleasure has led them to become controlled by their passions like animals without any reason instead of being able to control their passions like rational human beings. For just as a man can commit gluttony in eating too much and too extravagantly, so too can a man commit gluttony in the marital act by doing it too often, or in an unreasonable manner.

St. Augustine, *On Merit and the Forgiveness of Sins, and the Baptism of Infants* (A.D. 412): “The good, then, of marriage lies not in the passion of desire, but in a certain legitimate and honorable measure in using that passion, appropriate to the propagation of children, not the gratification of lust. ... When, however, it is curbed from unlawful desires, and is permitted only for the orderly propagation and renewal of the human race, this is the good of wedlock, by which man is born in the union that is appointed.” (Book I, Chapter 57, XXIX.--The Good of Marriage; Four Different Cases of the Good and the Evil Use of Matrimony)

Paul VI promotes sinful birth control in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae*

Antipope Paul VI, who promulgated the heretical decrees of Vatican II and implemented the New Mass, explained correctly that NFP is birth control when he promoted it in his heretical encyclical *Humanae Vitae*.

Antipope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae* (# 16), July 25, 1968: “... married people may then take advantage of the natural cycles immanent in the reproductive system and engage in marital intercourse **only during those times that are infertile, thus controlling birth** in a way which does not in the least offend the moral principles which We have just explained.”

Even though it's a dogma of Faith (as have been abundantly proved thus far) that (1) procreation and education of children is the primary purpose of marriage and the marital act; and (2) that to deliberately frustrate the natural power or purpose of the marital act to generate life in any way is contrary to nature, most advocates of NFP, however, would like to have us believe the exact opposite. Tragically, these people also seem to be completely ignoring the fact that this new teaching of NFP (if it's used to avoid Children), **was non**

existent in the Catholic Church prior to the modern world and the Vatican II revolution.

What is Vatican II?

Vatican II was a council that took place from 1962-1965. Vatican II was a false council that constituted a revolution against 2000 years of Catholic teaching and Tradition. Vatican II contains many heresies that were directly condemned by past popes and infallible councils. Vatican II attempted to give Catholics a new religion. In the period following Vatican II, massive changes in every aspect of Catholic Faith ensued, including the implementation of a New Mass.

(To learn what really happened to the Catholic Church after the Vatican II revolution, please consult this book: [The Truth about What Really Happened to the Catholic Church after Vatican II](#) - [LINK TO SECTION])

Now, the defenders of NFP couldn't seem to care less that the new "Church" they follow today in fact contradicts 2000 years of Catholic teaching and Tradition. These people actually seem to believe that the Catholic Church and all Her Popes and Saints (prior to the Vatican II revolution) was wrong or ignorant for about 2000 years in condemning such practices as NFP, while naively believing that the Vatican II "Church" (that sprung up in the last days to deceive Catholics) is right in teaching that one is perfectly fine to deliberately avoid children, while only striving to satisfy one's own depraved and damnable lust.

However, both cannot be right at the same time. Either the Vatican II "Church" and Paul VI is right in teaching *that NFP is acceptable*, or 2000 years of Catholic Church teaching and Tradition (pre-Vatican II) and Pope Pius XI is right in *infallibly condemning it*.

Because as any honest person reading this article will be forced to admit, Pope Pius XI was clearly contradicted by Antipope Paul VI on NFP (see below). But the idea that the Catholic Church was wrong for about 2000 years in infallibly condemning evil practices like NFP, and that the new end times church is right in allowing it, thus contradicting what the Catholic Church has previously infallibly taught since ancient times, is not only absurd and ridiculous, but also heretical; and none who is honest with himself would ever dare to make such an outrageous argument.

The Catholic Church (pre-Vatican II) condemns birth-control	The heretical Vatican II “Church” approves of birth-control
<p>Pope Pius XI, <i>Casti Connubii</i> (# 17), Dec. 31, 1930: “<u>THE PRIMARY END OF MARRIAGE IS THE PROCREATION AND THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.</u>”</p> <p>Pope Pius XI, <i>Casti Connubii</i> (# 54), Dec. 31, 1930: “Since, therefore, <u>THE CONJUGAL ACT IS DESTINED PRIMARILY BY NATURE FOR THE BEGETTING OF CHILDREN</u>, those who in exercising it <i>deliberately</i> frustrate its natural powers and <i>purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.</i>”</p>	<p>Antipope Paul VI, <i>Humanae Vitae</i> (# 16), July 25, 1968: “... married people may then take advantage of the natural cycles immanent in the reproductive system and engage in marital intercourse <u>ONLY DURING THOSE TIMES THAT ARE INFERTILE, THUS CONTROLLING BIRTH</u> [SO THAT NONE MAY RESULT] in a way which does not in the least offend the moral principles which We have just explained.”</p>

Note the word “purpose” by Pius XI. What is the purpose of the marital act? Obviously, it is the procreation of Children. But what is the purpose of the couple who practice NFP? Is it to fulfill the main “purpose” of marriage and raise holy and godly children? No! Their only “purpose” is selfishness; to satisfy their own selfish agenda while deliberately trying to avoid the children that God wanted to bless them with.

Another keyword is “deliberate” attempt to prevent conception. Pope Pius XI teaches all forms of deliberately frustrating the marital act by depriving it of its natural power and purpose (conception) is a “sin against nature” and is “intrinsically vicious” (intrinsically evil). He does not qualify deliberate frustration by saying, only if physical devices are used during the act, or by withdrawal during the act.

Not only did Paul VI contradict the Church’s teaching on NFP and birth control, but he also contradicted Her on the declared sinfulness of performing the marital act ***exclusively*** for the purpose of satisfying one’s own lust. **Marital relations performed for the sole sake of sexual pleasure is condemned as sinful by the Magisterium of the Church and the Word of God in the Holy Bible (Tobias 6:16-17, 22; 8:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5,**

Genesis 38:9-10).

Various Errors on Moral Subjects, Condemned in a decree, March 4, 1679:
“THE ACT OF MARRIAGE EXERCISED FOR PLEASURE ONLY IS ENTIRELY FREE
OF ALL FAULT AND VENIAL DEFECT.” – **Condemned statement by Pope
Innocent XI.** (Denz. 1159)

Therefore all aspects of NFP or “Natural Family Planning”, both the deed of deliberately avoiding children while having marital relations, and the motive of having marital relations only for the sake of venereal pleasure, **is condemned by the Catholic Church.**

So while Vatican II and Paul VI teaches that the primary purpose (or reason) of marriage and the marital act is to satisfy one’s own shameful and damnable lust (since they even allow for the total exclusion of bearing children by a systematic effort and deliberate plan), the pre-Vatican II Catholic Church and dogmatic teaching teaches us that the primary purpose of marriage (and the marital act) is the procreation and education of children: “However, you say: ‘It is no sin to know one’s wife except with the desire for children.’ So great a sin is it, that the repentant Prophet exclaims: ‘I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me.’ [Psalm 50:7] So, too, we read in the Old Testament that, when the Jewish people were about to approach Mount Sinai, it was said to them in the Lord’s teaching: ‘Be sanctified, and be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives,’ [Exodus 19:15] and: ‘if any man be defiled in a dream by night, let him not eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of salvation, lest his soul be cut off from his people.’ [Deuteronomy 23:10; Leviticus 7:20] If after defilement which happens to us even unwillingly we may not communicate [receive the Eucharist] unless compunction and almsgiving come first, and fasting, too, if infirmity does not prevent it, who can say that there is no sin if we do such things intentionally when we are wide awake?” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon 44*)

The Great Apostasy in the Bible and the writings of the Catholic Prophets prophesied the almost complete destruction of the Catholic Faith and morals that we are now living through

St. Paul, in his epistles to the Romans and St. Timothy speaks of the prophesied great loss of faith during the Great Apostasy and the accompanying evil fruits (sins of immorality). Dear reader, if you are or have been a defender of NFP, please consider the following inspired and prophetic words from the Bible perfectly applying to our situation today.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 “Know also this, **THAT IN THE LAST DAYS**, shall come dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, slanderers, **incontinent**, unmerciful, without kindness, traitors, stubborn, puffed up, and **lovers of pleasure more than of God**: Having an appearance indeed of godliness but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid.”

1 Corinthians 11:16-19 “But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the church of God. Now this I ordain: not praising you, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all I hear that when you come together in the church, there are schisms among you; and in part I believe it. **For there must be also heresies: that they also, who are approved, may be made manifest among you.**”

Douay-Rheims & Haydock Bible Commentaries explains First Corinthians 11: “Ver. 19. *There must be also heresies*: By reason of the pride and perversity of man’s heart; not by God’s will or appointment; who nevertheless draws good out of this evil, **manifesting, by that occasion, who are the good and firm Christians**, [and who are not,] and making their faith more remarkable. (Challoner) --- The providence of God draweth good out of evil, but *woe to the man*, says the Scripture, *by whom scandal cometh*, such as sects and heresies. Hence St. Augustine, chap. viii. de vera relig. says: ‘Let us use heretics not so as to approve their errors, but to make us more wary and vigilant, and more strenuous in defending Catholic doctrine against their deceits.’”

These bible verses are an exact description of modern, wicked and heretical men in these final days and is the end result of an unrepentant, sinful and selfish lifestyle that always ends in sinful practices like contraception, and eventually in the loss of the Catholic Faith. This is known as the Romans One Curse. “*And as they liked not to have God in their knowledge, God delivered them up to a reprobate sense, to do those things which are not convenient.*” (Romans 1:28) Fallen-away Catholics say they believe in God with their lips and continue with outward actions of worship. They have an appearance of godliness indeed, but in their hearts they deny God by denying His power, making their worship vain. “*Well did Isaias prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And in vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines and precepts of men.*” (Mark 7:6-7) Fallen-away Catholics teach precepts of men, such as NFP, and not of God, making their worship vain and without fruit.

Once faith is lost, sin abounds and spirals out-of-control producing the resultant evil fruits. “Augustine was wont to say ‘When all restraints are removed by which men are kept on the narrow path of truth, their nature, which is already inclined to evil, propels them to ruin.’” (Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* #14, 1832)

The reason God honored the Patriarchs and the Prophets of the Old Testament period was because they all performed the marital act for the motive of begetting children

Many Fathers and Saints of the Church taught that the reason God honored and blessed the Patriarchs and the Prophets so exceedingly much was that they all performed the marital act for the sole sake of begetting children, instead of for the motive or purpose of selfishly pleasing their concupiscence or sexual desire that most people through the ages have performed the marital act for. For instance, it could be said of the marital intercourse between the Holy Patriarch Abraham and Righteous Sarah that “their one concern was the heir not their pleasure” (St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. XXXVIII in Gen.*; PG 53.356). St. Chrysostom calls the Patriarch Abraham in this homily a “man of steel” and a “noble athlete of God”. St. Chrysostom calls the bridal-chamber the “chamber of procreation” (*Hom. XXIV in Rom.*; PG 60.626). The necessary end of desire is procreation (St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. XXIV in 2 Cor.*; PG 61.563).

St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata* (c. 198-203 A.D.): “And Abraham, who had children by three wives, not for the indulgence of pleasure, but in the hope, as I think, of multiplying the race at the first...” (*The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XIX.)

St. Augustine who similarly wrote extensively about procreation and sexuality explains in his “*Sermons on the New Testament*,” that the Patriarchs and the Prophets of old searched for and desired children and purity rather than fulfilling their own selfish and sensual interests, thus living a chaste lifestyle directly opposed to most of the lustful people of today. Augustine writes, “So then, my brethren, give heed. Those famous men who marry wives only for the procreation of children, such as we read the Patriarchs to have been, and know it, by many proofs, by the clear and unequivocal testimony of the sacred books; whoever, I say, they are who marry wives for this purpose only, if the means could be given them of having children without intercourse with their wives, would they not with joy unspeakable embrace so great a blessing? would they not with great delight accept it? For there are two carnal operations by which mankind is preserved, [eating and sex] to both of which the wise and holy descend as

matter of duty, but the unwise rush headlong into them through lust; and these are very different things.” (St. Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament*, Sermon 1:23)

“Hence, my brethren, understand the sense of Scripture concerning those our ancient fathers, whose sole design in their marriage was to have children by their wives. For those even who, according to the custom of their time and nation, had a plurality of wives, lived in such chastity with them, as not to approach their bed, but for the cause I have mentioned, thus treating them indeed with honor. But he who exceeds the limits which this rule prescribes for the fulfillment of this end of marriage, acts contrary to the very contract by which he took his wife. The contract is read in the presence of all the attesting witnesses; and an express clause is there that they marry "for the procreation of children;" and this is called the marriage contract. If it was not for this that wives were given and taken to wife, what father could without blushing give up his daughter to the lust of any man? But now, that the parents may not blush, and that they may give their daughters in honorable marriage, not to shame, the contract is read out. And what is read from it?—the clause, "for the sake of the procreation of children." And when this is heard, the brow of the parent is cleared up and calmed. Let us consider again the feelings of the husband who takes his wife. The husband himself would blush to receive her with any other view, if the father would blush with any other view to give her.

“Nevertheless, if they cannot contain (as I have said on other occasions), let them require what is due, and let them not go to any others than those from whom it is due. Let both the woman and the man seek relief for their infirmity in themselves. Let not the husband go to any other woman, nor the woman to any other man, for from this adultery gets its name, as though it were "a going to another." And if they exceed the bounds of the marriage contract, let them not at least exceed those of conjugal fidelity. Is it not a sin in married persons to exact from one another more than this design of the "procreation of children" renders necessary? It is doubtless a sin... The Apostle saith... "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." [1 Cor. 7:5] What does this mean? That you do not impose upon yourselves any thing beyond your strength, that you do not by your mutual continence fall into adultery. "That Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." And that he might not seem to enjoin what he only allowed (for it is one thing to give precepts to strength of virtue, and another to make allowance to infirmity), he immediately subjoined; "But this I speak of allowance, not of commandment. For I would that all men were even as I myself [that is, chaste]." As though he would say, I do not command you to do this; but

I pardon you if you do.” (St. Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament*, Sermon 1:22)

The Catechism of the Council of Trent in the part about the “Sacrament of Matrimony” confirms that the Patriarchs of old loved God with a pure and chaste love, explaining that: “A second reason for marriage is the desire of family, not so much, however, with a view to leave after us heirs to inherit our property and fortune, as to bring up children in the true faith and in the service of God. That such was the principal object of the holy Patriarchs when they married is clear from Scripture. Hence the Angel, when informing Tobias of the means of repelling the violent assaults of the evil demon, says: “I will show thee who they are over whom the devil can prevail; for they who in such manner receive matrimony as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.” He then adds: “Thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children.” It was also for this reason that God instituted marriage from the beginning; and therefore married persons who, to prevent conception or procure abortion, have recourse to medicine, are guilty of a most heinous crime – nothing less than wicked conspiracy to commit murder.” Children, the Catholic Church teaches, are a blessing from God. They are not a curse, neither are they an impediment.

Furthermore, Origen, (c. 184-254) in his “*Homilies on Genesis*,” which deals with the topic of the circumcision of Abraham, explains that God’s purpose with the circumcision of the foreskin that He commanded in the Old Law (and the Old Testament) symbolizes a person’s will to have marital relations only for the motive of procreating offspring, rather than for satisfying their own lusts and desires: “But now let us see how also, according to our promise, circumcision of the flesh ought to be received. There is no one who does not know that this member, in which the foreskin is seen to be, serves the natural functions of coitus and procreation. If anyone, therefore, is not troublesome in respect to impulses of this kind, nor exceeds the bounds set by the laws, **nor has known a woman other than his lawful wife, and, in the case of her also, makes use of her in the determined and lawful times for the sake of posterity alone, that man is to be said to be circumcised in the foreskin of his flesh.** But that man is uncircumcised in the foreskin of his flesh who fall down in all lasciviousness and everywhere loiters for diverse and illicit caresses, and is carried along unchecked in every whirlpool of lust. But the Church of Christ, strengthened by the grace of him who has been crucified for it, abstains not only from illicit and impious beds but also from those allowed and legitimate, and flourishes like the virgin bride of Christ with pure and chaste virgins in whom true circumcision of the foreskin of the flesh has been performed

and truly God's covenant and the eternal covenant is preserved in their flesh." (Origen, *Homilies on Genesis*, Homily III, Section 6)

It is thus clear that married spouses who want to please Our Lord and His Holy Will must follow the holy and pure example of the Patriarchs and the Prophets of the Old Testament time, "For they [that is, the men of the Old Law] had them [their wives] in the work of begetting children, not "in the disease of desire, as the nations which know not God." [1 Thess. 4:5] And this is so great a thing, that many at this day more easily abstain from all sexual intercourse their whole life through, than, if they are joined in marriage, observe the measure of not coming together except for the sake of children." (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 15) Hence, "the case being thus, enough and more than enough answer has been made to the heretics, whether they be Manichees, or whosoever other [heretics] that bring false charges against the Fathers of the Old Testament, on the subject of their having several wives, thinking this a proof whereby to convict them of incontinence... [however the Fathers] used those women not for wantonness, but for the begetting of children" (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 33)

We see the same kind of teaching about Abraham in Augustine's work *Against Faustus*:

"Referring, then, to the eternal law which enjoins the preservation of natural order and forbids the breach of it, let us see how our father Abraham sinned, that is, how he broke this law, in the things which Faustus has charged him with as highly criminal. In his irrational craving to have children, says Faustus, and not believing God, who promised that his wife Sara should have a son, he defiled himself with a mistress. But here Faustus, in his irrational desire to find fault, both discloses the impiety of his heresy, and in his error and ignorance praises Abraham's intercourse with the handmaid. For as the eternal law—that is, the will of God the Creator of all—for the preservation of the natural order, permits the indulgence of the bodily appetite under the guidance of reason in sexual intercourse, not for the gratification of passion, but for the continuance of the race through the procreation of children; so, on the contrary, the unrighteous law of the Manichæans, in order to prevent their god, whom they bewail as confined in all seeds, from suffering still closer confinement in the womb, requires married people not on any account to have children, their great desire being to liberate their god. Instead, therefore, of an irrational craving in Abraham to have children, we find in Manichæus an irrational fancy against having children. So the one preserved the natural order by seeking in marriage only the production of a child; while the other, influenced by his heretical notions, thought no evil could be greater than the

confinement of his god.” (St. Augustine, *Against Faustus*, Book 22, Section 30)

As we can see, for St. Augustine, the purpose of sexual relations is only to produce children. This is also the teaching of all the Fathers on this subject.

St. Augustine, *On the Literal Meaning of Genesis* 9.3.5-6: “If one should ask why it was necessary that a helper be made for man, the answer that seems most probable is that it was for the procreation of children, just as the earth is a helper for the seed in the production of a plant from the union of the two. This purpose was declared in the original creation of the world: “Male and female he made them. And God blessed them and said, ‘Increase and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.’” This reason for creation and union of male and female, as well as this blessing, was not abrogated after the sin and punishment of man. It is by virtue of this blessing that the earth is now filled with human beings who subdue it. Although it was after the expulsion of the man and woman from paradise that they came together in sexual intercourse and begot children, according to Scripture, nevertheless I do not see what could have prohibited them from honorable nuptial union and “the bed undefiled” even in paradise. God could have granted them this if they had lived in a faithful and just manner in obedient and holy service to him, so that without the tumultuous ardor of passion and without any labor and pain of childbirth, offspring would be born from their seed. In this case, the purpose would not be to have children succeeding parents who die. Rather those who had begotten children would remain in the prime of life and would maintain their physical strength from the tree of life that had been planted in paradise. Those who would be born would develop to the same state and eventually, when the determined number would be complete, if all live just and obedient lives, there would be a transformation. Thus without any death their natural bodies would receive a new quality since they obeyed every command of the spirit that ruled them. With the spirit alone vivifying them, without any help from corporeal nourishment, they would be called spiritual bodies. This could have been if the transgression of God’s command had not merited the punishment of death.”

EVIL FRUITS OF NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

Abortion is the result of failed contraceptive practices

All sin produces evil fruit according to its quality and quantity. What are the fruits of NFP? They are very evil fruits indeed: small families, unbridled lust, selfishness, materialism, greed,

discord, contentions, disobedience in all ranks, alcoholism, drug addiction, also abortion, which is a direct result of failed contraceptive practices.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 65), Dec. 31, 1930: “All of which agrees with the stern words of the Bishop of Hippo in denouncing those wicked parents who seek to remain childless, and failing in this, are not ashamed to put their children to death: ‘Sometimes this lustful cruelty or cruel lust goes so far as to seek to procure a baneful sterility, and if this fails, the foetus conceived in the womb is in one way or another smothered or evacuated, in the desire to destroy the offspring before it has life, or if it already lives in the womb, to kill it before it is born. If both man and woman are party to such practices, they are not spouses at all; and if from the first they have carried on thus they have come together not for honest wedlock, but for impure gratification.’”

If the plan to prevent conception fails then abortion, the murder of the infant in the womb of the mother, is the solution. This is the great cost men pay to fulfill their unbridled and sinful lust. This monstrous, unbridled lust shows its ugly head in many ways such as by sexual abuse of all sorts to sexual harassment and rape, to the carrying out of the act with family members (incest) and others; by viewing pornography and in their children who cannot control their lusts because they were conceived primarily in lust and raised in lust. Greed manifests itself because of the selfish nature that leads spouses to practice contraception. Objects and things that bring them momentary pleasure are more important to them than people, more important than having children. The children they do have are only sentimental ornaments that lend their perverted marriage an air of acceptance. They have no true love or care for their children, because the parents are lovers of themselves more than God. They are more interested in what brings them momentary pleasure. What they do not realize is that true pleasure and peace only comes from obeying all of God’s commandments and raising godly children if God wills they should have children. Parents sit their children in front of a Television to baby-sit them while the parents fulfill, or work to fulfill, their own selfish interests. They drop off their children at day care centers for strangers to care for them. Imagine if our Blessed Mother Mary, after having received the greatest gift that any man can ever receive, the infant Jesus, God and Man, dropped Him off with godless strangers to care for Him. Parents, due to their selfish, materialistic, and covetous nature, have shirked their duty to bring children into the world and then educate and train them to be pious, faithful and obedient Catholics, so that they may have a hope to save their souls. “The having of children, they esteem grievous and unwelcome. Many at least with this view have even paid money to be childless, and have mutilated nature, not only killing the newborn, but even acting to prevent their beginning to live.” (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 28:5, A.D. 391)

“Whence women, reputed believers, began to resort to drugs for producing sterility, and to gird themselves round, so to expel what was being conceived on account of their not wishing to have a child either by a slave or by any paltry fellow, for the sake of their family and excessive wealth. Behold, into how great impiety that lawless one [the Devil] has proceeded, by inculcating adultery and murder at the same time!” (St. Hippolytus of Rome, *Refutation of All Heresies*, Book IX, Chapter 7, A.D. 225)

In truth, “No woman should take drugs for purposes of abortion, nor should she kill her children that have been conceived or are already born. If anyone does this, she should know that before Christ’s tribunal she will have to plead her case in the presence of those she has killed. Moreover, women should not take diabolical draughts [contraceptive drugs] with the purpose of not being able to conceive children. A woman who does this ought to realize that she will be guilty of as many murders as the number of children she might have borne. I would like to know whether a woman of nobility who takes deadly drugs to prevent conception wants her maids or tenants to do so. Just as every woman wants slaves born for her so that they may serve her, so she herself should nurse all the children she conceives, or entrust them to others for rearing. Otherwise, she may refuse to conceive children or, what is more serious, be willing to kill souls which might have been good Christians. Now, with what kind of a conscience does she desire slaves to be born of her servants, when she herself refuses to bear children who might become Christians?” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon 44:2*)

The following question can truly be asked to all those evil and impure people who kill their children or who use any form of birth-control: “Why do you sow where the field is eager to destroy the fruit, where there are medicines of sterility, where there is murder before birth? [NFP and contraception] You do not even let a harlot remain only a harlot, but you make her a murderess as well. . . . Indeed, it is something worse than murder, and I do not know what to call it; for she does not kill what is formed but prevents its formation. What then? Do you condemn the gift of God and fight with his laws? . . . Yet such turpitude. . . . the matter still seems indifferent to many men -- even to many men having wives. In this indifference of the married men there is greater evil filth; for then poisons are prepared, not against the womb of a prostitute, but against your injured wife. Against her are these innumerable tricks.” (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Romans 24*, A.D. 391)

Also, in *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, by St. Augustine: “Sometimes lustful cruelty, or better cruel lust, leads one to take contraceptive drugs, and, if they do not work, kill the living infant in the womb. Or they abort it before it is born, because they would rather have the child die in the uterus than live. If both spouses subsequently agreed to this they are not really

husband and wife. If they intended this from the start, their union was not marriage but debauchery. If only one intended this, I dare say that she or he was merely her husband's whore or his wife's paramour." (Quoted by Gratian, in *Marriage Canons From The Decretum*, Case Thirty-Two, Question II, C.7)

They work harder and are not at peace

Spouses who use contraception to limit the number of children actually increase their burden instead of lessening it. It does not matter if they have small or large families. Even spouses that have large families who then decide to use contraception fall under the same curse from God as those who use contraception and have small families. What the faithless do not see is that God punishes them by making them work much harder than they would if they did not use contraception. They work harder as a result of their sins, which are selfish in nature. All the work they do is for carnal purposes, to support and maintain a gluttonous and extravagant lifestyle, at least that is their goal even if they have not achieved it to their satisfaction. In reality gluttons and materialistic men are never satisfied no matter how much they have, thus they are disquieted most of the time and in many ways. *"The eye of the covetous man is insatiable in his portion of iniquity: he will not be satisfied till he consume his own soul, drying it up."* (Ecclesiasticus 14:9) *"There is no peace to the wicked."* (Isaiah 57:21)

The sin of materialism they are afflicted with causes them to covetously desire fancy homes with all the modern conveniences and gadgets, fancy new cars, two vacations or more a year, etc. All this has caused them to work harder than if they had a larger unplanned family and lived frugally. How often do we hear them say, "I have all these things but no time to enjoy them?" They run around like chickens with their heads cut off, every which way, busy about much, with no time to contemplate on what is really important. One of Satan's main ploys is to keep men so busy that they cannot think about God. Remember Satan's ploy against the Israelites. Satan, speaking through Pharaoh, increased the workload of the Israelites so they would not have time to worship God. "Moses and Aaron went in, and said to Pharaoh: Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Let my people go, that they may sacrifice to me in the desert... The king of Egypt said to them: Why do you Moses and Aaron draw off the people from their works? Get you gone to your burdens. ... Therefore he commanded the same day the overseers of the works, and the task-masters of the people, saying: You shall give straw no more to the people to make brick, as before; but let them go and gather straw. And you shall lay upon them the task of bricks, which they did before; neither shall you diminish any thing thereof, for they are idle, and therefore they cry, saying: Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let them be oppressed with works, and let them fulfill them." (Exodus 5:1. 4,6-9)

If men do not have proper time to think about God, not just a fleeting thought, they have no hope of finding Him. Just look around any city and you will see people running hither and thither going about at a mad pace with barely enough time to say hello to anyone. You do not see people talking with one another at leisure anymore on street corners or in parks. *“Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life: and that day come upon you suddenly.”* (Luke 21:34-36) It is only when people soberly think, contemplate, and talk that there can be any hope for them to find God. This is not a guarantee that they will find God, but without it there is no hope at all. *“Without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that cometh to God must believe that he is: and is a rewarder to them that seek him.”* (Hebrews 11:6) *“Seek and you shall find.”* (Matthew 7:7) Those who seek God with a true and unfeigned heart will find God and godly peace because they are the elect who are of good will.

Parents do not even have time to spend with their own children, thus they invented the worldly evil slogan, “Quality time over quantity.” This is another tradition of men that has done away with God’s commandment to raise and educate godly children in the Catholic religion. Parents imagine they can spend around one hour a day with their children, heaping on them a false, worldly love, many times bribing them by giving them what ever they want and then ignore them the other 23 hours. If the infant needs his diaper changed outside the quality time limit, then he must sit in his mess until his scheduled visit from his mom, or she could get someone else to do her duty. Children need 24-hour care, not just one, two, three, or twelve hours a day. Raising godly children is a full time job. It means cooking, cleaning, teaching, and vigilance every hour of every day of every year. Yes, it is a duty, and woe to those who shirk it. For surely as God is the God of the Holy Catholic Church, He will abandon you also, just as you have abandoned your own children, by your refusal to raise and educate them in holiness and the Catholic faith. He will let you sit in the mess of your own sins.

St. Augustine, *On The Natural Good of Marriage*, A.D. 419: “With respect, however, to what I ascribed to **the nature of marriage, that the male and the female are united together as associates for procreation**, and consequently do not defraud each other (forasmuch as every associated state has a natural abhorrence of a fraudulent companion), although even men without faith possess this palpable blessing of nature, yet, since they use it not in faith, they only turn it to evil and sin. In like manner, therefore, the marriage of believers converts to the use of righteousness that carnal concupiscence by which the flesh lusts against the Spirit. [Gal. 5:17] **For they entertain the firm purpose of generating offspring to be regenerated -- that**

the children who are born of them as children of the world may be born again and become sons of God. Wherefore all parents who do not beget children with this intention, this will, this purpose, of transferring them from being members of the first man into being members of Christ, but boast as unbelieving parents over unbelieving children—however circumspect they be in their cohabitation, studiously limiting it to the begetting of children—really have no conjugal chastity in themselves.” (On Marriage and Concupiscence, Book I, Chapter 5)

If a person truly loved his own soul and the souls of his spouse and children, he would first and foremost do whatever he must to procure eternal salvation for himself and his family. If the father and mother have done their duty well, let them say in all humility, “*We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do.*” (Luke 17:10) In other words, do not pat yourselves on the back, for you have only done what you must do if you want to have a hope to be saved and enter Heaven. “Undoubtedly, by the eternal law, which requires the preservation of natural order, and forbids the transgression of it, conjugal intercourse should take place only for the procreation of children, and after the celebration of marriage, so as to maintain the bond of peace.” (St. Augustine, *Against Faustus*, Book XXII, Section 61, A.D. 400)

The evil fruit of disobedience

Even when parents and children are home and at rest they sit in front of the Television and get brainwashed. Perverted families look at perverted shows about perverted families, while not even talking with their own family members. They live through the perverted families they see on Television and imitate them. They turn fantasy into reality, thus their lives have become nightmares. They have become robots with no true personalities, who are programmed to sin without the least pang of conscience. God, indeed, punishes these perverted families by the natural consequences of their sins. “*By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented.*” (Wisdom 11:17) One of these punishments is disobedient wives and children. Thus you have families in which the natural order of hierarchical submission is turned upside down and the resultant discord that follows. “As for my people, their oppressors have stripped them, and women have ruled over them... I will give children to be their princes, and the effeminate shall rule over them... And the people shall rush one upon another, and every man against his neighbor: the child shall make a tumult against the ancient, and the base against the honorable.” (Isaiah 3:12, 4-5) “And the brother shall betray his brother unto death, and the father his son; and children shall rise up against their parents and shall work their death.” (Mark 13:12)

When wives disobey their husbands and children rise up against their parents, husbands and parents act surprised! But by what right do they have to complain? Have they not fostered rebellion in their homes? Because they have rebelled against God, fallen-away Catholics being the worst of all, rebellion is in the midst of them: “*Because it is like the sin of witchcraft, to rebel: and like the crime of idolatry, to refuse to obey.*” (1 Kings 15:23) Because they would not obey God, obedience is not rendered to them when it is due. Where does it all end? It ends in most cases in adultery, separation, or divorce and sinful second unions that are not marriages (see [The Annulment Fiasco – The Vatican II Sect’s De Facto acceptance of Divorce and Remarriage](#)). In other cases it maintains an illusion of a marriage and family, in which the spouses and children are alienated from one another, each going about their own selfish interests. These perverted families are cold and sterile with happy-faces pasted in front of their true faces of greed, selfishness, pride, envy, hopelessness, despair, melancholy, boredom, restlessness, the root being hatred toward the true God. There is only one remedy, and that is to come to God with one’s whole heart and soul by becoming Catholic in word and deed before it is too late.

Pope Pius XI, *Ingravescentibus Malis* (# 1), On the Rosary, 1937: “There is no remedy for the ever-growing evils of our times except a return to Our Lord Jesus Christ and to His most holy precepts. Truly, only He “hath the words of eternal life” (cf. John 6:69), and individuals and society can only fall into immediate and miserable ruin if they ignore the majesty of God and repudiate His Law.”

St. Pope Pius X, *Communium Rerum* (# 24), 1909: “More bitter shall be the consequences of these threats when the vices of society are being multiplied, when the sin of rulers and of the people consists especially in the exclusion of God and in rebellion against the Church of Christ: that double social apostasy which is the deplorable fount of anarchy, corruption, and endless misery for the individual and for society.”

Honorable continence and chastity

One of the times conception can legally be deferred is if the spouses agree to abstain from marital relations through virtuous chastity for a period of time. They must then abstain altogether from the marital act, both during the infertile periods as well as the fertile periods. This is referred to by Pope Pius XI as “virtuous continence” in *Casti Connubii*, where he discusses the **Vices Opposed To Christian Marriage:**

“And now, Venerable Brethren, We shall explain in detail the evils opposed to each of the benefits of matrimony. **First consideration is due the offspring, which many have the audacity to call the disagreeable burden of matrimony and which they say is to be carefully avoided by married people *not through virtuous continence, but by frustrating the marriage act.* Some justify this criminal abuse on the ground that they are weary of children and wish to gratify their desires without their consequent burden.” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, # 54)**

“Virtuous continence” or abstinence is neither virtuous nor honorable if spouses have marital relations during the infertile period while having deliberately planned to avoid having relations during the fertile period. The intent is not to abstain from marital relations. Rather, the intent is to have marital relations while having planned to prevent conception.

To deliberately remain chaste during the fertile period while having marital relations only during the infertile period is dishonorable continence and is chastity for Satan. It is chastity in the service of lust, and that is not true chastity. Far from honorable is this dark and dastardly deed. The only reason the spouses remain chaste during the fertile period is so they will not have children while at the same time having planned to commit the sexual act as soon as the fertile period is over. This is only pretend chastity; pretend continence. “You do not want to have a child? Settle a pious agreement with your husband; let him agree to an end of childbearing in accord with the virtue of chastity. The only sterility of a very pious wife is chastity.” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 52:4)

Despite this fact, the overwhelming majority of NFP users will actually have the boldness to claim that they are practicing “abstinence” or “continence” while using “Natural Family Planning,” just as if there was something “virtuous” or “good” about their dastardly deed of avoiding the children that God wanted to bless them with. In truth, Pope Pius XI rightly calls these people “criminals” and their evil and filthy action a “criminal abuse” in the above mentioned encyclical.

Again, the sin of contraception is incurred when two conditions are met, the planning to engage in the marital act while also having planned to prevent conception: “Who is he who cannot warn that no woman may take a potion so that she is unable to conceive or condemns in herself the nature which God willed to be fecund? **As often as she could have conceived or given birth, of that many homicides she will be held guilty, and,**

unless she undergoes suitable penance, she will be damned by eternal death in Hell. **If a woman does not wish to have children, let her enter into a religious agreement with her husband; for chastity is the sole sterility of a Christian woman.**” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 1:12, A.D. 522)

Medical condition, danger to the mother or child, does not excuse

Honorable continence can also be practiced if the wife has a medical condition in which pregnancy would endanger her life. If the husband and wife decide to have relations, they must do so with the intention to beget children if God wills they should have children and be prepared to risk the life of the mother; for neither abortion, contraception nor NFP is allowed in case of a medical problem on the part of the mother.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 64), Dec. 31, 1930: “As to the ‘medical and therapeutic indication’ to which, using their own words, we have made reference, Venerable Brethren, however much we may pity the mother whose health and even life is imperiled in the performance of the duty allotted to her by nature, nevertheless, what could ever be a sufficient reason for excusing in any way the direct murder of the innocent? This is precisely what we are dealing with here. Whether inflicted upon the mother or upon the child, it is against the precept of God and the law of nature: “Thou shalt not kill”. The life of each is equally sacred, and no one has the power, not even the public authority, to destroy it... Upright and skillful doctors strive most praiseworthy to guard and preserve the lives of both mother and child; on the contrary, those show themselves most unworthy of the noble medical profession who encompass the death of one or the other, through a pretense at practicing medicine or through motives of misguided pity... Holy Mother Church very well understands and clearly appreciates all that is said regarding the health of the mother and the danger to her life. And who would not grieve to think of these things? **Who is not filled with the greatest admiration when he sees a mother risking her life with heroic fortitude, that she may preserve the life of the offspring which she has conceived?** God alone, all bountiful and all merciful as He is, can reward her for the fulfillment of the office allotted to her by nature, and will assuredly repay her in a measure full to overflowing.”

If the wife’s life is threatened by bearing children, then either the marital act is abstained from altogether by honorable continence, or it is done with the hope of conception if God wills they should have children, being ready to bear the consequences of the possible death of the

mother.

Lack of faith that God can regulate, feed, clothe, and protect families

Fallen-away Catholics exhibit their loss of the Catholic faith by a lack of faith in the God whom they profess to believe in. How does this lack of faith in God exhibit itself with those who practice contraception? They deny God's power to open and close wombs, to feed, shelter, and provide for all the other necessities of their families. Many verbally profess belief in miracles, while in their hearts they do not really believe. Many do not even profess belief in miracles.

Do the couples who use NFP, or the priests who promote it, possess supernatural faith in the providence of God? Do they believe that God is the one who sends life? Does anyone have a right to have 3 children when God willed them to have 10? God is perfectly aware of each couple's needs, and he knows precisely what they can handle. Those with the true Catholic faith should be totally unconcerned with charts and calendars. These are all unnatural instruments which frustrate God's will. Disregard this nonsense and accept the fact that God will not send you any children that you cannot handle. He will not burden anyone with anything too heavy, for His yoke is always easy and His burden always light. "For the virtue of each [good] thing then discovers itself when it is brought to its own fitting work... For instance, wine is given for cheerfulness, not drunkenness, bread for nourishment, **sexual intercourse for the procreation of children.**" (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians*, Homily XII, Colossians iv. 12-18, Ver. 18)

God feeds the birds which neither reap nor sow

The word of God condemns anyone who attempts to excuse the mortal sin of contraception for any reason, one being the economic excuse. Those who use the economic excuse faithlessly say that if they have too many children they will not be able to feed or clothe them, or provide their other necessities. These fallen-away Catholics do not really believe in the word and power of God.

Regarding the so-called "necessities" and "grave circumstances" that so many people excuse themselves with today, Our Lord Jesus Christ explicitly teaches us in the Holy Gospels how we are to behave on such occasions: "Therefore I say to you: Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. The life is more than the meat: and the body is more than the raiment. Consider the ravens, for they sow not, neither do they reap, neither have they storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them. How much are you more

valuable than they? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. Now, if God clothe in this manner the grass that is to-day in the field and to-morrow is cast into the oven: how much more you, O ye of little faith? *seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice: and all these things shall be added unto you.*" (Luke 12:22-24, 27-28, 31)

Dear reader, you will either truly believe in the word of God or not. It does no good to say you believe while your actions prove otherwise. "*Let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*" (1 John 3:18) Your professed faith is tested when it comes time to put it into action. "*Faith without works is dead.*" (James 2:20) "*Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*" (James 1:22) Only those are blessed who hear the word of God and keep it. "*Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.*" (Luke 11:28) Do you really believe God can feed, clothe, and shelter your family no matter how big it is? "[Some] complain of the scantiness of their means, and allege that they have not enough for bringing up more children, as though, in truth, their means were in [their] power... or God did not daily make the rich poor and the poor rich. Wherefore, if any one on any account of poverty shall be unable to bring up children, it is better to abstain from relations with his wife." (Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 6:20, A.D. 307)

Woe to faithless fallen-away Catholics who say they cannot feed their families due to difficult economic conditions, implying God cannot provide for them. Nothing is impossible with God.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (#'s 60-61), Dec. 31, 1930: "We are deeply touched by the sufferings of those parents who, in extreme want, experience great difficulty in rearing their children. However, they should take care lest the calamitous state of their external affairs should be the occasion for a much more calamitous error. No difficulty can arise that justifies putting aside the law of God which prohibits all acts intrinsically evil.

There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the Grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted. This truth of Christian faith is expressed by the teaching of the Council of Trent: 'Let no one be so rash as to assert that which the Fathers of the Council have placed under anathema, namely that there are precepts of God impossible for the just to observe. God does not ask the impossible, but by His commands, instructs you to do what you are able, to pray for what you are not able that He may help you.'"

Pope Pius XI is crystal clear: not even “in extreme want” may people justify “putting aside the law of God which prohibits all acts intrinsically evil”, thus condemning all forms of contraception and birth control. He then proceeds to give a cure for those who are living “in extreme want” by saying that: “There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the Grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their **chastity unspotted**” and “**God does not ask the impossible, but by His commands, instructs you to do what you are able, to pray for what you are not able that He may help you.**”

God will always honor and bless a couple who seeks to please Him first and foremost in this life by doing what He commands. This is an infallible truth found in His Holy Word, and all people who wish to save their own souls – which is the only thing that really matters in this short life – must of course strive to please Our Lord in every way possible. “*And he will love thee and multiply thee, and will bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy vintage, thy oil, and thy herds, and the flocks of thy sheep upon the land, for which he swore to thy fathers that he would give it thee.*” (Deuteronomy 7:13)

If God wills for a couple to have none, few, or many children, He will regulate conception during the marital act so that it will be so. Dear reader, do you believe that? Prove it by condemning contraception and never practice it again. Always desire and hope that conception should take place during every marital act, even if by a miracle. Do not take the place of God. Let God regulate whether or not conception occurs during your marital act. He will not burden you with anything too heavy, for His yoke is always easy and His burden always light.

St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book II, Chapter 7:20, A.D. 421: “He [Julian] asserts that woman was given to man only for the purpose of generation, a matter which you thought it necessary to argue so long in vain, as if any of us denied this statement. ... God cares for the universe, you will find that this must please God more in which there is the cause of the universe... Therefore, because the propagation of the human race could not be from the man alone, God said it is not good for man to be alone. ... [Therefore] He did not permit Cain, guilty of fratricide, to perish before he had generated children. Therefore, woman was given to man for the sake of the generation of human posterity.”

Famine, plague, war, exile, and death are not due to big families

If you cannot feed your family it is not because of the size of your family. If God is not shunned by the deliberate prevention of conception, then God will certainly provide for the family. God will make available all they need, provided the family does not incur God's wrath for other reasons, or if God sees they should die as persecuted martyrs. To suffer persecution for God, such as martyrdom by starvation, is the greatest provision God can give, by providing the soul with immediate entry into Heaven as a saint. Famine, plague, all sorts of calamity, or martyrdom that befalls families is not due to the number of children, but because of disobedience or obedience to God. When God strikes a land with famine, or similar conditions that make it impossible for families to sustain themselves, they all die, no matter how small or large their families are. The punishment is not due to the size of the family. When God allows persecution and martyrdom to come upon His faithful chosen to test their faith and to witness to unbelievers, they die in obedience to God. Their death has nothing whatsoever to do with the number of children they have. God has demonstrated many times how He protects His faithful while at the same time sending famine and death to obstinate evildoers.

“The Lord will take away from thee all sickness: and the grievous infirmities of Egypt, which thou knowest, he will not bring upon thee, but upon thy enemies.”

(Deuteronomy 7:15) “The Lord will make a wonderful difference between the possessions of Israel and the possessions of the Egyptians, that nothing at all shall die of those things that belong to the children of Israel... The Lord therefore did this thing the next day: and all the beasts of the Egyptians died, but of the beasts of the children of Israel there died not one.” (Exodus 9:4, 6) “Moses stretched forth his rod towards heaven, and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and lightning running along the ground: and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt... And the hail destroyed through all the land of Egypt all things that were in the fields, both man and beast: and the hail smote every herb of the field, and it broke every tree of the country. Only in the land of Gessen, where the children of Israel were, the hail fell not.” (Exodus 9:22-26)

What they fear comes upon them in unknown ways

“*That which the wicked feareth, shall come upon him.*” (Proverbs 10:24) When spouses deliberately plan to prevent conception, taking the place of God, God abandons them and their families. Many times people cry out to God for help when they are in dire straights. When all is well they disobey or ignore Him. If they should appeal to God in a time of need, God says to them, “You abandoned Me by following your own sinful ways, now provide for your needs yourselves!”

Proverbs 1:25-31 “You have despised all my counsel, and have neglected my reprehensions. I also will laugh in your destruction, and will mock when that shall come to you which you feared. When sudden calamity shall fall on you, and destruction, as a tempest, shall be at hand: when tribulation and distress shall come upon you: Then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear: they shall rise in the morning, and shall not find me: Because they have hated instruction, and received not the fear of the Lord, Nor consented to my counsel, but despised all my reproof. Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and shall be filled with their own devices.”

NFP is a tradition of men that replaces the law of God

NFP is simply a tradition of men. It has eliminated the commandment of God that forbids contraception, by making it seem that NFP is not contraception simply because physical devices or techniques are not used during the marital act. They ignore the very heart of this commandment of God by violating it in a most deceptive manner. The ancestors of the Pharisees that Jesus condemned, the apostate and Talmudic Jews and their false religion of apostate Judaism have carried on these traditions of men to absurd proportions. One such teaching is that it is only murder if one directly kills another, such as by stabbing, shooting, or choking, etc. They teach it is not murder if one locks a man in a room with no food or water and does not give him any. In this case, they teach, the man dies from thirst and starvation, and not by the hands of any man; thus no murder was committed (Babylonian Talmud: Tractate Sanhedrin, Folio 77a). In truth, these apostate Jews are a perfect parallel to those who practice NFP. The tradition of men teaches that as long as a physical device or technique is not used during the marital act, the planning ahead of time by charting cycles to prevent conception is not a crime.

In every case a deliberate plan is made before the act

Married couples that attempt to frustrate conception while engaging in the marital act must formulate a deliberate plan in order to do so. In every case they deliberately formulate a plan to prevent conception before the marital act. Whether they plan to use physical contraceptive devices during the act, or plan to withdraw during the act, or plan to take birth control pills that prevent ovulation before the act, or plan to use NFP by only having relations during the infertile period, or they plan by charting fertile and infertile periods, it is exactly the same plan. In every case the goal of the plan is the same: to prevent conception while engaging in the marital act. In a sense it could be said about NFP that a contraceptive is placed over the

fertile period while engaging in the marital act during the infertile period, or, the husband withdraws from the act during the fertile period while engaging in it during the infertile period, or, instead of preventing ovulation with a pill, it is prevented by charting cycles. Dear reader, open your eyes and ears, can you not see that the intention is the same in every case! Can you not see that NFP is contraception! **“Dost thou not know what thou art at? Thou marriest a wife for chastity, and procreation of children...”** (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians*, Homily XII, Colossians iv. 12-18, Ver. 18)

It is intrinsically evil when spouses plan to have sexual relations while also having planned to hinder the conception of the child that God wanted to bless them with. It does not matter in what way the spouses plan to prevent conception. The principle is the same in all cases: the deliberate prevention of conception (bearing children) by the spouses while engaging in the marital act. Guilt of mortal sin occurs when these two conditions are met, either in the mind or in the act. Our Lord teaches us that all sin proceeds from the heart, and manifests itself in men's actions. *“The things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man. . . . For from the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies.”* (Matthew 15:11, 19)

St. Augustine, *City of God* 7:30, A.D. 426: **“And now, to begin to go over those works of the one true God... we worship that God who has appointed... the union of male and female for the propagation of offspring...”**

The natural cycles of a fruit tree

A fruit tree has its natural cycles for fertility and infertility. There is a proper time to fertilize the tree. If a gardener fertilized the tree when it was not fertile nothing will come of it. If he were a good gardener he would only fertilize it during its known fertile cycle in order for it to conceive and thus produce fruit. Now, what is to be said of a gardener who only fertilizes the tree during its infertile cycle, while deliberately not fertilizing it during its fertile period? He would have made an unnatural use of the natural cycles of the tree, so unnatural that the people would think him either insane or a hater of fruit. Bad enough, would they say he is, if they see him stupidly wasting time and fertilizing material when nothing can come of it, but worse beyond compare is he when he deliberately stops fertilizing the tree just when it is fertile. Indeed, “Dare not to do the deeds of Sodom,” St. John Chrysostom says, “lest ye suffer the lot of Sodom... Even as they devised a barren intercourse, not having for its end the procreation of children, so did God bring on them such a punishment...” (*On the Statues*, *Hom. XIX*; NPNF, p. 467) Commenting on the sin of Sodom St. John Chrysostom writes,

“How great is that sin, to have forced hell to appear even before its time?” (*Hom. IV in Rom.*; NPNF, p. 358)

Now, if for some reason, not in contempt for the fruit and with the good of the tree in mind, the gardener does not want the tree to bear fruit, then he would not fertilize the tree at all. This is equivalent to honorable continence or chastity, and this state is the most honorable for married people. In truth, God loves purity and chastity so much that He often uses His chaste servants to save souls. The chaste or barren husband and wife still conceive and give birth to children, but they are of a spiritual kind, which is infinitely more valuable: **“That virginity is good I do agree. But that it is even better than marriage, this I do confess. And if you wish, I will add that it is as much better than marriage as Heaven is better than Earth, as much better as angels are better than men.”** (St. John Chrysostom, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, Vol. 2: 1116, A.D. 392)

Man plays stupid, and God will not be mocked

Some, evading the issue, say that when NFP is used, conception can still take place if God grants it. Thus, according to them, the spouses are open to conception. But if it were true that the spouses are open to conception then why all the planning by the spouses to prevent conception by only having relations during the infertile period? The sin resides in the intention of the spouses, not the fact that God may still grant conception in spite of their plan against it. The same can be said of any contraceptive device or technique. None are 100 percent guaranteed to prevent conception. Even those who were sterilized have conceived. Sadly, these are the children that are referred to by these bastard parents as mistakes. The children they bear will be children of fornication whom God will use to torment the parents. Question this not, O blind men, who love evil and love to play stupid. Do you not see the discord in your own families, the rebellion of children against their rebellious parents? Sin begets sin. In that which you sin, you shall be punished. Think not that God is like sinful men in that He lets sin go unpunished. Open your eyes and observe the history of fallen man. Has God ever allowed sin to go unpunished? Look at the lust that infects the fallen-away priests who promote NFP?

Examine your conscience now, all you who use NFP, and confess your mortal sins before it is too late. Examine your conscience real good and ask yourself if you had **deliberately planned to prevent conception** when you performed the marital act. It does not matter what the lust filled faithless priest tells you. He cannot quell your conscience, because this sin violates the law God has written upon your heart. This priest will not be able to console you

when you are both in Hell. Take to heart Pope Pius XI's warning in *Casti Connubii*: "They are blind and leaders of the blind: and if the blind lead the blind, **both fall into the pit.**" The priests and the people they are leading astray will all go to Hell for this sin alone.

A last most important point, there is no remission of sin outside the Catholic Church and that is where most of you readers are. The infallible Catholic dogma which teaches that "*Outside the Church there is no salvation nor remission of sins*" have no exceptions according to the teachings of the Church (Pope Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctum*, A.D. 1302). You must learn the Catholic Faith and abjure from your heresies or schisms and thus enter the Catholic Church before your sins can be forgiven.

Pope Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctum*, A.D. 1302: "Urged by faith, we are obliged to believe and to maintain that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and also apostolic. We believe in her firmly and we confess with simplicity that outside of her there is neither salvation nor the remission of sins, as the Spouse in the Canticles [Sgs. 6:8] proclaims: 'One is my dove, my perfect one. She is the only one, the chosen of her who bore her,' and she represents one sole mystical body whose Head is Christ and the head of Christ is God [1 Cor. 11:3]. In her then is one Lord, one faith, one baptism [Eph. 4:5]. There had been at the time of the deluge only one ark of Noah, prefiguring the one Church, which ark, having been finished to a single cubit, had only one pilot and guide, i.e., Noah, and we read that, outside of this ark, all that subsisted on the earth was destroyed."

The root of the whole problem that leads to sins of immorality and sins against the Natural Law and the loss of the Catholic Faith is evil practices like NFP. Bad lives coupled with intentions of persevering in sin always precedes before a person falls into more grievous errors, heresies or schisms. For when man refuses to heed the Natural Law and the conscience that God has imprinted on his heart, God allows him to fall into more grievous errors and heresies because of his negligence and scorn of God's divine and natural laws.

Please read this text called "[Important Spiritual Information You Must Know About to be Saved](#)" to see if you are living in some mortal or venial sins that you have not yet wished to break free from. This important text addresses some of the most common sins committed by men today that they fall into Hell for.

COMMON OBJECTIONS

Objection: How can you say that the only motive that can excuse the marital act is the procreation of children? It is not against the Natural Law or the Law of the Church to excuse intercourse for the sake of pleasure, health, or love. You are wrong when you say that one must perform the marital act for the purpose or motive of begetting children, and that the procreation of children is the only primary purpose or motive that a couple can use to excuse the marital act. There are many primary purposes or motives of marriage that excuse the marital act from being sinful. One can perform the marital act for many primary reasons such as for the sole purpose or motive of health, satisfying the fleshly lust, quenching concupiscence, mutual help, paying the marital debt, as well as for cultivating mutual love and unitive purposes. Any one of these purposes or motives are enough to perform the marital act in a lawful way, and this proves that spouses can perform sexual acts that are not intended or able to procreate in themselves.

Answer: Not so, since the Church and Pope Pius XI, as we have seen, teaches that the primary end or motive of the marital sexual act is the procreation of children, while he describes the other ends or motives of the marital act (if spouses choose to perform the act for these reasons) as secondary ends or motives that are not necessary for the act to be lawful and that are dependent on and which must follow the primary motive of procreation in order for the sexual act to be lawful. The teaching of the Natural Law as well as that of the Church is clear that “***the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children***” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* #54) and this is also why Pope Pius XI teaches that spouses are not forbidden to consider the secondary ends of marriage “such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love [unitive purpose], and the quieting of concupiscence... so long as they are subordinated to the primary end [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN] and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.” This proves that all other motives than the procreation of children are secondary ends or motives.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: “**For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial right there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence** which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved [that is, all sexual acts must be able to procreate in themselves, which means that no unnatural and non-procreative form of a sexual act can ever be performed without sin].”

This means that the primary end or purpose of procreation (in thought and action) can *not* be made subordinate or subject to the secondary ends or purposes and that the primary end must always exist for the marital act to be lawful while the secondary ends or motives are not needed at all in order to lawfully perform the marital act. The secondary ends “such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, [unitive purpose] and the quieting of concupiscence” can follow after the primary end or purpose of begetting children if the spouses choose this, but the secondary ends or motives are not absolutely needed to lawfully perform the marital act in the same way as the primary purpose of begetting children, nor is the secondary motive of quieting concupiscence meritorious even though it is allowed. This is also exactly how Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Bible teaches us to view the sexual pleasure and the marital act, since it is a higher calling to live for the Spirit than for our own selfish and fleshly desires. “*And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust** do I take my sister to wife, **but only for the love of posterity, [children] in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.***” (The Holy Bible, Tobias 8:9)

While some have erroneously asserted that the motive of paying the marital debt to one’s spouse can be used as a primary motive to excuse the marital act from sin, we see that Pope Pius XI defines *the paying of the marital debt* as a secondary end or motive, by using the words “*mutual aid*” to explain its nature, since according to God’s Law and Saint Paul in the Holy Bible, a spouse must **help** his or her spouse by paying the marital debt when the other spouse asks for it in order to not allow the requesting spouse to become tempted to fall into sins of sensuality (1 Corinthians 7).

Many other heretics of our own times also claim that the “unitive” purpose is a primary motive of the marital act along with the motive of procreation, but we can see that Pope Pius XI relegates the unitive purpose, which he calls “the cultivating of mutual love”, to a secondary purpose that are not necessary to exist in order for the act to be lawful.

In fact, the modern day proposition that health, pleasure or love might be the sole object of intercourse is a heresy that has no biblical, apostolic, patristic or medieval authority whatsoever. St. Thomas Aquinas explains in his *Summa* that: “Although it is not evil in itself to intend to keep oneself in good health, this intention becomes evil, if one intend health by means of something that is not naturally ordained for that purpose; for instance if one sought only bodily health by the sacrament of baptism, and the same applies to the marriage act in the question at issue.” (*Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5, Reply to Objection 4)

The Holy Bible confirms the fact that God wants spouses to perform the marital act for the

only purpose of procreation. The holy youth Tobias was commanded by almighty God through the Archangel Raphael to never perform the marital act for the sake of lust and that he shall be “**moved rather for love of children than for lust,**” so “**that in the seed of Abraham**” he “**mayest obtain a blessing in children**”. Tobias who was a holy and virtuous person consented to this admonishment by the holy angel and answered God in his prayer that “**not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity**”.

The Holy Bible, Tobias 6:22; 8:9 “And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust,** that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said:] And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity**, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.”

The holy youth Tobias approached his bride Sara after three days of prayer, not for fleshly lust but only for the love of posterity, having been instructed by the Archangel Raphael that to engage in the marital act he shall “be moved rather for love of children than for lust”.

According to God’s will, spouses are to engage in the marital act for the “love of posterity” (children), not for lust. No, contrary to what most people today say, the Holy Bible is clear that spouses are to come together “**only for the love of posterity**” if they want to please Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Word of God in the Bible is indeed true when it says that “**the devil has power**” over all spouses who come together for the purpose of gratifying their fleshly pleasures, giving “**themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding**”.

Tobias 6:16-17 “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will show thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. **For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.**”

It is a divine law, a dogma of the faith (*de fide*), that the primary end of marriage is procreation (bearing children) and the education of children. Pope Pius XI decrees it “is beyond the power of any human law” to teach otherwise.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 8), Dec. 31, 1930: “To take away from man the natural and primeval right of marriage, to circumscribe in any way the principal ends of marriage laid down in the beginning by God Himself in the words ‘Increase and multiply,’ is beyond the power of any human law. ... This is also expressed succinctly in the [1917] Code of Canon Law [Canon 1013]: ‘The primary end [or purpose] of marriage is the procreation and the education of children.’”

A Practical Commentary on Canon 1013 explains that: “there can be no controversy over the primary object of marriage. The perpetuation of the human race is willed by the Creator, who from the creation of mankind appointed the means for this purpose... **The Holy Office condemned the opinion defended by some recent authors who deny that the procreation of children is the primary end of matrimony, and regard its secondary ends not subordinate to its primary end but independent of it.**” (April 1, 1944; *Acta Ap. Sedis*, XXXVI, 103.)

It could not be more clear from both the Natural Law as well as the teachings of the Church that: “The primary purpose of marriage is the procreation and education of children.” (*The 1917 Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1013) Therefore, it is heresy to teach that procreation and education of children is not the only primary end of marriage.

Objection: The Bible doesn’t condemn birth control. Modern birth control methods were unknown in Bible times, and the Bible is, therefore, silent on the matter. The closest that Scripture comes to condemning birth control is Genesis chapter 38, the account of Judah’s sons Er and Onan. Onan’s motivation was selfish; he used Tamar for his own pleasure, but refused to perform his legal duty (from Deuteronomy 25:5-10) of creating an heir for his deceased brother. This passage (in Genesis 38) is often used as evidence that God does not approve of birth control. However, it was not the act of contraception that caused the Lord to put Onan to death as you say; it was Onan’s selfish motives behind the action. God did not kill Onan for practicing contraception but because he refused to obey the Law from Deuteronomy 25:5-10 that instructed brothers to raise up seed for his dead brother. This fact proves that God doesn’t directly condemn contraception in the Bible. Contraception, by definition, is merely the opposite of conception. It is not the use of contraception that is wrong or right. As we learned from Onan, it is the motivation behind the contraception that determines if it is right or wrong. Ultimately, a couple’s motives for delaying childbearing, using contraception, or even having numerous children, are between them and God. Therefore, we can find no biblical admonition against the use of birth control in and of itself.

Answer: God's law in the Old Testament did not even command the death penalty for the person who refused to create heirs to his deceased brother. **The brother who refused this duty was, as a punishment, only to be publicly disgraced!**

Deuteronomy 25:5-10 "When brethren dwell together, and one of them dieth without children, the wife of the deceased shall not marry to another: but his brother shall take her, and raise up seed for his brother: And the first son he shall have of her, he shall call by his name, that his name be not abolished out of Israel. **But if he will not take his brother's wife, who by law belongeth to him, the woman shall go to the gate of the city, and call upon the ancients, and say: My husband's brother refuseth to raise up his brother's name in Israel: and will not take me to wife.** And they shall cause him to be sent for forthwith, and shall ask him. If he answer: I will not take her to wife: **The woman shall come to him before the ancients, and shall take off his shoe from his foot, and spit in his face, and say: So shall it be done to the man, that will not build up his brother's house: And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of the unshod.**"

This Bible verse shows us that disobeying the Law of the Old Testament that directed a man to marry his dead brother's wife in order to raise up seed for his brother, was not something that was a particularly serious infraction in the eyes of the Lord, for if God would have considered this act of disobedience as a great crime, He would have instituted a punishment that was much more severe than being only a little disgraced or mocked, which almost is no punishment at all.

According to *The Book of Genesis*, the reason for why Onan was killed was because: "*He knowing that the children should not be his, when he went in to his brother's wife, spilled his seed upon the ground, lest children should be born in his brother's name.*" Notice how clearly this biblical text shows that the reason Onan did this "**detestable thing**" was "**lest children should be born in his brother's name**", *thus showing us that the act of performing the marital act while taking steps to hinder procreation is hated by God.* This absolutely proves that a person who performs the marital sexual act with an intention opposed to procreation is condemned according to God's Holy Law.

Genesis 38:8-10 "Juda, therefore said to Onan his son: 'Go in to thy brother's wife and marry her, that thou mayst raise seed to thy brother.' He knowing that the children should not be his, when he went in to his brother's wife, spilled his seed upon the

ground, **lest children should be born in his brother's name.** And therefore the Lord slew him, because he did a detestable thing.”

Therefore, it is abundantly clear from the Bible itself that Onan was not killed for his deed **of refusing to fulfill his duty to create heirs for his deceased brother**, as the protestants claim, since this act was only punished with a public disgrace (Deuteronomy 25:5-10). What deed then was Onan killed for? Obviously, **he was killed for the wicked and selfish deed of having sexual relations while practicing contraception; and for being against conception.** Truly, if Onan did not want to raise up heirs for his deceased brother, he should not have had sexual relations with her while pretending to fulfill the marital duty of procreating children (even though he did not); and obviously, he must not practice coitus interruptus while selfishly indulging in the sex act, since this is an act against nature.

God did not even ordain for a man to die or even be hurt if he refused to raise up seed for his deceased brother according to the Old Testament Law, **but when Onan performed the actual marital sexual act without wishing to beget children, God instantly killed him in order to show us the hatred God have of those who do not excuse the marital sexual act with the absolutely necessary motive of procreation.** Thus, the refusal to not raise up children for one's brother is not a very grave crime in the eyes of God as long as one does not perform the marital act, but performing the marital sexual act without wanting to have children is a very grave crime according to God's Holy Law. Since God foresaw the great evil and selfishness of many in the future (and especially in our own time) who were to practice contraceptive sexual acts, and in order to help future generations of Jews and Christians to abstain from all contraceptive acts: it is clear that God killed Onan to set an example for future generations.

Since God utterly detests the act of contraception, God also sometimes allows the evil demons who incite men and women to commit this act, to kill them when they consent to their temptations, as is recorded in the Book of Tobit, where the seven husbands of Sarah was killed; since they tried to perform the marital act for selfish and lustful reasons. As in the case from Tobit, it seems clear that since Onan wanted to selfishly and lustfully enjoy the sex act without intending having children, as God's holy law requires, that a demon, or the evil angel Asmodeus that kills lustful and wicked people, was permitted by God to slay him (cf. Tobias 3:8). Haydock commentary explains: “[Genesis 38] Ver. 10. *Slew him*, perhaps by the hand of *evil angels*, Psalm lxxvii. 49. Asmodeus, &c., who slew the libidinous husbands of Sara. (Tobias iii. 7[8].) (Menochius)”

The design of this institution of raising up seed for a brother – which was not originated by Moses, but came down from early times (Genesis 38:8) and is to be found amongst other nations than the Jews, and that even in the present day – was to preserve a family from becoming extinct and to secure the property of a family from passing into the hands of a stranger.

Thus, the claim that “*it was not the act of contraception that caused the Lord to put Onan to death; it was Onan’s selfish motives behind the action*” is of course ludicrous and false, and is easily refuted not only from the Bible itself as we have seen, but also from the writings of the Fathers. We will quote only St. Augustine:

“As St. Augustine notes, **‘Intercourse even with one’s legitimate wife is unlawful and wicked where the conception of offspring is prevented. Onan, the son of Judah, did this and the Lord killed him for it** (Gen. 38:8-10).” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* # 55; St. Augustine, *De Conjugiis Adulterinis*, Book II, Chapter 12)

Furthermore, this objection of excusing contraception is also condemned by the Holy Word of God in both an explicit and implicit way. Indeed, the Bible does have quite a lot to say about children. The Bible presents children as a gift from God (Genesis 4:1; Genesis 33:5), a heritage from the Lord (Psalm 127:3-5), a blessing from God (Luke 1:42), and a crown to the aged (Proverbs 17:6). God sometimes blesses barren women with children (Psalm 113:9; Genesis 21:1-3; 25:21-22; 30:1-2; 1 Samuel 1:6-8; Luke 1:7, 24-25). God forms children in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16). God knows children before their birth (Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15).

It’s not a couple that decides for themselves whether God should send them new life or not as the biblical verses already provided proves, but this is wholly up to God and His holy will (Matthew 6:10).

Genesis 30:1-2 “And Rachel seeing herself without children, envied her sister, and said to her husband: ‘Give me children, otherwise I shall die.’ **And Jacob being angry with her, answered: ‘Am I as God, who hath deprived thee of the fruit of thy womb?’**”

We all know that God is the One who opens the womb, the One who killeth and maketh alive. “*The Lord also remembering Rachel, heard her, **and opened her womb.***” (Genesis 30:22) In truth, “*The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to hell, and bringeth back*

again.” (1 Kings 2:6)

So why would a woman who desires to fulfill the will of God make a systematic effort to avoid God sending her a new life? What excuse could such a person possibly make for going out of her way to calculate how to have marital relations without getting pregnant with the child God was going to send? Why would a woman (or a man) who believes that God opens the womb try to avoid His opening of the womb by a meticulous and organized effort, involving birth control methods, charts, cycles or thermometers? The answer is that those who engage in such behavior as contraception selfishly turn from God (which is the essence of sin) and refuse to be open to His will.

God, and not man, is the only one that can lawfully decide whether a couple shall receive a child or not. Can you imagine what Jacob would have said to Rachel if she had discovered a new way to avoid “the Lord opening her womb?” He would probably have rebuked her as an infidel.

Objection: Natural Family Planning is a justifiable practice of birth control because it does nothing to obstruct the natural power of procreation.

Answer: Natural Family Planning obstructs the primary end of marriage, the procreation and education of children. This makes the fact that NFP does nothing to obstruct the marital act itself irrelevant.

In order to quickly refute this *most common of all objections in favor of NFP*, it will be necessary to repeat the section from the beginning of this article.

Catholic dogma teaches us that the primary purpose of marriage (and the conjugal act) is the procreation and education of children.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 17), Dec. 31, 1930: “**The primary end of marriage is the procreation and the education of children.**”

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 54), Dec. 31, 1930: “Since, therefore, **the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural powers and *purpose* sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.”

Besides this primary purpose, there are also secondary purposes for marriage, such as mutual aid, the quieting of concupiscence and the cultivating of mutual love. **But these secondary purposes must always remain subordinate to the primary purpose (or end) of marriage (the procreation and education of children).** This is the key point to remember in the discussion on NFP.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: “For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial right there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.”

Therefore, even though NFP does not directly interfere with the marital *act itself*, as its defenders love to stress, it makes no difference. **NFP is condemned because it subordinates the primary end (or purpose) of marriage and the marriage act (the procreation and education of children) to the secondary ends.**

NFP subordinates the primary end of marriage to other things, by deliberately attempting to avoid children (i.e., to avoid the primary end) while having marital relations. NFP therefore inverts the order established by God Himself. It does the very thing that Pope Pius XI solemnly teaches may not lawfully be done. And this point **crushes** all of the arguments made by those who defend NFP; because all of the arguments made by those who defend NFP focus on the marriage act itself, while they blindly ignore the fact that it makes no difference if a couple does not interfere with the act itself *if they subordinate and thwart the primary PURPOSE of marriage*.

To summarize, therefore, the only difference between artificial contraception and NFP is that artificial contraception frustrates the *power* of the marital *act itself*, while NFP *frustrates* its *primary purpose* (by subordinating the procreation of children to other things).

Objection: I know that NFP is always wrong, except for certain reasons, and in those cases it is allowable.

Answer: Pope Pius XI specifically condemns all reasons and all excuses.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 54), Dec. 31, 1930: “**BUT NO REASON, HOWEVER**

GRAVE, MAY BE PUT FORWARD by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, **those who in exercising it *deliberately* frustrate its natural powers and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.”**

No reason, however grave it may be, can make something that is intrinsically evil, such as contraception or NFP, to become good. NFP subordinates the primary purpose of the conjugal act (the procreation and education of children) to other things and is therefore evil and against nature and infallibly condemned by the Church, the Bible, and God. **No reason can make it good or lawful.**

And this brings us to another point. If NFP is not a sin – if it is simply “natural,” as they say – then why can’t married couples use NFP during the whole marriage and have zero children? If NFP is not a sin, then all women are perfectly free to use this method of birth control to phase out of existence all children so that not even one is born! But basically all of the defenders of NFP would admit that it would be immoral and gravely sinful to use NFP to avoid all new life. But when they make this admission they are admitting that NFP is a sin; otherwise (which God may forbid) let them confess that it can be used by all couples for any reason to avoid all children.

Objection: Everyone admits that “Natural Family Planning” can be used to help a woman achieve a pregnancy. Therefore, the same method can be used to avoid pregnancy.

Answer: There is nothing wrong with achieving a pregnancy.

If a couple is using Natural Family Planning to gain a pregnancy it is lawful, because in this case they are trying to fulfill the primary end of marriage (the procreation and education of children). If a couple is using Natural Family Planning to avoid pregnancy it is unlawful, because in this case they are trying to avoid the primary end of marriage (the procreation and education of children) while selfishly engaging in the marital act.

Objection: In *Casti Connubii* itself, Pope Pius XI teaches that spouses can engage in the marital act during known infertile periods and not commit sin. Spouses who use Natural Family Planning attempt to only have marital relations during the known infertile periods,

thus they commit no sin.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*: “Nor are those considered as acting against nature who, in the married state, use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons either of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth. For in matrimony as well as in the use of matrimonial rights there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider, **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.”

Answer: It’s permissible to engage in the marital act during the known infertile periods, SO LONG AS CONCEPTION IS NOT DELIBERATELY FRUSTRATED BY AN ORGANIZED EFFORT.

Yes, Pope Pius XI taught that married couples could use their marriage right in the infertile periods of the wife (or when there is a defect of nature or age which prevents new life from being conceived). But he did not teach that they could designedly restrict the marital act ONLY to the infertile periods to avoid a pregnancy, as in Natural Family Planning. (Although it is not sinful to have relations during the known infertile periods of the woman, it is still best to remain chaste during this time period in order to nurture virtue and holiness.)

Contraception or NFP does not just subordinate the primary end of childbearing to the quenching of concupiscence, but it eliminates the primary end altogether by the spouses’ refusal to fulfill the primary end or purpose of marriage while they are performing the marital act for purely selfish reasons.

And this is why, in the very passage quoted above, Pope Pius XI reiterates that all use of the marital right – including when new life cannot be brought forth due to time or nature – must keep the secondary ends of marriage subordinate to the primary end! This teaching is the deathblow to NFP, as NFP itself is the subordination of the primary end of marriage (the procreation and education of children) to other things (lust and the avoiding of children). So, in summary, the passage above does not teach NFP, but merely enunciates the principle that married couples may use their conjugal rights at any time.

It is not a sin of contraception to engage in the marital act during the known infertile period, provided the known fertile period has not been deliberately frustrated in order to prevent

conception, either by inhibiting it by the use of birth control pills or some other contraception method or avoiding it by the use of Natural Family Planning. If the spouses know conception cannot take place, and they did not deliberately plan to prevent conception, they can perform the marital act without committing any sin of contraception provided they desire having children. This does not rule out other sins that can occur during the marital act, such as using it to excite or inflame lust instead of quelling lust, or using it in an unnatural and abusive manner. These sins can be committed even when childbearing is a goal of the marital act.

Therefore, even when the spouses engage in the marital act to quell concupiscence during known infertile periods, they must still desire and hope to have children if God wills they should have children. The act must still have as its primary goal the conception of children, which means to desire and be open to all new life and not hindering it from taking place in any way or form, even though the spouses believe conception cannot occur. In this way the quelling of concupiscence is subordinate to the primary end of the act, which is childbearing.

Objection: The sin of contraception is committed when physical devices are used during the marital act so as to prevent conception. NFP does not use a physical device during the marital act to prevent conception, thus the marital act is left open to conception if God so wills it. Therefore, Natural Family Planning is not contraception.

Answer: All methods of contraception are open to conception.

Just as the use of Onanism and Birth Control Pills are no guarantee that conception will not occur, because it does, so also, Natural Family Planning is no guarantee that conception will not occur, because it does. They are all open to conception if God so wills it. **The sin of contraception has thus nothing whatsoever to do with the fact that God can make conception happen, in spite of the spouses' deliberate plan not to make it happen. The mortal sin of contraception lies in the intent of the spouses, not whether conception actually happens or not.**

All marital acts, no matter what contraception method is used, are open to conception if God so wills it. God opens barren wombs past the childbearing years. If the spouses' Natural Family Planning succeeds according to their desires and careful planning, then, conception will not take place when they engage in the marital act. I say if it succeeds, because no form of contraception is 100 percent guaranteed. Even men who had vasectomies and women who had their tubes tied or hysterectomies still conceive children sometimes. The fact that conception can take place, even after spouses had planned to prevent it, does not allow the

spouses the excuse that the act is still open to conception. Because, according to their premeditated plan and intent it is their hope that the marital act is not open to conception, and that is where the mortal sin lies.

For example, is a man who plots to murder another man innocent if an accident prevents him from murdering the man? Even though the murder did not occur, he is guilty because he wanted to murder him. Mortal sin is committed in the intent, even if for some reason the crime cannot be carried out. A married man desires to commit adultery with a woman. He attempts to carry out his plan, but God thwarts it, and he does not succeed. Is this man innocent because his plan and attempted act of adultery failed? No! He is guilty of the mortal sin of adultery because adultery was in his heart. He would have committed it if God did not prevent it. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us this truth many times, “*I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.*” (Matthew 5:28) If after the man failed, he continued to plan and attempt to commit adultery with the woman, he would be guilty of mortal sin every time, whether the plan and attempt succeeds or not.

What is a plan? A plan is the words of a man that proceed from his mouth that come forth from his heart that he seeks to put into action. The root of every plan is in the heart. What is in the heart of spouses who plan to use physical contraceptive devices during the marital act, or plan to withdraw so as to make conception improbable, or plan to have marital relations only during the infertile period? In the heart of these spouses is the desire to have marital relations to satisfy their vile and perverse lust while having deliberately planned to prevent conception. Pope Pius XI in *Casti Connubii* describes what is in their heart, “**Offspring... they say is to be carefully avoided by married people... by frustrating the marriage act... [They] deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose.**” Sin originates from what is in the heart. I ask spouses who practice NFP, “What is in your heart when you practice NFP?” While engaging in the marital act, after having planned to do so only during the infertile period, ask yourself in the heat of your lust, “Am I not committing this very act with the explicit, deliberate, premeditated, planned intention of preventing conception while fulfilling my lust?” If your wish or prayer is to have relations and that conception does not occur, then you committed the mortal sin of contraception.

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence* 1:17, A.D. 419: “**It is one thing not to lie [with one’s wife] except with the sole will of generating [children]: this has no fault.** It is another to seek the pleasure of the flesh in lying, although within the limits of marriage: this has venial fault [that is, venial sin as long as one is not

against procreation]. I am supposing that then, **although you are not lying for the sake of procreating offspring**, you are not for the sake of lust obstructing their procreation by an evil prayer or an evil deed. Those who do this, although they are called husband and wife, are not [since they commit adultery in their marriage and a mortal sin]; nor do they retain any reality of marriage, but with a respectable name cover a shame [of an adulterous connection, which means that they sin mortally against the Sacrament of Marriage]. They give themselves away, indeed, when they go so far as to expose their children who are born to them against their will; for they hate to nourish or to have those whom they feared to bear. Therefore a dark iniquity rages against those whom they have unwillingly borne, and with open iniquity this comes to light; a hidden shame is demonstrated by manifest cruelty. Sometimes this lustful cruelty, or cruel lust, comes to this, that they even procure poisons of sterility, and, if these do not work, extinguish and destroy the fetus in some way in the womb, preferring that their offspring die before it lives, or if it was already alive in the womb to kill it before it was born. Assuredly if both husband and wife are like this, they are not married, [since they commit adultery in their marriage and a mortal sin against God] and if they were like this from the beginning they come together not joined in matrimony but in seduction. If both are not like this, I dare to say that either the wife is in a fashion the harlot of her husband or he is an adulterer with his own wife.”

All one needs to know if the sin of contraception has been committed is to ask oneself while engaging in the marital act, “Do I desire and hope conception takes place if God should grant it?” If you answer no, you committed the mortal sin of contraception. If you answered yes, while having planned by NFP for conception not to take place, you add a mortal sin of lying to the mortal sin of contraception. For if you really wanted conception to take place you would not have planned to prevent it.

It is the unwillingness to conceive a child while engaging in the marital act that constitutes the mortal sin of contraception, and if there was a premeditated plan to prevent conception, then the mortal sin is committed before the act as soon as the plan is consented to.

St. Augustine, *Against Faustus* 15:7, A.D. 400: “You [Manicheans] make your Auditors adulterers of their wives when they take care lest the women with whom they copulate conceive. They take wives according to the laws of matrimony by tablets announcing that the marriage is contracted to procreate children; and then, fearing because of your law [against childbearing]... they copulate in a shameful union only to satisfy lust for their wives. **They are unwilling to have children, on whose account alone**

marriages are made. How is it, then, that you are not those prohibiting marriage, as the Apostle predicted of you so long ago [1 Tim. 4:1-4], when you try to take from marriage what marriage is? When this [childbearing] is taken away [by a deliberate plan], husbands are shameful lovers, wives are harlots, bridal chambers are brothels, fathers-in-law are pimps.”

Objection: Natural Family Planning (NFP) can be both sinful and not sinful. It is sinful if it is used as a method of contraception, which is to stop the chance of conceiving because children are not desired. It is not sinful if it is used because of a medical condition, such as the wife’s reproductive system is damaged placing her and her infant in danger of death if she was to conceive and bear children. In this case NFP is not used to prevent conception because children are not desired, but to prevent the possible death of the wife and infant.

Answer: The medical condition is no excuse.

Natural Family Planning is contraception. Therefore, it cannot be practiced for any reason. Pope Pius XI condemned contraception for any and all reason, no matter how grave, **specifically mentioning the medical excuse** of “difficulties... on the part of the mother” and the excuse of “difficulties... on the part of family circumstances.”

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (#’s 53-54), Dec. 31, 1930: “Others say that they cannot on the one hand remain continent nor on the other can they have children **because of the difficulties**, whether **on the part of the mother** or on the part of family circumstances. But, **no reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good**. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural *power* and *purpose*, sin against nature, and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.”

The thing that he is talking about that is “intrinsically against nature” is contraception and all the various forms and disguises it takes. If the mother and/or infant would be in danger of death due to pregnancy, and provided the couple doesn’t want to risk the death of the mother and/or infant, then the spouses must refrain from the marital act, not just during the fertile period but also the infertile period. Pope Pius XI refers to this as “virtuous continence.” Or, if they do engage in the marital act, they must not deliberately plan to prevent conception or deliberately plan to have relations only during known infertile periods. They must desire to

have children if God wills they should have children, and they must bear the consequences of the wife and infant's possible death if the wife gets pregnant, while favoring the life of neither if pregnancy occurs; and most importantly of all, they must never perform an abortion or in anyway murder the child in favor of the life of the mother in case a dangerous pregnancy occurs, but must risk the life of both while favoring the life of neither. Pope Pius XI sums this up as follows:

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 64), Dec. 31, 1930: “As to the ‘medical and therapeutic indication’ to which, using their own words, we have made reference, Venerable Brethren, however much we may pity the mother whose health and even life is imperiled in the performance of the duty allotted to her by nature, nevertheless, what could ever be a sufficient reason for excusing in any way the direct murder of the innocent? This is precisely what we are dealing with here. Whether inflicted upon the mother or upon the child, it is against the precept of God and the law of nature: ‘Thou shalt not kill’. The life of each is equally sacred, and no one has the power, not even the public authority, to destroy it... Holy Mother Church very well understands and clearly appreciates all that is said regarding the *health of the mother and the danger to her life*. And who would not grieve to think of these things? Who is not filled with the greatest admiration when he sees a mother risking her life with heroic fortitude, that she may preserve the life of the offspring which she has conceived? God alone, all bountiful and all merciful as He is, can reward her for the fulfillment of the office allotted to her by nature, and will assuredly repay her in a measure full to overflowing.”

Further, scripture teaches that a woman shall be saved through child-bearing (if she is Catholic and in the state of grace). Therefore, a good Catholic woman has absolutely nothing to fear from child-bearing, even if her life is threatened: “***Yet she shall be saved through child-bearing; if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification, with sobriety.***” (1 Timothy 2:15)

If the mother or infant's life is threatened by child bearing, then either the marital act is abstained from altogether by virtuous continence, or it is done with the hope of conception if God should grant it, being ready to bear the consequences of the death of the mother or the infant.

Objection: But we simply cannot afford more children, therefore we must use NFP. Our situation is clearly an exception...

Answer: “Difficulties” on the part of “family circumstances” and “sufferings of those parents who, in extreme want, experience great difficulty in rearing their children” are no excuses for practicing contraception (*Casti Connubii*).

In reality, the economic excuse is nothing new; in fact, the Church has had to deal with it for thousands of years. For instance, Lactantius, an early Christian author, wrote in 307 A.D. on this very subject.

Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 6:20: “[Some] complain of the scantiness of their means, and allege that they have not enough for bringing up more children, as though, in truth, their means were in [their] power... or God did not daily make the rich poor and the poor rich. Wherefore, if any one on any account of poverty shall be unable to bring up children, it is better to abstain from relations with his wife.”

In more recent times, Pope Pius XI specifically mentions the economic excuse and condemns it, along with all people who defend it.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (#’s 60-61), Dec. 31, 1930: “We are deeply touched by the sufferings of those parents **who, in extreme want, experience great difficulty in rearing their children.** **However,** they should take care lest the calamitous state of their external affairs should be the occasion for a much more calamitous error. **No difficulty can arise that justifies putting aside the law of God which prohibits all acts intrinsically evil.** There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the Grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted. This truth of Christian faith is expressed by the teaching of the Council of Trent: ‘Let no one be so rash as to assert that which the Fathers of the Council have placed under anathema, namely that there are precepts of God impossible for the just to observe. God does not ask the impossible, but by His commands, instructs you to do what you are able, to pray for what you are not able that He may help you.’”

This condemns the extreme poverty excuse as well as all excuses. Pope Pius XI teaches that spouses who do not desire conception to take place during conjugal relations because of poverty, even if it is extreme, have no faith in God and that He can provide for them and regulate the size of their family, and they have also committed a mortal sin if they tried to prevent, or are against (either by thought or deed) the conception of a child in anyway, which is an intrinsically evil act.

He also warns that God will curse spouses for committing this mortal sin, and thus their problems will only get worse without God to help them. To their calamitous state (for example, extreme poverty), they would have added a calamitous error, mortal sin, and thus bring down God's wrath upon themselves. For Pope Pius XI warns: "However, they should take care lest the calamitous state of their external affairs should be the occasion for a much more calamitous error."

Objection: Pope Pius XII taught that NFP is lawful for at least certain grave reasons. So you have no right to condemn it, as he was the Pope.

Answer: Even Popes can be wrong in their fallible capacity.

It is true that Pope Pius XII taught that Natural Family Planning is lawful for certain grave reasons in a series of *fallible* speeches in the 1950's. However, this does not justify NFP. Pius XII's speeches were fallible, and were therefore vulnerable to error.

In studying papal errors throughout history in preparation for its declaration of papal infallibility, the theologians at Vatican I found that over 40 popes held wrong theological views. In a notorious case of papal error, Pope John XXII held the false view that the just of the Old Testament don't receive the Beatific Vision until after the General Judgment (and this false view was later infallibly rejected by the Church and condemned as a heresy after he died, although the Pope was not obstinate nor condemned himself during his life). And many other errors have been held by various Popes, and also great scandals have been caused by many bad Popes throughout the Church's 2000 year long history, as can be consulted in *The History of the Popes* book series. But none of these errors were taught by popes from the Chair of St. Peter in an infallible manner, just like Pius XII's speech to Italian midwives is not a declaration from the Chair of St. Peter.

One of the most notorious cases of papal error in Church history is the "Synod of the Corpse" of 897. This was where the dead body of Pope Formosus – who by all accounts was a holy and devoted pope – was condemned after his death by Pope Stephen VII for a number of supposed violations of canon law. Pope Sergius III was also in favor of the judgment, while later Popes Theodore II and John IX opposed it. This should show us very clearly that **not every decision, speech, opinion or judgment of a pope is infallible.**

Those who think that they are safe following something simply because it was endorsed by

pre-Vatican II theologians or by Pope Pius XII in his fallible capacity are gravely mistaken. Even though the explosion of the Great Apostasy occurred at Vatican II, its momentum by a departure from the Faith was well in motion prior to Vatican II, as is evidenced from many pre-Vatican II books which promoted condemned heresy and modernism. Most of the priests had already fallen into heresy in the 1950's, as is proven by the fact that almost all of them accepted and embraced the new religion of the Vatican II Church when it was imposed.

The bottom-line remains that it is an infallible teaching of the Catholic Church that the primary end of marriage (and the conjugal act) is the procreation and education of children. This is a *de fide* teaching of the Catholic Church; it is a dogma. Natural Family Planning subordinates the primary end of marriage and the conjugal act to other things and is therefore gravely sinful and forbidden.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 8), Dec. 31, 1930: "To take away from man the natural and primeval right of marriage, to circumscribe in any way the principal ends of marriage laid down in the beginning by God Himself in the words 'Increase and multiply,' is beyond the power of any human law. ... This is also expressed succinctly in the Code of Canon Law 'The primary end of marriage is the procreation and the education of children.'"

Objection: Pope Paul VI also taught that NFP is lawful in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. Surely, two Popes successively teaching the same thing on matters of morals cannot be wrong. **God would not allow them to teach wrong.** Therefore, NFP is not wrong.

Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae* (# 16), July 25, 1968: "... married people may then take advantage of the natural cycles immanent in the reproductive system **and engage in marital intercourse *only* during those times that are infertile, thus controlling birth** in a way which does not in the least offend the moral principles which We have just explained."

Answer: Yes, Antipope Paul VI explained correctly that NFP is birth control when he promoted it in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, as we saw above.

And regarding the objection that God would not allow errors or even heresies to be embraced by men in the Church, we must consider the following prophetic words from the Bible: "*there must be also heresies: that they also, who are approved, may be made manifest among you.*" (1 Corinthians 11:16-19) Haydock Commentary explains: "*There must be also heresies:*

By reason of the pride and perversity of man's heart; not by God's will or appointment; who nevertheless draws good out of this evil, manifesting, by that occasion, who are the good and firm Christians, [and who are not,] and making their faith more remarkable. (Challoner)"

Despite the Magisterial teaching which condemns "Natural Family Planning", simple logic will tell Catholics that it's wrong. If the Church has condemned artificial contraception because it prevents the conception of offspring, why would it be permissible to do the same thing by means of a different method? In truth, Holy Scripture itself could not be more clear when it says that: "*thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children.*" (Tobias 6:22)

Paul VI's endorsement of "natural" birth control, or NFP (as though there were something *natural* about constantly taking temperatures, consulting charts and jumping through other such hoops to determine the infertile periods), **is not the official position of the Catholic Church, but the official and accepted position of the heretical Vatican II sect.**

The bottom-line remains that it is an infallible teaching of the Catholic Church that the primary end of marriage (and the conjugal act) is the procreation and education of children. This is a *de fide* teaching of the Catholic Church; it is a dogma. **No Pope or law can change this dogma because dogmas never change. Dogmas are thus unchangeable, eternal truths revealed by God through scripture, the Natural Law and the Popes through their infallible capacity from the Chair of St. Peter; and they must be believed by all under pain of heresy and mortal sin and no one can ever deviate from these laws and truths without losing his faith.**

Pope Pius X, *Lamentabile*, The Errors of the Modernists, July 3, 1907, #22: "**The dogmas which the Church professes as revealed are not truths fallen from heaven**, but they are a kind of interpretation of religious facts, which the human mind by a laborious effort prepared for itself." – **CONDEMNED STATEMENT by Pope Pius X.**

As we can see here, **dogmas are truths fallen from heaven which cannot possibly contain error**. To better illustrate the point that dogmas can never change, consider the following example: The Catholic Church or a Pope could never officially hold or teach that which is against nature, such as the secular heresy that abortion is a human "right" or that homosexuality is "natural". Similarly, a Pope could never proclaim as an infallible dogma (a

dogma that must be believed by all the faithful under pain of heresy and mortal sin) any doctrine that would contradict an already established dogma of the Catholic Faith, such as a “dogma” that would deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ. That is common sense. Therefore, any “Pope” or so-called “Catholic Church” that would hold to such an error or declare such a “dogma” **would not be Catholic or the Catholic Church, but a heretic (an antipope) and a non-Catholic Church.**

Catholic Prophecy foretold that there would be a Great Apostasy and a counterfeit Church in the Last Days. Catholic prophecy and the New Testament paint a picture of the last days as a massive spiritual deception aimed to deceive those who intend to practice the true faith (the Catholic Faith), and which leaves the Earth with almost no one maintaining the true faith. So it is not at all impossible or strange that God would allow such a deception to occur. In fact, it was specifically predicted to occur. Did not Our Lord Himself prophesy that the true Faith would be almost extinguished when he comes back the second time to judge the living and the dead? Yes he did. ***“But yet the Son of man, when he cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on Earth?”*** (Luke 18:8)

The exact same message is heard in the *Church approved Revelation and Prophecy of Our Lady of La Salette*, which prophesies the exact same situation, warning us that: ***“Rome will lose the Faith and become the seat of the Anti-Christ... the Church will be in eclipse [meaning that the Catholic Church will not be visible to most men due to something being in its way (i.e., the Vatican II sect) obscuring its sight].”*** (*Our Lady of La Salette*, Sept. 19, 1846)

Henry Edward Cardinal Manning, *The Present Crisis of the Holy See*, 1861, London: Burns and Lambert, pp. 88-90: “The apostasy of the city of Rome from the vicar of Christ and its destruction by Antichrist may be thoughts so new to many Catholics, that I think it well to recite the text of theologians of greatest repute. First Malvenda, who writes expressly on the subject, states as the opinion of Ribera, Gaspar Melus, Biegas, Suarez, **Bellarmino** and Bosius that **Rome shall apostatize from the faith, drive away the Vicar of Christ** and return to its ancient paganism. ... Then the Church shall be scattered, driven into the wilderness, and shall be for a time, as it was in the beginning, invisible hidden in catacombs, in dens, in mountains, in lurking places; for a time it shall be swept, as it were from the face of the earth. **Such is the universal testimony of the Fathers of the early Church.**”

Thus, this is the kind of spiritual deception we’re talking about here—that would occur in the

last days, in our days. Mortal sins such as NFP (which is no different from artificial contraception in intent), and other sins, especially sexual sins, and immodest dress, are undoubtedly major causes for why most people have been entirely abandoned by God.

2 Peter 2:1-5 “But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there shall be among you lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition, and deny the Lord who bought them: bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their riotousnesses, through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you. Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their perdition slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down by infernal ropes to the lower hell, unto torments, to be reserved unto judgment: And spared not the original world, but preserved Noe, the eighth person, the preacher of justice, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.”

In the Gospel, Jesus Christ not only informs us that in the last days the true faith would hardly be found on the Earth, but that “in the holy place” itself there will be “the abomination of desolation” (Mt. 24:15), and a deception so profound that, if it were possible, even the elect would be deceived (Mt. 24:24). St. Paul says that the man of sin will sit “in the temple of God” (2 Thess. 2:4). The Apocalypse describes in detail the Whore of Babylon, a false bride (i.e. a Counter Church) which arises in the last days in the city of seven hills (Rome) and which spreads spiritual fornication all over the Earth. The fact that the last days are characterized by a spiritual deception intending to ensnare Catholics proves, rather than disproves, the authenticity of the Catholic Church.

For more information, please consult the texts: [The Great Apostasy and a counterfeit Church predicted in the New Testament and in Catholic Prophecy](#); and: [Is the Vatican II sect the Whore of Babylon prophesied in the Apocalypse?](#)

These articles gives the stunning evidence that the Vatican II sect, a counterfeit Church which opposes the true Catholic Church in the last days, is the Whore of Babylon prophesied in Apocalypse chapters 17 and 18.

Pope Leo XIII’s Supernatural Revelation is also a great example and proof that the Vatican II Church is not the Catholic Church: [Pope Leo XIII’s supernatural experience and Original Prayer to St. Michael prophesying an apostasy in Rome in the last days](#)

Now, Paul VI was the man who claimed to be the head of the Catholic Church from June 21, 1963 to August 6, 1978. He was the man who promulgated the [Second Vatican Council](#) and the [New Mass](#). Paul VI solemnly ratified all 16 documents of Vatican II. It is not possible for a true Pope of the Catholic Church to solemnly ratify teachings that are heretical. The fact that Paul VI did solemnly ratify the heretical teachings of Vatican II proves that Paul VI was not a true pope, but an antipope.

It's important to keep in mind that Paul VI was the one who gave the world the [New Mass](#), the other new "sacraments," and the heretical teachings of Vatican II (i.e. religious liberty, salvation outside the Church, esteem for false religions, prayer and divine worship with false religions, NFP, etc). If you go to the New Mass or embrace the teachings of Vatican II, **the confidence that you have that these things are legitimate is directly connected to the confidence that you have that Paul VI was a true Catholic Pope.**

You can read an expose of the amazing heresies of Antipope Paul VI in the article: [The Heresies of Paul VI](#). The article will show, from his official speeches and writings, that Paul VI was a complete apostate who was not even remotely Catholic. All of the official speeches and writings of the men who claim to be pope are contained in the Vatican's weekly newspaper, *L' Osservatore Romano*. The Vatican has reprinted issues of their newspaper from April 4, 1968 to the present. From those speeches, one will see that Paul VI was not a true pope because of the irrefutable and undeniable evidence that he was a complete heretic and an apostate.

Objection: The Pope in his teaching to the universal Church on matters of Faith and morals cannot lead us astray. Pope Pius XII placed the teaching to midwives in the *Acta*, thus making it universal, since it was sent to all the bishops of the world. An honest person would realize that Catholics learn from the Pope, and submit to his judgments. If you refuse to believe Pius XII's authoritative teaching, it is the matter for mortal sin. You should not be quick to judge a bad motive on Catholics who submit to the Pope. It is necessary for one's salvation to submit to the Pope, and you are advocating rebellion. Pope Pius XII's speech to midwives is an authoritative statement. Learn from the Pope, love the Pope, and never dissent from the Pope. There is no holiness where there is dissent from the Pope. The Pope's teaching on the lawful use of the sterile times was not an ex Cathedra pronouncement, therefore it is not infallibly true, but it is infallibly safe since he made it universal. All teachings of the Fathers must be understood and interpreted through the teaching of the magisterium. Our Lord commissioned St. Peter and his successors. The Papal office is an office created by God Himself, and it cannot fail and those that sit in that office cannot lead Catholics astray. The office protects the Pope. Pope Pius XI and Pius XII have spoken on this

issue, the matter is settled. To rebel against the Pope's teaching is to foster schism. You need to submit and obey by believing what these Pope's have taught. A refusal to assent to Pius XII's teaching is mortally sinful; and it is schism, and therefore you are outside the Church.

Answer: It is an easily proven fact of history that fallible people in the Church as well as fallible statements by the Popes can lead us astray and teach error. Indeed, even the Pope himself is only infallible when speaking from the Chair of St. Peter.

First, Pope Pius XII's statement is not an authoritative statement as this objection falsely claims. In fact, it is not even an encyclical! **Rather, all it is is simply a heretical and fallible speech to midwives that also directly contradicts the Holy Bible, Apostolic Tradition, as well as the unanimous teaching of the Popes, Fathers, and Saints of the Catholic Church from the beginning, as we have seen in this article. In truth, nothing more than this should be needed to be said to an honest person than to point out to him that the Church has always rejected every form of birth-control for 2000 years.** Furthermore, in contrast to Pope Pius XII's fallible statement concerning NFP, Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Casti Connubii* is an **infallible declaration** from the Chair of St. Peter that directly condemns as a mortal sin all kinds of birth control, which of course includes NFP.

Second, a fallible statement cannot be "infallibly safe"! That a normal person even makes such a directly contradictory statement in the same sentence makes one question the sanity or honesty of those people who make this argument. Indeed, this perverse and false argument could not be made more false or erroneous even if one tried to.

It is also a known fact that Pope John XXII taught heresy in a sermon, yet this false argument denies that Pope Pius XII could do the same in his speech to midwives, even though his speech to midwives is just as fallible and in no way different from Pope John XXII's fallible, condemned and heretical sermon. If Pope John XXII could teach heresy in a sermon not intended to be the universal or infallible teaching of the Catholic Church, then so could Pope Pius XII in his speech to midwives that was also not intended to be made universal and infallible even in the first place. It is clearly evil and false to claim otherwise and to give the Pope infallibility outside of infallibility — which obviously is a ridiculous and false argument — and in this way make his statement out to be more than what it really is.

Third, it is claimed that Pope Pius XII placed the teaching to midwives in the *Acta* (the Vatican's official organ for publishing authentic documents and speeches) thus making it

universal, since it was sent to all the bishops of the world. But where is the proof that Pope Pius XII ever did this? We have never seen this proof nor has it ever been provided by anyone so far even though we have asked for it specifically; hence that it is still not even certain or a fact that it was ever put in the *Acta* at all.

But even if it was put in the *Acta*, it is still **not known that the Pope himself put it there**. Anyone of his subjects with the authority to do so could have put it in the *Acta* themselves without the pope knowing it or even intending it. Indeed, if the heretics who use this false objection cannot even prove that the Pope himself put it in the *Acta*, then their supposed “evidence” is even more worthless.

But even if Pope Pius XII himself did put it in the *Acta*, and this could be proven, **the evidence would still be fallible! That’s the point. *It’s fallible***. Indeed, this argument even admits that the evidence is *fallible*, yet, in its sheer stupidity, it perversely makes it out to become “*infallibly safe*”, teaching that: “*The Pope’s teaching on the lawful use of the sterile times was NOT an ex Cathedra pronouncement, therefore IT IS NOT INFALLIBLY TRUE, but it is infallibly safe since he made it universal.*”

Just because a teaching of a Pope is universal doesn’t make it *infallible* or *infallibly safe*. Infallibility must also be invoked by the Pope (and the Pope must meet certain requirements) in order for his teaching to become “*infallibly safe*”. Otherwise it is always liable to error. Thus, since a Pope is only infallible when [speaking from the Chair of St. Peter and when fulfilling certain conditions](#) — and since popes have been allowed to fall into errors in the past by God in their fallible capacity — this proves that it’s entirely possible for a valid Pope to teach grave errors or even heresy on faith or moral matters in his *fallible* capacity, and that it’s possible God could allow such a thing to occur in the last days.

If Pius XII’s speech to midwives is not *infallible*, then it cannot be “*infallibly safe*”. How can something be “*infallibly safe*” when it **so obviously contradicts 2000 years of Catholic teaching and tradition, in addition to the *infallible* decree in the encyclical *Casti Connubii* of Pope Pius XI, that condemns as a mortal sin all forms of birth-control, which of course includes NFP?** No heretic has ever been able to answer this question or with any Church teaching. All they ever say is that *it cannot be wrong* and that *God could or would not allow such an error to be taught*. **However, as we have already seen, this can indeed happen and God has allowed it to happen. In fact, it was even foretold that it would happen in the last days, but the heretics just refuse to believe it in this case since they want to believe in and defend this vile doctrine.**

The fact that God would allow the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Church to teach for about 2000 years that all forms of birth control (which includes NFP) is mortally sinful, and that thus those who are using this false argument about NFP have to hold that the whole Church erred in 2000 years, in addition to having to argue that the infallible decree of Pope Pius XI in *Casti Connubii* is false, or that it doesn't mean what it actually says when it teaches that no excuse (not even starvation or death) can be used to prevent procreation, does not seem to move these bad willed people one bit, sad to say.

Again, a *fallible* statement (Pope Pius XII's Speech to midwives) cannot contradict an *infallible* decree of the Catholic Church (*Casti Connubii* and the *unanimous consent of the Fathers*). Yet, this is the most common and dishonest tactic used by the heretics, that is, that they always cling to the *fallible*, presenting it as if it outweighs or precedes the *infallible*. **Only a faithless heretic would even try to argue against the *infallible* dogmas of the Church with *fallible* speeches or texts that prove nothing. But this evil tactic is so common and persistent among the false traditionalist groups that it's almost impossible to get through to them. Only a condemned person would fail to understand this or refuse to see it when it can be proven that popes in the past have taught heresies and been wrong in many instances. In truth, to make *fallible* out to become *infallibly safe* is one of the most perverse, evil and false arguments that we have heard so far in defense of this heresy.**

Those people who perversely want to argue that God approves of birth control or of methods that encourages people to try to avoid God sending them new life, are nothing less than sacrilegious blasphemers and mortal enemies to God's Holy and Chaste Word in the Bible: "*And now, Lord, thou knowest, that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, [children] in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.*" (The Holy Bible, Tobias 8:9)

Fourth, concerning the statement that: "*The Papal office... cannot fail and those that sit in that office cannot lead Catholics astray. The office protects the Pope.*" It is a fact that God has allowed a Pope (in his fallible capacity) to teach error and to lead Catholics astray in our days—the last days—mainly because people have rejected Him, His dogmas and the Natural Law written in their hearts. And since they love the world and the pleasures of the world more than they love God (2 Timothy 3:1-5), God has rightly rejected them.

Is it reasonable to believe that God would have allowed His Church to be eclipsed like this by

the Whore of Babylon (the Vatican II sect) unless the majority of Catholics were already bad or displeasing to Him? Of course not. Indeed, we learn from Jacinta herself – the Prophetess of Fatima – that even before Vatican II, almost all people were in a state of damnation; and it is just a fact that the people of that time were many times more virtuous than the “Catholics” of our own time. “**Jacinta, what are you thinking of?**” Jacinta, the prophetess and seer of Fatima replied: “**About the war which will come. So many people will die, and almost all of them will go to hell!**” Consider that this statement by Jacinta was made *before* the Vatican II revolution. And many Catholic nations participated in the war. Yet almost all Catholics were damned. Are you any better than they were?

Some things that God has permitted to occur in His Church before the Great Apostasy, among other things have been: 1) a universal Arian crisis where about 98% of all bishoprics became Arian and almost everyone who claimed to be a Catholic became Arian; 2) a Great Western Schism lasting 39 years—Massive confusion, multiple antipopes, antipopes in Rome, an antipope recognized by all the cardinals; and 3) bad priests, bad bishops, bad popes giving bad examples, causing scandal and teaching grave errors and even heresies later condemned by the Church, and other bad people in the Church in general that has led people astray by their evil teachings and bad examples.

In truth, if one doesn't have dogmatic teaching backing up one's assertions, one shouldn't say what God **would** or **would not** allow to happen in the Great Apostasy, or that He would not allow a faithless, godless people that rejects Him, and that loves pleasure more than they love Him, to *receive the fruits of their sins* and their *own evil ways* (Proverbs 1:31; Proverbs 14:14), just as they *desired* (2 Timothy 3:1-5) and in fact *deserves* as a recompense for their evil crimes (Proverbs 1:25).

That most people have rejected the Faith (and the Natural Law) is proven by Our Lord's words in Luke 18:8, where He even questions if anyone will have the faith when He comes back to judge the world: “*But yet the Son of man, when he cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on earth?*”

Fifth, Do not let yourself be deceived by the lie that if you reject Pius XII's *fallible* and *erroneous* speech to midwives (which is in no way different from John XXII's heretical and condemned sermon), **this means you reject the Church and commit mortal sin!** The objection said: “*If you refuse to believe Pius XII's authoritative teaching, it is the matter for mortal sin. ... You need to submit and obey by believing what these Pope's have taught. A refusal to assent to Pius XII's teaching is mortally sinful; and it is schism, and therefore you*

are outside the Church.” We have already seen that the Church dogmatically teaches that no one is allowed in anyway to deviate from the Church’s infallible and official teachings, and that not even the Pope himself or anyone else can contradict Her teachings. This truth about the Church’s dogmatic and unchangeable teachings is so obvious that the Church Herself has declared that *even the Pope himself **may** be resisted or contradicted “**if he be found to have deviated from the [Catholic] Faith.**”*

Pope Paul IV, *Cum Ex Apostolatus Officio* (# 1), Feb. 15, 1559: “In assessing Our duty and the situation now prevailing, We have been weighed upon by the thought that a matter of this kind [i.e. error in respect of the Faith] is so grave and so dangerous **that the Roman Pontiff, who is the representative upon earth of God and our God and Lord Jesus Christ**, who holds the fulness of power over peoples and kingdoms, who may judge all and be judged by none in this world, **may nonetheless be contradicted if he be found to have deviated from the Faith.**”

This teaching of Pope Paul IV in *Cum Ex Apostolatus Officio* above of course also answers the heretical statement which said that: “*An honest person would realize that Catholics learn from the Pope, and submit to his judgments. ... It is necessary for one’s salvation to submit to the Pope, and you are advocating rebellion. ... Learn from the Pope, love the Pope, and never dissent from the Pope. There is no holiness where there is dissent from the Pope. ... **To rebel against the Pope’s teaching is to foster schism.**”* According to the heretics’ logic in this objection, since John XXII was the Pope, if his heretical sermon would have been put in something equivalent to the *Acta* at his own time, we would have no right to contradict and rebel against his heretical teaching, and it would have to be considered to “foster schism” to choose to rebel against his heretical teaching, and – according to the heretics – **we would have to believe in and submit to his heretical and condemned teaching**. This is the inescapable and illogical conclusion that the heretics would have to come to if they actually were consistent with their own teaching and followed it to its full extent *as they claim we must do when the pope is making a statement that they deem to be authoritative*.

As we have seen already, to openly disagree with the pope when he teaches manifest error is **not** to advocate rebellion or to commit schism as the heretics make it out to be, but it is in fact the exact opposite, since if you follow and adhere to this new teaching, **you evidently and directly reject and rebel against the infallible definitions of the Church** – *The Council of Trent, Vatican I* and the unanimous consent of the Fathers, in addition to Pope Pius XI’s dogmatic encyclical *Casti Connubii* – all of which unanimously condemn Pius XII’s fallible and erroneous teaching on NFP, as well as all other heretical teachings on birth

control.

It should be clear by now that what has been stated above is absolutely true, and in fact, *infallibly safe*, and anyone who is honest while reading this will of course agree with it. Indeed, it is very easy to understand that it is infallibly safe to believe what has *always* been believed unanimously by the whole Church since the beginning. It is *not*, as the heretics make it out to be, infallibly safe to believe in a new teaching which not a single Pope, Father or Saint ever has believed in or taught before — until just prior to the Great Apostasy. Anyone with even a little honesty left in his soul will of course understand that this is true.

Objection: I have read many Catholic books approved by the Church that teach timing-based methods of contraception, or NFP. These Catholic books teaching timing-based methods of contraception also had Nihil Obstat Church imprimaturs -- many of which was obtained *before* Vatican II. This clearly shows that these contraceptive methods were permitted by the Church then as well as now. If NFP or timing-based methods of contraception were not the accepted or official teaching of the Church, these books would never have been approved nor would these theologians have wasted their time writing on contraception, or NFP.

Answer: Nihil Obstat Church imprimaturs are not infallible; and all heretical so-called theologians' opinions are worthless!

In reality, there are a lot of heretical imprimatured books. It is illogical to presume that a Pope reads and thus personally approves all official decrees and responses from the Roman Congregations, along with all unofficial ones attributed to the Roman Congregations found in the many books that publish them, along with reading all books in the world with imprimaturs, along with ruling the Church spiritually and temporally, along with sanctifying his own soul by prayer and meditation, along with sanctifying Catholics as the chief shepherd, and along with calling non-Catholics to conversion.

Pope St. Pius X testifies to the impossibility of a pope's inspection of every imprimatured book, even with the help of the Holy Office, and also testifies that there were many bad books that were given imprimaturs.

St. Pope Pius X, *Pacendi Dominici Gregis*, A.D. 1907: "51. We bid you do everything in your power to drive out of your dioceses, even by solemn interdict, any pernicious

books that may be in circulation there. The Holy See neglects no means to put down writings of this kind, but **the number of them has now grown to such an extent that it is impossible to censure them all.** Hence it happens that the medicine sometimes arrives too late, for the disease has taken root during the delay. We will, therefore, that the Bishops, putting aside all fear and the prudence of the flesh, despising the outcries of the wicked, gently by all means but constantly, do each his own share of this work, remembering the injunctions of Leo XIII in the Apostolic Constitution *Officiorum*: “Let the Ordinaries, acting in this also as Delegates of the Apostolic See, exert themselves to prescribe and to put out of reach of the faithful injurious books or other writings printed or circulated in their dioceses.” In this passage the Bishops, it is true, receive a right, but they have also a duty imposed on them. Let no Bishop think that he fulfills this duty by denouncing to us one or two books, while a great many others of the same kind are being published and circulated. Nor are you to be deterred by the fact that a book has obtained the Imprimatur elsewhere, both because this may be merely simulated, and because it may have been granted through carelessness or easiness or excessive confidence in the author as may sometimes happen in religious Orders.”

The same logically applies to the official Roman Congregations’ decrees and responses, and more so to the unofficial decrees and responses found in the many books that list them.

Also consider our Lady’s prophecy in the *Church approved apparition of La Salette*:

“Bad books will abound over the earth, and the spirits of darkness will everywhere spread universal relaxation in everything concerning God’s service...” (Prophecy of La Salette, 19th of September 1846)

Yet many “Natural Family Planning” supporters resort into quoting fallible and heretical theologians who support the contraception heresy of NFP, also known as the Rhythm Method, who lived either before or after the heretical Second Vatican Council. Their opinions are utterly worthless and totally heretical. **God has already spoken by the mouth of Pope Pius XI in *Casti Connubii*, infallibly declaring that all forms of Contraception, including NFP, is heretical and a mortal sin – and nothing can change that fact!** The Great Apostasy—Vatican II, the Conciliar Church, and her apostate antipopes—did not come about overnight.

Objection: But my traditional priest instructed me in NFP...

Answer: Satan instructs people in NFP.

When the blind lead the blind they both fall into the pit. Couples who use NFP know that they are committing a sin. It is written on their hearts. They don't need a priest to tell them that it's wrong. Yes, the priests who obstinately instruct people that NFP is okay and defend this birth control method are also guilty, but this does not take away the responsibility of the couples who follow their bad advice.

Pope Pius XI teaches there are no exceptions and no excuses. No excuses, even if your priest or bishop said it can be used.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 57), Dec. 31, 1930: "We admonish, therefore, priests who hear confessions and others who have the care of souls, in virtue of Our Supreme authority and in Our solicitude for the salvation of souls, not to allow the faithful entrusted to them to err regarding this most grave law of God; much more, that they keep themselves immune from such false opinions, in no way conniving in them. If any confessor or pastor of souls, which may God forbid, lead the faithful entrusted to him into these errors, or should at least confirm them by approval or by guilty silence, let him be mindful of the fact that he must render a strict account to God, the Supreme Judge, for the betrayal of his sacred trust, and let him take to himself the words of Christ: "They are blind and leaders of the blind: and if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit."

This is why we stress that those who are contributing money to or who receive the sacraments from heretical or schismatical priests who promote or accept heresies such as NFP or any other condemned heresy must cease immediately if they don't want to share in their sin and follow them to Hell, since these priests are leading souls to Hell.

This includes the priests of the Vatican II sect, the Society of St. Pius X, the Society of St. Pius V, the C.M.R.I and almost all independent priests in this time of the Great Apostasy.

Objection: Both of the Sacred Penitentiary's Responses of the years 1853 and 1880 taught that NFP is allowed for married spouses, and so, you have no right to reject the Church's teaching on this matter.

Answer: The 1853 and 1880 responses are not only unofficial and fallible, but they are also

illogical and heretical, and they do not even defend the current practice of NFP, as we will see.

In this section, we will refute a specific argument in favor of NFP promoted by various heretics and heretical sects posing as “traditional Catholics,” priests, and even bishops. Precisely because these people claim to be traditional Catholic and hold the true Faith, it is especially important to refute their arguments. One such heretical individual bent on murdering and deceiving souls is the heretical so-called Bishop Mark. A. Pivarunas of CMRI, a sedevacantist religious so-called community. However, Mark. A. Pivarunas’ “evidence” that defends NFP is neither infallible nor official nor certified as authentic. It is also ambiguous and contradictory.

There was a need in the Church for an organ that contained the official decrees and responses from the Roman Congregations because many decrees and responses were fraudulent or doubtful.

Therefore, the Roman Congregations needed an official organ in which to publish their decrees and responses that would guarantee authenticity. Authentic and official decrees and responses from the Roman Congregations are found in the *Acta Sanctae Sedis* (ASS) from 1904 to 1908 and in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (AAS) from 1909 onward.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1907, *Acta Sanctae Sedis*: “A Roman monthly publication containing the principal public documents issued by the Pope, directly or through the Roman Congregations. It was begun in 1865, under the title of ‘Acta Sanctae Sedis in compendium redacta, etc.’, and was declared, 23 May, 1904, an organ of the Holy See to the extent that all documents printed in it are ‘authentic and official.’... On the Roman Congregations: Editors of periodicals on ecclesiastical subjects have been allowed for several years back to publish in their magazines the acts of the Congregations, and one of these periodicals, *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, has received the privilege of being declared ‘authentic and official for publishing the acts of the Apostolic See’ (S.C. de Prop. Fid., 23 May, 1904).”

The 1917 Code of Canon Law, Canon 9: “The laws issued by the Holy See are promulgated by being published in the official organ of the Holy See, the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, unless in particular cases another mode of promulgation is prescribed.”

A Practical Commentary: “The publication of the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* began in

January, 1909, and from the very beginning it was declared the official organ of the Holy See. [Footnote: The Constitution ‘Promulgandi’ of Pius X, Sept. 29, 1908; *Acta Ap. Sedis*, I, 5.]”

Consequently, any so-called Holy Office decree or response that exists outside these organs, the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (ASS) from 1904 and the AAS from 1909, is not certified as authentic and is not official. (Hereafter I will simply refer to these documents as unofficial while understanding that they are also not certified as authentic.) Hence, Mark. A. Pivarunas’ argument has no credibility because it rests on responses that are not official and cannot be certified as authentic.

Official Roman Congregations’ decrees and responses are also fallible

Even if Mark. A. Pivarunas produced the official Roman Congregations’ decrees or responses defending NFP, that does not help his case because they are also fallible.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, *Infallibility*: “Proof of Papal Infallibility - The pope, of course, can convert doctrinal decisions of the Holy Office, which are not in themselves infallible, into ex cathedra papal pronouncements...”

The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, *Acts of the Roman Congregations*: “...(b) Authority of doctrinal decrees - Doctrinal decrees are not of themselves infallible; the prerogative of infallibility cannot be communicated to the Congregations by the Pope.”

People that calls themselves Catholic, I believe, would agree with this. Consequently, they would also have to believe that the unofficial evidence that he uses to defend NFP is likewise fallible.

The 1853 response

The source

The 1853 response is one such piece of incredible evidence. The source quoted, a local moral theology book, is not a first hand source for a Sacred Penitentiary (a Roman Congregation) response. Therefore, it is an unofficial and fallible response. And even if it were an official response, it would still be fallible. That is the main point: the evidence is fallible.

The meaning

The meaning of the response is ambiguous. While it has two interpretations, heretical and orthodox, one cannot be certain of either.

Mark A. Pivarunas, *On the Question of Natural Family Planning*: “The very concept of “rhythm” was first considered by the Catholic Church in 1853. The Bishop of Amiens, France, submitted the following question to the Sacred Penitentiary:

“[Q.] Certain married couples, relying on the opinion of learned physicians, are convinced that there are several days each month in which conception cannot occur. Are those who do not use the marriage right except on such days to be disturbed, especially if they have legitimate reasons for abstaining from the conjugal act?”

Mark A. Pivarunas: “On March 2, 1853, the Sacred Penitentiary (during the reign of Pope Pius IX) answered as follows:

“[A.] Those spoken of in the request are not to be disturbed, providing that they do nothing to impede conception.”

The first part of the response seems to allow for the contraceptive method of NFP, but the second part does not by saying the spouses can “do nothing to impede conception.”

The purpose of NFP is to impede conception when the spouses have conjugal relations. If spouses come together only during the infertile period with the purpose of preventing conception, they are clearly attempting to impede conception. Therefore, the seemingly heretical first part of the response contradicts the orthodox second part.

I will now present a possible orthodox interpretation.

There are non-sinful reasons why spouses cannot have relations during known fertile periods, such as the husband is on a business trip or one spouse is sick, etc. Because they did not deliberately impede the fertile period for the purpose of preventing conception, they can have relations during the known infertile period without sinning, even though they did not have relations during the fertile period. For instance, if a husband is away from home during his wife’s known fertile period and returns to his wife during her known infertile period, he can still have conjugal relations with her without sinning as long as he did not deliberately avoid the fertile period for the purpose of preventing conception. In this case the spouses did not

sin, even though they had marital relations only during the wife's known infertile period. Pope Pius XI specifically refers to this fact in his encyclical, *Casti Connubii*.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: “Nor are those considered as acting against nature who, in the married state, use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons either of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth. For in matrimony as well as in the use of matrimonial rights there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider, **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [PROCREATION OF CHILDREN] AND SO LONG AS THE INTRINSIC NATURE OF THE ACT IS PRESERVED.**”

Pope Pius XI says that the “primary end,” that is, bearing children, must be desired and preserved; therefore, the spouses must not do anything that is against the primary end of marriage, that is, the procreation and education of children.

Nowhere does Pius XI teach that spouses can deliberately avoid the wife's fertile period in order to prevent conception when they come together during the infertile period. He is only teaching that spouses can have conjugal relations during the known infertile period or if one of the spouses has a defect, a barren womb or sterile seed. And, he clearly adds that even then they must be “subordinated to the primary end [bearing children].”

The spouses must conform to the intrinsic nature of the act by being open to conception both in mind and deed. If they are not, they are denying the intrinsic nature of the act.

The last part of the 1853 response, “provided they do nothing to impede conception,” supports the orthodox interpretation. There can be no act, plan, or desire to impede conception when the marital act takes place. The spouses must always desire to have children if God wills they should have children, even if conception is improbable or impossible (such as in a barren womb). The 1853 response clearly says that no action may be taken by the spouses that would impede conception: “[A.] *Those spoken of in the request are not to be disturbed, providing that they do **nothing** to impede conception.*” All impediments are condemned. The goal of NFP is to impede conception when the spouses engage in the marital act.

The decree does not specify any specific type of impediment. It condemns all impediments. The point of the response is if spouses are going to have relations during known infertile

periods, they must still be subordinated to the primary purpose of marriage, the procreation and education of children, and thus cannot do or have done anything that would impede or prevent it.

The 1880 response

The source

No doubt, there were those who interpreted the 1853 response in a heretical way. Yet, NFP defenders knew they needed to be more specific so there would be no doubt that NFP, according to them, is not sinful. The 1853 response did not say anything about the spouses deliberately avoiding the fertile period and only having conjugal relations during the wife's infertile period with the purpose of preventing conception. This motive is not mentioned in the 1853 question and is even condemned in the last sentence, which says, "providing that they [spouses] do nothing to impede conception."

Therefore, the NFP defenders needed a decree or response that specifically mentions and justifies the motive of preventing conception while leaving out the part about spouses not impeding conception. Digging deep in their hat of tricks, they found what they believe defends their heresy in one response (found in two unofficial sources) that supposedly refers to a response from the Sacred Penitentiary.

The meaning

The NFP defenders have another serious problem with this so-called evidence—this fallible 1880 response. It is ambiguous, confusing, and contradictory, and it even condemns Mark. A. Pivarunas' idea of NFP.

Mark A. Pivarunas, *On the Question of Natural Family Planning*: "Another reference to rhythm appeared in 1880. Fr. Le Conte submitted the following questions to the Sacred Penitentiary:

"[Q.] Whether married couples may have intercourse during such sterile periods without committing mortal or venial sin?"

"Whether the confessor may suggest such a procedure either to the wife who detests the onanism of her husband but cannot correct him, or to either spouse who shrinks from having numerous children?"

Mark. A. Pivarunas: “The response of the Sacred Penitentiary (during the reign of Pope Leo XIII), dated June 16, 1880, was:

“[A.] Married couples who use their marriage right in the aforesaid manner are not to be disturbed, and the confessor may suggest the opinion in question, cautiously, however, to those married people whom he has tried in vain by other means to dissuade from the detestable crime of onanism.”

1) If this fallible response is meant to allow NFP, it only allows it as a substitute for the husband’s obstinately sinful Onanism (withdrawal during the marital act by the husband), which presents serious dilemmas.

2) If the husband is not obstinate and repents of his sin of Onanism, then the spouses cannot use NFP, which is how this response has to be interpreted. Let me explain. The first part of the Sacred Penitentiary’s response was only addressed to Conte’s first question: “*Whether married couples may have intercourse during such sterile periods without **committing mortal or venial sin?***” As we have seen already, there is no sin in having marital relations during known infertile periods provided conception is not deferred deliberately. That is why the Sacred Penitentiary answered favorably in their first part of the response: “*Married couples who use their marriage right in the aforesaid manner are not to be disturbed*”. This response, however, was only directed at Conte’s first question, and hence it cannot be used to support NFP.

The second part of the response which supports NFP only allows it in case of Onanism: “... and the confessor **may suggest the opinion in question**, cautiously, however, **to those married people** whom he has tried in vain by other means to dissuade from **the detestable crime of onanism**.” Since the Sacred Penitentiary made no further mention of Conte’s other statement, “*Whether the confessor may suggest such a procedure... to either spouse **who shrinks from having numerous children?***” this means that they only allowed the confessor to suggest deliberate sterile relations in case of Onanism. Since they made no mention of those who “shrinks from having numerous children”, one cannot use this response in favor of NFP in any other case than Onanism. So the only non-sinful use of NFP, according to this response, would be if the husband obstinately commits the sin of Onanism. If not, the confessor cannot even suggest the use of NFP. Therefore, according to this response, NFP cannot be used for any other reason put forward by NFP defenders.

3) The 1880 response appeased stiff-necked sinners by rewarding their obstinate disobedience

to God and their confessors. If the obstinate sinner does not listen to the confessor, the confessor must pander to the sinner. Instead of punishing him, the confessor rewards him with another sinful contraceptive method. It is like saying that it is better for a single man to fornicate with an unmarried woman than a married woman because there is no additional sin of adultery. Both actions are mortally sinful. It is like a confessor telling an alcoholic who drinks hard liquor that he will not sin if he gets less drunk by using soft liquor, such as beer or wine. The purpose, getting drunk, remains the same in both cases. Since when do God and His representatives compromise faith and morals by appeasing obstinate sinners? The proper action for a good confessor in such a case is to forbid the wife to have relations with her husband under pain of sin until he repents of his sin and thus promises to no longer use Onanism, NFP or artificial contraception. To conclude, this 1880 response is not only unofficial and fallible, but it is also illogical and heretical, and it does not even defend the current practice of NFP.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: Is it sinful to have sterile relations during breast-feeding?

Answer: A natural consequence of breast-feeding is that the mother is infertile while breast-feeding. The only just reason for breast-feeding is for the nourishment of the infant. The sin of contraception is committed if at anytime that just reason – breast-feeding to nourish the infant – is perverted by being replaced with the unjust reason of having relations without the possibility of conception. The fact that conception cannot take place is naturally beyond the control of the spouses during this period of time. The very second spouses use breast-feeding to maintain the infertile period so as to prevent conception when they have relations, they commit the mortal sin of contraception. They have replaced the only just and natural reason for breast-feeding, which is nourishment of the infant, with the unjust and unnatural reason of deliberately using it to maintain the infertile period so conception will not take place when they have sexual relations. Breast-feeding, when perverted in this evil manner, is used as a contraception. It is also best to remain chaste during this period.

Pope St. Gregory the Great, *Epistle To Augustine, Bishop of the English* (c. 597 A.D.):
“Further, her husband ought not to cohabit with her till that which is brought forth be weaned. But an evil custom has arisen in the ways of married persons, that women scorn to nurse the children whom they bring forth, and deliver them to other women to be nursed. Which custom appears to have been devised for the sole cause of incontinency, in that, being unwilling to contain themselves, they think scorn to suckle

their offspring [and live continent]. Those women therefore who, after an evil custom, deliver their children to others to be nursed ought not to have intercourse with their husbands unless the time of their purification has passed, seeing that, even without the reason of childbirth, they are forbidden to have intercourse with their husbands while held of their accustomed sicknesses [menses]; so much so that the sacred law smites with death any man who shall go into a woman having her sickness [Leviticus 20:18].” (*Epistles of St. Gregory the Great*, Book XI, Letter 64, To Augustine, Bishop of the Angli)

Question: Must a husband or wife refrain from marital relations with a contracepting spouse?

Answer: Yes. The use of contraception is intrinsically evil and always gravely immoral because it deprives the marital act of the procreative meaning. Intrinsically evil acts are not justified by intention or circumstances. So even if the intention of one spouse is good, and the circumstances are very difficult, he or she cannot morally choose to engage in marital relations with a contracepting spouse. To do so would be a mortal sin.

The Church’s teaching is clear that “**the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, # 54) and that is why it will always be a mortal sin of contraception against the primary purpose of marriage to knowingly perform the marital act with a contracepting spouse.

In one sense, only the contracepting spouse is “using” the contraception (taking the pill, or using a condom, etc.). But in another sense, both spouses are contracepting because both are knowingly choosing to engage in contracepted marital relations. The “non-contracepting” spouse is deliberately choosing to participate in contraceptive marital relations, and so he or she is participating in an act that is deprived of the procreative purpose that must accompany all marital acts. The lack of an intention to use a contraceptive on the part of the one spouse does not change the moral object of the act that he or she has deliberately chosen.

Moreover, if the wife is using an abortifacient contraceptive, such as the birth control pill, and the husband chooses to have relations with her, both spouses are participating in the mortal sin of direct abortion as well as the mortal sin of contraception.

The only lawful action for a good husband or wife to do if one of the spouses is using contraception is to abstain from having marital relations with their spouse until he or she

repents of the sin and thus promises to no longer use contraception. If the husband should force himself on his wife (rape her), then that is a reason for separation.

There are times when a spouse cannot prevent the other spouse from sinning during the marital act. In these cases, the spouse sinned against does not sin. For instance, a husband can pretend he repented of his sin of Onanism or of other forms of contraception and can promise his wife he will no longer use it, but he could still use it, and the wife would not be able to prevent it. Or, one spouse may do something immoral and the other spouse may be helpless to prevent it. In these cases the spouse sinned against does not sin, “*provided that, mindful of the law of charity, he or she does not neglect to seek to dissuade and to **deter** the partner from sin.*” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, # 59)

Question: Can an unmarried woman, who is not sexually active, use the contraceptive pill for a medical purpose?

Answer: Yes. When the contraceptive pill (the birth control pill) is taken by a woman who is not sexually active for different medical purposes (other than hindering the conception of a child), the pill does not deprive sexual acts of the procreative meaning, because there are no sexual acts. Since the person using the contraceptive pill does not perform the sexual act that always must be excused with the motive of procreation, the moral object is not evil, and the usage of the contraceptive pill is not intrinsically evil.

Question: Can a married woman use the contraceptive pill for a medical purpose, while refraining entirely from marital relations?

Answer: Yes. But when a woman is married, she must have a grave reason to refrain from marital relations with her husband for an extended period of time. The husband and wife have a moral obligation (called the marriage debt) to have natural marital relations if or when one of the spouses wants to have marital relations.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 64. Art. 1: “Further, marriage is directed to the avoiding of fornication [adultery, masturbation, etc.] (1 Corinthians 7:2). But this could not be the effect of marriage, if the one were not bound to pay the debt to the other when the latter is troubled with concupiscence. Therefore the payment of the debt is an obligation of precept.”

If a wife has a serious medical problem, which can only be effectively treated with the contraceptive pill, then she is allowed to take the contraceptive pill while refraining from marital relations with her husband, and the husband has no right to ask for the debt. As long as she is not sexually active while taking the pill, the marital act is not deprived of the procreative meaning, and so she avoids committing an intrinsically evil act.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 64. Art. 1, Reply to Objection 3: “If the husband be rendered incapable of paying the debt through a cause consequent upon marriage, for instance through having already paid the debt and being unable to pay it, the wife has no right to ask again, and in doing so she behaves as a harlot rather than as a wife. But if he be rendered incapable through some other cause [such as sickness or fatigue], then if this be a lawful cause, he is not bound [to pay the marital debt], and she cannot ask, but if it be an unlawful cause [i.e., he has no grave reason for refusing to pay the marital debt], then he sins, and his wife’s sin, should she fall into fornication [adultery, impure thoughts or masturbation] on this account, is somewhat imputable to him. Hence he should endeavor to do his best that his wife may remain continent.”

Since the person using the contraceptive pill does not perform the sexual act (that always must be excused with the motive of procreation), the moral object is not evil, and the usage of the contraceptive pill is not intrinsically evil.

Question: On what authority does the protestant sects deny the biblical, Apostolic and Patristic teaching that all marital acts must be excused with the motive of procreation?

Answer: Protestants have no biblical basis whatsoever for practicing contraception and being against conception; neither have they any basis for this teaching from the Early Church or Christian tradition.

It is also a little known fact of history, but the protestants were actually in agreement up until the year of 1930 A.D. with the Catholic Church’s teaching on marriage and family life that contraception and birth control methods are sinful and forbidden to use for married people. The watershed event that changed this ancient teaching in these apostate “churches” was a conference of Anglican so-called bishops.

On August 14, 1930, with 193 favoring and 67 opposing, the leaders of the Anglican Church passed seven resolutions dealing with “marriage and sex.” The “bishops”

stated in the fifteenth resolution that: “Where there is a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or to avoid parenthood, the primary and obvious method is complete abstinence from intercourse (as far as may be necessary) in a life of discipline and self-control lived in the power of the Holy Spirit.” But that same fifteenth resolution also stated that, if a couple faced “a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood” and the couple had “a morally sound reason for avoiding complete abstinence, the conference agrees that other methods may be used.” (*The Lambeth Conferences*, 166) Thus the Anglican sect had taken a position different from any previous teaching of both the Old and New Testament Church. According to their unnatural and novel teaching, married couples could now engage in marital intercourse while taking specific measures to prevent conception. On October 4, 1930, Cardinal Francis Bourne, the Catholic archbishop of Westminster, denounced the decision made by the conference of the Anglican bishops. He declared that they “had forfeited any claim to be ‘authorized organs of Christian morality.’” (Arthur Vermeersch, “*La Conférence de Lambeth et la morale du mariage*,” in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 57, A.D. 1930, 850) Arthur Vermeersch, the moral theologian who played a large role in writing the marvelous statement on marriage made by the Belgian bishops in 1909 (that affirmed the biblical teaching that the marital act must be procreative), was greatly disturbed by the way the Anglican “bishops” had perverted the teaching of St. Alphonsus Liguori on conscience. Vermeersch and other theologians thought that only a “strong papal action” could put an end to the assault on Catholic doctrine regarding the purposes of sexual relations in marriage.

The strong papal action followed swiftly by the promulgation of the encyclical *Casti Connubii*. On December 31, 1930, Pope Pius XI (1922–1939) promulgated *Casti Connubii* (On Chaste Marriage). The pope provided the Catholic Church with “one of the great papal documents of all time.” This encyclical “defined not only the nature of Matrimony but also the moral duties flowing therefrom.” As he gazed out upon the world from “the watchtower” of the Vatican, Pope Pius XI observed that certain “pernicious errors and degraded morals” had spread “even among the faithful.” (*On Chaste Marriage* # 3) The pope wanted to remind everyone that both the Bible and the Council of Trent had declared that **matrimony was created not by human beings but by God. Thus there was little scope for human decision-making when it came to contractual marriage**: “the only function of . . . human freedom is to decide that each of the consenting parties in fact wishes to enter the state of matrimony.” (*On Chaste Marriage* # 6) **Therefore, having consented to marry, the spouses were subject to the way God instituted marriage with its particular “ends, laws and blessings.”** (Pope Pius XI, *On Chaste Marriage* # 9)

Procreation or Abstinence: The Married Couple’s Only Choice

Referring to St. Augustine as the great Christian authority on marriage, Pope Pius XI reminded his readers of the three goods of marriage: “These . . . are the blessings which make matrimony itself a blessing: OFFSPRING, FIDELITY, SACRAMENT.” (*On Chaste Marriage* # 10) These traditional goods provide “the law of marriage, which gives luster to the fruitfulness of nature and sets a curb upon shameful incontinence.” (Ibid) The pope next referred to the summary found in the 1917 Code of Canon Law: “The primary end of matrimony is the procreation and education of offspring.” (Canon 1013) In sum, *Casti Connubii* simply repeated what church leaders and theologians had asserted from the time of Our Lord and the Apostles—namely, that the purpose of marital intercourse was to produce a child. If, at any particular time, husband and wife did not want to conceive a child, **they could avoid conception in only one way—namely, “by means of a virtuous continence.”** (*On Chaste Marriage* # 53) The pope noted that some couples were using a false argument in excusing their birth control, claiming “that they can neither observe continence, nor, for personal reasons or for reasons affecting the mother, or on account of economic difficulties, can they consent to have children.” Since Pope Pius XI saw the use of birth control devices as a “criminal abuse,” (Ibid) he rejected all the reasons offered for engaging in marital acts while trying to avoid conception. Repeating the traditional teaching of the Bible, the Apostles, and the Church from the beginning, the pope taught that: **“The conjugal act is of its very nature designed for the procreation of offspring; and therefore those who in performing it deliberately deprive it of its natural power and efficacy, act against nature and do something which is shameful and intrinsically immoral.”** (Pope Pius XI, *On Chaste Marriage* # 54)

Condemnation of the Anglican Bishops’ teaching

Referring to the Onan incident in the book of Genesis, the pope repeated his condemnation of contraception: **“The Divine Majesty detests this unspeakable crime with the deepest hatred and has sometimes punished it with death.”** (*On Chaste Marriage* # 55) Again citing Augustine, the bishop of Rome wrote: “Sexual intercourse even with a lawful wife is unlawful and shameful if the conception of offspring is prevented. This is what Onan, the son of Judah, did, and on that account God put him to death.” (Ibid) With his reference to the traditional interpretation of the story of Onan in place, the pope scolded the Anglican “Church” as “openly departing from the Christian teaching which has been handed down uninterruptedly from the beginning.” (*On Chaste Marriage* # 56) Against the unlawful and unnatural teaching of the Anglican “bishops” “the Catholic Church” had to raise “her voice in sign of her divine mission to keep the chastity of the marriage contract unsullied by this ugly

stain.” (Ibid)

The Pope’s warning to married spouses against loving “as adulterers love” shows us that the search for selfish sexual pleasure and concupiscence are alien to authentic marital love: “This is the rule prescribed by the Apostle when he says, ‘Husbands, Love your wives as Christ also loved the Church.’ Now Christ certainly loved the Church with a boundless charity, and not for His own personal advantage but solely for the good of His Bride.” (*On Chaste Marriage # 23*) According to various commentators, the high point of this encyclical is the papal declaration that spouses should perfect each other’s “interior life.” Spousal love “**is not confined to mutual help; it must have as its higher and indeed its chief objective that of shaping and perfecting the interior life of husband and wife.**” (Ibid) When the pope speaks of charity, it is not charity “founded on a mere carnal and transitory desire . . . it is a deep-seated devotion of the heart.” (Ibid) Thus, the perfecting of the interior life of one’s partner is good but the enjoyment of “carnal and transitory desire” is not.

Return to the Divine teaching of Matrimony

In part three the pope warned that God might well “punish men for their pride and their audacity” if they dared to tamper with the divine idea of marriage (*On Chaste Marriage # 95*). Relying on St. Augustine’s teaching on sexuality, Pius XI singled out “the violence of rebellious concupiscence” as the chief obstacle to carrying out God’s plan for marriage (*On Chaste Marriage # 97*). Such rebellion of the flesh can only be subdued by obeying the church’s leaders who know “the divine laws in marriage and in married life.” (*On Chaste Marriage # 100*) For this reason married persons must pay special attention to such laws lest they, by reason of their human nature, fall “prey to carnal passion” that so readily deceives and corrupts (*On Chaste Marriage # 102*). Married persons must be ready to sacrifice their sexual desires in order to refrain from marital intercourse: “God’s law sometimes requires of married persons difficult and enduring sacrifices, sacrifices which, as experience shows, the weak man is apt to invoke as so many excuses for not keeping with the divine law.” (Ibid) The pope also warned married couples to keep “as far as possible aloof from all idolatry of the flesh and from the degraded slavery of the passions.” (*On Chaste Marriage # 107*)

Dismissing the “exaggerated physiological education” advocated by “the so-called reformers of our day,” (*On Chaste Marriage # 108*) **the pope firmly rejected the legitimacy of limiting marital intercourse to the sterile period (the rhythm method) in order to avoid pregnancy.** Pope Pius XI accused the “so-called reformers” of teaching the “art of skillful sinning” instead of “the virtue of chastely living.” (Ibid) After husband and wife had

given birth to the maximum number of children they could rear, the pope confirmed that they should cease having marital relations: "Whatever the theories sustained and propagated by certain persons, husband and wife must . . . use their matrimonial rights always in a Christian and sacred way, especially in the early days of wedlock, so that should circumstances subsequently require them to observe continence, their habit of self-restraint will help them more easily to do so." (*On Chaste Marriage* # 110) We can see that this papal teaching relegates sexual feelings to the lowest part of the house of married living. Since the desire for sexual intimacy has always been regarded as a defect that arose from the fall of Adam and Eve, such desire has to be repressed in order to develop restraint and attention to the interior life of one's partner and oneself.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (#'s 106-108), December 31, 1930: "Certainly, if the latter day subverters of marriage are entirely devoted to misleading the minds of men and corrupting their hearts, to making a mockery of matrimonial purity and extolling the filthiest of vices by means of books and pamphlets and other innumerable methods, much more ought you, Venerable Brethren, whom "the Holy Ghost has placed as bishops, to rule the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," [*Acta*, XX, 28] to give yourselves wholly to this, that through yourselves and through the priests subject to you, and, moreover, through the laity welded together by Catholic Action, so much desired and recommended by Us, into a power of hierarchical apostolate, you may, by every fitting means, oppose error by truth, vice by the excellent dignity of chastity, the slavery of covetousness by the liberty of the sons of God, [John, VIII, 32 sqq.; Gal., V, 13] that disastrous ease in obtaining divorce by an enduring love in the bond of marriage and by the inviolate pledge of fidelity given even to death.

"Thus will it come to pass that the faithful will wholeheartedly thank God that they are bound together by His command and led by gentle compulsion to fly as far as possible from every kind of idolatry of the flesh and from the base slavery of the passions. They will, in a great measure, turn and be turned away from these abominable opinions which to the dishonor of man's dignity are now spread about in speech and in writing and collected under the title of "perfect marriage" and which indeed would make that perfect marriage nothing better than "depraved marriage," as it has been rightly and truly called.

"Such wholesome instruction and religious training in regard to Christian marriage will be quite different from that exaggerated physiological education by means of which, in these times of ours, some reformers of married life make pretense of helping those joined in wedlock, laying much stress on these physiological matters, in which is learned rather the art of sinning in a subtle way than the virtue of living

chastely.”

Question: Why are these and other verses from the Book of Tobit (or Tobias) that you cite not found in my bible?

The Holy Bible, Tobias 6:22; 8:9 “And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said:] And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity**, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.”

Answer: In the few protestant “bible” versions where the Book of Tobias actually is included, the entire crucial verse found in Tobit 6:22 quoted above is completely missing, and verse 8:9 (Tobit 8:7 in protestant versions) “**but only for the love of posterity**” is nowhere to be found! The reason why the devil had to exclude these important verses from their bibles is because he knows how important and absolutely necessary it is for one’s salvation to follow the Natural Law in all things—such as the Natural Law on sexual morality—because one can never be ignorant about the Natural Law, or be a “material heretic” in its regard. Since the devil foresaw the great damage the exclusions of these books and passages would have on his followers, and since the protestants are impure and lustful in every way, he was permitted by God to inspire their leaders to remove these crucial teachings of Our Lord. This is also why some protestants have told us they are not familiar with the above and related bible verses from the Book of Tobit, and why they have told us that they are not found in their bible.

In addition to verse 22 already noted above, the following other important verses found in Chapter 6 in the Book of Tobit, verses 16 to 18, and verse 20, are completely missing from the protestant versions, while verse 21 in most of their versions have been modified to read something like this: “Moreover I *suppose* [or *presume*] that she shall bear thee children”.

Tobias 6:18, 20-21 “**But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her.** ... But the second night thou shalt be admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs. **And the third night thou shalt obtain a blessing that sound children may be born of you.**”

Tobias 6:16-17 [completely missing] “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]:

Hear me, and I will show thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. [17] **For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.**”

Furthermore, the differences between the verse numbering in the Protestant and Catholic versions of the Book of Tobit are very great indeed, which makes it highly probable that many other important verses are missing, omitted or changed in the Protestant versions. **In fact, only 2 chapters out of entire 15 had the similar number of verses in the protestant and Catholic version; in all other chapters the Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible had 1 to 10 (or even more) extra verses per chapter than the protestant King James version.** The devil sure does not like this book, teaching purity, virtue and chastity as it does. No wonder Luther so much wanted these books out of his own corrupt bible.

See: ***The Bible Proves the teachings of the Catholic Church***

Question: I want a child, but my spouse does not. What do I do?

Answer: We have already abundantly proved from the Bible and Apostolic Tradition as well as the teaching of the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Church that spouses must directly wish to beget children if they are to perform the marital sexual act. A spouse who refuses to desire children cannot therefore perform the marital act without sin, which obligates the other spouse who desires children to abstain from performing the marital act with the offending spouse until he or she comes to his senses and repents. The Bible declares children to be a blessing. Psalm 127:3-5 says, *“Behold the inheritance of the Lord are children: the reward, the fruit of the womb. As arrows in the hand of the mighty, so the children of them that have been shaken. Blessed is the man that hath filled the desire with them; he shall not be confounded when he shall speak to his enemies in the gate.”* This is contrary to the way much of the world views children—as a hindrance and a burden. Children cannot be viewed as a liability.

The lack of desire to have children while also wanting to perform the sexual act stems from selfish motives. Some people do not want children because they want to focus on themselves, their careers, and their money. They do not want to be "tied down" or give up their expensive cars, homes, or vacations. Others do not want children because of fears about not being able

to parent successfully, not being able to afford to raise the child properly, or fears about childbirth itself—although they want to indulge in the marital act. All of these kinds of so called excuses are directly mortally sinful, unless one abstains from the marital act completely, since the marital act needs to be excused with the motive of procreation:

“Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5) A person who do not want children must therefore stay unmarried (unless he enters upon an agreed Josephite marriage where both husband and wife live chaste, either permanently or for a time) until he or she changes his intention. In the case of the married, if a couple does not want to have children, they are obligated to abstain from the marital act under pain of mortal sin.

As Christians, our devotion must first be to God, who says that children are a blessing. If we devote ourselves to prayer, spiritual reading, and meditation, God will reveal His will to us if we put Him first. Romans 12:2 declares, *“And be not conformed to this world; but be reformed in the newness of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect will of God.”*

Question: What is your thought on childbearing today? Is it wise to raise children today? And should husband and wife live a chaste life rather than having children?

Answer: No one must believe that it is a bad thing to want to raise and love children, and especially so, if it is done for godly purposes. However, even though the will of wanting to have and raise children for the love and honor of God is a good and noble thing, the consequences following upon this good thing are many times bad; a few examples being disobedient, evil and mortally sinful children that, sad to say, in most cases are headed for Hell. Scripture also testifies to this most sad truth.

Matthew 7:13 **“Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it!”**

Luke 13:24 **“Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able.”**

The above words has been true for all ages, but it has never been more true than what it is for us today. The Bible prophetically warned of this: *“And woe to them that are with child, and*

that give suck in those days.” (Matthew 24:19) Many marriages are also not good and are displeasing to God since many spouses marry for sinful and lustful reasons.

Our Lady of Fatima: “**The sins of the world are too great! The sins which lead most souls to hell are sins of the flesh!** Certain fashions are going to be introduced which will offend Our Lord very much. Those who serve God should not follow these fashions. The Church has no fashions; Our Lord is always the same. Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God.”

And considering some of the “woes” of our days. Unless you will lock up your children in a room without a television, media or contact with other people (except good friends and family members), it is almost guaranteed that they will be exposed to innumerable mortal sins and be lost. Why? Because the world has become so evil, corrupted and sensual today so that one will see even half naked women displayed on billboards in public places! This was totally unheard of before. One look with consent to impure thoughts is enough for a mortal sin to have been committed. And I ask you this: Will you ever let your children go out? If yes, then, can you guard their eyes and their desires? or keep them away from bad companions?

Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law*: “Also, [Pope St.] Gregory, [in Moral Reflections, XXI, ix]: C. 13. One commits adultery when one sinfully desires a married or an unmarried woman. “**Anyone who so much as looks with lust at a woman, has already become an adulterer with her in his heart.**” [cf. Mt. 5:28] Now Greek uses the word moechus for adulterer, because it prohibits looking not only at another’s wife but also at any other woman. This shows plainly that, when an unmarried woman is desired with lust, adultery can be committed by sight alone.”

And this is without even considering all other evils of today, such as porn, the media, and the world with all its allurements that are, in truth, too numerous to even mention.

And then we have the public school system, which is mandatory in most western countries, wherein all kinds of ungodly and dangerous teachings are being taught, such as evolution, false religions, and as if that was not enough, sexual education. Will you allow your children to go to public school and be perverted and familiarize with worldly and ungodly friends? Then sadly, you will in fact lose them to the world! **In fact, some statistics show that a large percentage of all children raised in so-called Christian homes who attend public schools will outright and openly reject the Christian faith by the first year of college.** It was Adolf Hitler that once said, “Let me control the textbooks and I will control

the state. The state will take youth and give to youth its own education and its own upbringing. Your child belongs to us already... what are you?" Pope Pius XI says concerning this: "By nature parents have a right to the training of their children, but with this added duty that the education and instruction of the child be in accord with the end for which by God's blessing it was begotten. Therefore it is the duty of parents to make every effort to prevent any invasion of their rights in this matter, and to make absolutely sure that the education of their children remain under their own control in keeping with their Christian duty, **and above all refuse to send them to those schools in which there is danger of imbibing the deadly poison of impiety.**" (*Rappresentanti in terra* #35, Dec. 31, 1929) God does not tell us as much as to be on guard against demons as with men (Matthew 10:17), for men are oftentimes more harmful to us than the devils are, for demons can be expelled by invoking the most holy names of Jesus and Mary, but man on the other hand cannot be expelled in the same way. And if a man tries to change his life, he will be reviled, despised, and called a most miserable fool, a good for nothing and a man of no education. Many weak souls sadly turn back to the vomit from such and like reproaches out of fear for the loss of human respect!

If you are thinking of raising children, then you should first seriously consider if this is God's will for you. No one should be thinking of raising children unless they believe it's God's will that they should have children. After one has entered into the married state, however, one is not allowed to abstain from the marital act if or when the other spouse asks for the marital debt to be payed, unless both the spouses agree to live the more virtuous and meritorious life of chastity and purity; and that is why one must seriously consider the needs of one's future children before entering the state of matrimony.

God naturally wants all spouses to live a chaste life and avoid bad occasions for themselves or their children, and so spouses should only have relations if they believe that God wants them to have children. But how will a couple know if God wants them to have children? They will of course understand this by praying to Him and asking His Holy will in this matter. God will implant a fervent love and longing for children in the spouses' hearts, or reveal to them through some sign or special revelation if He wills they should have children. Thus, a husband and wife should ask God and seriously consider if it's His will that they should have children. For it is certain that if God wills that a couple should have children, that it is for a greater purpose, such as giving birth to a saint.

St. Augustine teaches that the first man and woman were waiting for God's order and commandment to engage in intercourse since God created Adam and Eve without sexual desire for each other. Thus, St. Augustine, with the rest of the Church taught that sexual desire

was not an aspect of God's design for the male and the female, since concupiscence is an evil effect of the original sin. "For why should they not await God's authorization for this, since there was no drive of concupiscence coming from rebellious flesh?" Indeed, Augustine concludes that sexual desire is "fundamentally alien to the original definition of humanity." By this we can understand that the biblical teaching in Tobias 6:18 of chaste and humble prayer for three days – before one consummates the marriage by the marital act – comes directly from God's original plan and will for humanity before the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden; for before the fall, the human will was infinitely more directed to obeying and following God's perfect will and direction in all things rather than their own reason and judgment, as it sadly is now.

The Word of God and Holy Scripture teaches that one should not consummate the marriage immediately after one has been married, but that one should wait for three days while praying earnestly to God to bless their marriage: "*because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock.*" (Tobias 8:4) The Holy Archangel Raphael, acting as God's messenger, instructs husbands and wives to always wait three days in chastity and in prayer before consummating the marriage: "*But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her.*" (Tobias 6:18)

Indeed, according to God's Holy Word, those who refuse to practice continence and virtue in their marriage, will undoubtedly fall into all kinds of sins because of their bad will and sensuality: "*Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. **For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.***" (Tobias 6:16-17)

It is thus certain and an established fact by both the Holy Bible and Apostolic Tradition that those spouses who do not practice chastity and prayer for a while before they perform the marital act will much more easily fall into sexual sins of various sorts since they will be more easily controlled by the devil and his demons because of their carelessness and sloth in praying to God and invoking His Holy aid in resisting sinful inclinations and temptations. God's Word in the Holy Scripture were not written down just for show or because they sounded good or pleasant, but it was explicitly written down for the purpose of saving our souls from sin and the eternal hellfire, and this truth of Sacred Revelation obviously applies to the biblical and Apostolic teaching that spouses – who want to please Our Lord – should pray

and observe chastity for a while before having sexual relations.

If spouses wish to honor Our Lord and Our Lady in a perfect way they should always pray to God in chastity for three days every time before they perform the marital act, and God will hear them and keep them from sinning and bless them with good offspring for His Holy Name's sake for their virtuous and pure love of God, prayer and chastity. In the case that spouses do not receive offspring, however, this is many times God's sign to them that He wants another way for them and that they should serve Him in total chastity and purity instead, which is a much more virtuous life where they beget spiritual children for the love of God rather than fleshly children.

In truth, "he who neglects prayer in the time of temptation is like a general, who, when surrounded by the enemy, does not ask for reinforcements from his monarch. **Adam fell into sin because when he was tempted he did not look to God for help.** We should say a Hail Mary, or at least devoutly utter the holy names of Jesus and Mary. "These holy names," St. John Chrysostom declares, "have an intrinsic power over the devil, and are a terror to hell." At the name of Mary the devils tremble with fear; when she is invoked their power forsakes them as wax melts before the fire." (Rev. Francis Spirago, *The Catechism Explained*, A.D. 1899)

St. Ephraim, On Prayer Before Intercourse: "O Blessed Fruit conceived without intercourse, bless our wombs during intercourse. Have pity on our barrenness, Miraculous Child of virginity." (*Hymns of St. Ephraim: Hymn 7 On the Nativity*)

Question: Should a traditional Catholic be living a single life if no traditional Catholic is available for him or her to marry? I am unsure what God would like my life's vocation to be (married, single or even a religious). I would prefer to get married and have children but with so few traditional Catholics who are sedevacantists I am not sure where to turn or what to do. I hope to marry a traditional Catholic and sedevacantist or someone who is willing to convert to the true Catholic faith. It would cause too many problems with a Novus Ordo "catholic" when it came to his family/friends concerning weddings/ wakes/ funerals which a Catholic can't go to. Am I correct on this? So I guess it would be a traditional Catholic and sedevacantist husband or nothing. Any thoughts or recommendations concerning what I could/should do would be greatly appreciated.

In Jesus and Mary

Answer: Yes, you should not pursue marriage with a person who is not in agreement on all the issues. In this apostasy, that means that many people might have to embrace a single life. One should of course pray for the specific intention of fulfilling God's Will in one's life.

Question: What is marital modesty? And is it absolutely necessary for two married spouses to be modest towards each other in their dress, conversations and acts?

Answer: Marital modesty is modesty within a marriage and concerns the modesty and purity the husband and wife must have towards each other in order to have a fruitful and good marriage. Modesty within a Christian Marriage is very important.

Ecclesiasticus 7:21 "Depart not from a wise and good wife, whom thou hast gotten in the fear of the Lord: for the grace of her modesty is above gold."

A wife must be modest even before her husband, and a husband should be modest even before his wife. Whoever teaches immodesty to married couples, leads them away from Christ, and harms the Sacrament of Marriage. For the relationship between a husband and wife is a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His Church. Should Christ be immodest with His Bride, the Church? Should the Church be immodest before Christ? So then, neither can a husband and wife be immodest with one another, neither in thought, nor in word, nor in deed. For immodesty leads to every sexual sin.

Marriage is not an exception to the eternal moral law. Natural marital relations for the purpose of procreation is morally good only when it is practiced in accord with morality. Lust within marriage is gravely immoral. If the spouses use one another for mere sexual pleasure, apart from love, faith, fidelity, hope, apart from the primary goods of marital relations (found in the procreation and education of children), then they have sinned against the end, and honesty of marriage. And all unnatural sexual acts are intrinsically evil and always gravely immoral, even within marriage.

But lesser, although still grave sins are also possible concerning sexuality within marriage. Even for a husband and wife, it is a sin to speak or act in a licentious manner, to speak or act as if marital relations were base or were merely for pleasure, to speak or act with immodesty and impurity. Even spouses must have respect for the dignity of the body, and a holy fear of God, in order to avoid various misuses of the body and of sexuality.

A just war does not justify all acts of violence within that war. And a holy marriage does not

justify all sexual acts within that marriage. The eternal moral law prohibits intrinsically evil and gravely immoral sexual acts, as well as acts that are not intrinsically evil, but are sinful due to intention or circumstances. So the thoughts, words, and deeds of immodesty are not justified by marriage.

Modesty within marriage requires the spouses to treat one another as whole persons, with respect and affection, and with a holy fear of sin. Modesty within marriage requires the spouses to view the marital sexual act as integral to the Sacrament of Marriage, and not as a mere source of entertainment or pleasure. Modesty within marriage requires the spouses to subjugate the lesser and baser motive of sexuality (pleasure and quenching of concupiscence), to the higher motives of sexuality (the procreation and education of children), and to the marriage as a whole. Respect for the human body as a gift from God requires the spouses to act with self-restraint or even self-denial, and to avoid excessive indulgence in even lawful acts.

St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book IV, Chapter 2, Section 6: “I could not have called good that concupiscence of the flesh which the Apostle John said is not from the Father, but I call conjugal modesty good which resists the evil of concupiscence lest, when aroused, it draw men to unlawful acts.” (*The Fathers Of The Church A New Translation*, Vol. 35, pp. 170-171)

Question: What is concupiscence and how does it effect us?

Answer: Concupiscence is an ardent, usually sensual, longing. In Christian theology, concupiscence is the selfish human desire for an object, person, or experience. For Christians, concupiscence is what they understand as the orientation, inclination or innate tendency of human beings to long for fleshly appetites, often associated with a desire to do things which are proscribed.

The husband and wife, joined in the holy Sacrament of Matrimony for the purpose of procreation of children and in order to remedy concupiscence, remain nevertheless in the fallen state. Although baptism entirely wipes away original sin, there remains an effect of original sin in the human person called concupiscence, which is a tendency toward personal sin. The Council of Trent explains this inclination to sin inherent in human persons:

Pope Paul III, *Council of Trent*, Session V, Section 5, June 17, 1546: “But this holy council perceives and confesses that **in the one baptized there remains**

concupiscence or an inclination to sin, which, since it is left for us to wrestle with, cannot injure those who do not acquiesce but resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ; indeed, he who shall have striven lawfully shall be crowned. **This concupiscence, which the Apostle sometimes calls sin, the holy council declares the Catholic Church has never understood to be called sin in the sense that it is truly and properly sin in those born again, but in the sense that it is of sin and inclines to sin.**”

Even the holiest of persons, if they were conceived with original sin, have concupiscence. Only Jesus and the Virgin Mary were conceived without original sin, and never had concupiscence. (Adam and Eve were created without original sin, but they later fell from grace, and as a result they had concupiscence.) We mere weak and mortal sinners must always struggle against this tendency toward selfishness, toward valuing lesser goods over greater goods, toward the disorder of values that is the basis for sin.

As *The Council of Trent* declared, we must “**walk not according to the flesh, but, putting off the old man [of sin] and putting on the new one who is created according to God, are made innocent, immaculate, pure, guiltless and beloved of God [through baptism and a holy life], heirs indeed of God, joint heirs with Christ; so that there is nothing whatever to hinder their entrance into heaven.**” (Pope Paul III, *Council of Trent*, Session V, Section 5)

Therefore, throughout any marriage, both spouses must continually struggle against the misuse of sexuality. For sexuality has great power to do harm within marriage. There is an intrinsic danger to sexuality. The spouses can be pushed apart by this misuse of sexuality, resulting in disunity. Sin of any kind, mortal or venial, does not cooperate with grace and does not benefit any relationship.

CONCLUSION

Hell will be long and excruciatingly painful for all those who practice or promote NFP or contraception.

We implore, beg and entreat all priests and laymen to accept the Church’s teaching on this point and regain their faith in God’s providence.

Couples who have used NFP but who are resolved to change should not despair. NFP is a great

evil, but God is merciful and will forgive those who are firmly resolved to change their life and confess their sin. Those who have used NFP need to be sorry for their sin and confess to a validly ordained non-heretical priest (if one is available) that they have practiced birth control (for however long it may have been used). Both the husband and wife who agreed to the use of NFP need to confess. They should then be open to all of the children that God wishes to bestow upon them – without concern or knowledge of charts or cycles, seeking first the kingdom of God and His justice, letting the King of Heaven plan their family.

PART 2. SEXUAL PLEASURE, LUST, AND THE VARIOUS SEXUAL ACTS IN MARRIAGE

Can spouses sin sexually with each other in their sexual acts?

There are three main reasons for why the Natural Law, The Holy Bible, Apostolic Tradition, as well as the Church and Her Popes and Saints (as we will see) teaches that all spouses who perform unnecessary and non-procreative forms of sexual acts (**such as masturbation of self or of spouse, oral and anal sex, foreplay, and sensual touches and kisses**) either by themselves or in relationship to the marital act before, during or after it, are sinning mortally against their conscience and the Divine and Natural Law instituted by God.

The first reason is that all unnecessary and non-procreative sexual acts are a kind of **drug abuse** since they are **selfish, intoxicating** and **unnecessary** just like drug abuse is, and this intoxication and selfishness that is inherent in all unnecessary and non-procreative forms of sexual acts (such as sensual kisses) is also the reason why the Natural Law and the Church teaches that even sensual kisses performed ***“for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss”*** is condemned as a mortal sin for both the married and the unmarried people alike (Pope Alexander VII; Denz. 1140) and that even **the normal, natural and procreative “act of marriage exercised for pleasure only” is condemned as a sin for both the married and unmarried people alike** (Blessed Pope Innocent XI; Denz. 1159).

St. Thomas Aquinas also confirms these truths, teaching that ***“because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time, [as in the case of intoxication of drugs]... the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...”*** (*Summa Theologica, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5*) “Consequently ***purity regards venereal matters properly, and especially the signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches***” thus making it obvious that ***“lasciviousness’ relates to certain acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth.”*** (*Summa Theologica, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4*)

The second reason is that they are **shameful** since the people who commit these unnecessary acts are ashamed to commit them in front of other people. *And the third* is that they are **non-procreative** even though God’s law teaches that the ***“the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children”*** (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #54).

These three reasons are also why this truth about sexual morality in marriage was taught already in the Old Testament by God long before even the New Testament was revealed to us by Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Holy Bible, Tobias 6:16-17, 22; 8:9 “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: **Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.** ... And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust,** that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said] And now, Lord, thou knowest, **that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife,** but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.”

The first reason for why all non-procreative and unnecessary forms of sexual acts are mortally sinful is that all sexual acts (even marital, natural, lawful and procreative ones) are intoxicating and affects the person similar to the effect of a drug. In fact, the sexual pleasure is many times more intoxicating than many drugs that are unlawful to abuse. But when people are performing unnatural and non-procreative forms of sexual acts, they are abusing the marital act in a similar way that a drug user abuses drugs, or a glutton abuses food. It is an inherently selfish act that are not founded on reason, but only on their unlawful and shameful search for carnal pleasure, similar to the action of a person that uses drugs in order to get intoxicated or high.

This is also why the Church teaches that even the normal, natural and procreative “**act of marriage exercised for pleasure only**” is condemned as a sin for both the married and unmarried people alike (Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters Condemned in Decree* (# 8), March 4, 1679). Since the Church and the Natural Law condemns even the normal, natural and **procreative** “**act of marriage exercised for pleasure only**” even though this act is directly **procreative** in itself, it is obvious that **all non-procreative** and unnecessary forms of sexual acts (such as sensual kisses and touches) are condemned as even worse sins (that is, as mortal sins) since they are utterly **unnatural, unreasonable, shameful, and selfish.**

This obvious fact is also why it is patently absurd and illogical for anyone who agree with the Church’s condemnation of the normal, natural and **procreative** “**act of marriage**

exercised for pleasure only” even though this act is directly **procreative** in itself, to then turn around and say that the Church and the Saints allows spouses to perform unnatural or **non-procreative** sexual acts, such as sensual kisses and touches! In truth, it is a marvel how anyone who accept such a contradictory, illogical and absurd position as described above is even able to justify such a stupid position in his own conscience, but free will being what it is, we can only pray that those who have fallen into this false and unreasonable position see their error, and convert. Again, since the Church and Her Saints teach that even the normal, natural and **procreative** sexual act is sinful for the married unless it is excused with the motive of procreation, how much more obvious does it have to get for a person to realize that all **non-procreative** or unnecessary sexual acts, such as kisses and touches for venereal pleasure, are even more sinful for the married?

A sick person is allowed by God’s permission to take drugs in order to lessen his pain. But when this sick person uses more drugs than he needs in order to get intoxicated, or continues to use the drugs after he gets well, he commits the sin of drug abuse. This is a perfect example of those who perform non-procreative forms of sexual acts either by themselves or in relationship to the marital act. They are gluttonous or overindulgent in the marital act, and are thus sinning against their reason and the Natural Law. For “**the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason...**” and “**lust there signifies any kind of excess.**” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

The “any kind of excess” that St. Thomas and the Church condemns as a sin are all sexual acts except for what is inherent in the normal, natural and procreative marital act itself. All other sexual acts are by their own nature inexcusable and a sin against the Natural Law, which means that even though a person has never been told or taught that they are sins, they are still committing a mortal sin, just like a person do not have to be told or taught that murder, abortion, stealing, or getting intoxicated or drunk is a sin against the Natural Law in order for this person to be able to commit a mortal sin. As the Haydock Bible and Commentary correctly explains about The Natural Law and Romans 2:14-16: “**these men are a law to themselves, and have it written in their hearts, as to the existence of a God, and their reason tells them, that many sins are unlawful...**”

It is totally obvious that “any kind of excess” in the sexual act, such as by acts of lascivious kisses and touches between married spouses is a sin against the Natural Law and not only some acts, such as masturbation of self or of spouse, as some perversely claim nowadays. Again, notice that he specifically mentions that the sin of lust regards “any kind of excess”

instead of only some excess, and this of course totally excludes all unnecessary and non-procreative sexual acts such as sensual kisses and touches. In truth, **“We may also reply that "lasciviousness" relates to certain acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth.”** (*Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 154, Art. 1) Notice that St. Thomas even rejects as lascivious and unlawful **“acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth”** and so it is clear that St. Thomas taught that all non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts are sinful and against nature.

This is also why the Natural Law and the Church teaches that even sensual kisses performed **“for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss”** is condemned as a mortal sin for both the married and the unmarried people alike. Indeed, the Church firmly condemns anyone who would dare to claim that sensual kisses are only venial sins, thus utterly proving that such acts are mortal sins and that the opinion that sensual kisses are allowed in marriage or outside of marriage is condemned.

Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #40, September 24, 1665 and March 18, 1666: “It is a probable opinion which states that a kiss is only venial when performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss, if danger of further consent and pollution is excluded.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Alexander VII.** (Denz. 1140)

Thus, it could not be more clear from the teaching of the Church and the Saints that “any kind of excess” in the marital sexual act between two married spouses, such as by acts of sensual kisses and touches, are mortal sins against the Natural Law.

This is also why Pope St. Gregory the Great (c. 540-604), who is one of the greatest Popes in human history as well as a Father and Doctor of the Church, teaches that: **“The married must be admonished to bear in mind that they are united in wedlock for the purpose of procreation, and when they abandon themselves to immoderate intercourse, they transfer the occasion of procreation to the service of pleasure.** Let them realize that though they do not then pass beyond the bonds of wedlock, yet in wedlock they exceed its rights. Wherefore, it is necessary that they efface by frequent prayer what they befoul in the fair form of conjugal union by the admixture of pleasure.” (St. Gregory the Great, *Pastoral Care*, Part 3, Chapter 27, in *Ancient Christian Writers*, No. 11, pp. 188-189)

Can a sick person who only need one pain killer tablet to ease his pain claim that he can take more tablets in order to get intoxicated or high and escape the sin of drug abuse? Of course not! But this is the kind of unnatural and idiotic logic we have to deal with from those perverse, evil and damned persons who defend such vile sexual acts against God and nature as foreplay, and anal, oral, and manual sexual acts. Not only are these acts in themselves abominable and a kind of drug abuse – and thus a mortal sin – but just like drug addicts they add a lie to their mortal sin of drug abuse when they claim that they need or are entitled to perform such acts and thus derive more sexual pleasure than nature and God allows them to have.

Venerable Luis de Granada (1505-1588): “Those that be married must examine themselves in particular, if in their mind thinking of other persons, **or with intention not to beget children, but only for carnal delight, or with extraordinary touchings and means, they have sinned against the end, and honesty of marriage.**” (*A Spiritual Doctrine, containing a rule to live well, with divers prayers and meditations*, p. 362)

Indeed, since it is obvious that a person who is suffering from an illness cannot use more drugs in order to get intoxicated than what is necessary even though he is sick and in pain, how much more must not the married who perform unnecessary, superfluous or **non-procreative** sexual acts be guilty of sin since they personally are not even enduring any pain or illness like the sick person, but are acting totally for the sake of their selfish lust? Thus, we can see that the personal necessity that lustful spouses has to commit their non-procreative sexual acts, such as foreplay, or kisses and touches for venereal pleasure, is much less than the sick person who abuses drugs, and this fact gives us ample proof both from the Natural Law itself as well as the law written on our hearts that the sexual sins of lustful spouses are much more sinful and of greater severity than the sick person who abuses drugs. “Consequently, when kisses and embraces and so forth are for the sake of this [sensual] pleasure they are mortal sins.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 4)

Just like in the case of the person who uses drugs, one must have an absolutely necessary reason for using the drugs, such as an illness, and motives that aren't absolutely necessary such as “love”, “pleasure” or “fun” can never be used as an excuse to excuse the marital act, just like one cannot use such **unnecessary** and evil excuses for the purpose of excusing one's drug abuse. “For **necessary** sexual intercourse for begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is **alone** worthy of *marriage*. **But that which goes beyond this necessity [of**

begetting children, such as sensual kisses and touches] no longer follows reason but lust.” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 11)

In this context of speaking about the truth that the vehemence of the marital sexual act is “more oppressive on the reason than the pleasures of the palate”, St. Thomas shows that the sexual act is intoxicating and thus oppressive on the reason just like a drug is, which shows us that it is a fact of the Natural Law and the Law of the Church that the marital sexual act must be excused by the absolutely necessary motive of procreation, just like the drug use must be excused with an absolutely necessary motive such as pain relief.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 153, Art. 2: “**Venereal pleasures are more impetuous, and are more oppressive on the reason than the pleasures of the palate**: and therefore they are in greater need of chastisement and restraint, since if one consent to them this increases the force of concupiscence and weakens the strength of the mind. Hence Augustine says (Soliloq. i, 10): ‘I consider that nothing so casts down the manly mind from its heights as the fondling of women, and those bodily contacts which belong to the married state.’”

Here we see the very evident truth from the Natural Law that the sexual act deprives people of the ability to reason, explained in a very eloquent way by *The Angelic Doctor*. In another section of his *Summa*, he explains this truth about the marital sexual act again:

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1: “**Now there is a loss of reason incidental to the union of man and woman, both because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time [as in the case of intoxication of drugs], as the Philosopher says (Ethic. vii, 11); and again because of the tribulation of the flesh which such persons have to suffer from solicitude for temporal things (1 Corinthians 7:28).**

Consequently the choice of this union cannot be made ordinate except by certain compensations whereby that same union is righted, and these are the goods [procreation, sacrament and fidelity] which **excuse** marriage and make it right.”

Therefore, the normal, natural and procreative marital act performed by two married spouses is the only sexual act that can be excused from sin, since man knows by nature and instinct that one must excuse an act of intoxication with an absolutely necessary motive. Anything contrary to this is unnatural and evil.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5: “Whether the marriage act can be excused without the marriage goods [sacrament, fidelity, procreation]? On the contrary, If the cause be removed the effect is removed. **Now the marriage goods are the cause of rectitude in the marriage act. Therefore the marriage act cannot be excused without them.** Further, the aforesaid act does not differ from the act of fornication except in the aforesaid goods. But the act of fornication is always evil. **Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...**”

An inherently evil act must always be excused with an absolutely necessary motive or purpose. Otherwise, it will always be a sin. Two examples that clearly demonstrates this fact of “excusing” an otherwise evil act are found in the case of a man injuring another person, which is excused in the case of self-defense; or in the case of a man getting intoxicated, which is excused when a man is sick and requires this intoxication in order to get pain relief. All other inherently evil acts than what is absolutely necessary are strictly condemned as sins, since they cannot be excused by an absolutely necessary motive. For example, a man cannot hurt another man if he wants his money, or if he does not like him; and a man cannot get drunk or intoxicated just because he is sad or unhappy, for none of these excuses are absolutely necessary. Thus, these excuses are not enough by themselves to excuse these acts from being sinful. In truth, some evil acts cannot even be excused at all, such as in the case of a man who is suffering from hunger, but who nevertheless is never allowed to kill another person in order to get food to survive. It is thus a dogmatic fact of the Natural Law that “**the generative [sexual] act is a sin unless it is excused.**” (St. Bonaventure, *Commentary on the Four Books of Sentences*, d. 31, a. 2, q. 1) It could not be more clear from the Natural Law as well as the teachings of the Church that “**Coitus is reprehensible and evil, unless it be excused**” (Peter Lombard, Archbishop of Paris, *Sententiarum*, 3, d. 37, c. 4) and that is also why all who commit the marital act without excusing it, will always commit sin. “**Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...**” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5)

The second reason for why all non-procreative and unnecessary forms of sexual acts are mortally sinful is that all sexual acts (even marital, natural, lawful and procreative ones) are shameful, which is why people never perform any sexual acts in front of other people.

“Now men are most ashamed of venereal acts, as Augustine remarks (De Civ. Dei xiv, 18), **so much so that even the conjugal act, which is adorned by the honesty**

of marriage, is not devoid of shame... Now man is ashamed not only of this sexual union but also of all the signs thereof, as the Philosopher observes (Rhet. Ii, 6). Consequently **purity regards venereal matters properly, and especially the signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches.** And since the latter are more wont to be observed, purity regards rather these external signs [i.e., looks, kisses, and touches], while chastity regards rather sexual union.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4)

And so, when people are performing such inherently shameful acts for lustful and selfish reasons, they are sinning against the Natural Law imprinted on their hearts. Since even the lawful, natural and procreative “conjugal act, which is adorned by the honesty of marriage, **is not devoid of shame**”, how much more must not all non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts of the married, such as “impure looks, kisses, and touches” that is not “adorned by the honesty of marriage,” **be utterly shameful, sinful and unlawful?**

Some people may object that there are many other events that are shameful and that are not yet inherently sinful such as soiling one’s pants or being forced to show oneself naked to other people against one’s own will. This objection however fails to notice the obvious difference between 1) people committing acts of lust with a desire or longing; and 2) events which are shameful but who are not desired or longed for by a person in a sensual way.

Acts of lust are acts performed for the sake of a pleasure and are performed with the will and purpose of satisfying a sensual desire while the events or acts of soiling one’s pants or being forced to show oneself naked to other people is not a desire or lust that is sought after in a sensual way. Thus, these people do not desire that these events should happen. If those people who endured the events of soiling their clothes or naked exhibition against their will would sensually desire or lust for that these shameful events would happen in the same way that a man or a woman lust for and desire that sexual acts or acts of lust happen, they would indeed be declared the most disgusting perverts. Who but a complete and satanic pervert would sensually desire or lust after soiling their pants or being exhibited naked? Thus, it is not just a mere shameful act or event that is sinful, but the shameful act that is performed with the intention of pleasing oneself sensually, that is sinful.

St. Methodius taught that the marital act was “unseemly,” and St. Ambrose agreed with the Holy Bible that it causes a “defilement” (Leviticus 15:16). St. Augustine agreed with the Holy Bible that “It is good for a man **not** to touch a woman” (1 Corinthians 7:1) and that sexual pleasure, lust or concupiscence for both the married and unmarried people alike are *not*

something “good” or “praiseworthy” but are truly “*evil of concupiscence*” and the “*disease of concupiscence*” that arose as an evil result of the original sin of Adam and Eve.

This is also why the Holy Bible urges people to remain unmarried and in a life of chastity since the married man “*is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided*” (1 Corinthians 7:33). St. Paul in the Bible also warns those who would marry as opposed to those who would remain virgins that spouses “shall have tribulation of the flesh”: “*But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have tribulation of the flesh. But I spare you.*” (1 Corinthians 7:28) It is certain that St. Paul does not refer to the desire to procreate as a tribulation of the flesh. Consequently, he can be referring only to one thing—sexual pleasure. Indeed, sexual pleasure is a tribulation of the flesh that must hence be fought against in thought and deed in some way or the Devil will succeed in tempting a spouse to fall into mortal sins of impurity either with the other spouse, with himself or with someone other than his spouse. This is also why St. Augustine teaches that “Nothing so casts down the manly mind from its height as the **fondling** of women and those bodily contacts which belong to the married state.” (St. Augustine of Hippo, *The Soliloquies* 1:10; cf *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 3)

The sexual pleasure is very similar to the effect of a strong drug, and drugs as we all know are very easy to become addicted to by abusing them or overindulging in them. The stronger a drug is, the more is also our spiritual life hindered, and that is why the angelic life of chastity will always be more spiritually fruitful than the marital life according to God’s Holy Word in the Bible. And so, it is clear that Holy Scripture infallibly teaches that marriage and the marital life is an impediment to the spiritual life, while a life of chastity and purity “*give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment.*” (1 Corinthians 7:35)

St. Maximus the Confessor (c. 580-662): “Again, vice is the wrong use of our conceptual images of things, which leads us to misuse the things themselves. **In relation to women, for example, sexual intercourse, rightly used, has as its purpose the begetting of children. He, therefore, who seeks in it only sensual pleasure uses it wrongly, for he reckons as good what is not good. When such a man has intercourse with a woman, he misuses her.** And the same is true with regard to other things and one’s conceptual images of them.” (*Second Century on Love*, 17; *Philokalia* 2: 67-68)

Someone might say that it is the sexual member that is shameful or evil to expose to others

and not concupiscence or the sexual lust. But this argument is false and easily refuted since no one who is not a complete pervert would have sex in front of other people even though their whole body was covered by sheets or blankets. This proves to us that it is the sexual pleasure that is shameful and evil, and not only the exhibition of the sexual organ. For “**man is ashamed not only of this sexual union but also of all the signs thereof**,” (St. Thomas Aquinas) and this proves to us that not only the sensual desire is shameful, but also the very sexual act and “also of all the signs thereof”.

St. Jerome: “Thus it must be bad to touch a woman. If indulgences is nonetheless granted to the marital act, this is only to avoid something worse. But what value can be recognized in a good that is allowed only with a view of preventing something worse?”

The sexual pleasure is always an evil pleasure to experience in itself since it is a **shameful and intoxicating pleasure** that is very similar to the evil pleasure people experience when they abuse alcohol or drugs, and that is why it is always an evil pleasure to experience even for married couples, even though married spouses do not sin during their normal, natural and procreative marital acts since “**those who use the shameful sex appetite licitly are making good use of evil.**” (St. Augustine, *Anti-Pelagian Writings*) St. Augustine in his book *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, explains this evil thus: “Wherefore the devil holds infants guilty [through original sin] who are born, not of the good by which marriage is good, but of the **evil of concupiscence [lust]**, which, indeed, marriage uses aright, but at which even marriage has occasion to feel shame.” (Book 1, Chapter 27)

St. Augustine’s reference to the lawful use of “the shameful sex appetite” means that spouses are only allowed to engage in marital intercourse as long as they perform the act for the sake of conceiving a child. Spouses who perform the marital act without excusing it with the motive or purpose of procreation are thus “making evil use of evil” according to St. Augustine. “I do not say that the activity in which married persons engage for the purpose of begetting children is evil. As a matter of fact, I assert that it is good, because it makes good use of the evil of lust, and through this good use, human beings, a good work of God, are generated. But the action is not performed without evil [that is, intoxicating and shameful lust], and this is why the children must be regenerated in order to be delivered from evil.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, 3.7.15) It is thus obvious that the cause of the shame that is inherent in the sexual act, as we have seen, is “the evil of the sex appetite.” (St. Augustine, *Anti-Pelagian Writings*)

The third reason for why all non-procreative and unnecessary forms of sexual acts are mortally sinful is that the Natural Law teaches that “**the conjugal act is destined**

primarily by nature for the begetting of children” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #54) and that even the normal, natural and procreative ***“act of marriage exercised for pleasure only”*** is condemned as a sin for both the married and unmarried people alike (Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters Condemned in Decree* (# 8), March 4, 1679).

The Natural Law is rooted in design. God, the Supreme Designer, has imprinted a design on all created things – including the human person, both in his spiritual and physical being – a purpose for which each has been created. Thus, with regard to the human person, the Creator has designed speech for communicating the truth and the mouth to swallow food etc. Likewise, the Creator has designed the sexual organs for something noble, namely, for procreating children. Because of this, the Church’s teaching has always been clear from the beginning that ***“the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children”*** (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #54).

Any action of the sexual organisms (the private parts) or other acts that are intended to arouse sensuality that is lacking the procreative function, is always sinful and against the Natural Law. An action of the sexual faculties outside of the normal and natural marital act are lacking the procreative dimension and consequently, it would be sexual pleasure sought for itself, isolated from its procreative function – and that is always an unlawful lust. The fact that sinful spouses may engage in the normal, natural and procreative marital act before, during or after they have engaged in another kind of sinful, non-procreative and unnecessary sexual act (such as masturbation of self or of spouse, oral and anal sex, foreplay, and sensual touches and kisses) does not make these two different acts the same action, just as the fact that a person taking another footstep immediately after he have taken a previous footstep does not make the two footsteps the same action.

“Lastly comes the sin of not observing the right manner of copulation, which is ***more grievous*** if the abuse regards the ‘vas’ [the vessel or the orifice of a woman] than if it affects the manner of copulation in respect of other circumstances.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 12)

The Church teaches that any act which is intrinsically evil cannot be moral, regardless of circumstance or intention. Unnatural sex acts (such as oral, anal and manual sex) are intrinsically evil and therefore cannot become moral by being combined with, preceded by, or followed by, a moral act of natural marital relations performed for the primary purpose of begetting children. ***“No difficulty can arise that justifies the putting aside of the law***

of God which forbids all acts intrinsically evil. There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted.” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #61)

Now (in the 20th and the 21st century) there are many ‘teachers’ who are teaching the exact opposite idea, but they have no explanation for how an act that is intrinsically evil can become good by being combined with another act. As an analogy, killing an innocent person in order to steal his money is immoral, and it does not become moral by being combined with or followed by the act of donating the money to charity. “*And should we not do evil, so that good may result? For so we have been slandered, and so some have claimed we said; **their condemnation is just.***” (Romans 3:8)

This principle of combining an evil act with a good act is, in essence, what is being proposed by some commentators today, who, in contradiction of the Holy Bible’s Word and the Natural Law, claim that only one sexual act out of many in the marital bedroom needs to be natural, marital and procreative. Contrary to all reason and decency, they suggest an approach that would justify any arbitrary number and kind of non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts, as long as these occur as part of a set, or within the same arbitrary time frame, as an act of natural intercourse.

Today, too many lustful people that claim to be Catholics or Christians seem to think that as long as they perform the normal sexual act at some point in time, then all or most of the other non-procreative sexual acts, such as sensual kisses and touches, masturbation, and oral sex, are allowed. However, even common sense reject this, as people know in their hearts, apart from the other arguments we have already mentioned, that all unmarried people sin when they perform such non-procreative sexual acts, which shows us that they instinctively know that their act is evil. Is the sexual act of the unmarried only a sin unless the man does not finish the act with a normal sexual intercourse in order to inseminate the woman? No! Each act must be evaluated for itself and one cannot string together many acts in order to excuse one act, as this is even against common sense.

Unnatural sexual acts are intrinsically evil and always gravely immoral because they lack the procreative meaning. If a particular sexual act is intrinsically evil and always gravely immoral, because it is non-procreative, the same act does not become lawful by the absence of sexual climax. Unnatural sexual acts are never chaste, never moderate, never reasonable, and never permissible, regardless of intention or circumstances, because such acts are intrinsically against the Natural Law. Labeling an act foreplay does not make the act moral. The intention

to use the first act (foreplay) as a means to accomplish the second act (natural intercourse) does not justify the first act. The end of natural marital relations does not justify the means of non-procreative sexual acts. Furthermore, it is absurd to claim that only the climax of the husband is restricted to normal, natural and procreative intercourse, and not also the climax of the wife. The moral law applies equally to both the husband and the wife.

One of the greatest evidences that proves that non-procreative sexual acts are inherently sinful and that they can never be excused or justified in any circumstance is that not a single Pope or Saint in the 2000 year history of the Church ever taught that they could be done either by themselves or in relationship to the marital act but that, as we have seen, and as we will see, The Holy Bible and all the Popes, Church Fathers, and Saints unanimously condemned these acts. Only in the debauched and immoral 20th century did this vile and monstrous teaching spring up from the pit of Hell, directly fulfilling biblical prophecy: “*For there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, according to their **own desires**, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.*” (2 Timothy 4:3)

Unnatural sexual acts are inherently non-procreative; such acts are, by their very nature, not open to the possibility of conceiving a child.

“But no reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who, in exercising it, *deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose, sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.*” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #54)

Unnatural sexual acts are intrinsically against nature because the conjugal act is primarily directed toward procreation – the begetting of children. Those persons (married or not) who deliberately choose sexual acts deprived of the natural power and purpose of procreation “sin against nature” and commit a shameful and intrinsically evil act.

“Since, therefore, openly departing from the uninterrupted Christian tradition some recently have judged it possible solemnly to declare another doctrine [that is, a heretical and false doctrine which contradicts the Church’s constant and infallible teaching that the primary end or purpose of the marital act is the procreation of children] regarding this question, the Catholic Church, to whom God has entrusted the defense of the integrity and purity of morals, standing erect in the midst of the moral

ruin which surrounds her, in order that she may preserve the chastity of the nuptial union from being defiled by this foul stain, raises her voice in token of her divine ambassadorship and through Our mouth proclaims anew: **any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is *deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offense against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin.***” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #56)

This infallible teaching of the Church which says that “*any use whatsoever of matrimony in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offense against the law of God and of nature, **and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin***” must be understood to condemn not only contracepted sexual acts, but also any and all non-procreative sexual acts, even within marriage, including unnatural sexual acts. For all sexual acts are a deliberate use of the sexual faculty, and all unnatural sexual acts are a deliberate choice of an act that is inherently non-procreative. If the Pope had wished to narrow his statements to only contraception, he would not have said “any use whatsoever,” or if he had wished to allow unnatural sexual acts within marriage, he would not have said “any use whatsoever of matrimony.”

Instead, he unequivocally proclaimed the Magisterium’s definitive and infallible teaching, which is also found in Holy Scripture, Sacred Tradition and the Natural Law, that each and every marital sexual act must include the procreative meaning. This teaching of the Church necessarily prohibits the married couple from engaging in any kind of unnatural sexual act (with or without climax), because all such acts lack the procreative meaning, and it also explicitly declares in an infallible manner that all non-procreative sexual acts are grave sins or mortal sins against the Natural Law, by making clear that they are “**an offense against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin**” and this of course means that all who perform such acts will be damned unless they repent. This is also why Pope Pius XI teaches that spouses are not forbidden to consider the secondary ends of marriage “**SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]**” and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.”

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: “For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial right there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO**

THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN] and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved [that is, all sexual acts must be able to procreate in themselves, which means that no unnatural and non-procreative form of a sexual act can ever be performed without sin].”

This means that the primary end or purpose of procreation (in thought and action) can *not* be made subordinate or subject to the secondary ends or purposes and that the primary end must always exist for the marital act to be lawful while the secondary ends or motives are not needed at all in order to lawfully perform the marital act. This is also exactly how Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Bible teaches us to view the sexual pleasure and the marital act, since it is a higher calling to live for the Spirit than for our own selfish and fleshly desires. “*And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, **but only for the love of posterity**, [children] in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.*” (The Holy Bible, Tobias 8:9)**

Notice how clearly and unambiguously Pope Pius XI teaches that married people are not even allowed to “consider” the secondary ends of marriage unless they are **subordinated to the primary purpose of marriage (procreation)** and unless “the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved” **which means that one may never perform anything other than the normal, natural and procreative marital act itself since all other sexual acts are not in conformity to procreation and “the intrinsic nature of the [marital] act”**. By using the words, “the intrinsic nature of the [marital] act”, Pope Pius XI makes it abundantly clear that everything concerning the mechanics or operation of the marital act must be directly procreative in itself, for he says that there are two direct necessities to even be allowed to “consider” the secondary ends of marriage, that is, procreation, and keeping oneself to only performing the normal, natural and procreative marital act or “the intrinsic nature of the [marital] act”. It is therefore clear that it is totally “forbidden” and mortally sinful to even consider the secondary ends or motives, much less to perform the sexual act, unless “the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved”, and this totally excludes all non-procreative sexual acts.

Since the Church even condemns only “considering” in one’s thoughts the secondary ends of marriage unless these motives are “**SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved**”, and that this fact is true even though a person has not yet even performed the actual sexual act but only consented to a thought in his mind, only a liar can claim that one can lawfully perform real and actual sexual acts, such as foreplay, oral sex, or sensual kisses and touches, that are non-procreative in nature, or that such acts can be

only venial sins.

The secondary ends “such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence” can follow after the primary end or purpose of begetting children if the spouses choose this, but the secondary ends or motives are not absolutely needed to lawfully perform the marital act in the same way as the primary purpose of begetting children, nor is the secondary motive of quieting concupiscence meritorious even though it is allowed.

In truth, Pope Pius XI rightly defines all non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts as “***intrinsically against nature***” and he says that those who perform such vile acts “***sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious***” which shows us that such acts are not only some slight venial or light sin, but a dark and grave mortal sin against nature “***which is shameful and intrinsically vicious***” and thus condemned and rejected by the Church and Her Saints with a specific detestation and hatred because of its evilness.

St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Chapter 11, 12, A.D. 401: “... nor be changed into that use which is against nature, on which the Apostle could not be silent, when speaking of the excessive corruptions of unclean and impious men. For ***necessary*** sexual intercourse for begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is ***alone*** worthy of marriage. **But that which goes beyond this *necessity* [of begetting children, such as sensual kisses and touches] no longer follows reason but *lust*.** ... they [must] not turn away from them the mercy of God... ***by changing the natural use into that which is against nature, which is more damnable when it is done in the case of husband or wife.*** Of so great power is the ordinance of the Creator, and the order of creation, that... ***when the man shall wish to use a body part of the wife not allowed for this purpose, the wife is more shameful, if she suffer it to take place in her own case, than if in the case of another woman.***”

The expression “*that use which is against nature*” refers to unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts, such as oral, anal, or manual sex (masturbation). St. Augustine condemns such acts unequivocally. He even states that such unnatural sexual acts are more damnable (i.e. even more serious mortal sins) when these take place within marriage. The reason why is that God is even more offended by a sexual mortal sin that takes place within the Sacrament of Marriage, since this offense is not only against nature, but also against a ***Holy Sacrament***. “*So then, of all to whom much has been given, much will be required. And of those to whom*

much has been entrusted, even more will be asked.” (Luke 12:48)

*The Catechism of the Council of Trent: “Matrimonial faith also demands, that husband and wife be united by a certain singular, and holy, and pure love, **a love not such as that of adulterers**, but such as that which Christ cherishes towards his Church; for this is the model which the Apostle proposed, when he said: “*Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church*” (Ephesians 5:25); and very great indeed was the love with which Christ embraced his Church, **not a selfish love**, but a love that proposed to itself the sole interest of his spouse...” (Question XXIV. — What is Faith in Matrimony, and how it is to be preserved)*

Therefore, non-procreative sexual acts cannot be justified by saying that it leads to the marital act; it is by nature a separate action whose object is gravely immoral. St. Thomas Aquinas confirms this fact: “Now the end which nature intends in sexual union is the begetting and rearing of the offspring. ... **Accordingly to make use of sexual intercourse on account of its inherent pleasure, without reference to the end for which nature intended it, [procreation] is to act against nature, as also is it if the intercourse be not such as may fittingly be directed to that end.**” (*Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 65, Art. 3) The meaning of St. Thomas is that, if the intercourse is, in part or in entirety, unnatural or non-procreative in nature, such as by acts of foreplay or sensual kisses and touches before, during or after the normal marital act, it is an “act against nature” and thus a mortal sin against the Natural Law since it is not “directed to that end [procreation]” in addition to the fact that it is “to make use of sexual intercourse on account of its inherent pleasure” alone, which the Church have always condemned. Indeed, it is clear that St. Thomas defines all non-procreative sexual acts as “vice against nature” since he says that: “the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason... Now this same matter may be discordant with right reason... because it is inconsistent with the end of the venereal act [procreation]. On this way, as hindering the begetting of children, there is the “vice against nature,” which attaches to **every venereal act from which generation cannot follow** [such as foreplay and sensual kisses and touches etc. which are inherently non-procreative sexual acts *from which generation cannot follow*]”. (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

Unnatural sexual acts are non-procreative, intrinsically evil, and always gravely immoral, regardless of intention or circumstances, even within marriage. That is why unnatural sexual acts in a marriage and between two spouses cannot be justified as a type of foreplay in order to prepare for the natural marital act because the end never justifies the means. And the

absence of sexual climax does not change an intrinsically evil, gravely immoral, unnatural sexual act into an act that is good or morally defensible. Thus, “as regards **any part of the body** [such as the mouth] which is not meant for generative [procreative] purposes, **should a man use even his own wife in it, it is against nature and flagitious** [that is, atrociously wicked; vicious; outrageous].” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 2, Chapter 35)

Again, for those who would claim that only some non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts, such as masturbation of self or of spouse, oral and anal sex, or foreplay, are condemned by the Church and Her Saints, but not sensual touches or kisses, St. Augustine answers that “as regards **any part of the body** [such as the mouth] which is not meant for generative [procreative] purposes, **should a man use even his own wife in it, it is against nature and flagitious**” in order to show us that no sexual act without exception that is non-procreative could ever be performed by married spouses without sin, and that **all unnecessary** sexual acts are “against nature” and condemned and utterly detested by God: “But those who, giving the rein to lust, either wander about steeping themselves in a multitude of debaucheries, **or even in regard to one wife not only exceed the measure necessary for the procreation of children, but with the shameless license of a sort of slavish freedom heap up the filth of a still more beastly excess...**” (St. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Book III, Chapter 19:28)

Are the “beastly excess” of sensual kisses and touches of two married spouses “necessary for the procreation of children”? Of course not. Therefore, it is clear that the “beastly excess” of any kind of foreplay, such as sensual kisses and touches, “exceed the measure necessary for the procreation of children” in marriage, and that is also the reason for why these acts are totally condemned by the Church and Her Saints. In truth, it is totally clear that the Saints, such as St. Augustine, not only condemns non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts as a sin, but that they condemn these acts with a specific detestation and horror, since they are “**against nature and flagitious**”, that is, atrociously wicked, vicious and outrageous.

Neither can one argue that these kinds of non-procreative sexual acts can be used if necessity requires it for the sexual act to be performed or if there is a problem with performing the marital act without them, for acts that are gravely immoral can never be justified in any circumstance. “But no reason, **however grave**, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good.” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #54)

Those who have a problem in performing the marital act should use a lubricant in order to be able to complete the normal, natural and procreative marital act, for this is a lawful and honorable solution to use if there is a problem to perform the marital act. “*May marriage be **honorable** in all, and may the bed be undefiled. For God will judge fornicators and adulterers.*” (Hebrews 13:4)

Further, the consequences of this behavior of deviant sexuality (consequences are a witness as well to the Natural Law), is disease. There is research that shows women’s risk of fungal infection increases 10 fold with this type of behavior. There are other risks as well, some mouth cancers, which research is beginning to show may be a result of the sexually transmitted disease. “*Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting sanctification in the fear of God.***” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

The leading cause of mouth and throat cancer is not tobacco smoking or alcohol use. Oral sex is now listed as the leading cause of cancer of the mouth and throat (oropharynx cancer). A new research published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology and authored by Dr. Maura Gillison states that persons who had practiced oral sex are eight times more likely than those who have not had oral sex to develop human papilloma virus (HPV). HPV, the most commonly transmitted sexual disease, is the leading cause of cancer of the oropharynx in the US. The number of people diagnosed with HPV-related oral cancers in the U.S. tripled from 1998 to 2004.

St. Barnabas, *Letter of Barnabas*, Chapter 10:8, A.D. 74: “Moreover, he [Moses] has rightly detested the weasel [Leviticus 11:29]. For he means, “Thou shalt not be like to those whom we hear of as **committing wickedness with the mouth through uncleanness [oral sex]**; nor shalt thou be joined to **those impure women who commit iniquity with the mouth with the body through uncleanness.**” (Chapter X. — Spiritual Significance of the Precepts of Moses Respecting Different Kinds of [Forbidden] Food)

It is clear that the Church and Her Saints rejects the heretical modern-day idea that the mere deposit of semen in the correct location justifies all other sexual acts. Every single sexual act must be marital and procreative, and one is not justified in adding sexual acts (such as oral or anal sex) that are not procreative in themselves. One cannot justify a set or number of non-procreative forms of sexual acts by performing a procreative form of a sexual act before, during or after one has performed these non-procreative forms of sexual acts, because every

sexual act must be able to beget children in itself. The sexual act is only allowed to be performed as long as the purpose and ability of the act itself to procreate is present, and when this intention and ability is not there, the sexual act will always be a sin.

Pope St. Clement of Rome (1st century AD): “**But this kind of chastity is also to be observed, that sexual intercourse must not take place heedlessly and for the sake of mere pleasure, but for the sake of begetting children.** And since this observance is found even amongst some of the lower animals, it were a shame if it be not observed by men, reasonable, and worshiping God.” (*Recognitions of Clement*, Chapter XII, Importance of Chastity)

The Catholic Church and Her Saints have always taught that illicit, non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts within marriage are equivalent to fornication and adultery.

St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus*, Book 1, Section 49, A.D. 393: “And it makes no difference how honorable may be the cause of a man’s insanity. Hence Xystus in his Sentences tells us that ‘He who too ardently loves his own wife is an adulterer.’ It is disgraceful to love another man’s wife at all, or one’s own too much. A wise man ought to love his wife with judgment, not with passion. Let a man govern his voluptuous impulses, and not rush headlong into intercourse. There is nothing blacker than to love a wife as if she were an adulteress.”

Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law*, Case Thirty-Two, Question IV: “Also, Jerome, [in *Against Jovinian*, I]: C. 5. Nothing is more sordid than to make love to your wife as you would to an adulteress. The origins of love are respectable, but its perversion is an enormity. §1. It gives no respectable motive for losing one’s self control. Hence, the Sentences of Sixtus says, “He is an adulterer who is too passionate a lover of his wife.” Just as all passion for another’s wife is sordid, so also is excessive passion for one’s own. The wise man should love his wife reasonably, not emotionally. The mere stimulus of lust should not dominate him, nor should he force her to have sex. Nothing is more sordid than to make love to your wife as you would to an adulteress.”

Notice that St. Jerome states that “it makes no difference how honorable may be the cause of a man’s insanity.” In other words, the intention which motivates a man to sin is irrelevant to the morality of the act. If a sexual act is a sin, it does not matter how honorable the man’s intentions are, it is still a serious moral disorder, comparable, as a figure of speech, to the serious mental disorder of insanity. St. Jerome plainly teaches that there are sexual sins and

excessive passion within marriage and between spouses, just like countless of other Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Church teaches. He said: “Let a man govern his voluptuous impulses, and not rush headlong into intercourse.” The idea that “nothing is shameful or sinful” in the marital act as long as the marital act occurs at some point in time is plainly rejected by St. Jerome, the Church and the rest of Her Fathers and Saints. It is contrary to wisdom and good judgment for a man to have sexual relations with his wife in an inordinate and excessive manner. “For it belongs to chastity that a man make moderate use of bodily members in accordance with the judgment of his reason and the choice of his will.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 1, Reply to Objection 1)

That is also why the Holy Fathers of the Church unanimously teaches that all non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts are mortally sinful and adulterous. Since “*the unanimous consent of the Fathers*” in a doctrinal matter makes a doctrine the official and infallible teaching of the Church according to the infallible teaching of the Holy Councils of Trent and Vatican I, anyone who dares to deny this teaching of the Church concerning sexual morality in marriage, must be regarded as an automatically excommunicated heretic since he denies not only the Natural Law and an infallibly defined dogma of the Church, but also the infallible teaching of Trent and Vatican I which explicitly declared that the “*unanimous consent of the Fathers*” is the official teaching of the Church.

The fact of the matter is that Our Lord Jesus Christ looks with a very severe eye on all who either perform non-procreative sexual acts or who teach that such acts are moral or lawful since all those who have sexual relations with their spouse in an inordinate and excessive manner, or who perform unnatural or non-procreative forms of sexual acts, are guilty of the crucifixion of Our Lord Jesus Christ by their evil, sinful and selfish acts. This truth was expressly revealed by Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself in a revelation to Blessed Angela of Foligno (1248-1309) in the following words:

*Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke, saying: “**For the sins of thy hands and arms, with which thou hast done much wickedness in embraces, touches, and other evil deeds, My hands were driven into the wood of the Cross by large nails and torn through bearing the weight of My body in Mine agony.**”* (Blessed Angela of Foligno, 1248-1309, *The Book of Divine Consolations*, p. 217)

Therefore, unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts do not become permissible when these take place within marriage. Instead, **unnatural sexual acts are made even more sinful**

when they take place within marriage because they offend not only against nature and a Holy Sacrament, but also against God and the Law written in our hearts.

“And since the man who is too ardent a lover of his wife acts counter to the good of marriage if he use her indecently, although he be not unfaithful, he may in a sense be called an adulterer; and even more so than he that is too ardent a lover of another woman.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 8)

Notice in the quote above that St. Thomas held sexual sins within marriage **to be worse than adultery**, because the act occurs within marriage. He did not teach that all sexual acts between a husband and wife are moral as many heretical and perverted “Catholics” nowadays do. **“Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption. But he that soweth in the spirit, of the spirit shall reap life everlasting.** *And in doing good, let us not fail. For in due time we shall reap, not failing. Therefore, whilst we have time, let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith.*” (Galatians 6:7-10)

The marital act performed for pleasure only is condemned as a sin for both the married and unmarried people alike

The Catholic Church teaches that the normal, natural and **procreative** marital act when it is performed for the sole sake of pleasure, is at least a venial sin, and many times a mortal sin, **provided one is not against conception or hinder it from taking place in anyway in either deed or thought.**

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #9, March 4, 1679: **“THE ACT OF MARRIAGE EXERCISED FOR PLEASURE ONLY IS ENTIRELY FREE OF ALL FAULT AND VENIAL DEFECT.”** – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.** (Denz. 1159)

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 1, Chapter 17, A.D. 419: “It is, however, one thing for married persons to have intercourse only for the wish to beget children, which is not sinful: it is another thing for them to desire carnal pleasure in cohabitation, but with the spouse only, which involves venial sin. *For although*

propagation of offspring is not the motive of the intercourse, there is still no attempt to prevent such propagation, either by wrong desire or evil appliance.”

As we can see here, it is at least a venial sin to have normal, natural and procreative marital relations merely for lustful motives, provided that the spouses are open to conception (and do not hinder it in anyway) and no other sinful deed or thought is committed during the act of marriage. From this can be understood that a couple must have a reason (other than carnal pleasure) for coming together without sin during the act of marriage, and this motive is procreation according to the teaching of the Church, since the Church teaches that “There would be no adulteries, and debaucheries, and prostitution of women, if it were known to all, that **whatever is sought beyond the desire of procreation is condemned by God.**” (Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* 5:8, A.D. 307). The Holy Bible is also clear that spouses when they perform the marital sexual act shall be “**moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children”. (The Holy Bible, Tobias 6:22) Thus, spouses are not to come together for whatever lustful reason or desire they may come to think of—for that would be, at least (if not more than) a venial sin according to the Catholic Church. All venial sins open up the soul to graver sins, and that is why one must always guard oneself very carefully from falling into venial sins.

The Catholic Church’s condemnation of even natural and normal so-called marital relations performed solely for lustful motives shows us that the Catholic Church absolutely abhors and condemns all sexual acts that are unnecessary for conception to occur (such as oral sex or masturbation of self or spouse, before, during or after the marital act). Every unnecessary and non-procreative form of a sexual act (such as sensual kisses, touches and masturbation) are obviously even more evil and depraved than the normal, natural and **procreative** “act of marriage exercised for *pleasure only*,” **which the Church condemns as a sin even though this act is directly procreative in itself.** This clearly shows us that Holy Mother Church absolutely condemns all sexual acts performed for the sake of sensual pleasure that goes above or beyond what is inherent in the marital act itself, and that is necessary for conception to occur.

St. Athanasius the Great (293-373): “Which use [of marriage] are you referring to? That in the Law which God allowed... or that which, while popular, is performed secretly and adulterously [even by married people]? ... Blessed is the man who in his youth having a free yoke employs his natural parts for the purpose of producing children. **But if for licentiousness, the punishment spoken of by the Apostle shall await the immoral and adulterous (Heb. 13:4).**” (First Epistle of Athanasius the Great

addressed to the Monk Amun, Quoted in *The Rudder*, pp. 576-77)

The Church teaches that all unnecessary and non-procreative sexual acts are *sinful* before, during and after the act of marriage, and that these acts may never be performed in any circumstance or for any reason whatsoever by anyone. For just as it is blameworthy and sinful to have sexual relations only for sensual pleasure for both the married and unmarried people alike, so too is this true with other pleasures as well, such as “eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only,” and kissing “for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss”. **This has always been the teaching of the Catholic Church and Her Saints.**

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #8, March 4, 1679: “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only, are not sinful, provided this does not stand in the way of health, since any natural appetite can licitly enjoy its own actions.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.**

Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #40, September 24, 1665 and March 18, 1666: “It is a probable opinion which states that a kiss is only venial when performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss, if danger of further consent and pollution is excluded.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Alexander VII.** (Denz. 1140)

St. Alphonsus Liguori, one of the most well known doctors of the Church, expounds on this teaching of Pope Innocent XI in his masterpiece “*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*”, showing us the inherent evilness of acting in accordance to our sensual desires: “Pope Innocent XI Odescalchi has condemned the proposition which asserts that it is not a sin to eat or to drink from the sole motive of satisfying the palate. However, it is not a fault to feel pleasure in eating: for it is, generally speaking, impossible to eat without experiencing the delight which food naturally produces. **But it is a defect to eat, like beasts, through the sole motive of sensual gratification, and without any reasonable object. Hence, the most delicious meats may be eaten without sin, if the motive be good and worthy of a rational creature; and, in taking the coarsest food through attachment to pleasure, there may be a fault.**” (*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, p. 282)

This condemnation of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” and kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” is not only reasonable, but part of the Natural Law, yet it may come as a surprise to many, but this is only because so many

commit sins of this nature.

Ask yourself this question: Which is the most pleasurable of the acts of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” or kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight”? An honest person can only answer that kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” is a much more pleasurable experience. Since it is obvious that the act of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” is a much less pleasurable action than the act of kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” since those who eat or drink “even to satiety for pleasure only” are normally not intoxicated by this inherently evil act as those who perform sensual kisses are, it is clear to all but liars, that if God condemns one unreasonable or unnecessary act that is less pleasurable, he also condemns the other act that is more pleasurable, since it too, is unreasonable and unnecessary.

In truth, since the act of the act of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” does not normally make a person intoxicated like the act of kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight”, it is patently absurd to claim that God condemns a much less inherently evil action, while he allows the more intoxicating and pleasurable action to be performed. Since both the act of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” as well as the act of kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” are unreasonable and unnecessary, we can therefore know by natural instinct and thus through the Natural Law, that both of these actions are inherently evil and sinful, but while both are sinful, we can also know that the act of kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” is a much greater sin since it not only is unreasonable and unnecessary, but also shameful and intoxicating.

Indeed, all people who fall into these kinds of sins have become slaves to their passions and do not order their acts in accordance with natural reason, but in accordance with their unmortified desires, like beasts, and yet, even worse than beasts.

St. Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament*, Sermon 1, Section 24: “Seeing then that... the faithful man descends to both [marriage and food] as matter of duty, and does not fall into them through lust. But how many are there who rush greedily to their eating and drinking, and make their whole life to consist in them, as if they were the very reason for living. For whereas men really eat to live, they think that they live to eat. These will every wise man condemn, and Holy Scripture especially, all gluttons, drunkards, gormandizers, "whose god is their belly." [Phil. 3:19] Nothing but the lust of the flesh, and not the need of refreshment, carries them to the table. ... And so in that

other duty of marriage, sensual men seek for wives only to satisfy their sensuality, and therefore at length are scarce contented even with their wives. ... Nevertheless, if you were to say to such a man, "why do you marry?" he would answer perhaps for very shame, "for the sake of children." But if any one in whom he could have unhesitating credit were to say to him, "God is able to give, and yea, and will give you children without your having any intercourse with your wife;" he would assuredly be driven to confess that it was not for the sake of children that he was seeking for a wife. Let him then acknowledge his infirmity, and so receive that which he pretended to receive only as matter of duty."

The Bible states that a demon of lust "hath power" over all spouses who come together for various lustful reasons in their marital acts

In the Biblical book of Tobit or Tobias, we can read about how a powerful devil or demon of lust that is called Asmodeus kills and deceives lustful people, and that this demon "hath power" over married spouses and individuals who come together for various lustful reasons in their marital acts.

Tobias 6:16-17 "Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. **For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust,** as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, **over them the devil hath power.**"

Haydock Commentary adds: "**Verse 17.** *Mule*, which are very libidinous, [Showing excessive sexual drive; lustful.] Psalm xiii."

The interesting thing about the sexual connection of a horse and a mule is that they cannot produce offspring, thus making their sexual relations completely sterile and unproductive. So what does this mean for marriage? It means that this verse alone proves that God's word condemns as sinful and unlawful all human sexual relations or acts that (1) are performed for the sole motive of lust; (2) that cannot produce offspring naturally (not referring to natural infertility or defects); (3) and that are done with an intention or mindset opposed to procreating offspring. Our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament of the Bible also connects the will to bear children to salvation, teaching us that a woman: "**shall be saved through child-bearing;** *if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification, with sobriety.*" (1 Timothy 2:15)

The biblical book of Tobias describes how the pious and pure virgin “Sara daughter of Raguel” had married seven husbands, but all seven of them had mysteriously died when they first entered the nuptial chamber, that is, when they first tried to perform the marital act: “... *she [Sarah] had been given to seven husbands, and a devil named **Asmodeus** had killed them, at their first going in unto her.*” (Tobias 3:8). Haydock Commentary explains the reason for this: “*God justly suffers the wicked to fall victims to their iniquitous appetites. (St. Gregory, mor. ii.)*”

This specific demon who is allowed to control and kill people who fall into sins of the flesh is named Asmodeus, according to Holy Scripture. Haydock Commentary adds the following about this demon: “*Asmodeus, "the fire of Media." Hebrew, "king of the devils," of that country, exciting people to lust, (Menochius; Serarius, q. 8.) and destroying them. (Worthington) --- Unto her. Greek and Hebrew intimate, when they first entered the nuptial chamber, chap. vi. 14.*”

The Catholic Encyclopedia gives the interesting explanation that “God allowed the demon to slay these men because they entered marriage with unholy motives,” and that “the permission given by God to the demon in this history seems to have as a motive to chasten man’s lust and sanctify marriage.” The only reason why the demon Asmodeus was allowed to kill all seven of Sarah’s husbands “at their first going in unto her,” that is, when they first tried to perform the marital act, was because they all intended to perform the sexual act for sinful, selfish, impure and lustful reasons instead of for the love of God and of children that always must be connected to the marital act. Thus, St. Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636), *Doctor of the Church*, could rightly say that in a true marriage “couples seek not pleasure but offspring” and that “therefore when a person is more sexually active than [is] needed for... procreation, he sins.” (St. Isidore, *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis*)

In the same Book of Tobit the holy angel Raphael told Tobias to marry Sarah the Virgin but Tobias was afraid to do this since he knew about the death of Sarah’s seven former husbands. St. Raphael however assured him that only those husbands and wives who are lustful and who seek fleshly pleasures are able to be controlled or killed by the demon, thus reassuring him in his holy motives.

Tobias 6:14-18,22 “Then Tobias answered, and said: I hear that she hath been given to seven husbands, and they all died: moreover I have heard, that a devil killed them. Now I am afraid, lest the same thing should happen to me also: and whereas I am the only

child of my parents, I should bring down their old age with sorrow to hell [not the literal Hell, but to the place where the souls of the good were kept before the coming of Christ]. **Then the angel Raphael said to him: Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.** But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her. ... But the second night thou shalt be admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs. And the third night thou shalt obtain a blessing that sound children may be born of you. **And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children.**”

Haydock Commentary explains: “**Ver. 14.** *Died.* Greek, "were destroyed in the nuptial chamber, (*numphe*). ... he was permitted by God to exercise his malice against those who would have gratified their impure desires. (Calmet) --- **Ver. 20.** *Society (copulatione.)* He then obtained this blessing, though he knew not his wife till the fourth night. (Worthington) --- His marriage resembled that of the patriarchs. (Calmet)”

The archangel Raphael also told Raguel (Sarah’s father) that his daughter Sarah could only be married to a man that feared God, thus showing us the necessity of fearing God in all our actions.

Tobias 7:11-12 “Now when Raguel heard this he was afraid, knowing what had happened to those seven husbands, that went in unto her: and he began to fear lest it might happen to him also in like manner: and as he was in suspense, and gave no answer to his petition, The angel said to him: Be not afraid to give her to this man, for to him who feareth God is thy daughter due to be his wife: therefore another could not have her.”

This shows us that Sarah’s seven former husbands did not fear God; hence that they deserved to die. For Sarah, who was a holy and devout virgin, did not deserve to be united with such impure and unholy men that did not fear God — and especially during the marital act. For this reason, God allowed the demon Asmodeus to kill all seven of her former husbands.

Before Sarah had met with Tobias, she had fervently prayed to God and fasted for three days so as to be delivered from her reproach after she experienced the sad event of the death of her seven husbands. Her words while praying clearly shows that her intention when marrying was not to gratify pleasure (that, sad to say, is the most common reason today of why so many marry), but rather that she may be joined in wedlock in the fear of the Lord and for love of children.

Tobias 3:16 “[Sarah said:] Thou knowest, O Lord, that I never coveted a husband, and have kept my soul clean from all lust. Never have I joined myself with them that play: neither have I made myself partaker with them that walk in lightness. But a husband I consented to take, with thy fear, not with my lust.”

Haydock Commentary explains: “**Verse 16.** *Coveted*, through impure love. Greek, "I am pure from all the sin of a man, and I have not defiled my name, nor the name of my father, in the land of our captivity. I am an only child," &c. (Haydock) --- *Lust*: a very high encomium; which Sara mentions without vanity, placing her confidence in God. (Menochius) (Proverbs xx. 9.) --- **Ver. 17.** *Play*, lasciviously, (Menochius) or dance. (Hugo.) (Exodus xxxii. 1.)”

In contrast to Sarah’s seven former husbands, Tobias was spared from being attacked and killed by Asmodeus since he was holy and desired to please God instead of his own flesh.

Tobias 8:9-10 “And now, Lord, thou knowest, that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever. Sara also said: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, and let us grow old both together in health.”

Haydock Commentary explains: “**Ver. 9.** *Only*. Greek, "for truth," resolving to be ever faithful to her. (Haydock) --- We cannot read the pure sentiments of Tobias and Sara, brought up in the midst of infidels, without surprise. Nothing more perfect could be required of Christians (Calmet) in the married state. (Haydock) --- St. Augustine (Doct. x. and xviii.) adduces this text to shew the true intent of marriage. --- **Ver. 10.** *And*. Greek, "Order pity to be shewn me, and that I may grow old with this woman. And she said along with him, Amen. And they both slept the night," probably on separate beds, ver. 15. (Haydock)”

While most people are not physically killed by the demon Asmodeus when performing the sexual act with unholy and sinful motives, this text from the Bible demonstrates that those who are sexually lustful with their spouse, or with other people they are not married with, die

a spiritual death through their sins. Most people do not like to think about these facts, but the amount of people today who are controlled and killed bodily, spiritually and eternally by the Devil is, sad to say, far too many. For “*they that commit sin and iniquity, are enemies to their own soul.*” (Tobias 12:10) If lust is not controlled and in some sense fought against, it will almost always end in mortal sin, because all control is lost. “*Go not after thy lusts, but turn away from thy own will.*” (Ecclesiasticus 18:30)

It is thus absolutely clear that the Holy Bible and the Christian Faith teaches us “**that those marriages will have an unhappy end which are entered upon... because of concupiscence alone, with no thought of the sacrament and of the mysteries signified by it**” since those kinds of sinful, selfish, and lustful “marriages” in effect are nothing but fornication in disguise of a marriage (Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* #12).

St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 198 A.D.): “Marriage in itself merits esteem and the highest approval, for the Lord wished men to “be fruitful and multiply.” [Gen. 1:28] He did not tell them, however, to act like libertines, nor did He intend them to surrender themselves to pleasure as though born only to indulge in sexual relations. Let the Educator (Christ) put us to shame with the word of Ezekiel: “Put away your fornications.” [Eze. 43:9] Why, even unreasoning beasts know enough not to mate at certain times. To indulge in intercourse without intending children is to outrage nature, whom we should take as our instructor.” (*The Paedagogus or The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X.--On the Procreation and Education of Children)

In conclusion, it should be totally clear that “**the devil hath power**” over all people who shut God out from themselves and their hearts, “as the horse and mule,” and who do things such as masturbation, oral sex, or any other act that are completely shameful, unnecessary, non-procreative and selfish (both before, during, or after the marital act) that they normally wouldn’t do if they really believed that God was present with them. Good and virtuous spouses always remember that God is present with them, and that is also why they do not stoop to the evil and unnatural sexual sins that so plague humanity today. “The activities of marriage itself, if they are not modest and do not take place under the eyes of God as it were, so that the only intention is children, are filth and lust.” (St. Jerome, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, Book III, Chapter 5:21, A.D. 387)

In truth, “filth” is the most suitable word that sums up the worth of every marital act that lacks a procreative purpose. While most people looks upon carnal lust as something good or normal, God, on the other hand, views it as “filthiness” and “unclean stench”. *The Son of God*

spoke to Saint Bridget, saying, “**The evil spirit fills and incites those in the worldly marriage to carnal lust where there is nothing but unclean stench**, but those in the spiritual marriage are filled with my Spirit and inflamed with the fire of my love that will never fail them.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 26) In another part of the same book, Christ explains that “**lustful pleasure** and worldly delight are well compared to a sulfurous mountain” because of “**the stench of concupiscence and the fire of punishment**” that all who perform unlawful sexual acts have within themselves. “**In truth, lustful pleasure** and worldly delight are well compared to a sulfurous mountain, since they have within themselves the swelling of the spirit **and the stench of concupiscence and the fire of punishment.**” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 5, Revelation 11)

Thus, “... when it [the sexual act] is from lust or for the sake of pleasure, then the coition is a mortal sin and the man sins mortally. ... **And these dicta assume that the man and his wife have sex according to the order of nature, for anyone who goes against nature always sins mortally and more seriously with his wife than with anyone else and should be punished more seriously...** Note the difference between the two cases of husband-wife sex, for incontinence and for pleasure and lust... **In the second case, he seeks to procure pleasure with hands or thought or passionate uses and incentives so he can do more than just have sex with his wife...** [thus sinning mortally] because he acts as an adulterer when he burns like an adulterer even with his own wife.” (Gratian, *On Marriage*, Dictum Post C. 32. 2. 2)

That is why it is of the greatest importance that a couple learn to control their lust. Risking eternal damnation and insufferable, indescribable torments in the fires of hell for a momentary, brief, pleasure or sin is not worth it, and is a horribly bad choice to make.

Jesus Christ spoke to St. Bridget, saying: “Therefore, two holes will be opened in him. Through the first there will enter into him every **punishment earned for his least sin up to his greatest, inasmuch as he exchanged his Creator for his own lust.** Through the second there will enter into him every kind of pain and shame, and no divine consolation or charity will ever come to him, **inasmuch as he loved himself rather than his Creator. His life will last forever and his punishment will last forever,** for all the saints have turned away from him.’ My bride, see how miserable those people will be who despise me and **how great will be the pain they purchase at the price of so little pleasure!**” (*St. Bridget’s Revelations*, Book 2, Chapter 9)

The more sexual pleasure and sensual gratification a person seeks to derive from the sexual act, the more the devil's power over him will be increased also, and the more the sin is increased (with an intention of persevering) the more the devil's power is increased as well, until, what was a venial and pardonable sin, becomes a mortal and damnable sin. Therefore, if a person understands that he may be living in venial or mortal sin with respect to sexual pleasure, he or she must learn to control their lust immediately, keeping it within the range of what is licit and permitted (non-sinful) within a marriage, and not going any further.

*The Catechism of the Council of Trent, **What Instruction is to be given touching the Use of Marriage:*** "The last remaining point regards the use of marriage, a subject which pastors will so treat as that no expression that may seem unfit to meet the ears of the faithful, or that could offend pious minds, or excite laughter, fall from their lips. For as "The words of the Lord are chaste words" (Psalms 6:7), so also does it eminently become a teacher of the Christian people to make use of such language as is characterized by singular gravity and integrity of soul. Two lessons of instruction are then to be specially impressed on the mind of the faithful. **The first is that marriage is not to be used from motives of sensuality or pleasure**, but that its use is to be restrained within those limits, which, as we have above shown, are prescribed by the Lord. **They should be mindful of the exhortation of the Apostle: "They that have wives, let them be as though they had them not,"** (1 Cor. 7:29) and that St. Jerome says: "**The love which a wise man cherishes towards his wife is the result of judgment, not the impulse of passion; he governs the impetuosity of desire, and is not hurried into indulgence. There is nothing more shameful than that a husband should love his wife as an adulteress.**"

Recent studies prove that 75% of men who died during intercourse committed adultery

Recent studies have proven that the demon Asmodeus is still very active today and that he kills a considerable amount of people who commit sexual sins of various sorts. According to these studies, the risk of a heart attack is 2.7 times greater when compared with those *not* engaging in sex. Of those who died during intercourse, 82-93% were male of which 75% were having extra-marital sex, usually with a younger partner, at an unfamiliar location and after excessive food and alcohol! *Beware!* The fact that 75% of all people who die during sexual relations are adulterers and that they were committing an act of adultery when they died is an astonishing and undeniable proof of the fact that the demon of lust, Asmodeus, still kills wicked, sinful and lustful people even today. All those unrepentant adulterers whom the

demon killed are burning in Hell right now as we speak, and nothing they will ever say or do will change that fact however much they weep and plead in their eternal abode of excruciating fire.

However hard this might seem to some people, especially unbelievers, a considerable amount of people really do die of heart attacks or sudden cardiac arrest during sex. And almost all of those people who die are older married men cheating on their wives with younger women in unfamiliar surroundings. I came across this information while reading this article: "**Heart 411: The Only Guide to Heart Health You'll Ever Need**", by Marc Gillinov and Steven Nissen, both high-ranking cardiologists at the Cleveland Clinic.

They wrote: "Men with coronary heart disease do need to follow the rules. When heart attacks occur during or after sex, they almost always involve older men in extramarital affairs with young women. For those men, it would have been safer to stay at home and burn off excess energy on a treadmill in the basement."

I wrote to Steven Nissen, and asked him to back that statement up with some data. Almost instantly he sent me two scientific papers, the first of which was "**On the association of sex with cardiac events**", and the second was a scientific statement from the "**American Heart Association on sexual activity and cardiovascular disease**". The latter states: "Of the subjects who died during coitus, 82% to 93% were men, and the majority (75%) were having extramarital sexual activity, in most cases with a younger partner in an unfamiliar setting and/or after excessive food and alcohol consumption."

The astonishing level of people that dies during sex when committing adultery (75%) compared to those of the rest of humanity who dies during sex (25%) is irrefutable proof of God's holy indignation and displeasure of sexual sin, and especially adultery (which even most people of the world looks upon with horror and disgust). It is a fair assumption to say that married men have much more sex with their wives than with other women, and yet 75% of all people who die in the sexual act die when they are committing adultery. This gives us solid statistical evidence that adultery and sinful sexual lust actually kills people.

You who are reading this document may not be committing the sin of adultery, but most of you are certainly committing some form or another of marital sexual sin since that is what you have been taught by the media, the world, and even by the so-called "moral theologians", false priests and heretical bishops. In fact, an incredible 25% of all people who die during sexual activity perform some form of sexual activity other than adultery. This is not an insignificant

number, but every 1 out of 4. So the scientific claim about extramarital and marital sexual activity holds true and is just another proof of how God allows demons to kill and damn people who sin sexually. Thus, it is true to say that “Inordinate love of the flesh is cruelty, because under the appearance of pleasing the body we kill the soul.” (St. Bernard of Clairvaux, A.D. 1090-1153)

All people should seriously consider and think about what it actually means to give oneself over to a devil or a demon as the Bible describes happening with those who commit sexual sin. The implications and result of giving oneself over to the devils and demons are endless, but some obvious examples are murder, divorce, incest, rape, arguing, adultery, fornications, abuse, gloating, and drug and alcohol abuse. This list could obviously go on for pages. Even a worldly couple would appreciate the inestimable worth of having a peaceful home free from all strife and troubles, but most people, however, live as though they cared nothing for such things. It is true to say that a huge part of the abuse or other problems that people endure in this world happens as a result of the married and unmarried performing unlawful sexual acts (such as kisses and touches for venereal pleasure) that are not able to procreative in themselves. When men and women abuse the sexual act by performing unnatural sexual acts, they cease seeing each other as persons created in the image of God, and start seeing each other as objects to be used to gratify themselves. Since they do not use the marital act for the good purpose of procreation but abuse it in order to derive more pleasure than God and nature allows them to have, they sin mortally by committing a sin that is selfish in nature, and this selfishness will in turn taint all of their conversations and relationships. It is easy to understand that a person who is seen as an object will be much more easy to maltreat or abuse than someone who is seen as a person. Indeed, one can understand this fact from the light of natural reason, as selfishness is the cause of abuse, and non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts are at the root cause of all selfishness, as we have shown. This shows us that reason itself confirms that non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts are at the root cause of abuse or other problems in a marriage and in the world.

Indeed, one of the foundational or root causes today why so many marriages fail, is the fact that about 2/3 of men watch porn. Ultimately, pornography reduces human persons to the level of objects or animals, and induces in man a contempt or disregard for the well being of other people. Once you reduce human beings to the level of objects, there is no end to the evils that will ensue. This thread of the evil of porn is interwoven in so many evils of our times, because when spouses are using contraception or non-procreative sexual acts, they are reducing their spouse to the level of sexual objects. Abortion is the ultimate example of a child being a mere object that we can dispose of for our own selfish motives. It is an act of utter

selfishness to say that a child must die so that you may live a little more comfortably as you wish. Couple the two things of reducing the humans to the level of objects and removing life from the marital act, and you got the perfect storm for what we are seeing right now in our world. It is no accident that pornography became a main stay of society right at the time that abortion became legal, in addition to the fact that the porn during this time started to become really hard core. It is impossible that this is an historical accident. Porn is definitely destroying families. “*The American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers*” reports that 56% of divorce cases involve one party having “an obsessive interest in pornographic websites.” According to numerous studies, prolonged exposure to pornography leads to:

- a diminished trust between intimate couples
- the belief that promiscuity is the natural state
- cynicism about love or the need for affection between sexual partners
- the belief that marriage is sexually confining
- a lack of attraction to family and child-raising

Sad to say, 64% of “Christian” men and 15% of “Christian” women say they watch porn at least once a month, and unless something drastic happens, families will continue to be broken because of the inherent problem of porn producing in man an objectification of other men. It cannot be doubted that porn and non-procreative sexual acts in marriage are intimately and directly connected, and parents as well as all people, must do their utmost to warn and encourage their family to abstain from porn, making clear the detrimental effects that will ensue if they choose to use porn.

The sexual act and the desire to please oneself sexually is so powerful to invoke the powers of darkness and devils that almost all satanic cults have sexual acts and rituals along with all kinds of abominable perversion as a prerequisite in their rituals to invoke the devils and demons of hell. These servants of Satan knows that the sexual act is especially powerful to summon various demons, and so they always try to act out their sexual perversions in order to be able to better commune with their lord and god, who is the Devil.

The book *Malleus Maleficarum*, which means “hammer of the witches”, and which was a very influential writing in the 16th century, explains that “God allows the devil more power over the venereal act, by which the original sin is handed down, than over other human actions”, adding that this happens, “because of its natural nastiness, and because by it the first sin was handed down to posterity.” Indeed, the truth that the devil have “more power over the venereal act” than other acts, if one thinks about it, is proven by the fact that very many of the

most evil sins that humans can commit on this earth are connected to sex: Homosexuality, abortion, contraception, pedophilia, rape, and all other unlawful and perverse sexual acts. The book also explains that spouses can sin with each other in their sexual acts, and that sexual sins in the marriage and between spouses makes the spouses more liable to bewitchment, or in our language, possession or obsession of demons or devils. Thus, “even in a state of matrimony it is possible to commit the sin of incontinence in various ways. ... He who loves his wife to excess is an adulterer. And they who love in this way are more liable to be bewitched after the manner we have said.”

Malleus Maleficarum, Part 2, Chapter II: “Although far more women are witches than men, as was shown in the First Part of the work, yet men are more often bewitched than women. And the reason for this lies in the fact that God allows the devil more power over the venereal act, by which the original sin is handed down, than over other human actions. In the same way He allows more witchcraft to be performed by means of serpents, which are more subject to incantations than other animals, because that was the first instrument of the devil. And the venereal act can be more readily and easily bewitched in a man than in a woman, as has been clearly shown. For there are five ways in which the devil can impede the act of generation, and they are more easily operated against men. ...

And the infirmity we are considering can only be due to the sin of incontinence. For, as we have said, God allows the devil more power over that act than over other human acts, because of its natural nastiness, and because by it the first sin was handed down to posterity. Therefore when people joined in matrimony have for some sin been deprived of Divine help, God allows them to be bewitched chiefly in their procreant functions. But if it is asked of what sort are those sins, it can be said, according to St. Jerome, that even in a state of matrimony it is possible to commit the sin of incontinence in various ways. See the text: He who loves his wife to excess is an adulterer [*Against Jovinianus* 1.49]. And they who love in this way are more liable to be bewitched after the manner we have said.”

Another interesting example which shows us that the devil—by tempting lustful spouses to commit sexual sin—is the mastermind behind why spouses perform non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts, is found in the great *Revelations of St. Bridget*, where Our Lord Himself also reveals that spouses who perform unnatural or unnecessary sexual acts with their spouse will be damned to suffer and be tormented for all eternity in the fire of hell unless they repent and cease committing these acts:

“A demon appeared at the court of divine judgment with a certain deceased man’s soul that was trembling the way a heart trembles. The demon said to the judge: “Here’s my prey! Your angel and I have been following this soul from start to finish—he did it to protect her, I to harm her. Both of us chased her like hunters. But in the end she fell into my hands. My passion to gain possession of her is like a torrential stream rushing along which nothing can resist but the barrier of your justice. However, your justice has not yet been applied against this soul, so I am not yet secure in her possession. I long for her as intensely as an animal consumed by starvation that hunger drives to eat its own limbs. Therefore, since you are the just judge, adjudge a just judgment upon her!”

The judge [Our Lord Jesus Christ] answered: “Why has she fallen into your hands and why were you closer to her than my angel?”

The demon answered: “Because her sins were greater in number than her good deeds.”

The judge answered: “Show me which!” The demon replied: “I have filled a book with her sins.” The judge: “What is the name of this book?”

The demon answered: “Its name is disobedience, and it is really seven books, each one containing three columns. Each column contains more than a thousand words: none less than a thousand but some many more. ... **The seventh book was his lust and it, too, had three columns. The first was that he spilled his seed in an undue and intemperate way. Although he was married and kept away from the stain of other women, nevertheless he spilled his seed unduly as a result of embraces and unsuitable words and immodest behavior. The second column was that he was extremely frivolous in his speech. He not only led his own wife on to more passionate sexual desire, his words also lured others many times to hearing and imagining indecent things.** The third column was that he fed his body too luxuriously, having sumptuous dishes prepared for the greater enjoyment of his body and for the sake of his reputation, in order to be called a great man. Over a thousand words are in these columns—sitting longer at table than he ought, not keeping to schedule, speaking unsuitably, eating beyond natural requirements.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 6, Chapter 39)

In Book 4, Chapter 52 of the *Revelations* a similar vision describes how a married couple that performed non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts was condemned to eternal punishments. After an angel’s explanation to St. Bridget about the terrible vision of a man and a woman and their spiritual significance, he says the following concerning the woman: “**You saw the woman’s hands were like the tails of foxes and her feet like scorpions. This is because, just as she was undisciplined in her whole body and all her**

passions, so too by the lightness of her hands and her way of walking she excited her husband's physical delight and stung his soul worse than any scorpion." This shows us that all lasciviousness and all unlawful lust outside of the normal, natural and procreative marital act kills the soul. In truth, today too many people in this world fall into hell because of "the lightness of her hands" by performing masturbatory acts with their hands either on their spouse, or on themselves, or by arousing their own or their spouse's lust by lascivious and impure behavior, just like this woman in this example did.

The following words describes the woman and the man's terrible punishment due to their lustfulness and worldliness:

"At that very moment an Ethiopian appeared with trident in hand and three sharp claws on his feet. He shouted and said: "Judge, it is my hour now. I have waited and been silent. Now is the time for action!" Immediately, I beheld a naked man and woman before the judge as he sat there together with his innumerable host. The judge said to them: "Though I know all things, tell us what you have done!" The man answered: "We heard and knew about the ecclesial bond, and we paid no attention but disdained it." The judge answered: "Because you refused to follow the Lord, justice says you must experience the malice of the executioner." Right then the Ethiopian thrust his claws into their hearts and pressed them together so tightly that they looked like they were in a winepress. And the judge said: "Look, daughter, this is what people deserve when they knowingly distance themselves from their creator for the sake of creation."

"The judge spoke again to the two of them: "I gave you a sack to fill with the fruit of my delights. What, then, do you bring me?" The woman answered: "O judge, we sought the delights of our belly and have nothing to bring but shame." Then the judge said to the executioner: "Let them have their just reward!" And he immediately thrust his second claw into both their bellies and wounded them so badly that all their intestines appeared to be pierced through and through. The judge said: "Look, daughter, this is what people deserve when they transgress the law and thirst after poison [that is, sensual pleasure] as though it were medicine."

"The judge spoke again to the two of them: "Where is my treasure that I provided for your use?" Both of them answered: "We trampled it underfoot, for we sought an earthly treasure and not an eternal one." Then the judge said to the executioner: "Let them have what you must and can give to them!" He immediately thrust his third claw into their hearts and bellies and feet in such a way that everything seemed to be like one big ball. The Ethiopian said: "Lord, where shall I go with them?" The judge answered: "It is not for you to rise or rejoice." At that the man and woman disappeared

with a wail from the face of the judge. The judge spoke again: “Rejoice, daughter, because you have been kept apart from such creatures.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 4, Chapter 52)

Another Revelation of Our Lord Jesus Christ confirms - in an even more horrifying manner - the fact that non-procreative sexual acts are utterly hated by God. Our Lord tells us about a woman who used to use her arms in a lascivious manner, and tells us that in Hell “**The arms and other limbs with which she used to lasciviously embrace the loved one so tenderly are now stretched out like two snakes that coil themselves around her, mercilessly devouring and tearing her to pieces without rest.**”

The Revelations of St. Bridget, Book 6, Chapter 16: “Then the Lord said to the same saint: “Tell my bride here what those persons deserve who care more about the world than about God, who love the creature more than the Creator. Tell her what kind of punishment that woman is now undergoing who spent her entire lifetime in the world in sinful pleasure.” The saint replied: “Her punishment is most severe. For the pride she had in her every limb, [through vanity] her head and hands, arms and legs burn horribly in a blazing fire. Her bosom is being pricked as though by the hide of a hedgehog whose quills fasten to her flesh and mercilessly press into her. **The arms and other limbs with which she used to lasciviously embrace the loved one so tenderly are now stretched out like two snakes that coil themselves around her, mercilessly devouring and tearing her to pieces without rest. Her belly is terribly twisted, as though a sharp pole were being driven into her private parts and thrust violently inward so as to penetrate ever more deeply.** Her thighs and knees are like ice, hard and stiff, with no warmth nor rest. The feet that used to carry her to her pleasures and lead others along with her now stand atop sharp razors slicing them incessantly.”

This hair raising example shows us the miserable end in hell of all who perform unlawful, non-procreative and lascivious sexual acts and touches, like this woman did.

Indeed, all people who are performing inherently shameful, unnatural or non-procreative sexual acts for lustful and selfish reasons of course knows by nature and instinct – just like the satanist do – that they are sinning against the Natural Law imprinted on their hearts. St. Augustine in his book *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, explains to us that the “law of righteousness [the law in our hearts] forbids allegiance” to such lusts.

“Now this [shameful] concupiscence [or lust], this law of [original] sin which dwells in our members, **to which the law of righteousness forbids allegiance, saying in the words of the apostle, "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin:"** [Rom. 6:12-13]—this concupiscence [of original sin], I say, which is cleansed only by the sacrament of regeneration [Baptism], does undoubtedly, by means of natural birth, pass on the bond of [this] sin to a man’s posterity [children], unless they [the children] are themselves loosed from it by regeneration. In the case, however, of the regenerate [the baptized], **concupiscence is not itself sin any longer, whenever they do not consent to it for illicit works, and when the members are not applied by the presiding mind to perpetrate such deeds.** So that, if what is enjoined in one passage, "Thou shalt not covet," [Ex. 20:17] is not kept, that at any rate is observed which is commanded in another place, "Thou shalt not go after thy concupiscences." [Ecclus. 18:30] Inasmuch, however, as by a certain manner of speech it is called sin, since it arose from sin [i.e., the first sin and consequent fall from grace by Adam and Eve], and, when it has the upper hand, produces sin, the guilt of it prevails in the natural man; **but this guilt, by Christ’s grace through the remission of all sins, is not suffered to prevail in the regenerate man, if he does not yield obedience to it whenever it urges him to the commission of evil.**” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 1, Chapter 25, A.D. 419)

The lawful quieting of concupiscence vs the sinful inflaming of concupiscence

According to Catholic teaching, a husband and wife are allowed to quiet their concupiscence as a secondary motive after the first motive of procreation. This is the authoritative teaching proclaimed by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Casti Connubii*. This means that spouses are allowed to **put down** the flames of concupiscence and not to inflame it in any sinful way. The goal is to get the spouse to Heaven, to glorify God, and sanctify one self, and not primarily about pleasure.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 17), Dec. 31, 1930: “**THE PRIMARY END OF MARRIAGE IS THE PROCREATION AND THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN...** For in matrimony as well as in the use of matrimonial rights there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the **quieting of concupiscence** which husband and wife **are not forbidden to consider, SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS,**

PROCREATION OF CHILDREN and so long as the *intrinsic nature* of the act is preserved [*intrinsic nature*, that is, only the normal, natural and procreative marital act is allowed to be performed by the Church without sin].”

The gravity of sin when inflaming concupiscence depends on the thoughts and actual deeds that a couple consents to before, during or after the sexual act. However, while a couple are allowed to quiet their concupiscence as a secondary end that must follow and be subordinated to the primary end or motive of begetting children, they are ***never*** allowed to prevent the conception of a child in any way, either through contraceptives, or by withdrawal, or by the use of NFP, since this is contrary to the first end or purpose of marriage and the marital act—the procreation of children. This is the infallible and binding teaching of the Catholic Church (see [NFP and Contraception is Sinful Birth Control](#)).

Now, since many couples today, and especially those who call themselves by the name of Catholic and who should live like angels, inflame their lust to the fullest both before, during and after the procreative act just as they have been taught by the world, the media, the Vatican II Church and many other false, evil “traditional” sects and perverted, evil and satanic theologians and heretical laymen, we must condemn this idea in specific detail.

Notice the words of Pope Pius XI above, which said that the “quieting of concupiscence” is allowed. This means to *put down* the flame of concupiscence and not to inflame it in any unlawful or sinful way. **Those who thus commit acts which are not necessary for the quieting of concupiscence or the completion of the marital act and the begetting of children absolutely commit sin**, since they are inflaming their flesh in a totally sinful way.

The inflaming of concupiscence or sexual lust is condemned as sinful because it subordinates the primary or secondary ends (or purposes) of marriage and the marital act (the procreation and education of children, and the quieting of concupiscence) to other ends, by deliberately attempting to avoid the normal sexual procreative act as their first or only act of marriage while having sexual relations. The inflaming of concupiscence therefore inverts the order established by God Himself. It does the very thing that Pope Pius XI solemnly teaches may not lawfully be done. And this point ***crushes*** all of the arguments made by those who defend unnatural, unlawful non-procreative forms of fore-or-after-play outside of normal intercourse, because all of the arguments made by those who defend inflaming the flesh focus on the concupiscence and lust within the marital act itself, and not on the primary or secondary ends of lawful marital intercourse (the procreation and education of children, and

the quieting of concupiscence).

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 54), Dec. 31, 1930: “Since, therefore, **the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural powers and *purpose* sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.”

Therefore, all unnatural, unnecessary and non-procreative sexual acts are intrinsically evil and against nature because the conjugal act is primarily directed toward procreation and the begetting of children. Those persons (married or not) who deliberately choose sexual acts deprived of the natural power and purpose of procreation “sin against nature” and commit a shameful and intrinsically evil act.

In truth, what these lustful couples do when they are enhancing their pleasure is not the only lawful *quieting of concupiscence* that Pope Pius XI spoke about, **but is in fact the exact opposite**, since they first inflame their lust and concupiscence before putting it out. They are therefore then, without a doubt, committing a mortal sin. For if it is even considered minimally a **venial sin** for spouses to come together only for normal lustful motives while performing what is intrinsic or necessary for conception to occur in the normal and natural marital act, **what then must not those unnatural, unnormal, unholy and unnecessary sexual acts be that these lustful couples live out during the heat of their shameful lust?** Hence it is totally clear that every sexual act whereby lust is inflamed through acts such as oral, anal or manual sexual acts instead of quenched in the natural way is contrary to the good of marriage – the **HOLY** sacrament – and if this is done on purpose, it must be a mortal sin.

St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book 3, Chapter 14: “**Since conjugal modesty itself also restrains this pest [of lust], because of the boundless sloughs of lust and the damnable craving even in marriage, lest something be committed beyond the natural use of the spouse**, why did you [Julian, the Pelagian heretic, who praised lust and concupiscence] say: ‘In the married it is exercised honestly,’ as though to say this appetite were always honest in a spouse...? How much better to say: ‘In the moderateness of the married it is exercised honestly.’ Were you afraid this also might lead to recognition of the evil [of lust] which the married themselves restrain by careful moderation?”

The truth “**that marriage is not to be used from motives of sensuality or pleasure**,

but that its use is to be restrained within those limits, which, as we have above shown, are prescribed by the Lord” (*The Catechism of Trent*) is something that the western world have completely rejected in our times. However, as we have seen, it could not be more clear that Holy Scripture teaches us that “God either forbids or condemns the excess of lust”.

“You begin next to discuss the excess of concupiscence, which you say is reprehensible, as though in its moderation, when a married man uses it well, the horse itself which is evil should be praised and not the driver. What benefit do you derive from the testimonies from Scripture where it is shown how God either forbids or condemns the excess of lust? Look rather at this: that the concupiscence of the flesh, unless it be restrained, can effect all those things that horrify us in the most vicious crimes having to do with the reproductive members; and these effects it produces by means of those very movements which it causes, to our sorrow, even in sleep, and even in the bodies of chaste men.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book 3, Chapter 20)

A “venial sin is made mortal if a human being delights in it with the intention of persevering” according to Our Lord Jesus Christ

As we have already seen, the Church’s official teaching that condemns the statement that “*the [normal, natural and procreative] act of marriage exercised for pleasure only is entirely free of all fault and venial defect*” shows us that all unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts are mortally sinful. This teaching of Blessed Pope Innocent XI, however, does not say that it is only a venial sin to perform the normal, natural and ***procreative*** marital act for pleasure only, but merely condemns the unnatural and selfish opinion and heresy that this vile act “is entirely free of all fault and venial defect”. This teaching of Pope Innocent XI does not specify whether even the normal, natural and procreative “act of marriage exercised for pleasure only” is a mortal or a venial sin, and so, it is still possible that this act could be a mortal sin rather than a venial sin.

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Subjects* #9, March 4, 1679: “THE ACT OF MARRIAGE EXERCISED FOR PLEASURE ONLY IS ENTIRELY FREE OF ALL FAULT AND VENIAL DEFECT.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.** (Denz. 1159)

Although a venial sin does not separate us from God as does a mortal sin, a venial sin can still lead a person to Hell, since it might cause him to commit other graver sins, and, because he did not care to stop doing what he knew was a danger to his soul, but even took great delight

in it, though he knew it was offending God. To consent to deliberate venial sins is of course very bad. We can learn this truth from Jesus Christ Himself, because according to Jesus Christ: “a venial sin is made **mortal** if a human being delights in it **with the intention of persevering.**” This shocking truth was expressly revealed to St. Bridget in the following Revelation, in which Our Lord spoke, saying:

“Moreover, know that just as all mortal sins are very serious, so too a venial sin is made mortal if a human being delights in it *with the intention of persevering.*” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 7, Chapter 27)

According to this definition by Our Lord Jesus Christ, if a person were to commit a venial sin but does not want to or intend to continue committing this sin again in the future, such a person would not be in a state of damnation because of his sin, even if it turned out that he committed it again in the future, because his will at the time was not to continue doing it.

In contrast, if another person has “the intention of persevering” in a venial sin and does not repent with a firm resolution or will to stop doing this sin again in the future, but intends to continue doing it and are unrepentant for his sin, **then he is in a state of damnation.**

Our Lord’s words are crystal clear that a “venial sin is made **mortal** if a human being delights in it *with the intention of persevering.*” Thus, the venial sin that is practiced “with an intention of persevering” and “if a human being delights in it” is made mortal, and all mortal sins must always be wiped away by perfect contrition and repentance if one wishes to be saved. Unless a person repents and firmly resolves to change and stop doing the venial sin that he had “an intention of persevering” in, he will be damned. So don’t think that you are “safe” just because you’re “only” sinning venially. For the fact of the matter is that you in fact are **in mortal sin** and will be damned to burn in Hell for all eternity **because of the venial sin if you intend to persevere in it!** It is thus clear that “**the smallest sin, lusted after, is enough to damn anyone from the kingdom of Heaven, who does not repent.**” (Jesus speaking to St. Bridget, Book 1, Chapter 32)

The Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, has the following interesting things to say about how a venial sin can become a mortal sin, and about the evil action of choosing sin before choosing to love God:

“The very fact that anyone chooses something that is contrary to divine charity, proves that he prefers it to the love of God, and consequently, **that he loves it more than**

he loves God. Hence it belongs to the genus of some sins, which are of themselves contrary to charity, that something is loved more than God; so that they are mortal by reason of their genus... Sometimes, however, the sinner's will is directed to a thing containing a certain inordinateness, but which is not contrary to the love of God and one's neighbor, e.g. an idle word, excessive laughter, and so forth: and such sins are venial by reason of their genus... It is written (Sirach 19:1): "He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little." Now he that sins venially seems to contemn small things. Therefore by little and little he is disposed to fall away together into mortal sin." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part of the Second Part, Q. 88, Art. 2 & 3, Reply to Objection 1/On the contrary)

And further on, he says:

"Whether a venial sin can become mortal? I answer that, The fact of a venial sin becoming a mortal sin... **This is possible**, in so far as one may **fix one's end in that venial sin, or direct it to some mortal sin as end**, as stated above (Article 2). [Excerpt from article 2:] ... it happens sometimes that a sin which is venial generically by reason of its object, becomes mortal on the part of the agent, either because he fixes his last end therein, or because he directs it to something that is a mortal sin in its own genus; for example, if a man direct an idle word to the commission of adultery." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part of the Second Part, Q. 88, Art. 4 & 2)

A good example that demonstrates the difference between venial and mortal sin is the sin of drunkenness. For instance, a person who only gets a "little drunk" has committed a venial sin, while the person who gets "drunk" has committed a mortal sin. However, the first moment the person who committed the venial sin of getting a "little drunk" have made up his mind (or intention) to persevere in his venial sin of drunkenness, that is, he has no intention of stopping to commit this sin against God, **then this venial sin has turned into a mortal and damnable one because of his deliberate contempt and scorn of the all good God whom he is willfully offending.**

These facts, then, demonstrates that all those people who have an "intention of persevering" in performing even the normal, natural and procreative marital act for the sole sake of sensual pleasure are in a state of damnation, and that they would be condemned to Hell for this sin alone. And this is just speaking about those who perform the *normal* sexual act without any other immoral or sinful act. Today, it is indeed true to say that a huge part of both men and women in the western world not only have an "intention of persevering" in performing the

normal sexual act for the sole sake of pleasure until death, which is damnable in itself, but that almost all of them have an “intention of persevering” in committing all kinds of damnable sexual perversions in the sexual act as well, such as masturbation of self or of spouse, foreplay, anal or oral sex, and shameful and sensual kisses or touches on different body parts, etc., which are acts so shameful, detestable and wicked that they scream to Heaven for vengeance! **Eternal Hell and insufferable, indescribable torments will rightly and justly be the lot of all those people!**

Considering the above facts, for a person then to deliberately and consciously live in venial sin or to commit even a single venial sin (even without an intention of persevering) is of course very bad, since it has always been a wide gateway into committing more grave sins. Many people, for instance, fail to see (or don't think about) that most mortal sinners (like alcoholics and perverts) did not start out their life in this way. In the beginning, people are generally lured by the Devil by first committing a venial sin, and then, gradually, when he's got a grip on them and has fooled them and made them comfortable in their sin, he easily inspires them into committing graver sins, such as mortal sins. No person starts out as a rapist or a child molester. This is a gradual process of evolution in wickedness. Therefore, it is of the greatest importance to fight against all venial sins and to do one's utmost not to consent to them.

A clearer demonstration of this fact can also be found in the following revelation in St. Bridget's Revelations:

The Son of God speaks to the bride (St. Bridget), saying: “What are you worried and anxious about?” She answered: “I am afflicted by various useless thoughts that I cannot get rid of, and hearing about your terrible judgment upsets me.” The Son answered: “This is truly just. Earlier you found pleasure in worldly desires against my will, but now different thoughts are allowed to come to you against your will.

*“But have a prudent fear of God, and put great trust in me, your God, knowing for certain that when your mind does not take pleasure in sinful thoughts but struggles against them by detesting them, then they become a purgation and a crown for the soul. **But if you take pleasure in committing even a slight sin, which you know to be a sin, and you do so trusting to your own abstinence and presuming on grace, without doing penance and reparation for it, know that it can become a mortal sin.** Accordingly, if some sinful pleasure of any kind comes into your mind, you should right away think about where it is heading and repent.*

“... God hates nothing so much as when you know you have sinned but do not care, trusting to your other meritorious actions, as if, because of them, God would put

up with your sin, as if he could not be glorified without you, or as if he would let you do something evil with his permission, seeing all the good deeds you have done, since, even if you did a hundred good deeds for each wicked one, you still would not be able to pay God back for his goodness and love. So, then, maintain a rational fear of God and, even if you cannot prevent these thoughts, then at least bear them patiently and use your will to struggle against them. You will not be condemned because of their entering your head, unless you take pleasure in them, since it is not within your power to prevent them.

“Again, maintain your fear of God in order not to fall through pride, even though you do not consent to the thoughts. Anyone who stands firm stands by the power of God alone. Thus fear of God is like the gateway into heaven. Many there are who have fallen headlong to their deaths, because they cast off the fear of God and were then ashamed to make a confession before men, although they had not been ashamed to sin before God. Therefore, I shall refuse to absolve the sin of a person who has not cared enough to ask my pardon for a small sin. **In this manner, sins are increased through habitual practice, and a venial sin that could have been pardoned through contrition becomes a serious one through a person’s negligence and scorn, as you can deduce from the case of this soul who has already been condemned.**

“After having committed a venial and pardonable sin, he augmented it through habitual practice, trusting to his other good works, without thinking that I might take lesser sins into account. Caught in a net of habitual and inordinate pleasure, his soul neither corrected nor curbed his sinful intention, until the time for his sentencing stood at the gates and his final moment was approaching. This is why, as the end approached, his conscience was suddenly agitated and painfully afflicted because he was soon to die and he was afraid to lose the little, temporary good he had loved. **Up until a sinner’s final moment God abides him, waiting to see if he is going to direct his free will away from his attachment to sin.**

“**However, if a soul’s will is not corrected, that soul is then confined by an end without end.** What happens is that the devil, knowing that each person will be judged according to his conscience and intention, labors mightily at the end of life to distract the soul and turn it away from rectitude of intention, and God allows it to happen, since the soul refused to remain vigilant when it ought to have...” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden*, Book 3, Chapter 19)

Again, Our Lord’s words are crystal clear: a deliberate venial sin becomes a mortal sin if it’s done with an intention of persevering in it. Our Lord also explained that even a slight sin

without an intention of persevering in it “can become a mortal sin” **if a person does not do “penance and reparation for it” and if they don’t feel any sorrow for their sin.** But why? Jesus goes on to explain that as well, saying that “**sins are increased through habitual practice**” and that “**a venial sin that could have been pardoned through contrition becomes a serious one through a person’s negligence and scorn, as you can deduce from the case of this soul who has already been condemned.**” He then proceeds to describe this sorrowful and condemned person that tragically was living in sin even until death: “After having committed a venial and pardonable sin, he augmented [increased] it through habitual practice” and “Caught in a net of habitual and inordinate pleasure, his soul neither corrected nor curbed his sinful intention, until the time for his sentencing stood at the gates and his final moment was approaching.”

Considering all of the above, what then does God think of married couples who come together in the marital act in sinful lust and concupiscence and about those who work on inflaming their sinful lust rather than quieting it?

“They seek a warmth and sexual lust that will perish and love flesh that will be eaten by worms. ... When the couple comes to bed, my Spirit leaves them immediately and the spirit of impurity approaches instead, because they only come together for the sake of lust and do not discuss or think about anything else with each other. ... Such a married couple will never see my face unless they repent. For there is no sin so heavy or grave that penitence and repentance does not wash it away.” (Jesus Christ speaking to St. Bridget, in the *Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 26)

As we can see, Jesus Christ views such foul, impure spouses as described above as eternally condemned. Therefore, a couple may not do anything before, during or after the procreative act that is against the primary or secondary purpose of marriage: the begetting of children, and the quieting of concupiscence.

So contrary to modern day notion and common opinion (even amongst those who dare to call themselves by the name of Catholic and who should live like angels), a husband and wife are never allowed to “help” themselves with their hands or do other things to enhance their lust and in this way make themselves “ready” before the act as they so call it and their shameful and sinful excuse is. If a couple really believes in God they should pray to God before coming together and God will hear their prayers and make them ready without any further need by the couple to inflame their lust in a sinful way. Lubricants are of course also acceptable and

the non-sinful and honorable way to use if there is a problem to complete the marital act. However, lubricants that increase sexual pleasure and that now are being manufactured and sold are of course totally unacceptable.

Likewise, if a woman was not able to quiet her concupiscence before the completion of the procreative act, it is unlawful for her (or her husband) to help herself afterwards. If husband and wife engage in unlawful activities such as masturbation, oral sex, or any other unnecessary or non-procreative evil act, they always commit a mortal sin. Barren couples and people with defects or old age still fulfill the primary end of marriage through normal intercourse by being open to conception and desiring children and not being against conception if it should occur. Husband and wife are forbidden to indulge in all unnecessary sexual acts, that is, to masturbate themselves or their spouse or to fondle with their hands in improper, shameful bodily places (like the genital and breast area) and in this way enhance their lust. Masturbation, lewd or sensual kisses and touches is as forbidden during the procreative act as it is at any other time for any person. To avoid falling into mortal sin, a good husband and wife must learn to pray to God for relief in their concupiscence and lust. (The Most Holy Rosary is also the best weapon to use in order to conquer the Devil's temptations.) If a pious couple really wants help from God, He will help them and remove the concupiscence and sinful lust from them. It is also many times necessary to offer up penances to God like fasting and eating less tasty food in order to acquire this goal. These small penances coupled with spiritual reading and prayer will help a couple to stem their sinful inclinations, as long as they stay out of mortal and venial sins.

God almost never allows sinners to be freed from their attachment to sin unless they first offer up "penance and reparation for it." Our Lord is crystal clear that penance is a great necessity for freeing the soul from the bondage of sin.

Jesus Christ speaking to St. Bridget: "But if you take pleasure in committing even a slight sin, which you know to be a sin, and you do so trusting to your own abstinence and presuming on grace, **without doing penance and reparation for it**, know that it can become a mortal sin." (St. Bridget's Revelations, Book 3, Chapter 19)

It is also of the greatest importance that husband and wife are not influenced by the evil and demonic teachings that are rampant in the secular world – even amongst those who dare to call themselves "Catholic" or "traditional Catholic", or even worse, "Priest" or "Bishop". These perverted people will tell you things such as, "*that almost nothing is wrong in the marital act as long as the primary purpose of the act was achieved at some point. Whatever happens*

before, during or afterwards, was part of that act and is therefore licit and permitted.” This statement, as we have seen, is clearly false and have been thoroughly refuted by the teaching of Pope Pius XI that condemns all non-procreative sexual acts, as well as from the teaching of Pope Innocent XI that condemns the heretical idea that the marital act performed for pleasure only is without any fault or venial defect.

In truth, all men and women of good will can of course see that the words of Holy Scripture – that prophesies and directly describes our lamentable, evil time where almost universal perversion rules all of society – has been directly fulfilled to the letter by those who hold such perverted views concerning the marital sexual act. “*Knowing this first, that in the last days there shall come deceitful scoffers, walking after their own lusts...*” (2 Peter 3:3) “*Now the Spirit manifestly saith, that in the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error, and doctrines of devils, Speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their conscience seared...*” (1 Timothy 4:1-2)

Anyone therefore that agrees with or acts upon the teachings of such demonically inspired people will lose their souls, since they are rejecting the [natural law](#) that God has imprinted on their hearts, which tells them that such activities are inherently wrong, evil, selfish, unnecessary, and above all, shameful. “*For the things that are done by them in secret are shameful, even to mention.*” (Ephesians 5:12)

Some pleasures are intrinsically evil and hence always forbidden

That some pleasures are intrinsically evil is taught by the Natural Law and by the positive laws of God’s Church. Certain sins give a pleasure unique to themselves and hence are intrinsically evil pleasures. This is attested to in the following verse: “*The discourse of sinners is hateful, and their laughter is at the pleasures of sin.*” (Ecclesiasticus 27:14) For instance, the pleasure one gets from murdering a man is an intrinsically evil pleasure. The pleasure one gets from demeaning and degrading someone who is not as smart or rich or physically attractive as oneself is an intrinsically evil pleasure. The pleasure one gets from enjoying riotous assemblies is an intrinsically evil pleasure. “*Take no pleasure in riotous assemblies, be they ever so small: for their consternation is continual.*” (Ecclesiasticus 18:32) The love of money is an intrinsically evil pleasure. “*There is not a more wicked thing than to love money.*” (Ecclesiasticus 10:10) The pleasure one gets from mind-altering drugs such as LSD or marijuana is an intrinsically evil pleasure just as getting drunk is. When I was trying to convert a young boy, he told me that marijuana is good because God created it and it makes

him feel good. I told him that God also created poison and some poisons taste good and may make you feel good for a while but will nevertheless kill you. This example applies perfectly to sexual pleasure because to some it tastes and feels good for a while but it surely kills the soul if not fought against and controlled.

King Solomon is a good example of what happens to a man who doesn't fight against bad pleasures and that lets himself get overcome by them. Today, sad to say, most people act in the precise same way as King Solomon did, for they do not fight against or resist any of the temptations that they are tempted with, whether lawful or unlawful, but commit them without any shame or scruple or pangs of conscience whatsoever. Carnal temptations led Solomon into mortal sins of immorality which led him into mortal sins of idolatry and apostasy: "*And whatsoever my eyes desired, I refused them not: and I withheld not my heart from enjoying every pleasure, and delighting itself in the things which I had prepared: and esteemed this my portion, to make use of my own labour.*" (Ecclesiastes 2:10) In truth, Pope St. Gregory the Great explains in his *Moral Reflections* 7:7 that "Immoderate relations with women led Solomon into idolatry. His immoderate relations with and devotion to women brought Solomon to such a state that he built a temple to idols. Indeed he was so addicted to lust and reduced to such infidelity that he did not fear to construct a temple to idols..." (Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law*, Case Thirty-Two, Question IV, Part 4, C. 13)

The Fall and Original Sin of Adam and Eve is the origin and cause of fleshly lusts and sexual desires

From where comes this fleshly lust, this momentary pleasure of the flesh that so deceives us and tempts us to commit sins and excesses of various sorts? It came after Adam and Eve committed the *Original Sin*—after their sin of disobedience against God and His Law in the garden of Eden.

The Holy Bible expressly reveals that Original Sin and thus all the temptations and defects that we now all experience and are plagued with entered the world and became a part of all Adam's children (and descendants) because of Adam's first sin, and that by this sin *death* followed, passing upon all Adam's children and posterity for all generations to come: "*Wherefore as by one man [Adam] sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.*" (Romans 5:12) The only thing that saves us from this sure death is the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of Baptism that washes away the stain or guilt of Original Sin, but not its effect. In truth, "*for as by the disobedience of one man [Adam], many were made sinners; so also by the obedience*

of One [Our Lord Jesus Christ], many shall be made just.” (Romans 5:19) God’s Holy Word not only makes clear the fact that death entered the world because of Adam’s transgression or first sin, but it also makes clear that sin entered the world because of him—thus passing upon all men.

The Church of course understood from the beginning that all our fleshly lusts and desires (whether inside or outside of marriage), arose as a direct result and evil effect of the sin of Adam and Eve, and that is why the Papal Magisterium and the Saints unanimously teach this doctrine of the Christian Faith.

St. Augustine, *City of God*, Book XIV, Chapter 12 (c. 426 A.D.): “... lust, which only afterwards sprung up as the penal consequence of [the original] sin, the iniquity of violating it was all the greater in proportion to the ease with which it might have been kept.”

St. John Chrysostom, A.D. 347-407, *Homilies on Genesis* 18:12: “Now, Adam had intercourse with his wife Eve.’ Consider when this happened. After their disobedience, after their loss of the Garden, then it was that the practice of intercourse had its beginning. You see, before their disobedience they followed a life like that of the angels, and there was no mention of intercourse. How could there be, when they were not subject to the needs of the body? So at the outset and from the beginning the practice of virginity was in force, but when through their indifference disobedience came on the scene and the ways of sin were opened, virginity took its leave for the reason that they had proved unworthy of such a degree of good things, and in its place the practice of intercourse took over for the future.”

St. Jerome (c. 347-420 A.D.): “Eve in paradise was a virgin... understand that virginity is natural and that marriage comes after the Fall.” (Quoted in *Honest to Man*: p. 120 by Margaret Knight)

St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus* 1:16, A.D. 393: “And as regards Adam and Eve we must maintain that before the fall they were virgins in Paradise: but after they sinned, and were cast out of Paradise, they were immediately married.”

St. John Damascene (c. 676-749 A.D.): “Adam and Eve were created sexless; their sin in Eden led to the horrors of sexual reproduction. If only our earliest progenitors had obeyed God, we would be procreating less sinfully now.”

St. Augustine, *City of God*, Book 14, Chapter 26 (c. 426 A.D.): “In Eden, it would have been possible to beget offspring without foul lust. The sexual organs would have been stimulated into necessary activity by will-power alone, just as the will controls other organs. Then, without being goaded on by the allurements of passion, the husband could have relaxed upon his wife’s breasts with complete peace of mind and bodily tranquility, that part of his body not activated by tumultuous passion, but brought into service by the deliberate use of power when the need arose, the seed dispatched into the womb with no loss of his wife’s virginity. So, the two sexes could have come together for impregnation and conception by an act of will, rather than by lustful cravings.”

St. John Chrysostom, A.D. 347-407, *Homilies on Genesis* 15:14: “... the consummation of that intercourse occurred after the fall; up till that time they were living like angels in paradise and so were not burning with desire, not assaulted by other passions, not subject to the needs of nature; on the contrary, they were created incorruptible and immortal, and on that account at any rate they had no need to wear clothes.”

God had originally created the sexual act between man and woman to be a perfect act of love for God through mutual devotion and union of the flesh without any shameful lust. The act would have been no more pleasing to the flesh than a hug or caress, and childbirth was not to be painful. The emphasis on the flesh, both the momentary pleasure during the act and the pain during childbirth, are evil effects of Adam and Eve’s original sin. After Adam and Eve committed the original sin they covered their private parts indicating shame and that a violation had occurred in this area not intended by God: “*and when they perceived themselves to be naked, they sewed together fig leaves, and made themselves aprons.*” (Genesis 3:7) This strange sensation that Adam and Eve experienced, this momentary fleshly pleasure, was at the same time very shameful, something alien to them, to which they sensed a loss of control over their own bodies. “Hence, it happened that the defilements which flowed into the nature of man from Adam’s sin, especially the infirmity of the will and the unbridled desires of the soul, survive in man.” (Pope Pius XI, *Divini illius magistri*; Denzinger 2212)

St. Paul also speaks about and laments this law of sin and concupiscence that is inherent in all humans after the fall, as well as “the defilements which flowed into the nature of man from Adam’s sin” which tempts us to commit sexual sins of all sorts: “But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members.” (Romans 7:23)

“When the first man transgressed the law of God, he began to have another law in his members which was repugnant to the law of his mind, and he felt the evil of his own disobedience when he experienced in the disobedience of his flesh a most righteous retribution recoiling on himself. Such, then, was the opening of his eyes which the serpent had promised him in his temptation [Genesis 3:5] — the knowledge, in fact, of something which he had better been ignorant of. Then, indeed, did man perceive within himself what he had done; then did he distinguish evil from good—not by avoiding it, but by enduring it.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 1, Chapter 7)

After the fall, the sexual act became shameful and disordered since the will to produce offspring had to compete with the will of self-gratification. This quick, momentary pleasure during the sexual act placed the excitation of the flesh at the center of attention instead of the true cause, which is the love of God and the procreation of a child. Satan always promises a quick thrill while death lies underneath. Circumcision which brings pain where a pleasure never belonged is an external sign that God reclaimed dominion over those that faithfully bore it, so that the devil may not tempt them with lust.

The pleasure of the marital act was to be purely spiritual, the joy of bringing a godly child into the world who can be loved and return love, who would be a source of joy, comfort, and aid. The whole focus of attention during the marital act was to solely be the love of God and the joy of bringing a godly child into their family and the world. “For, if man had not sinned, union would have been like the union of other bodily members and would have been without the fervor and itching of pleasure just like the union of other members is. For member would have been joined to member... just like a slate to a slate.” (Gratian, *On Marriage* 32.2.2) Since the fall of Adam and Eve, however, the deep, spiritual love of God and of bringing a soul, a human being, into the world, had to compete with the pleasure of the flesh. It is a misplaced and inordinate pleasure that distracts from the true intention of why the marital act should be performed, and it is selfish in nature, because gratification of the flesh had entered a realm where it does not belong. The motive of bringing a child into the world had to compete with the motive of self-gratification of the flesh. Spouses who allow the motive of self-gratification (fleshly lust) to usurp the motive of pleasing God and of bringing a child into the world will be infected with the sin of self-love. They will not be able to truly love God, their children, or even themselves. “*Men shall be... lovers of pleasure more than of God.*” (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

The best evidence that sexual pleasure is a punishment for the original sin of Adam and Eve, instead of a “gift from God” or “good” as many perverts nowadays think, is that the sexual act

and sexual desire is both an intoxicating and shameful pleasure, in addition to the fact that the private parts are not subject to reason anymore. “Augustine says (De Civ. Dei xiv, 16, seqq., 24) that the infection of original sin is most apparent in the movements of the members of generation, which are not subject to reason. Now those members serve the generative power in the mingling of sexes, wherein there is the delectation of touch, which is the most powerful incentive to concupiscence. Therefore the infection of original sin regards these three chiefly, viz. the generative power, the concupiscible faculty and the sense of touch.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part of the Second Part, Q. 83, Art. 4)

As a matter of fact, the shame that is inherent in all sexual acts is a striking proof that lust and concupiscence is a disease and evil: “For why is the special work of parents withdrawn and hidden even from the eyes of their children, except that it is impossible for them to be occupied in laudable procreation without shameful lust? Because of this it was that even they [Adam and Eve] were ashamed who first covered their nakedness. [Genesis 3:7] These portions of their person were not suggestive of shame before, but deserved to be commended and praised as the work of God. They put on their covering when they felt their shame, and they felt their shame when, after their own disobedience to their Maker, they felt their members disobedient to themselves.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 14)

In truth, nothing could be more obvious than that there is a diseased condition concerning concupiscence and sexual desire: “That concupiscence, however, which we have to be ashamed of, and the shame of which has given to our secret members their shameful designation, pudenda, had no existence in the body during its life in paradise before the entrance of sin; but it began to exist in the body of this death after sin, the rebellion of the members retaliating man’s own disobedience. Without this concupiscence it was quite possible to effect the function of the wedded pair in the procreation of children: just as many a laborious work is accomplished by the compliant operation of our other limbs, without any lascivious heat; for they are simply moved by the direction of the will, not excited by the ardour of concupiscence.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 26)

One can accurately describe sexual lust and concupiscence as a cancer and disease that started to grow in humankind at the moment that sin entered into creation. Indeed, one can even understand this fact from reason alone and St. Thomas Aquinas also confirms this fact, teaching that “because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time, [as in the case of

intoxication of drugs]... the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...” (*Summa Theologica, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1, 5*). Only a thoroughly deluded and evil person would believe that getting intoxicated is something good, or that this inherently evil act does not need to be excused because of its inherent defective nature.

Yet many deluded and lust filled souls that live today have fooled themselves and others into believing that sexual lust inside of marriage is something good and praiseworthy, instead of something dangerous and abnormal—*dangerous* since it tempts us into committing sins of the flesh—*abnormal* since it is an evil product of original sin. These people say that one of the purposes of marriage is so that they can have sex in order to inflame their fleshly lust and that marital relations is a sign of true love between the man and the wife (as if staying chaste would be a sign of not loving each other) and that spouses are allowed to have as much sexual pleasure as they can when they have marital relations as long as they do not prevent conception. They even go so far as to say that provoking the flesh by foreplay, masturbation or fondling with the hands in improper bodily places is according to God’s will. They think that sexual pleasure or concupiscence is a gift from God intended to satisfy them, when it in fact is an evil product of the fall. Marital relations, however, is to be used for the love, honor and glory of God by bringing into the world godly children. Thus, “From and with this concupiscence is born a man, a good work of God, but not born without the evil which the origin of generation contracts and which the grace of regeneration heals.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian, 3.21.46*)

Sex was never intended by God to please or ease mankind’s lust since He willed spouses to perform the act solely with the intention of raising godly children for the love and honor of His holy name, and sexual temptations and the sexual lust didn’t even exist before the fall of Adam and Eve. After the fall however, and due to the weakness and frailty of the flesh, spouses are not forbidden to consider the secondary ends of marriage (such as the quieting of concupiscence) “**so long as they are subordinated to the primary end [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved” **but only in so far as to avoid something worse**. St. Jerome explains it well: “Thus it must be bad to touch a woman. If indulgences is nonetheless granted to the marital act, this is only to avoid something worse. But what value can be recognized in a good that is allowed only with a view of preventing something worse?”

The Holy Bible itself could not be more clear that God wants us to perform the marital act “**only for the love of posterity**” and the begetting of children: “*And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust** do I take my sister to wife, **but only for the love of***

posterity, [children] in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.” (The Holy Bible, Tobias 8:9) **The Church’s teaching is clear on this point as well, teaching that: “the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children,”** (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* #54) and that is why the secondary end or purpose of quieting concupiscence must always be subordinated to the primary end or purpose of procreation. “A gift, indeed, for pious men is the prosperous propagation of children; but not that shame-producing excitement of the members, which our nature would not feel were it in a sound state, although corrupted nature now experiences it.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 25)

In *The Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden*, Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed to the saint how He originally intended the marital act to be performed by good and godly spouses before the fall.

The Son of God speaks: “But now, my bride, for whose sake all these things are being said and shown, you might ask, how children would have been born by them if they had not sinned? I shall answer you: In truth, by the love of God and the mutual devotion and union of the flesh wherein they both would have been set on fire internally, love’s blood would have sown its seed in the woman’s body **without any shameful lust,** and so the woman would have become fertile. **Once the child was conceived without sin and lustful desire,** I would have sent a soul into the child from my divinity, and the woman would have carried the child and given birth to it without pain. When the child was born, it would have been perfect like Adam when he was first created. But this honor was despised by man when he obeyed the devil and coveted a greater honor than I had given to him. **After the disobedience was enacted, my angel came over them and they were ashamed over their nakedness, and they immediately experienced the lust and desire of the flesh and suffered hunger and thirst. Then they also lost me, for when they had me, they did not feel any hunger or sinful fleshly lust or shame, but I alone was all their good and pleasure and perfect delight.**

“But when the devil rejoiced over their perdition and fall, I was moved with compassion for them and did not abandon them but showed them a threefold mercy: I clothed them when they were naked and gave them bread from the earth. And for the sensuality the devil had aroused in them after their disobedience, I gave and created souls in their seed through my Divinity. And all the evil the devil tempted them with, I turned to good for them entirely.

“Thereafter, I showed them how to live and worship me, and I gave them

permission to have relations, because before my permission and the enunciation of my will they were stricken with fear and were afraid to unite and have relations. Likewise, when Abel was killed and they were in mourning for a long time and observing abstinence, I was moved with compassion and comforted them. And when they understood my will, they began again to have relations and to procreate children, from which family I, their Creator, promised to be born. When the wickedness of the children of Adam grew, I showed my justice to the sinful, but mercy to my elect; of these I was appeased so that I kept them from destruction and raised them up, because they kept my commandments and believed in my promises.” (St. Bridget’s Revelations, Book 1 Chapter 26)

Here we see Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself declaring that before the fall, the sexual act would still have been performed, by “the love of God and the mutual devotion and union of the flesh” but “**without any shameful lust**” and “**without sin and lustful desire**”, thus directly refuting those who dare to proclaim that sensual lusts and desires are given to men as a good gift from God. “In paradise, however, if sin had not preceded, there would not have been, indeed, generation without union of the sexes, but this union would certainly have been without shame; for in the sexual union there would have been a quiet acquiescence of the members, not a lust of the flesh productive of shame. Matrimony, therefore, is a good, in which the human being is born after orderly conception; the fruit, too, of matrimony is good, as being the very human being which is thus born; sin, however, is an evil with which every man is born. Now it was God who made and still makes man; but by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned. [Romans 5:12]” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 37)

St. Paul warns those who would marry as opposed to those who would remain virgins that spouses “shall have tribulation of the flesh”: “*But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have tribulation of the flesh. But I spare you.*” (1 Corinthians 7:28) It is certain that St. Paul does not refer to the desire to procreate as a tribulation of the flesh. Consequently, he can be referring only to one thing—sexual pleasure. Indeed, sexual pleasure is a tribulation of the flesh that must hence be fought against in thought and deed in some way or the Devil will succeed in tempting a spouse to fall into mortal sins of impurity either with the other spouse, with himself or with someone other than his spouse. There is no neutral ground with sexual pleasure—one either seek to enjoy it and hence inflame it by foreplay and other vile practices or seek to quench it and hence douse the fire of lust.

In this context, Halitgar, a ninth-century bishop who was known as *The Apostle to the Danes*, declared that: “God did not create men and women so that they might enjoy carnal desire or live in the delights of the flesh”, adding that: “if there had been no transgression of God’s command [in the garden of Eden by Adam and Eve], no one would experience carnal pleasure in the intercourse of the married.” In perfect agreement with 2000 years of Church tradition, *The Apostle to the Danes* summed up his teaching on Original Sin in the following way: “Carnal pleasure is an uncleanness of the body which comes from uncontrolled lust and the weakness of the soul which gives in to the sin of the flesh.” (Halitgar, *De Vitiis et Virtutibus et de Ordine Poenitentiarum Libri Quinque*)

St. Thomas Aquinas in his great work *The Summa Theologica* also agreed “that the infection of original sin is most apparent in the movements of the members of generation, which are not subject to reason.” He also taught that a man’s lack of rational control over his arousal and orgasm is the result of “the infection of original sin.” Although all aspects of the human soul are seen as “corrupted by original sin,” according to St. Thomas, the three aspects pertaining to human sexual response were most deeply infected, namely, “the generative power, the concupiscible faculty and the sense of touch.” The sense of touch was “the most powerful incentive to concupiscence.” Thus, St. Thomas linked the physical touching of bodies, with the effects of original sin. *The Angelic Doctor* concluded that: “Whoever, therefore, uses copulation for the delight which is in it, not referring the intention to the end intended by nature, acts against nature.” (cf. *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5; *In Sententiarum*, 4.33.1.3)

In truth, all our senses were soiled by the original sin after the fall—even our thoughts. Thus, people who let themselves grow attached to pleasures and feelings of various kinds will never be able to advance very far in their spiritual life, and in their search for God, since they will always be drawn towards earthly, carnal and perishable things. We read in the book of Genesis how God cursed the earth because of Adam and Eve’s transgression:

Genesis 3:16-19 “To the woman also He [God] said: I will multiply thy sorrows, and thy conceptions: in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband’s power, and he shall have dominion over thee. And to Adam he said: Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work: with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken: for dust thou

art, and into dust thou shalt return.”

There are, sad to say, too many things to recount that arose as a direct cause of the original sin of Adam and Eve. Death, injury, physical as well as emotional pain, painful childbirth, fatigue, hunger and thirst, and fleshly lusts and desires did not even exist before the fall of humanity into death and sin, and not only that, but nature also completely obeyed the will of humans. Thus, everything in nature was perfect, and matter and animals was in complete subjection to the will of man. In truth, if Adam and Eve would have kept away from sin, we would all be born and live a dream life in comparison to the miserable state we all humans now endure. “Matrimony was first instituted in Paradise so that the bridal chamber might be unblemished and marriage honorable, and so that conception be without lust and childbirth without pain [cf. Gen. 3:16].” (Gratian, *Marriage Canons From The Decretum*, C. 32, Q. 2, P. 2)

But “by persuading man to sin, the Devil violated what God made well, so that the whole human race limps because of the wound made through the free choice of two human beings. Consider the wretchedness of the human race... no matter how great the earthly happiness you may enjoy, you must daily cope with internal strife... look at infants: see how many and how great are the evils they endure; in what vanities, torments, errors, and terrors they grow up. Error tempts adults, even those who serve God, to deceive them; labor and pain tempt them, to crush them; lust tempts them, to inflame them; grief tempts them, to prostrate them; pride tempts them, to make them vain. Who can easily explain all the ways in which the heavy yoke presses down upon the children of Adam? ... We must, then, hold that the reason for these evils must be either the injustice or impotence of God, or the punishment for the first and ancient sin. Since God is neither unjust nor impotent, there is only what you are forced unwillingly to confess: that the heavy yoke upon the children of Adam from the day of their coming out of their mother’s womb until the day of their burial within the mother of all would not have existed if the offense by way of origin had not come first to deserve it.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, 4.16.83)

After the fall of man and his rebellion and disobedience against God, all of nature – not only animals, but also the human body – started to rebel against the will of man in consequence of this first sin, the body consequently no longer being subservient to the will of man as before the fall. Thus nature started to rebel and act against man and harm him, and the body started to tempt man and disobey his will, especially in the private parts “inasmuch as the reason, for rebelling against God, deserved that its body should rebel against it”. “That venereal concupiscence and pleasure are not subject to the command and moderation of reason, is due to the punishment of the first sin, inasmuch as the reason, for rebelling against God, deserved

that its body should rebel against it, as Augustine says (De Civ. Dei xiii, 13). ... "the child, shackled with original sin, is born of fleshly concupiscence (which is not imputed as sin to the regenerate) as of a daughter of sin." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 153, Art. 2, Reply to Objection 2) "Such, then, is the rebellion of this concupiscence which the primitive pair received for their own disobedience, and transfused by natural descent to us. It certainly was not at their bidding, but in utter disorder, that it was excited, when they covered their members, which at first were worthy to be gloried in, but had then become a ground of shame." (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 59)

In *The Revelations of Saint Bridget*, Book 5, also called *The Book of Questions*, and in Interrogation 5, Christ Himself reveals to Saint Bridget in a supernatural revelation that the only reason why nature and animals are able to harm us is because we consent to sin. In fact, Christ tells us that we humans endure illnesses "because of the vice of incontinence and excess, in order that people may learn spiritual moderation and patience by restraining the flesh", thus showing us very clearly how the sin of concupiscence is especially effective in bringing about the many different illnesses that we humans endure today.

"First question. Again the monk appeared on his ladder as before saying: "O Judge, why did you create worms that are harmful and useless?"

"Answer to the first question. The Judge [Our Lord Jesus Christ] answered: "Friend, as God and Judge I have created heaven and earth and all that are in them, and yet nothing without cause nor without some likeness to spiritual things. Just as the souls of holy people resemble the holy angels who live and are happy, so too the souls of the unrighteous become like the demons who are eternally dying. Therefore, since you asked why I created worms, I answer you that I created them in order to show forth the manifold power of my wisdom and goodness. For, although they can be harmful, nevertheless they do no harm without my permission and only when sin demands it, so that man, who scorns to submit to his superior, may bemoan his capacity to be afflicted by lesser creatures, and also in order that he may know himself to be nothing without me – whom even the irrational creatures serve and they all stand at my beck and call."

"Second question. "Why did you create wild beasts that are also harmful to humankind?"

"Answer to the second question. "As to why I created wild beasts, I answer: All things that I have created are not only good but very good and have been created either for the use or trial of humankind or for the use of other creatures and in order that humans might so much the more humbly serve their God inasmuch as they are more

blessed than all the rest. However, beasts do harm in the temporal world for a twofold reason. First, so that the wicked may be corrected and beware, and so that wicked people might come to understand through their torments that they must obey me, their superior. Second, they also do harm to good people with a view to their advancement in virtue and for their purification. And because the human race rebelled against me, their God, through sin, all those creatures that had been subject to humans have consequently rebelled against them.”

“Third question. “Why do you let sickness and pain into bodies?”

“Answer to the third question. “As to why sickness comes upon the body, I answer that this happens both as a strong warning and because of the vice of incontinence and excess, in order that people may learn spiritual moderation and patience by restraining the flesh.”

“... Fifth question. “Why is the human body afflicted even at the point of death?”

“Answer to the fifth question. “As to why the body suffers pain in death, it is just that a person should be punished by means of that in which she or he has sinned. If she sins through inordinate lust, it is right for her to be punished with proportionate bitterness and pain. For that reason, death begins for some people on earth and will last without end in hell, while death ends for others in purgatory and everlasting joy commences.” (*The Revelations of Saint Bridget*, Book 5, Interrogation 5)

The *Apocalypse of Moses* and *Life of Adam and Eve* (*LAE*) also devote a considerable space to the results of the fall. God’s judgment on the first human transgression profoundly affected both humanity and the rest of creation. The disobedience of Adam and Eve resulted in sin becoming part of the experience of all humanity (*LAE* 44.3). The whole human race is under God’s wrath (*Apoc. Mos.* 14.2; *LAE* 49.3; 50.2) and will face God’s judgment and destruction (*LAE* 49.3; 50.2; *Apoc. Mos.* 14.2). There are two judgments: (1) The water judgment undoubtedly refers to the flood. (2) A judgment by ‘fire’, which refers to the end of the world or eternal hell fire for the wicked and unrepentant.

Although the final judgment is expected, the books emphasize the changes that the fall brought to life in this world. When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost their original glory and were estranged from the glory of God (*Apoc. Mos.* 20.2; 21.6). All people lost immortality (*Apoc. Mos.* 28.3) and death became certain (*LAE* 26.2; *Apoc. Mos.* 14.2). Life is now full of hardship, labour, enmity, strife, disease, pain, suffering and other evils (*LAE* 44.2-4; *Apoc. Mos.* 24.2-3; 25.1-4; 28.3). Due to the fall, human life is marked by futile labour and failure: ‘those who rise up from us shall labour, not being adequate, but failing’ (*LAE* 44.3; cf. *Apoc. Mos.* 24.3). Humanity is banned from paradise, with all its pleasures and comforts (*Apoc.*

Mos. 27–29).

There are several physical aspects to God's curse on the human race in response to the fall: (1) death, (2) disease and bodily pains and (3) birth pangs. These affected not only Adam and Eve, but also all their descendants (*LAE* 34.2; 44.2 [= *Apoc. Mos.* 14.2]; 49.3; 50.2).

Due to the transgression of Adam and Eve, not only Adam and Eve but also all of their descendants die (*LAE* 26.2; *Apoc. Mos.* 14.2; 28.3). Human beings would not have died if Adam and Eve had not disobeyed God.

The book also describes how Adam and Eve's transgression brought disease and bodily pains. There are 'seventy plagues' on the body (*LAE* 34.2 [= *Apoc. Mos.* 8.2.]). Seventy is probably a symbolic number indicating that the ailments affect the entire body. Sin leads to affliction of the entire body, 'from the top of the head and the eyes and ears down to the nails of the feet and in each separate limb' (*LAE* 34.2). This is a figure of speech in which the extreme members of the body are mentioned to indicate the whole body. Prior to the fall there were no disease (*LAE* 34.2). When Adam is on his deathbed, Seth asks, 'What is pain and illness?' (*Apoc. Mos.* 5.5. [= *LAE* 30.4]; *LAE* 31.5). Seth's query suggests that the curse of illness was delayed until just prior to Adam's death, since illness was still unknown to Adam's children at that time. Romans 5:12 say in this regard: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." The physical curse due to the fall also brought pain in childbirth (*Apoc. Mos.* 25.1-3). This important change in the operation of the physical world is based on Genesis 3:16.

Nature also suffered damage as a result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Immediately after Eve ate the forbidden fruit, the nearby plants in paradise lost their leaves, except for the fig tree (*Apoc. Mos.* 20.4). This suggest a solidarity between humanity and the natural world so that when human beings sin, nature suffers damage. By contrast, when God entered paradise to judge the original humans, the plants blossomed and prospered (*Apoc. Mos.* 22.3). God's divine glory and righteousness bring healing to nature, but human unrighteousness damages the natural world.

Indeed, we see that this fact is also true after the fall since man lived to about 900 years before the flood, and that after this judgment, the human lifespan was drastically changed, undoubtedly as a direct result of the sins of men. Man's actions are thus directly effective and causative in bringing either destruction or healing from God, and this shows us the inherent need of all men to conform to God's Laws.

The fall brought a profound change in plant life. The curse on the ground (*Apoc. Mos.* 24.1-3), which is based on Genesis 3:17-19, involves several aspects. First, the Ground would require hard labour to grow crops (vv. 2-3. Second, the ground would never be as productive as before the fall (v. 2, 'it shall not give its strength'). Third, weeds, thistles and thorns would grow easily and abundantly, but these plants would be of no value for food and would make growing food crops more difficult (v. 2). After Adam and Eve were expelled from paradise, they no longer had access to many plants that grew in paradise (*LAE* 2.2; 4.1). Thus humans were reduced to eating the same food as animals (*LAE* 4.1). The only special plants Adam and Eve could take from paradise were certain aromatic spices (*LAE* 42.4; *Apoc. Mos.* 29.3-6).

The fall also brought changes to the animal world. The serpent was cursed because it allowed itself to be used as a vessel for the devil (*Apoc. Mos.* 26.1-4). The serpent underwent fundamental changes in its physical nature: It was forced to crawl on its belly. Although other animals did not undergo such radical physical changes, their behavior changed profoundly after the fall. Prior to the fall, animals were subservient to humanity, since the image of God is in humans (*Apoc. Mos.* 10.3). When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, the nature of animals was changed and they began to rebel against humans (*Apoc. Mos.* 11.3; 24.4). Animals took on some of the rebellious nature that is passed on to the descendants of Adam and Eve.

The rebellion of the animals is illustrated by the attack of a wild animal who bites Seth (*Apoc. Mos.* 10–12). In the *Apoc. Mos.*, the attack is a result of a fundamental change in animals due to the fall (*Apoc. Mos.* 11.2-3; cf. 10.2). The type of wild animal is not specified, since it represents the fundamental change in the nature of all animals. In *LAE*, however, the animal is identified as a serpent (*LAE* 37.1; 44.1), the animal that the devil indwelt. Yet, even in the passage where the wild animal attacks Seth, the beast obeys Seth when he commands it to be silent and to leave (*Apoc. Mos.* 12.1-2). Thus although nature was corrupted by the fall, the damage is not comprehensive or to the same extent as for the future generations. This again suggest a solidarity between humanity and the natural world so that when human beings sin more, nature suffers more and rebels more.

It is indeed perfect justice that man, who refused to obey God, should labor under the servitude of inferior passions, desires and creatures that rebel against him – just as man rebel and rebelled against God – so that through humility and acknowledgment of our own worthlessness, sin, weakness, infirmity, and nothingness, we should again be able to humbly approach Our Lord and God “with the assistance of grace, penance, resistance and moral effort”.

Pope Pius XI, *Mit brennender Sorge* #25, March 14, 1937: “‘Original sin’ is the hereditary but impersonal fault of Adam’s descendants, who have sinned in him (Rom. 5:12). It is the loss of grace, and therefore eternal life, together with a propensity to evil, which everybody must, with the assistance of grace, penance, resistance and moral effort, repress and conquer.”

An accurate description or definition of the current state of humanity’s existence that best describe our state would be that we are living in exile. In truth, we are exiled from the presence of Our Lord and the Tree of Life because of the sin of our first parents. Very few people understand this great truth which says that we are living in exile and that we are enduring a most grievous punishment of exclusion from the presence of Our Lord. The direct consequence of this lack of knowledge and understanding of the state of our miserable existence, undoubtedly contributes enormously to the amount and severity of sin that people commit. The main reason behind this is that a person who knows or considers that he is in a state of punishment, or living under a curse, will almost always act more cautiously and refrain from doing more to infuriate his Lord.

If people would only open their eyes and see in what miserable condition man have been degraded to through original sin, and that we all are under a most miserable punishment, many more people would undoubtedly be saved. The Apostle St. Paul rightly describes this exile and punishment, saying: “I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members” and “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 7:14-25) When we realize the actual facts of our degraded situation, the fear of God is undoubtedly increased, which is the beginning of salvation according to Holy Scripture: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Psalm 110:10)

“For there would have been none of this shame-producing concupiscence, which is impudently praised by impudent men, if man had not previously sinned; while as to marriage, it would still have existed, even if no man had sinned: for the procreation of children would have been effected without this disease. ... “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” [Romans 7:24] For the body of this death existed not in paradise before sin; therefore did we say, “In the body of that chaste life,” which was the life of paradise, “the procreation of children could have been effected without the disease,

without which now in the body of this death it cannot be done.” The apostle, however, before arriving at that mention of man’s misery and God’s grace which we have just quoted, had first said: “I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Then it is that he exclaimed, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” In the body of this death, therefore, such as it was in paradise before sin, there certainly was not another law in our members warring against the law of our mind—which now, even when we are unwilling, and withhold consent, and use not our members to fulfill that which it desires, still dwells in these members, and harasses our resisting and repugnant mind.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 6)

In fact, the power of original sin over humanity is so great that Pope Eugene IV in *The Council of Florence* infallibly declared that all children are born under “**the domination of the Devil**” through original sin, and that the only way to save them from this lamentable state of servitude to our eternal foe, the Devil, is to give them the sacrament of Baptism, “**through which they are snatched from the domination of the Devil [original sin] and adopted among the sons of God**” (Denzinger 712).

But there is yet another truth very important to remember. As soon as we wish to speak of education, Our human nature, the nature of every man who comes into this world since the original sin (except for Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary) is no longer an intact or balanced nature that is subject to God. This human nature that all human beings have inherited from Adam, is a wounded, corrupted, and fallen nature, “**whose will is no longer directed towards God, but is self-centered, and consequently, selfish; a nature whose tendencies and passions are no longer adapted to reason, but are carnal and opaque, permeated with the selfishness of the will.**”

St. Thomas Aquinas writes concerning this: “Through the sin of our first parents, all the powers of the soul are left destitute of their proper order, whereby they are naturally directed to virtue. This destitution is called a wounding of nature. First, in so far as the reason, where prudence resides, is deprived of its order to the true, there is the wound of ignorance. Second, in so far as the will is deprived of its order to the good, there is the wound of malice. Third, in so far as the sensitive appetite is deprived of its order to the arduous, there is the wound of weakness. Fourth, in so far as it is deprived of its order to the delectable moderated by reason, there is the wound of concupiscence.” St. Thomas adds: “These four wounds, **ignorance, malice, weakness and concupiscence** are afflicted on the whole of human nature only as

a result of our first parents' sin. But since the inclination to the good of virtue is diminished in each individual on account of actual sin, these four wounds are also the result of other sins, in so far as, through sin, the reason is obscured, especially in practical matters, the will hardened to evil, good actions become more difficult, and concupiscence more impetuous." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part of the Second Part, Q. 85, Art. 3)

Although we are born under the domination of the Devil through original sin, this "wounded" nature that we have all inherited from Adam is nonetheless redeemed by Christ through the Sacrament of Baptism. Thus since original sin, grace is not only elevating, but also healing. We are redeemed in Christ, healed by his wounds, and called to sanctity by our conformity to Christ crucified, offered in sacrifice. To resume, grace makes our human nature partake in the Divine Nature, and it is thus elevating; and since our human nature is wounded, it is also healing.

2 Peter 1:3-10 "As all things of His [Our Lord Jesus Christ's] divine power which appertain to life and godliness, are given us, through the knowledge of him who hath called us by his own proper glory and virtue. **By whom He hath given us most great and precious promises: that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature: flying the corruption of that concupiscence which is in the world.** And you, employing all care, minister in your faith, virtue; and in virtue, knowledge; And in knowledge, abstinence; and in abstinence, patience; and in patience, godliness; And in godliness, love of brotherhood; and in love of brotherhood, charity. For if these things be with you and abound, they will make you to be neither empty nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that hath not these things with him, is blind, and groping, having forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore, brethren, labour the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election. For doing these things, you shall not sin at any time."

Since human nature is wounded in every man and woman as well as in all our children, education must strive to heal, to rectify, and to purify the tendencies of our fallen nature, with the grace of Jesus Christ, with authority that dares to command, and with the use of punishment when they refuse to obey. Today, there are far too many parents who, through living an ungodly and selfish life, refuse to understand the inborn weakness of our human nature, and the inherent evilness of sexual desire or concupiscence, as well as its inherent danger and potential to tempt us to commit evil acts, **"but in this such persons gravely err, because they do not take into account the inborn weakness of human nature, and that law planted within our members, which, to use the words of the Apostle**

Paul, ‘fights against the law of my mind [Rom. 7:23]’. (Pope Pius XI, *Divini illius magistri*; Denzinger 2214)

Baptism cleanses us from original sin, but leaves intact in us the effect of the original sin, which are the four wounds of **ignorance, malice, weakness, and concupiscence**. The grace that baptism gives us truly makes us children of God in Christ Jesus, and through Christ Jesus, since this grace conforms us to Christ through His passion and death, and consequently, it demands that we die on the cross to ourselves and our own will in order that we may learn “to live according to the Spirit” rather than “according to the flesh” (Romans 8:5).

St. Paul tells us: “Do you not know that all we who have been baptized into Christ Jesus, have been baptized into His death? For we know that our old self has been crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin may be destroyed.” These words are very strong: “in order that the body of sin may be destroyed, that we may no longer be slaves to sin.” (Romans 6:2-6) And also: “If you have risen with Christ (through Baptism) seek the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For you **have died** and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” (Colossians 3:1-3)

This death of which St. Paul speaks in so many of his Epistles, is nothing other than the most necessary Christian mortification, the putting to death of our evil tendencies, our pride, of our selfishness, of our laziness, and most importantly, of our sensuality. This death is nothing other than the daily renunciation that Our Lord demands from those who want to be saved: **“If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”** (Matthew 16:24) Let him deny himself each day, from the cradle, early childhood, to the grave.

The Life of St. Philip Neri, Apostle of Rome, A.D. 1534: “Ever since sin so fatally disordered our nature there is a dark and profound mystery in pleasure, as there is in pain... Only Jesus, who cleared up the mystery of pain and sanctified it, has cast his light on the mystery of pleasure and purified it. He has taught us that pleasure is no longer since the Fall inseparably linked with virtue, but that the ordinary companion of virtue is suffering, so that blessed are they that suffer for justice’ sake, blessed they that mourn. (Matthew 5:5,10) And hence it follows that we should approach pleasure with self-restraint and forethought—nay, with fear and trembling; that many pleasures are evil and unholy, and those alone safe which are noble, spiritual, and restrained [that is, those pleasures that alone are safe are not sensual or fleshly]; those in short which,

being bound up with some spiritual good, are accompanied by charity and are expansions of charity.” (Extracts from "St. Philip Neri", by Alfonso, Cardinal Capecelatro, transl. by Thomas Pope, Burns, Oates, & Washbourne, London, 1926. pp. 36-37)

According to the teaching of the Church, superbly articulated by the Holy Fathers, man was created for the purpose of being in communion with God in love; or according to the Apostle Peter, to be “partakers of the divine nature: flying the corruption of that concupiscence which is in the world.” (2 Peter 1:4)

Man was supposed to move toward the goal of becoming “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4) by living in accordance with his own nature, that is, in accordance with God’s will that was innate in human nature. But his God-implanted natural motion toward the ultimate goal was interrupted by the fall. Adam’s sin and the beginning of evil in the visible world, according to Saint Maximos, consists in the misuse (use contrary to nature) of his natural powers and of God’s other creations in general. From then on, man slavishly served the irrational impulses of these powers, which impulses drove him to incline toward pleasure alone, and as far as possible to avoid pain. For fallen man “directs his whole effort toward pleasure and does all he can to avoid pain. He struggles with all his might to attain pleasure and fights against pain with immense zeal.” (“First Century of Various Texts” 53 in *The Philokalia* 2, p. 175)

Man’s reward for sin is seen not only in his body’s changeable and mortal condition. Man did not simply lose the incorruptibility of his nature, but he was also condemned to passionate sexual generation in the manner of animals:

“The first man was fittingly condemned to a bodily generation that is without choice, material and subject to death, God thus rightly judging him who had freely chosen what is worse over what is better... to bear the dishonorable affinity with the irrational beasts, instead of the divine, unutterable honor of being with God.” (Saint Maximos, “Peri diaforon aporion” (“On Various Perplexing Topics”), PG 91, 1348A)

In reference to the consequences of the fall, Saint Gregory of Nyssa likewise elaborates on the subject of man’s condemnation to sexual generation: “Through the beguilement of the enemy of our life, man freely acquired the bent toward what is bestial and without intelligence.” (“Pros tous penthoutas” (“To Those Who Mourn”), PG 46, 521D–524A.) Elsewhere, this Holy Father characterizes all the consequences of the fall as “the putting on of the skin garments.”

By “skin garments,” the Saint means the sum total of the evident signs of the corruption of human nature, namely: “copulation, conception, parturition, impurities, suckling, feeding, evacuation, gradual growth to full size, prime of life, old age, disease, and death.” (“Peri psichis ke anastaseos” (“On the Soul and Resurrection”), PG 46, 148C–149A.)

According to Saint Maximos, it is precisely through the birth from the first Adam that the sensual pleasure, as well as pain, is transmitted to all human beings; for in every birth through generation, the ancestral sin is transmitted in its entirety: “When our forefather, Adam, broke the divine commandment, in place of the original form of generation, he conceived and introduced into human nature, at the prompting of the serpent, another form, originating in pleasure and terminating through suffering in death... And because he introduced this ill-gotten pleasure-provoked form of generation, he deservedly brought on himself, and on all men born in the flesh from him, the doom of death through suffering.” (Saint Maximos, “Fourth Century of Various Texts” 44, Philokalia 2: 246–47)

Hence, it appears that herein chiefly lies the ancestral sin, with and in which every human is born, since “all those born of Adam are ‘conceived in iniquities,’ thus coming under the forefather’s sentence.” (Saint Maximos, “Peusis ke apokrisis” (“Questions and Answers”) 3, PG 788B.) Elsewhere, when asked the meaning of the Psalm verse “I was conceived in iniquities, and in sin did my mother bear me” (Psalm 50:5), Saint Maximos answers: “God’s original purpose was not that we be born from corruption through marriage. But Adam sinned, and the transgression of the commandment introduced marriage.” (“Peusis ke apokrisis” (“Questions and Answers”), 3, PG 788B.) It should be noted that David and the holy Fathers speak of birth “in sins” within lawful marriage. Such views on birth are seen already in the Old Testament, where special “sin offerings” are prescribed by God for the purification of a woman after she gives birth (see Lev. 12:6–8: cf. Luke 2:24). Even before Saint Maximos, Saint John Chrysostom taught the same thing:

“After he was created, he lived in Paradise, and there was no reason for marriage. A helper needed to be made for him, and one was made, and even then marriage was not deemed necessary. It had not yet appeared. But, rather, they continued without it, living in Paradise as if in heaven and delighting in their converse with God As long as they were unconquered by the devil and respected their own Master, virginity also continued, adorning them more than the diadem and golden clothing adorn the emperors. But when, becoming captives, they took off this garment and laid aside the heavenly adornment and sustained the dissolution deriving from death, the curse, pain, and toilsome existence, then together with these, enters marriage, this mortal and

slavish garment. Do you see whence marriage had its beginning, whence it was deemed necessary? From the disobedience, from the curse, from death. For where there is death, there also is marriage. Whereas, when the first does not exist, then neither does the second follow.” (Saint John Chrysostom, “Peri Parthenias” (“On Virginity”) 14, PG 48, 543–44)

It should be emphasized here that, according to Saint Maximos—and according to all the other Fathers of the Church—evil (that is, sin) does not exist within things themselves (for God made all things “very good”) but only in man’s misuse of them. Specifically, Saint Maximos writes:

“It is not food that is evil but gluttony, not the begetting of children but unchastity, not material things but avarice, not esteem but self-esteem. This being so, it is only the misuse of things that is evil, and such misuse occurs when the intellect fails to cultivate its natural powers.” (Saint Maximos, “Third Century on Love” 4, Philokalia 2:83)

Consequently, every man must fight against his concupiscence in some way if he is going to be able to reach the safe harbor of salvation and eternal life. St. Thomas Aquinas, speaking on this subject: “**answer that, Chastity takes its name from the fact that reason "chastises" concupiscence, which, like a child, needs curbing,** as the Philosopher states (Ethic. iii, 12). Now the essence of human virtue consists in being something moderated by reason, as shown above (I-II, 64, 1).” (*Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 151, Art. 1) Speaking on the same context of the necessity of all men to subdue their concupiscence and fallen nature, St. Thomas compares giving way to concupiscence to “the case of a child left to his own will” growing strong: “As stated above (1; 142, 2), the concupiscence of that which gives pleasure is especially likened to a child, because the desire of pleasure is connatural to us, especially of pleasures of touch which are directed to the maintenance of nature. Hence it is that if the concupiscence of such pleasures be fostered by consenting to it, it will wax very strong, as in the case of a child left to his own will. Wherefore the concupiscence of these pleasures stands in very great need of being chastised: and consequently chastity is applied antonomastically to such like concupiscences, even as fortitude is about those matters wherein we stand in the greatest need of strength of mind.” (*Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 151, Art. 2, Reply to Objection 2)

In this context of speaking about the need to resist and conquer our concupiscence, *The Holy Council of Trent* infallibly decreed in the Fifth Session on Original Sin that we all need to “**resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ**” our own concupiscence and sensual

nature if we wish to be saved, thus proving, once and for all, that concupiscence and sexual desire must be evil, since God would never tell us to resist what is good or a gift from Him.

“But this holy council perceives and confesses that *in the one baptized there remains concupiscence or an inclination to sin, which, since it is left for us to wrestle with, cannot injure those who do not acquiesce but resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ*; indeed, he who shall have striven lawfully shall be crowned. *This concupiscence, which the Apostle sometimes calls sin, the holy council declares the Catholic Church has never understood to be called sin in the sense that it is truly and properly sin in those born again, but in the sense that it is of sin and inclines to sin.*” (Pope Paul III, *Council of Trent*, Session V, Section 5, June 17, 1546)

The husband and wife, joined in the holy Sacrament of Matrimony for the purpose of procreation of children, remain nevertheless in the fallen state. Although baptism entirely wipes away original sin, there remains an effect of original sin in the human person called concupiscence, which is a tendency toward personal sin. The Council of Trent explains that this inclination to sin is inherent in human persons. Even the holiest of persons, if they were conceived with original sin, have concupiscence. Only Jesus and the Virgin Mary were conceived without original sin, and never had concupiscence (Adam and Eve were created without original sin, but they later fell from grace, and as a result they had concupiscence). We mere weak and mortal sinners must always struggle against this tendency toward selfishness, toward valuing lesser goods over greater goods, toward the disorder of values that is the basis for sin. It is therefore clear that “there must be warfare against evil of concupiscence, which is so evil it must be resisted in the combat waged by chastity, lest it do damage.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, 3.21.43) Thus, “Self-restraint is to prevail over sensual pleasure; on the other hand, the prevalence of the latter is what I call licentiousness.” (Saint Gregory of Nazianzus the Theologian, Vol. II, “Epi Ithika” (“Moral Epopees”) 31, “Ori pachimereis,” PG 37, 651A.)

Concupiscence and sexual desire is an evil disease that transmits the Original Sin to the offspring according to the Holy Bible and the Church

Today, most people are unaware of the fact that the ancient tradition of the Church teaches that concupiscence and sexual desire actually transmits the Original Sin to the offspring, but this has always been the Church’s teaching from the very beginning of its foundation by Our Lord Jesus Christ, and it was also taught in the Old Testament long before the New Testament was revealed to us. God Himself revealed this doctrine in *The Book of Psalms*, teaching us that

we are conceived in the iniquity of the Original Sin: “For behold I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins did my mother conceive me.” (Psalms 50:7)

Pope Innocent III as well, taught that the “foul concupiscence” that is inherent in all marital sexual acts transmits the stain of the *Original Sin* to one’s children and that “the conceived seeds [of the children] are befouled and corrupted” by this “foul concupiscence.”

Pope Innocent III, *On the Seven Penitential Psalms*: “Who does not know that conjugal intercourse is never committed without itching of the flesh, and heat and foul concupiscence, whence the conceived seeds [of the children] are befouled and corrupted?”

Pope Pius XI confirmed this teaching by the Papal Magisterium in his authoritative encyclical *Casti Connubii*, teaching us that the sexual act became “**the way of death by which original sin is passed on to posterity**” after the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve, and that the only way to cleanse the child from the stain of the original sin is through the Sacrament of Baptism, which makes all of them “living members of Christ, partakers of immortal life, and heirs of that eternal glory to which we all aspire from our inmost heart.”

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 14), Dec. 31, 1930: “**For although Christian spouses even if sanctified themselves cannot transmit sanctification to their progeny, nay, although the very natural process of generating life [that is, the marital sexual act] has become the way of death by which original sin is passed on to posterity,** nevertheless, they share to some extent in the blessings of that primeval marriage of Paradise, since it is theirs to offer their offspring to the Church in order that by this most fruitful Mother of the children of God they may be regenerated through the laver of Baptism unto supernatural justice and finally be made living members of Christ, partakers of immortal life, and heirs of that eternal glory to which we all aspire from our inmost heart.”

In addition to these facts, *The Council of Trent* infallibly teaches that the sexual generative act is the reason behind why humans contract the stain of original sin.

Pope Paul III, *The Council of Trent*, Session 5, On Original Sin, *ex cathedra*: “By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death... so that in them there may be washed away by regeneration, **what they have contracted by generation [that is, by the marital sexual act]**, ‘For unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost,

he cannot enter into the kingdom of God [John 3:5].” (Denzinger 791; Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils)

In another part of the Fifth Session of Trent, the Council confirmed the fact that the sexual act transmits the original sin: “If any one asserts, that this sin of Adam,--which in its origin is one, **and being transfused into all by propagation [that is, by the procreative marital sexual act]**, not by imitation, is in each one as his own,--is taken away either by the powers of human nature, or by any other remedy than the merit of the one mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath reconciled us to God in his own blood, made unto us justice, sanctification, and redemption; or if he denies that the said merit of Jesus Christ is applied, both to adults and to infants, by the sacrament of baptism rightly administered in the form of the church; let him be anathema.”

St. Augustine also explains this doctrine of the Church concerning concupiscence in several of his works, teaching “that by his sin Adam fell from his original supernatural status, and that through human propagation, which involved concupiscence, the lack of grace was passed on to every human being descended from Adam.” In his confrontation with Pelagius, Augustine’s teaching concerning the effects of Adam and Eve’s sin took on hard, clear connections involving sex, sin, and shame. Augustine taught that original sin was passed on to persons at their conceptions. When spouses conceived a child, they passed on the effects of Adam’s original sin. Thus every human being received a human nature deformed by Adam’s sin. St. Augustine’s teaching about original sin was “received,” that is, accepted as a doctrine that has always been true by the Catholic Church. His clear explanation of original sin helped to resolve three issues. First, it explained the practice of baptizing infants that was taught from the beginning of the Church by the Apostles and Apostolic Tradition. Secondly, it explained why concupiscence remained even after baptism. This sacrament removed original sin, but not its effects. Thirdly, Augustine’s teaching about original sin provided a weapon that could be used to defeat Pelagius’ false and heretical teachings about the basic goodness of the fallen human nature.

Legal marital relations in the Bible is described as a cause of impurity

In the book of Leviticus, the infallible Word of God describes how even legal marital relations between husband and wife makes them impure or unclean, thus describing the marital act itself as the cause of impurity, and not as something “holy” or “good,” as many people nowadays have deceived themselves into believing.

Leviticus 15:16-18,24 “The man from whom the seed of copulation goeth out, shall wash all his body with water: and he shall be unclean until the evening. The garment or skin that he weareth, he shall wash with water, and it shall be unclean until the evening. The woman, with whom he copulateth, shall be washed with water, and shall be unclean until the evening. ... If a man copulateth with her in the time of her flowers, he shall be unclean seven days: and every bed on which he shall sleep shall be defiled.”

Douay-Rheims Bible Commentary explains Leviticus 15 thus: “These legal uncleannesses were instituted in order to give the people a horror of carnal impurities.”

As we can read from these verses from Holy Scripture, God describes even legal marital relations as a cause of defilement and impurity between husband and wife and ordains that both of them shall be considered as unclean on the day they had marital relations. Leviticus also prohibits the man from seeing his wife during her infertile monthly cycle, thus diminishing the temptations of both parties. “*The woman, who at the return of the month, hath her issue of blood, shall be separated seven days.*” (Leviticus 15:19)

However, one must not think that the marital act is evil or impure in and of itself from the moral viewpoint when it is performed for the sake of procreation, but rather that after the fall, the human will or intent almost always yields more or less to concupiscence and self-gratification. St. Augustine explain it thus: “I do not say that nuptial union that is, union for the purpose [or motive] of procreating is evil [or sinful], but even say it is good. But...If men were subject to the evil of lust to such an extent that if the honesty of marriage were removed [such as in the case of most men and women today], all of them would have intercourse indiscriminately [by unnatural and excessively lustful sexual acts], in the manner of dogs...” (*Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 7:16, A.D. 421)

The main reason why Holy Scripture defines the marital act as a cause of defilement and impurity is because the sexual act is so potent in giving a person lascivious thoughts and desires—by implanting and defiling the mind with countless unholy and ungodly desires. While the marital act performed for the purpose of procreation is a lawful act, the act still defiles the mind by giving it all sorts of lascivious feelings, pictures or thoughts, in addition to making the spouses intoxicated by the drug of sexual pleasure, and this is also the reason why the Holy Bible directs all spouses who have performed the marital act to consider themselves impure, so that they may seek Our Lord’s help in order to conquer their concupiscences, temptations and thoughts that arises as a result of the marital act.

In order to warn us about the danger of marriage and the marital act, St. Paul also warns those who would marry as opposed to those who would remain virgins that spouses “shall have tribulation of the flesh”: “*But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have tribulation of the flesh.*” (1 Corinthians 7:28)

The only couple who performed the marital act without this curse of concupiscence was the parents of Our Blessed Lady at the time they conceived Her, since Our Lord supernaturally protected them from feeling any concupiscence so that they would not be able to transmit the original sin to Our Lady, who would become the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ. That is why Mary was conceived free from original sin from the first moment of her conception in the womb of her mother. Every child would have been born without original sin if Adam and Eve had not sinned. From this we can understand that it is very important for parents to fight against the search for self-gratification in order to draw down abundant blessings and graces from Heaven to themselves and their children.

The Natural Law condemns all unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts

The Natural Law is the law that every person knows by instinct from birth. It is planted by the Creator in our heart, and everyone – even pagans who have never heard about God or the true Catholic religion – receives this gift from God. Examples of sins against the Natural Law that are easy to recognize are: murder, rape, theft, pedophilia, slander and lying. The conscience always convicts a person who commits such sins and thus, there can never be an excuse for people who commit them. As the Haydock Bible and Commentary correctly explains about The Natural Law and Romans 2:14-16: “***these men are a law to themselves, and have it written in their hearts, as to the existence of a God, and their reason tells them, that many sins are unlawful...***”

The Natural Law that God has imprinted on every person’s heart teaches that some sexual acts, touches and kisses are inherently evil, unnecessary, selfish, unnatural, and shameful, while others are not. Some people, however, have hardened themselves in their sins and do not heed this warning or reproach from their conscience. But this is their own fault since they have rejected God and smothered their God given conscience through deliberate sin. This is testified to in the Bible in the following verses: “And Pharaoh seeing that rest was given, hardened his own heart, and did not hear them, as the Lord had commanded. ... And the magicians said to Pharaoh: This is the finger of God. And Pharaoh heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had commanded. ... And Pharaoh’s heart was hardened,

so that neither this time would he let the people go.” (Exodus 8:15,19,32)

In the marvelous *Revelations of Saint Bridget of Sweden*, Our Lord Jesus Christ speaks about the “hardening” of a sinner’s heart by using the example of the Pharaoh found in *The Book of Exodus*, chapter 8, in the Old Testament of the Bible.

Fifth question. “Why are some people exceedingly hardened, while others enjoy wonderful consolation?”

Our Lord Jesus Christ’s answer to the fifth question. “As to why some people are hardened, I [Jesus] answer: Pharaoh’s hardness of heart was his own fault, not mine, because he did not want to conform himself to my divine will. Hardness of heart is nothing other than the withdrawal of my divine grace, which is withdrawn when people do not give me, their God, their free possession, namely, their will.

“You can understand this by means of a parable. There was a man who owned two fields, one of which lay fallow, while the other bore fruit at certain times. A friend of his said to him: ‘I wonder why, although you are wise and rich, you do not take more care to cultivate your fields or why you do not give them to others to cultivate.’ The man answered: ‘One of the fields, no matter how much care I take, does not produce anything but the most useless plants that are seized by noxious animals that ruin the place. If I fertilize it with manure, it only insults me by growing wild because, though it does produce a small amount of grain, even more weeds spring up, which I refuse to gather in, since I only want pure grain. The better plan, then, is to leave a field like that uncultivated, since then the animals do not occupy the place or hide in the grass, and, if any bitter herbs do sprout, they are useful for the sheep, because, after tasting them, the sheep learn not to be fastidious about sweeter fodder.

“The other field is managed according to the nature of the seasons. Some parts of it are stony and need fertilizer; other parts are wet and need warmth, while still others are dry and need watering. Thus I organize my work according to the different conditions of the field.’ I, God, am like this man. The first field represents the free activity of the will given to man, which he uses more against me than for me. Even if man does do some things that please me, yet he provokes me in more ways, since man’s will and my will are not in harmony. Pharaoh also acted in this way when, although he knew my power by means of sure signs, nevertheless he set his mind against me and continued on in his wickedness. Therefore, he experienced my justice, because it is only just that a person who does not make good use of small things should not be allowed to rejoice proudly in greater ones.

“The second field represents the obedience of a good mind and the denial of self-

will. If such a mind is dry in devotion, it should wait for the rain of my divine grace. If it is stony through impatience and hardheartedness, it should bear chastening and correction with equanimity. If it is wet through carnal lust, it should embrace abstinence and be like an animal alert to its owner's will. I, God, can proudly rejoice in a mind like that. The human will acting in opposition to me causes people to be hardhearted. I desire the salvation of everyone, but this cannot come about without the personal cooperation of each and every person in conforming his or her will to mine.

“Furthermore, as to why grace and progress are not granted equally to all – that belongs to my hidden judgment. I know and measure out what is beneficial and appropriate to each one, and I hold people back in their designs so that they do not fall more deeply. Many people have received the talent of grace and are capable of working but refuse to do so. Others keep themselves from sin out of fear of punishment, or because they do not have the possibility of sinning, or because sin does not attract them. Thus, some are not given greater gifts, because I alone understand the human mind and know how to distribute my gifts.” (*The Revelations of Saint Bridget*, Book 5, Interrogation 13)

The description of a sinner “hardening” himself through sin that the Holy Scripture and spiritual writers often use to describe such people is indeed a most perfect description for this process of a sinner's evolution in wickedness. Indeed, the more a man is of bad will, the less will also his conscience rebuke him for his sinful activities, so that a person hardened in habitual sins will many times totally cease to hear the rebuke of his God given conscience.

The reason behind why people fall into heresies of all kinds is that they sin against the Natural Law concerning one or more of the seven deadly sins: lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride. Anyone who commits a single one of these sins sins mortally against nature, and damns himself. If people would only keep the Natural Law, the devil would never be able to conquer and damn their souls. However, of all the seven mortal sins, lust is especially powerful in inducing a man to fall into heresy. A great reason why the people who commit sexual sins are so “hardened” in their sins, and so hard to be converted according to St. Thomas, is because sensual lusts (both for the married and the unmarried people alike) actually **“gives rise to blindness of mind, which excludes almost entirely the knowledge of spiritual things, while dulness of sense arises from gluttony, which makes a man weak in regard to the same [spiritual] intelligible things.”** (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II:II, Q. 15, Art. 3) Indeed, this “blindness of mind” and “dulness of sense” in regards to “the knowledge of spiritual things” that St. Thomas describes that lustful and gluttonous people have, is undoubtedly the main reason why most people,

however much evidence is provided against their heresies, *refuse to convert*. It is therefore true to say that **“The perverse are hard to be corrected, and the number of fools [and damned people] is infinite”** (Ecclesiastes 1:15) because of their own bad will and lasciviousness, according to God’s Holy and infallible Word. Their short moment of pleasure in this perishable world blinds them to the truth about God and the Natural Law, precipitating them into an eternal hell fire and torment.

This fact also requires married people from not indulging too often in the marital act. For all who overindulge in the marital act will always experience a **“blindness of mind”** of spiritual things. So young as well as old must be kept away from impurity and gluttony, since both of these sins are very powerful in getting a person to abandon the faith and the moral life, since the “blindness of mind” and “dulness of sense” undoubtedly will effect the minds of both young and old in a very detrimental way. Since the Holy Bible itself infallibly tells us “the number of fools is infinite” and that “The perverse are hard to be corrected” we should not wonder or find it hard to believe or accept that Our Lord’s words in the Gospel that most men are damned, are true.

The fact that a person can never claim ignorance concerning points of doctrine that concerns the Natural Law – since all people knows about them automatically by nature and instinct – makes it evident that the study and gaining a knowledge of the Natural Law must always take a precedence above other theological studies; for a person can be ignorant about many of the theological doctrines of the Church without becoming a heretic, but a person can never contradict, doubt, or hold an opinion at variance to the Natural Law without by that fact, becoming a heretic. There is thus a great gulf between those points of doctrine that concerns the Natural Law, and those points of doctrine that we can only know about through supernatural revelation.

Indeed, so important is the knowledge of the Natural Law, that the Saints and Doctors of the Church teaches that the reason most of the people of the earth are not allowed to receive the knowledge of the Gospel or gain an entrance into the Catholic Church, is because they sin against or hold opinions at variance to the Natural Law. The importance of knowing about and understanding the Natural Law cannot be understated or underestimated since the direct reason why God left these people outside the knowledge of His Gospel is because of their manifold sins or heresies against the Natural Law. Thus, **“God foreknew that if they [infidels] had lived and the gospel had been preached to them, they would have heard it without belief”** (St. Augustine) and left them outside the faith in the darkness of their sins and paganism, for since their lives were evil and full of sins against nature, Justice

also excluded them from hearing the Gospel. This makes it clear to us all how important the study of the Natural Law is, for if a person keeps all of the laws of nature, God will also always come to such a person and reveal himself to him according to the saints who teach that: “In the case of a man who seeks good and shuns evil, **by the leading of natural reason, God would either reveal to him through internal inspiration what had to be believed,** [such as the absolutely necessary mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation that all without exception must have a knowledge of and right belief in for salvation] **or would send some preacher of the faith to him...**” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*, 14, A. 11, ad 1)

A person can thus be in “material heresy” or be a “material heretic” concerning points of doctrine that do not concern the Natural Law, (that is, be innocently unaware that his opinion contradicts the Catholic Faith) but a person can never deny or doubt a doctrine that pertains to the Natural Law and remain a Catholic and retain his Catholic Faith or his salvation. In order to become a heretic, one must obstinately deny or doubt a doctrine of the Catholic Faith, and if a person commits this crime, he is immediately placed in a state of damnation, awaiting his death, when the devil will come and take him to hell. But those who deny or doubt any part of the Natural Law do not have to obstinately deny or doubt the Natural Law without by that fact becoming a heretic. All they have to do is to deny or doubt it in any single point, such as doubting or denying that lasciviousness, murder or stealing is wrong, and they are immediately placed in a state of damnation. When we realize how different the Natural Law is when it is compared to the theological law and those points of doctrine that we can only know about through supernatural revelation, it is no understatement to say that one cannot know too much about the Natural Law.

For example, if a person for a while held an opinion that “Baptism of desire” or “Baptism of Blood” could save a person before he was shown the dogmatic teachings of the Church that condemns these theories, he could be without sin or heresy against God’s Laws as long as he did not obstinately deny or doubt any teaching of the Church. In contrast, a person who held a heresy against the Natural Law, such as the opinion that sensual kisses and touches between married spouses are lawful to perform in their sexual acts, would automatically be placed in a state of damnation the moment he started to hold this heresy against the Natural Law, and it would not matter one thing if someone had corrected him or taught him about the truth of this matter, or if he was obstinate in this opinion or not.

It is therefore obvious that one cannot know too much about the Natural Law, and that the Natural Law is infinitely more important to understand and learn about than the theological law, but sad to say, most so called Christians or Catholics do not understand this elementary

truth of the Faith, and instead choose to bicker and argue endlessly about different theological truths rather than concentrating first and foremost on following and learning the Natural Law in order to get saved. If they would only keep the Natural Law in all, God would come to them and give them help in ascertaining the truth of how to interpret the theological law and the teachings of the Church, but since they reject the Natural Law which they know by inborn nature and instinct, God does not find them worthy enough to be enlightened by the light of His Faith and the fullness of the Truth of His Church, and leaves them in their darkness and blindness of heresy that they have prepared for themselves.

St. Paul speaks about these blind wretches who rejects the Natural Law in his letter to the Ephesians, admonishing Christians to stay away from their lasciviousness and covetousness. “This then I say and testify in the Lord: That henceforward you walk not as also the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, **having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts. Who despairing, have given themselves up to lasciviousness, unto the working of all uncleanness, unto covetousness. But you have not so learned Christ.**” (Ephesians 4:17-20)

Every single person who have fallen into a heresy that concerns the theological law, must always have committed one or more sins against the Natural Law in order for God to allow them to fall into heresy. Indeed, even becoming a heretic by obstinately denying any point of doctrine that is only taught to us through supernatural revelation, is also a sin against the Natural Law, for when a man obstinately denies or doubts any teaching of the Church, this is a sin of pride, which in itself is a sin against the Natural Law. This fact helps us understand why people will not convert however much one prove that their opinions are false, because their fall into heresy are just an effect of a graver crime and sin against nature that blinds their spiritual understanding, and it also shows us that the best way to attack the devil and convert a person is to first and foremost discuss the Natural Law and see whether the person one intends to convert, sin against it in some way. As long as a person continues to sin against nature, or holds an opinion against it, a person’s spiritual eyes will remain darkened and blinded and this “blindness of mind” and “dulness of sense” that bad willed people have according to Saint Thomas, will remain as an effect of their sinful lusts or other sins against nature until they are converted and starts to follow and hold the Natural Law in all things. Thus, in order to help a person become a Catholic and accept all of the theological laws of the Church, this “blindness of mind” and “dulness of sense” that all who sin against nature has, must first be purged from the sinner’s life by the preacher or teacher of God’s Law before the blinded sinner’s spiritual eyesight gets better, and they are able to easier understand the

teaching of the Church.

Lust, in all its forms, is undoubtedly the greatest reason why people have a “blindness of mind” concerning spiritual things. “As Isidore says (Etym. x), "a lustful man is one who is debauched with pleasures." Now venereal pleasures above all debauch a man’s mind.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II:II, Q. 153, Art. 2) The truth that lust is the most powerful of all human acts in inducing spiritual death, can even be understood from reason alone, since the sexual or lustful pleasure is the one pleasure of all who induces in man a kind of inability to reason. “...lust applies chiefly to venereal pleasures, **which more than anything else** work the greatest havoc in a man’s mind”. (*Ibid*) “And truly, the concupiscence of the flesh, beyond all other passions, doth greatly hinder us from being ready to meet Christ; whilst, on the other hand, nothing makes us more fit to follow our Lord, than virginal chastity.” (St. Robert Bellarmine, *The art of dying well*, Chapter IV)

This proves that lust and sexual pleasure is the biggest cause why people in the end are damned, and it also shows us about what sins one should speak about when one tries to convert a sinner or a heretic. And this of course also applies to married people and their sexual acts, and St. Augustine also confirms the fact that “he who is intemperate in marriage, what is he but the adulterer of his own wife?” by quoting the great St. Ambrose’s teaching concerning the necessity for married people to practice moderation in even their normal, natural and lawful marital acts. Spouses who overindulge in the sexual act are doing the exact same thing as gluttons, acting unreasonably and being attached to a fleeting pleasure. A person who is steeped in lust will always have a “blindness of mind” concerning spiritual things. It cannot be doubted that “Although every vice has a certain disgrace, the vices of intemperance are especially disgraceful,” and that “Among the vices of intemperance, venereal sins are most deserving of reproach, both on account of the insubordination of the genital organs, and because by these sins especially, the reason is absorbed.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4, Reply to Objection 2 and 3)

The truth that of all a Christian’s conflicts against the devil, the most important one is chastity, cannot be understated: “Hence Augustine says (De Agone Christiano [Serm. ccxciii; ccl de Temp]) that of all a Christian’s conflicts, the most difficult combats are those of chastity; wherein the fight is a daily one, but victory rare: and Isidore declares (De Summo Bono ii, 39) that "mankind is subjected to the devil by carnal lust more than by anything else," because, to wit, the vehemence of this passion is more difficult to overcome.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 3, Reply to Objection 1)

Indeed, *Our Lady of Fatima* directly teaches that **“The sins of the world are too great! The sins which lead most souls to hell are sins of the flesh!”** Certain fashions are going to be introduced which will offend Our Lord very much. Those who serve God should not follow these fashions. The Church has no fashions; Our Lord is always the same. Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God.” Our Lady is the Queen of Prophets, and her words have been perfectly fulfilled in our times. Right at this time when *Our Lady of Fatima* revealed the future to the three young children, immodesty and lasciviousness started to rear its ugly head in all of society as a result of cinema. The sin that have damned most people through the ages is undoubtedly lust, but Our Lady put an emphasis on this message about lust and that “Many marriages are not good” at this exact time, because She knew that the years following Her prediction, the world’s people would be especially evil and lustful. Notice also how She prophesies and connects the sin of immodesty, and the changing of the clothes of the woman to lust, obviously because women in the years following her revelation would discard the immemorial law of the Church which expressly forbids women from wearing pants or tight and revealing clothing. Immodesty and lust goes together, as both are sins, and immodesty is the cause of the lust of the man. At no time in history have the world’s people been more evil and lustful, and this also shows us that the reason why most of the so called Christians have fallen into heresy, schism or apostasy, is lust.

St. Peter also confirms that “carnal desires” “war against the soul” in the Holy Bible, thus showing us that lust in all its forms blinds our spiritual eyes and understanding: “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the soul.” (1 Peter 2:11) It is important to notice that St. Peter does not single out only sinful lust here, but instead, he tells us that “carnal desires” in general “war against the soul”. All sexual acts, even lawful ones, “war against the soul” since they all are intoxicating like a drug, or as St. Thomas Aquinas describes it, **“because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time... the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused”**. The sexual pleasure is very similar to the effect of a strong drug, and drugs as we all know are very easy to become addicted to by abusing them or overindulging in them. The stronger a drug is, the more is also our spiritual life hindered, and that is why the angelic life of chastity will always be more spiritually fruitful than the marital life according to the Bible and God’s Holy Word. And so, it is clear that Holy Scripture infallibly teaches that marriage and the marital life is an impediment to the spiritual life, while the chaste and pure life “give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment.” (1 Corinthians 7:35)

This is also why the Holy Bible urges people to remain unmarried and in a life of chastity since the married man “*is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: **and he is divided***” (1 Corinthians 7:33). St. Paul in the Bible also warns those who intend to marry and perform the marital sexual act that they “shall have tribulation of the flesh”: “*But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have tribulation of the flesh. But I spare you.*” (1 Corinthians 7:28)

Even lawful sexual acts tempt a man to be “intemperate in marriage,” and if a man gives in to this temptation and perform unlawful sexual acts with his wife, such as sensual kisses and touches “what is he but the adulterer of his own wife?” Since “the whole world is seated in wickedness” (1 John 5:19), more because of carnal desires than any other act, the Apostles and their followers, who wrote the New Testament, really put an emphasis on the topic of chastity and carnal desires and lust, repeating the same topic over and over again in the Holy Scripture, since they had been told the truth from Our Lord that carnal desires was the greatest cause of why people, in the end, are damned. This is also why the wise teacher of God’s word should always remember this fact in order to know where his priorities need to be when he tries to convert a person. The man of God must not be discouraged if he cannot convert anyone or more than a few, for “**The perverse are hard to be corrected, and the number of fools [and damned people] is infinite**” (Ecclesiastes 1:15), and very few people are saved in the end.

The more a person, whether married or unmarried, seeks or indulges himself with venereal pleasures in his life, the more detrimental in effect will this “blindness of mind” be “since if one consent to them this increases the force of concupiscence and weakens the strength of the mind” and this proves that even the married must be very careful to never exceed the limits set by nature for the procreation of children.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 153, Art. 2: “**Venereal pleasures are more impetuous, and are more oppressive on the reason than the pleasures of the palate**: and therefore they are in greater need of chastisement and restraint, since if one consent to them this increases the force of concupiscence and weakens the strength of the mind. Hence Augustine says (Soliloq. i, 10): ‘I consider that nothing so casts down the manly mind from its heights as the fondling of women, **and those bodily contacts which belong to the married state.**’”

Since “venereal pleasures above all debauch a man’s mind” and “more than anything else work the greatest havoc in a man’s mind”, the topic of lust, in all its forms, is where the preacher or teacher should first try to find heresies or sins against the Natural Law in the sinner he intends to convert. Then he can move along and see if there are some other sins against the Natural Law, by asking questions to see if the sinner commits one or more of the other seven deadly sins, that is, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride. Every single mortal sin that man can commit on this earth fits into one of the categories of the seven mortal sins, and that is why it is much more easy to expose a mortal sin by using the template of the seven mortal sins when we try to convert a person. If people would only remember that God sees all their actions, no one would be able to sin. That is why one should always think as if God is present all the time in order to keep the Natural Law.

That one nowadays is forced to have to explain such matters of the Natural Law concerning sexual pleasure just shows us in what bad shape the world is currently in, for before our own time, as we have seen from the teaching of the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Church, the world’s population understood the inherent evilness of sensual kisses and touches in marriage and between married spouses, and it was publicly taught by the Magisterium of the Church as well as the Church’s Saints that kisses performed **“for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss”** is condemned as a mortal sin for both the married and the unmarried people alike (Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Morals Condemned in Decree #40*, September 24, 1665; Denz. 1140).

Indeed, the writers of this book can also testify that through our own fault before our conversion, we “hardened” ourselves by repeated sinful acts against the Natural Law when we lived in the world, so that our conscience totally ceased to correct us for many of our sins. Although we knew innately that non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts (such as masturbation, sensual kisses and touches, and fornication) are against nature since we hid in shame in order to perform these intoxicating and shameful acts, we did not care since we did not love and fear God as all sons and daughters of Him must if they wish to be saved. By our actions, we showed that we knew from the Natural Law that these acts were sinful and against nature, but through our own “hardening” of our wills, we had smothered our own conscience so much that it did not resist any more. Indeed, so much had we fallen into sin, that if a person would have asked us whether we thought that acts of fornication, masturbation or sensual kisses and touches were allowed, we would have answered that these acts were not only allowed but even good. Behold, then, this strange spectacle of bad will! Our own actions confessed that we knew these actions were evil and shameful since we hid in shame and became intoxicated while doing these shameful acts, yet the repeated custom of evil conduct

had so drowned our own conscience that we impudently declared to be good and lawful what we knew were utterly evil and unlawful.

What, then, was the reason for our fall? First and foremost, of course, our own bad will, but then, the force of habit, ungodly parents as well as the satanic media who over and over showed us in a multitude of ways that sensual acts were lawful and good. This fact shows us, once again, why there is an absolute necessity for parents to be very strict with their child's upbringing and education, as well as why they must control all they watch, listen to, or read on the media etc. The environment we are raised in are undoubtedly a great reason for why we humans fall away from God, but ultimately, we are all responsible for our own sins, and no one will be able on judgment day to excuse oneself by stating that all around him sinned, or that all around him thought that this or that sin was fine or lawful to do. This point is very important to mention since some "theologians" or "Catholics" nowadays actually claim that if a person does not "know" that an act is against nature or sinful, such as masturbation, they are free from all sin. Now, common sense, of course, utterly rejects such nonsense, but statements like this are becoming more and more common as the world evolves in wickedness. Indeed, so much have the media effected the formerly Christian people of the earth, that what before was absolutely unheard of or totally rejected, now has become "good" or lawful.

A good example of how the Christian peoples of the former times understood that non-procreative sexual acts (such as sensual kisses and touches) were sinful both for the married and the unmarried is found in St. Thomas Aquinas' writings where he tells us that acts "**such as *impure* looks, kisses, and touches**" regards the virtue of *purity*, while the virtue of "*chastity* regards rather sexual union".

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4: "Consequently **purity regards venereal matters** properly, and especially the signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches. And since the latter are more wont to be observed, purity regards rather these external signs [i.e., looks, kisses, and touches], while chastity regards rather sexual union."

Here we have another great evidence that kisses and touches for venereal pleasure was known very clearly to be sinful, shameful and contrary to purity even by the lay people of St. Thomas' time. St. Thomas tells us that the virtue of "purity regards venereal matters properly, **and especially the signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches.**" But he adds that the virtue of purity were "**more wont to be observed**" by the people of his own

time in regards to these “impure” acts of “impure looks, kisses, and touches,” thus confirming the fact that non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts, such as kisses and touches for sensual pleasure, is a completely foreign concept to the Church and Her Saints that have been foisted on the modern man and woman through the diabolical media, to be a cause of or even to be “love”, “affection”, or an integral part of the marital act, when it in fact is nothing but filthy lust! Thus, according to St. Thomas, in contrast to the lustful spouses of our own times, the people of the former times were lucky enough to have this good “shamefacedness” that kept them from performing unnecessary and unlawful sexual acts “**such as impure looks, kisses, and touches.**”

In addition, it is very important and of worth noting that St. Thomas, in the context of this quotation, referred to the marital sexual act, by using the words “**the conjugal act**” as well as “**of marriage,**” which directly refutes one of the principle objections of the heretical objectors to the condemnation of sensual kisses and touches by the Church and Her Saints (that is, that the quotes doesn’t apply to marriage or the marital act, but only to the unmarried):

“Now men are most ashamed of venereal acts... **so much so that even *the conjugal act, which is adorned by the honesty of marriage, is not devoid of shame...*** Consequently **purity regards venereal matters properly, and especially the signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches.** And since the latter are more wont to be observed, purity regards rather these external signs [i.e., looks, kisses, and touches], while chastity regards rather sexual union.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4)

Thus, we can see how *bad will* and the people’s *evolution in wickedness* have changed the human race’s moral compass to such a degree that, what were once “**more wont to be observed**” by the more virtuous people of St. Thomas’ time concerning how “purity regards venereal matters properly, and especially the signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches”, and that these people understood that “impure looks, kisses, and touches” were unlawful and shameful even for the married—have now changed so much that a great part of this world now impiously and shamelessly teaches that “impure looks, kisses, and touches” are “good” and allowed to be performed in a marriage and between two married spouses.

Then there is the matter that sexual arousal feels good. We tend to not only repeat the things that make us feel good, we often look to prolong the feeling. The problem is that repeated exposure dulls our sensitivity. It takes longer exposure or new things to fan the flames again.

If you have ever ridden a roller coaster, you know the first ride is a major thrill; but part of the thrill comes from not knowing what to expect. Hence, after repeated rides, the roller coaster becomes mundane. It hasn't changed, but we become calloused to its thrills. That is why people search out new roller coasters to ride. When people chase after sexual thrills, one of the things that lends excitement to the act is the newness of the feelings. But after a while, you will know just what to expect but you want those feelings you had when it was new. Hence, you engage in it longer or you go further toward intercourse because it adds new dimensions that you haven't experienced before. Just because you haven't gone too far in the past doesn't mean you won't gradually creep up to too far in the future.

This is why it is absolutely imperative for married spouses to never allow their lusts or desires to gain control over their wills, and why they must be obedient to the words of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Bible which tells spouses to practice chastity from time to time in order to be better disposed for prayer and other spiritual works. In truth, when we indulge our sensual appetites, we forge and make our own chains, binding ourselves to the World, the Devil and Hell. "Out of a forward will lust had sprung; and lust pampered had become custom; and custom indulged had become necessity. These were the links of the chain; this is the bondage in which I was bound." (St. Augustine, *Confessions of Augustine*, Book VIII, Chapter 5)

It is necessary for salvation that all men should strive to conform to the divine and natural plan, "and since man cannot hold in check his passions, **unless he first subject himself to God**, this must be his primary endeavor, in accordance with the plan divinely ordained." And how this is to be done in marriage, Pope Pius XI explains, is by restraining the unlawful, "unbridled lust, which indeed is the most potent cause of sinning against the sacred laws of matrimony."

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (#'s 96-100), Dec. 31, 1930: "In order, therefore, to restore due order in this matter of marriage, it is necessary that all should bear in mind what is the divine plan and strive to conform to it. Wherefore, since the chief obstacle to this study is the power of unbridled lust, which indeed is the most potent cause of sinning against the sacred laws of matrimony, and since man cannot hold in check his passions, unless he first subject himself to God, this must be his primary endeavor, in accordance with the plan divinely ordained. For it is a sacred ordinance that whoever shall have first subjected himself to God will, by the aid of divine grace, be glad to subject to himself his own passions and concupiscence; while he who is a rebel against God will, to his sorrow, experience within himself the violent rebellion of his worst passions.

“And how wisely this has been decreed St. Augustine thus shows: "This indeed is fitting, that the lower be subject to the higher, so that he who would have subject to himself whatever is below him, should himself submit to whatever is above him. Acknowledge order, seek peace. Be thou subject to God, and thy flesh subject to thee. What more fitting! What more fair! Thou art subject to the higher and the lower is subject to thee. Do thou serve Him who made thee, so that that which was made for thee may serve thee. For we do not commend this order, namely, 'The flesh to thee and thou to God,' but 'Thou to God, and the flesh to thee.' If, however, thou despisest the subjection of thyself to God, thou shalt never bring about the subjection of the flesh to thyself. If thou dost not obey the Lord, thou shalt be tormented by thy servant."

“This right ordering on the part of God’s wisdom is mentioned by the holy Doctor of the Gentiles [St. Paul], inspired by the Holy Ghost, for in speaking of those ancient philosophers who refused to adore and reverence Him whom they knew to be the Creator of the universe, he says: "Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness, to dishonor their own bodies among themselves;" and again: "For this same God delivered them up to shameful affections." And St. James says: "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble," without which grace, as the same Doctor of the Gentiles reminds us, man cannot subdue the rebellion of his flesh.

“Consequently, as the onslaughts of these uncontrolled passions cannot in any way be lessened, unless the spirit first shows a humble compliance of duty and reverence towards its Maker, it is above all and before all needful that those who are joined in the bond of sacred wedlock should be wholly imbued with a profound and genuine sense of duty towards God, which will shape their whole lives, and fill their minds and wills with a very deep reverence for the majesty of God. Quite fittingly, therefore, and quite in accordance with the defined norm of Christian sentiment, do those pastors of souls act who, to prevent married people from failing in the observance of God’s law, urge them to perform their duty and exercise their religion so that they should give themselves to God, continually ask for His divine assistance, frequent the sacraments, and always nourish and preserve a loyal and thoroughly sincere devotion to God.”

St. Paul teaches us of God’s purpose on marriage and sexuality, saying: “*May marriage be honorable in all, and may the bed be undefiled. For God will judge fornicators and adulterers.*” (Hebrews 13:4) Haydock Commentary explains this teaching of God in the Holy Bible: “Or, *let marriage be honorable in all.* That is, in *all things* belonging to the marriage state. This is a warning to married people, not to abuse the sanctity of their state, by any liberties or irregularities contrary thereunto. (Challoner) --- As marriage is a great sacrament,

(Ephesians 5) married persons should be careful to honor and respect it, by chaste and prudent behavior; (see 1st Peter 3, and 1st Thessalonians 4) **but it too often happens that by criminal incontinence they change a great sacrament into a great sacrilege.**”

1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 “For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you should abstain from fornication; That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor: ***Not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles that know not God***... because the Lord is the avenger of all these things, as we have told you before, and have testified. ***For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto sanctification.***”

No good Christian can doubt that all selfish, unnatural or non-procreative sexual acts must be totally excluded from a marriage that is “*honorable in all*” that the apostle spoke about, and that all selfish, immoderate or unnatural sexual acts “*that are done by them in secret, it is a shame even to speak of.*” (Ephesians 5:12)

1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 15-20 “Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God? Do not err: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, Nor the effeminate, nor liars with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God. ... [Know you not that] the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. Now God hath both raised up the Lord, and will raise us up also by his power. Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Or know you not, that he who is joined to a harlot, is made one body? For they shall be, saith he, two in one flesh. But he who is joined to the Lord, is one spirit. Fly fornication. Every sin that a man doth, is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body. Or know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God; and you are not your own? For you are bought with a great price. Glorify and bear God in your body.”

Haydock Commentary explains: “*Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ...and the temple of the Holy Ghost.* Man consists of soul and body; by baptism he is made a member of that same mystical body, the Church, of which Christ is the head: **In baptism both the soul and body are consecrated to God: they are made the temple of the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as the spirit and grace of God inhabits in men, who are sanctified. Christ redeemed both our souls and bodies, both which**

he designs to sanctify, and to glorify hereafter in heaven; so that we must look upon both body and soul as belonging to Christ, and not *as our own*. --- Shall I, then, taking the members of Christ, make them the members of an harlot, by a shameful and unlawful commerce? --- Such sins are chiefly to be avoided by flight, and by avoiding the occasions and temptations. Other sins are not committed by such an injury done to the body, but by an abuse of something else, that is different from the body, **but by fornication and sins of uncleanness, the body itself is defiled and dishonored, whereas the body ought to be considered as if it *were not our own*, being redeemed by our Savior Christ, consecrated to him, with an expectation of a happy resurrection, and of being glorified in heaven. Endeavor, therefore, to glorify God in your body, by employing it in his service, and bear him in your body by being obedient to his will. (Witham) --- We know and we believe that we carry about Jesus Christ in our bodies, but it is the shame and condemnation of a Christian to live as if he neither knew or believed it. ... **Whoever yields to impurity, converts his body into the temple of Satan, glorifies and carries him about, tearing away the members of Jesus Christ, to make them the members of a harlot.**”**

Sacred Scripture uses the term fornication in a more general sense that encompasses all sinful sexual acts. The argument is that God is Holy and that we also must be holy. “*Because it is written: You shall be holy, for I am holy.*” (1 Peter 1:16) The body of each and every Christian is a part of Christ, and is a Temple of the Holy Spirit. We are joined to the Lord with a unity of heart and mind that makes us one in spirit with our Savior, who is God Incarnate, who Himself has a human body and soul. Therefore our bodies, as well as our souls, should be treated as a holy means to glorify God. This understanding of the body is incompatible with the use of the body for mere sexual pleasure or mutual sexual gratification, in any situation, even within marriage, and is directly contrary to the Divine and Natural Law.

Unnatural, immoderate and non-procreative sexual acts within marriage are in fundamental conflict with this call from Scripture to “be holy” and to avoid all sexual sins because the body is a part of the body of Christ and is a Temple of the Holy Spirit. Did Christ teach His disciples to commit such acts within marriage? If you think so, then you do not know Christ. Would the Holy Spirit guide a married couple to commit such acts within the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, which is bestowed on the couple by the Holy Spirit? If you think so, then you understand neither the Spirit nor the holiness of the Sacraments. You have been bought at the great price of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Do not sin against Christ, the Natural Law and against the Sacrament of Marriage by committing unnatural or excessive lustful sexual acts.

The entire moral law is found implicitly in the single act of Jesus Christ dying on the Cross for our salvation. Look at a crucifix and consider the self-sacrifice and selfless love with which Christ lived and died for you. Do you really think that, within the Sacrament of Marriage established by this same Savior, Christ would permit unnatural, shameful or immoderate sexual acts of any kind, at any time, under any conditions whatsoever? Are such sexual acts compatible with the pure, holy, selfless, self-sacrificing love, which encompasses the entire moral law as well as our salvation? Certainly not.

Putting forward the question concerning sexual pleasure and the Natural Law: “Can a husband use his wife only for delight or principally for delight”, St. Bernardine of Siena (1380-1444) shows us a response or defense that lustful and wicked husbands commonly use in order to excuse their sexual sins, saying: “Why can’t I take delight in my own goods and my own wife?” **St. Bernadine, however, answers the wicked man that the wife is not the husband’s but God’s and that it is a sin (by implication mortal sin) to have sexual intercourse too frequently, with inordinate affection, or with dissipation of one’s strength (Bernadine of Siena, *Seraphic Sermons*, 19.3).**

So contrary to what most deceived people think today, spouses are not married or given to each other to live out, increase or excite their shameful, sexual perversions, **but they are married for the purpose of chastity, procreation and honorable companionship, and for the honor and glory of Our Lord:** “For she was espoused to her husband to be his partner in life, and for the procreation of children, not for the purposes of indecency and laughter; that she might keep the house, and instruct him also to be grave, not that she might supply to him the fuel of fornication.” (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*, Homily V, 1 Thessalonians iv. 1-8, Ver. 8)

All the Saints in the 2000 year history of the Catholic Church as well as the Catholic Magisterium of the Popes (as we have seen), taught that the seeking of pleasure only in natural intercourse, as well as seeking pleasure in unnatural or non-procreative sexual acts, was a selfish insult to God, the “Supreme Lord of our body” and an abuse of the generative power (and thus an abuse of the natural law) in the private parts.

“As the Apostle says (1 Cor. 6:20) in speaking against lust, ‘You are bought with a great price: glorify and bear God in your body.’ Wherefore by inordinately using the body through lust a man wrongs God Who is the Supreme Lord of our body. Hence Augustine says (De Decem. Chord. 10 [Serm. ix (xcvi de Temp.)]): ‘God Who thus

governs His servants for their good, not for His, made this order and commandment, lest unlawful pleasures should destroy His temple which thou hast begun to be.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I:II, q. 153, art. 3, obj. 2)

In truth, “If it is a sin for a man to be intimate with his wife except through a desire for children, [when the spouses are still performing the normal, natural and **procreative** marital act] what can men think or what hope can they promise themselves, if being married, they commit adultery? **By this means they descend to the depths of hell, refusing to hear the Apostle when he says: ‘The time is short; it remains that those who have wives be as if they had none’**; [1 Cor. 7:29] **and: ‘every one of you learn how to possess his vessel in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who have no hope.’** [1 Thess. 4:4,5,12]” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 42:4, c. 470-543 A.D.)

Nature teaches us that the sexual act is shameful

It is very easy to prove that the marital act is shameful. For no one (if not totally depraved) would have sex in front of their children, friends or parents. Neither would they want people to talk openly about their sex life. They would rather die than allow themselves to be seen or heard in this way. If a person walked in on them during the act or if someone openly talked about their sex life, they would wish to sink through the floor through shame. But how is it that they refuse to feel any shame if no human person other than their spouse is present? Is God not present with them? Does God not see their every thought as well as their deeds? Of course He does! He sees everything!

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 41, Art. 3, Reply to Objection 3: “The shamefulness of concupiscence that always accompanies the marital act is a shamefulness not of guilt [if no sin is committed of course], but of punishment inflicted for the first sin, inasmuch as the lower powers and the members do not obey reason.”

Someone might say that it is the sexual member that is shameful or evil to expose to others and not concupiscence or the sexual lust. But this argument is easily refuted and false since no one who is not a complete pervert would have sex in front of other people even though their whole body were covered by sheets of blankets. Even those people who are not complete perverts would never kiss each other for the sake of venereal pleasure if other people were in their vicinity, and this is true even though they have all of their clothes on. This proves to us that it is the sexual pleasure that is shameful, and not only the exhibition of the sexual organs.

For, as Augustine remarks: “whenever this process is approached, secrecy is sought, witnesses removed, and even the presence of the very children which happen to be born of the process is avoided as soon as they reach the age of observation.” (Book II, *On the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin*, Chapter 42)

All couples that sin during sexual relations have clearly suppressed the natural feeling of shame in their hearts and shut God out from themselves and closed their conscience in order to enjoy their sinful and filthy deed to the fullest. If an acknowledgment would be made by the spouses that God is present with them before having marital relations and while having it, this thought that God is present would hinder them in their concupiscence and keep them from sinning. Most couples, however, *want* to sin or do something immoral and unlawful against God and their conscience before, during or after marital relations; and because of this, they choose to forget about God and the natural shame that normally accompany the sexual act.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art 4: “I answer that, As stated above (Objection 2), "pudicitia" [purity] takes its name from "pudor," which signifies shame. Hence purity must needs be properly about the things of which man is most ashamed. Now men are most ashamed of venereal acts, as Augustine remarks (De Civ. Dei xiv, 18), so much so that even the conjugal act, which is adorned by the honesty [Cf. Q. 145] of marriage, is not devoid of shame: and this because the movement of the organs of generation is not subject to the command of reason, as are the movements of the other external members. Now man is ashamed not only of this sexual union but also of all the signs thereof, as the Philosopher observes (Rhet. ii, 6).”

According to St. Thomas, normal spouses are thoroughly ashamed from simply committing the act. But not only from committing the act, but also from thinking about committing the act and from “all the signs thereof.” This natural shame could only occur or be retained if people do not live lustful lives or have sex often.

Tertullian, *A Treatise on the Soul*, Chapter 27 (c. 203 A.D.): “Nature should be to us an object of reverence, not of blushes. It is lust, not natural usage, which has brought shame on the intercourse of the sexes. It is the excess, not the normal state, which is immodest and unchaste: the normal condition has received a blessing from God, and is blessed by Him: “Be fruitful, and multiply, (and replenish the earth.)” [Genesis 1:28] Excess, however, has He cursed, in adulteries, and wantonness [that is, sexually lawless or unrestrained, loose, lascivious, lewd and wanton behavior], and chambering

[wantonness, impurity].”

A good sign that a couple is living in sexual sin is that the natural shame that is inherent in the marital act have been extinguished partly or completely. The evidence for this is that St. Thomas explains to us that there is a “shamefulness of concupiscence that always accompanies the marriage act”. Because of this, all those who have ceased to experience this shame that is natural and inherent in the marital act, should seriously pray to God that he may heal them and help them regain this shame that is so good and helpful in reproofing peoples’ consciences against committing sexual sins.

For most people, this process of smothering their shame and God-given conscience does not happen immediately overnight but slowly over time as they progress and evolve in wickedness by committing acts that are unlawful and unnecessary. Not only those who commit perverted sexual acts will experience a decrease in the natural shame, but also those who have sex too often and who overindulge in it.

Tobias 6:16-17 “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. **For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust,** as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, **over them the devil hath power.**”

In contrast to the wicked described above, the godly who have not shut God out from themselves and their hearts clearly understand in their conscience that God will approve of them **if they do what is lawful** and that He will disapprove of them if they do something unlawful. That is why only the ungodly (who have repressed the natural thought of God’s presence) could ever fall into grievous mortal sins such as striptease, dressing sensual or masturbation. The godly couple who fears God and who has the thought of that God is present with them would never do such things, for they would feel guilt and be thoroughly ashamed of committing such acts as the ungodly do; **because they understand that God sees them and that He is present with them.** Since the godly couple are not selfish pleasure seekers, the natural feeling of shame for any deviation from what is inherent in the marital act will always be there and help them to keep them from sinning. “Do not, I pray, put off modesty at the same time that you put off your clothes; because it is never right for the just man to divest himself of continence.” (*The Paedagogus* or *The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X)

Ask yourself, dear reader, has the thought of God or that He is present with you ever even

entered your mind or heart when you are having marital relations? If not, then what sinful act or inordinate love of pleasure kept the thought of God away from you? By asking these questions, one will quickly learn what deeds and inordinate pleasures must be avoided and controlled, and what deeds should be kept during marital relations.

St. Augustine, **On the Shame of Nakedness** (c. 420 A.D.): “This kind of shame—this necessity of blushing—is certainly born with every man, and in some measure is commanded by the very laws of nature; so that, in this matter, even virtuous married people are ashamed. Nor can any one go to such an extreme of evil and disgrace, as, because he knows God to be the author of nature and the ordainer of marriage, to have intercourse even with his wife in any one’s sight, or not to blush at those impulses and seek secrecy, where he can shun the sight not only of strangers, but even of all his own relatives. Therefore let human nature be permitted to acknowledge the evil that happens to it by its own fault, lest it should be compelled either not to blush at its own impulses, which is most shameless, or else to blush at the work of its Creator, which is most ungrateful. Of this evil, nevertheless, virtuous marriage makes good use for the sake of the benefit of the begetting of children. But to consent to lust for the sake of carnal pleasure alone is sin...” (St. Augustine, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, Book I, Chapter 33)

There are some more facets of this topic of shame that everyone should consider. Spouses do naturally hate to even think that their respective other could commit adultery with another person. They naturally hate it. Likewise, parents naturally feel a revulsion or aversion thinking about the fact that their children will have marital relations, especially fathers for their daughters. Everyone knows by natural instinct that the marital act plucks the innocence from people and that it is shameful. And so, parents do not like to think on this topic. But while they feel a revulsion for this topic, they feel no shame in lusting after their own spouse or after other people that they are not married with, which of course is someone else’s daughter or son too. Every person on the face of this earth is the earthly or fleshly child of God. God created both their souls as well as their bodies. Everyone knows by natural instinct that the sexual act is shameful in its essence, and that is why they cannot stand the thought that their spouse is committing adultery or that their children are having or will have marital relations.

From this we can learn how God – who has planted this revulsion in the parents for the sexual act – wished to teach the parents how they should act in their own life. Do unto others as you would have others do to you was the saying of our Lord! All husbands and wives knows that their spouse has a father and mother who thinks about them in the same protective way that

they think about their own children, and yet, these parents feel no shame in themselves when seeking sexual pleasure with their own spouse or with others. But as soon as their own spouse or child is implicated in the thought process, then there immediately arises a sense of incredible shame and disgust. This shame is only natural and good. However, the sad part is that the spouses have repressed the thought that the marital act is shameful with respect to themselves too, while acknowledging this natural fact when it concerns others.

“The undeniable truth is that a man by his very nature is ashamed of sexual lust. And he is rightly ashamed because there is here involved an inward rebellion which is a standing proof of the penalty which man is paying for his original rebellion against God. For, lust is a usurper, defying the power of the will and playing the tyrant with man’s sexual organs. It is here that man’s punishment particularly and most properly appears, because these are the organs by which that nature is reproduced which was so changed for the worse by its first great sin—that sin from whose evil connection no one can escape, unless God’s grace expiate in him individually that which was perpetrated to the destruction of all in common, when all were in one man, and which was avenged by God’s justice.” (St. Augustine, *The City of God*, Book XIV, Chapter 20, c. 426 A.D.)

Parents certainly would not like that their child were thought upon in a shameful, sexual or lustful way by other individuals, and both fathers and mothers are naturally endowed with the dislike of this, and yet, they refuse to acknowledge that the object of their own sexual desires is also a child to other parents, who thinks in the exact same way that their children do not deserve to be thought of in a sexual or lustful way. By this rejection of what they know is true and natural, the Devil is allowed to lead them into committing more and more perverted sexual sins as they evolve in wickedness. Indeed, spouses who try to suppress their shame will almost always fall into graver sexual sins of various kinds.

St. Augustine, writing on the evil of lust in marriage, says that it ought not to be ascribed to marriage, and that when “marriage blushes for shame [this] is not the fault of marriage, but of the lust of the flesh”: “The evil [of lust], however, at which even marriage blushes for shame is not the fault of marriage, but of the lust of the flesh. Yet because without this evil it is impossible to effect the good purpose of marriage, even the procreation of children, whenever this process is approached, secrecy is sought, witnesses removed, and even the presence of the very children which happen to be born of the process is avoided as soon as they reach the age of observation. Thus it comes to pass that marriage is permitted to effect all that is lawful in its state, only it must not forget to conceal all that is improper. Hence it follows that infants, although incapable of sinning, are yet not born without the contagion of sin, not, indeed,

because of what is lawful, but on account of that which is unseemly: for from what is lawful nature is born; from what is unseemly, sin. Of the nature so born, God is the Author, who created man, and who united male and female under the nuptial law; but of the sin the author is the subtlety of the devil who deceives, and the will of the man who consents.” (*On the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin*, Book II, Chapter 42, A.D. 418)

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 37, A.D. 420: “Show me, he [the Manichean heretic] says, any bodily marriage without sexual connection. I do not show him any bodily marriage without sexual connection; but then, neither does he show me any case of sexual connection which is without shame. In Paradise, however, if sin had not preceded, there would not have been, indeed, generation without union of the sexes, but this union would certainly have been without shame; for in the sexual union there would have been a quiet acquiescence of the members, not a lust of the flesh productive of shame.”

The intention of the spouses performing the sexual act defines the moral goodness or evilness of the act

Someone might ask: “Then how is one going to make children since the act is shameful in its essence?” I answer that, when the act is done not for self-gratification but for a pure love of God and of children — then there is no sin committed by the spouses.

It is the intention behind the external deed of sexual intercourse that determines the sinfulness or goodness of the act. However, as with all things that are extremely pleasurable, the risk of becoming a slave under this sensual delight is very great, actually bigger than most things that exist on this Earth. It is no sin for the spouses to experience sensual pleasure in the flesh during the marital act (since this is a natural effect of the deed). The sin rather lies in the will or intent that resolves to love or cherish this sexual pleasure that is earthly and fleeting. The Holy Bible is clear that covetousness is a sin of idolatry. That is why all couples who cherish or love sexual pleasure, and unlawful and unnecessary sexual acts, in truth are fittingly and rightly described as idolaters.

Colossians 3:5 “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence, **and covetousness, which is the service of idols.**”

Ephesians 5:3-5 “But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so

much as be named among you, as becometh saints: Or obscenity, or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose; but rather giving of thanks. For know you this and understand, that no fornicator, or unclean, **or covetous person (which is a serving of idols)**, hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”

The Haydock Bible Commentary explains Ephesians 5:3-5:

“**Ver. 3. Covetousness.** The Latin word is generally taken for a coveting or immoderate desire of money and riches. St. Jerome and others observe, that the Greek word in this and divers other places in the New Testament may signify **any unsatiable desire, or the lusts of sensual pleasures; and on this account, St. Jerome thinks that it is here joined with fornication and uncleanness** [i.e., sexual sins]. --- **Ver. 5. Nor covetous person, which is a serving of idols. It is clear enough by the Greek that the covetous man is called an idolater**, whose idol is mammon; though it may be also said of other sinners, **that the vices they are addicted to are their idols.** (Witham)”

The Haydock Bible Commentary explains Colossians 3:5:

“*Your members,...fornication, uncleanness, &c.* He considers man’s body as made up of sins and sinful inclinations. (Witham) --- It is not to bring back Judaism we practice abstinences and fasts, nor with the same motive as the Jews, but to accomplish the precepts of mortifying the irregular desires of the flesh among which gluttony must find a place. In a mortified body sensuality is more easily subdued. (Haydock)”

Whenever the human will decides to seek the enhancement of sexual pleasure (or of any other unreasonable pleasure, such as “eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only”), God sees that His creation loves an idol of sorts. It becomes a kind of idolatry of corruptible flesh the moment spouses perform the marital act for the sake of self-gratification instead of for the love of God and love of children. The sin when having marital relations lies in the thought and action that seeks to do more than what is necessary or permitted for conception to occur. Sin will always be decided in the intent, but too few people seem to understand this truth today. Thus it is the will, thought or intent to enjoy, love, and as it were, worship this sexual pleasure, that makes it sinful.

This can be proven by an example. Consider how a man that is sick and suffers much pain is allowed by divine permission and justice to take morphine or other painkillers since he is in

need of them. His reason when taking these drugs is not self-gratification but the alleviation of the pain that he experiences. This example could be likened with lawful marital relations, which is permitted and non-sinful as long as the spouses have intercourse for a just and reasonable cause.

However, whenever the sick person mentioned above would have become well and yet continued to use morphine or other painkillers without any need to do so – and for the mere sake of getting high and for pleasure – **he would have committed the sin of drug abuse.** His just reason for using the painkiller became unjust the very moment he became well and did not need to use it anymore. The same can be said about a couple who is having sex often and without a just cause. For just as drug addicts fool themselves into believing that they cannot live without the intake of the drugs they are addicted to – so too do many couples deceive themselves into believing that they need to have sex often and that they cannot live in any other way, claiming that they need their sexual fix just as the drug addict would.

Spouses should hate, despise and fight against the sexual pleasure according to the teaching of the Holy Bible and the Saints

From the beginning, the Holy Bible, the Church, and all Her Saints taught all people, whether married or unmarried, that the best thing to do is to hate and despise the sexual pleasure, since by this virtuous act, all people, and especially the married, would be better able to control and resist the sexual pleasure and concupiscence so as to become victorious over the flesh rather than being defeated by its desires and vices.

This is also exactly how Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Bible teaches us to view the sexual pleasure, since it is a higher call to live for the Spirit than for our own selfish desires: “And now, Lord, thou knowest, that ***not for fleshly lust*** do I take my sister to wife, ***but only for the love of posterity***, [children] in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.” (The Holy Bible, Tobias 8:9)

This teaching of God in the Holy Bible is of course also taught in the New Testament Bible of Our Lord Jesus Christ, teaching us that “**it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none**; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as if they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you to be without solicitude.” (1 Corinthians 7:29-32)

Speaking about those few good Christians who really understand this message of the Bible that tells spouses to reject and despise their sensual appetites as well as all superfluity in the marital act, St. Augustine explains that there are “many [virtuous and chaste people who] in humility and steadfastness persevere in their course [of virtue] to the end, and are saved. There are apparent diversities in these societies [of good Christians]; **but one charity unites all who, from some necessity, in obedience to the apostle’s injunction, have their wives as if they had them not**, and buy as if they bought not, and use this world as if they used it not.” (St. Augustine, *Against Faustus*, Book V, Section 9, A.D. 400)

Agreeing with the Holy Bible, St. Francis de Sales also stressed that making use of something, in this case the use of wives by their husbands, did not mean enjoying what one uses: “The marriage bed should be undefiled, as the Apostle tells us, i.e. pure, as it was when it was first instituted in the earthly Paradise, wherein no unruly desires or impure thought might enter. All that is merely earthly must be treated as means to fulfill the end God sets before His creatures. Thus we eat in order to preserve life, moderately, voluntarily, and without seeking an undue, unworthy satisfaction therefrom. “The time is short,” says St. Paul; “it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had not, and they that use this world, as not abusing it.” Let every one, then, use this world according to his vocation, but so as not to entangle himself with its love, that he may be as free and ready to serve God as though he used it not. “It is the great evil of man,” says St. Augustine, “to desire to enjoy the things which he should only use.” **We should enjoy spiritual things, and only use corporal, of which when the use is turned into enjoyment, our rational soul is also changed into a brutish and beastly soul.**” (St. Francis de Sales, *Introduction to a Devout Life*, Chapter XXXIX. Of The Sanctity Of The Marriage Bed.)

The Holy Bible makes it clear over and over again that sensuality and selfishness in all its forms will be punished with eternal damnation but that mortification, penance and the rejection of the perishable and carnal will be rewarded with eternal life and glory: “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you shall die: but if by the Spirit you **mortify the deeds of the flesh**, you shall live.”

Romans 8:1, 4-9, 12-13 “There is now therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh. ... That the justification of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. For they that are according to the flesh, mind the things that are of the flesh; but they that are according to the spirit, mind the things that are of the spirit. For the wisdom of

the flesh is death; but the wisdom of the spirit is life and peace. Because the wisdom of the flesh is an enemy to God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be. And they who are in the flesh, cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. ... Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you shall die: but if by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live.”

Haydock commentary explains Romans 8: “**Ver. 5. &c.** *For they who are according to the flesh.* That is, who live according to the false, vain, and deceitful maxims and customs of carnal men, which he also calls the *prudence of the flesh*: and this prudence he calls *death*, as leading men to eternal death. Such carnal men relish nothing else but such pleasures. But they *who are* and live according to the spirit, *mind the things which are of the spirit*, fix their hearts on the things that belong to God, and his service; and this *wisdom of the spirit*, in which they experience much greater pleasure, leads them to eternal *life*, and to eternal *peace* in the enjoyment of God. The false *wisdom of the flesh* is an enemy of God, *cannot be subject to the law of God*, because the maxims of the flesh, and of the world, are so opposite to those of the gospel, and to the doctrine of Christ. (Witham) --- They who are subject to the flesh, by having their affections fixed on the things of the flesh, that is, carnal men, whilst they are such, cannot please God: for this prudence of the flesh makes them the enemies of God. (Estius)”

The Church understood from the beginning that the inspired words in Holy Scripture, which teaches us that: “It is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman” (1 Cor. 7:1) meant that the sexual marital act was especially powerful in influencing a man or a woman to “walk according to the flesh” and thus fall into sins of the flesh and die spiritually. For it is written: “*The soul that sinneth, the same shall die.*” (Ezekiel 18:20)

Carrying on the Apostolic Tradition from the beginning, St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215) understood that St. Paul was advising the married to engage in the procreative act while renouncing the enjoyment of sexual pleasure. According to St. Clement, Paul speaks “not to those who chastely use marriage for procreation alone, but to those who were desiring to go beyond procreation, lest the adversary should arise a stormy blast and arouse desire for alien pleasures.” Thus, according to Clement’s treatise “*On Marriage*,” Satan is the source of a couple’s desire for sexual delight and “alien pleasures.” Furthermore, when Clement considered the commandment, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” he understood it as God’s commanding husbands to engage in intercourse “only for the purpose of begetting children.” St. Clement also pointed out that in all the Jewish scriptures there was not a single instance in

which “one of the ancients approached a pregnant woman” and taught that the avoidance of sexual relations from the time one’s wife became pregnant to the time of the child’s weaning was “a law of nature given by God.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XI, Section 71, 72)

Being a champion of virtue and the highest moral perfection, St. Clement could thus safely assert that: “The human ideal of continence... teaches that one should fight desire and not be subservient to it so as to bring it to practical effect. ***But our [Christian] ideal is not to experience desire at all. Our aim is not that while a man feels desire he should get the better of it, but that he should be continent even respecting desire itself.*** This chastity cannot be attained in any other way except by God’s grace. That was why he said “Ask and it shall be given you.”...Where there is light there is no darkness. But where there is inward desire, even if it goes no further than desire and is quiescent so far as bodily action is concerned, union takes place in thought with the object of desire, although that object is not present.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter VII, Section 57)

St. Clement’s divinely inspired teaching that echoes the teaching in the biblical books of *Tobit* and *St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians* clarifies the Scriptural truth that “we should do nothing from desire” which in fact is the most perfect and evangelical teaching that should influence and direct all our deeds on this earth. St. Clement of Alexandria writes, “Our will is to be directed only towards that which is necessary. For we are children not of desire but of will. A man who marries for the sake of begetting children must practice continence so that it is not desire he feels for his wife, whom he ought to love, and so that he may beget children with a chaste and controlled will.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter VII, Section 58)

If those wondrous words of the Holy Spirit that “we should do nothing from desire” truly influences and directs all our actions and thoughts, the Devil would never be able to cast us down to Hell and eternal torment which all people deserve who live for the sake of the flesh instead of for the spirit. “*For if you live according to the flesh, you shall die: but if by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live.*” (Romans 8:13) Indeed, St. Clement rejected as “vulgar and plebeian” any efforts to seek pleasure in the marital act. Although he praised the values of mutual assistance and support, he also held “that ‘voluptuous joy’ had no proper place in Christian life.” In sum, “***Christian couples will never have intercourse simply because they enjoy it and each other; they must make love only to beget a child.***” In truth, the man who marries should do so “for the sake of begetting children”

while practicing “continence so that it is not desire he feels for his wife” and begetting “children with a chaste and controlled will” for the glory of God. Thus, St. Clement and the rest of the Church understood the inherent danger in living after our sensual desires. (Cf. *The Paedagogus or Instructor*, Book II, Section 83; *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter VII, Section 58)

St. John Chrysostom, carrying on the apostolic tradition of despising our fleshly lusts and desires, writes that: “Our soul hath by nature the love of life, but it lies with us either to loose the bands of nature, and make this desire weak; or else to tighten them, and make the desire more tyrannous. For as we have the desire of sexual intercourse, but when we practice true wisdom we render the [sexual] desire weak, so also it falls out in the case of life; and as God hath annexed carnal desire to the generation of children, to maintain a succession among us, without however forbidding us from traveling the higher road of continence; so also He hath implanted in us the love of life, forbidding us from destroying ourselves, but not hindering our despising the present life.” (*Homilies on the Gospel of St. John*, Homily LXXXV, John xix. 16-38, Ver. 24)

St. Augustine also agreed with this, teaching that the “lover of the spiritual good” hates and neglects the pleasures of the flesh: “What lover of the spiritual good, who has married only for the sake of offspring, would not prefer if he could to propagate children without it [lust] or without its very great impulsion? I think, then, we ought to attribute to that life in Paradise, which was a far better life than this, whatever saintly spouses would prefer in this life, unless we can think of something better.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book IV, Chapter 13, Section 71, A.D. 421) “Thus a good Christian is found to love in one and the same woman the creature of God, whom he desires to be transformed and renewed [in Heaven]; but to hate the corruptible and mortal conjugal connection and carnal intercourse: i.e. to love in her what is characteristic of a human being, to hate what belongs to her as a wife. ... ***It is necessary, therefore, that the disciple of Christ should hate these things which pass away,*** in those whom he desires along with himself to reach those things which shall for ever remain; and that he should the more hate these things in them, the more he loves themselves.” (St. Augustine, *On the Sermon on the Mount*, Book 1, Chapter 15:41, c. 394 A.D.)

Indeed, “The chaste are not bound by a necessity to depravity, for they resist lust lest it compel them to commit unseemly acts; yet not even honorable procreation can exist without lust. In this way in chaste spouses there is both the voluntary, in the procreation of offspring; and the necessary, in lust. But honesty arises from unseemliness when chaste union accepts, but does not love, lust.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book V, Chapter 9, Section 37) It is

therefore clear that “there must be warfare against evil of concupiscence, which is so evil it must be resisted in the combat waged by chastity, lest it do damage.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 21, Section 43, A.D. 421)

Thus the conception of children is “the one alone worthy fruit...of the sexual intercourse.” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 1) No other aspect of the marital act can be described as “worthy.” Therefore, when a husband engages in marital relations during those times when his wife is pregnant, nursing, or menstruating, the husband or the wife or both are seen as seeking the unworthy fruit of sexual pleasure: **“There also are men incontinent to such a degree that they do not spare their wives even when pregnant. Therefore, whatever immodest, shameful, and sordid acts the married commit with each other are the sins of the married persons themselves, not the fault of marriage.”** (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 5) St. Augustine with the rest of the Church always regarded marital intercourse as sinful whenever husband and wife “indulged” in marital intimacy without the intention to conceive a child. According to Augustine, there are two forms of marital intercourse, the necessary and the unnecessary. The only “necessary” marital intercourse is intercourse for begetting children. Such “intercourse for begetting is free from blame, and itself is alone worthy of marriage.” “Unnecessary” or blameworthy intercourse is simply lust: “But that which goes beyond this necessity, no longer follows reason, but lust.” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 11)

Therefore, St. Augustine concluded that marital intercourse could be totally excluded from marriage without doing any harm to the marriage itself. Augustine found the three goods of marriage exemplified in the virginal marriage of Mary and Joseph: “This is why I said the full number of the three goods of marriage is found in what I declared by the Gospel was a marriage: ‘Faithfulness, because no adultery; offspring, our Lord Christ; and sacrament, because no divorce.’” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book V, Chapter 10, Section 46)

St. Augustine taught that engaging in intercourse with one’s spouse because of sexual need or desire occupied the bottom rung of the ladder of marital morality; and when this pleasure was sought by itself without excusing it with the motive of procreation, this was a sinful act according to him, the Church and the rest of the Fathers. Higher up was intercourse to generate children, exemplifying the good use of the evil of concupiscence. Here there was no sin. Then came the top rung. Couples engaging in “angelic exercise” had “freedom from all sexual intercourse.” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 8) **It is thus clear that “continence from all intercourse [within or without marriage] is certainly better than marital intercourse itself which takes place for the sake of begetting**

children." (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 6; in "The Fathers Of The Church – A New Translation Volume 27")

According to the teaching of the Church, the good of offspring is expendable when the greatest good of avoiding marital intercourse is chosen. This is also why the Church and *The Council of Trent* infallibly teaches in Session 24, Canon 10 that it is "**better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or in celibacy, than to be united in matrimony**", which, as we have seen, is a restatement of Our Lord Jesus Christ's words in the Holy Bible (1 Corinthians 7). St. Augustine offered married couples striving for the "better and more blessed" way some suggestions for ridding the elements of sexual desire and sexual pleasure from their lives. He proposed that a person's love of heavenly realities would develop in direct proportion to a person's hatred of earthly realities. Since there would be no sexual intercourse in the next life, Augustine taught that the virtuous husband would do well to hate sexual union in this earthly life. Being a lover of virtue, the bishop of Hippo wanted the husband to "love" the spouse created by God while hating "the corruptible and mortal relationship and marital intercourse." St. Augustine reiterated: "In other words, it is evident that he loves her insofar as she is a human being, but he hates her under the aspect of wifehood." (St. Augustine, *On the Sermon on the Mount*, Book I, Chapter 15, Section 40-42)

The idea of marriage as a partnership in which sexual tenderness played a role is totally absent from St. Augustine's or any other of the Saints' writings. This novel and heretical idea was completely unheard of in Christianity until impious and lustful heretics, like the members of Gnostic sects, tried to justify all kinds of abominable and vile sexual acts with or without a spouse. Indeed, the Church's view on sexuality has been clear from the beginning, teaching us that both **married and unmarried persons who love each other passionately or immoderately exceeds "the bounds of moderation" and heaps up "the uncleanness of a more bestial intemperance."** (St. Augustine, *On the Lord's Sermon on the Mount*; in "The Fathers of the Church", 19, 28, 139)

Like the rest of the fathers, Augustine wanted a strict control over the act of marital intercourse "lest there be indulgence beyond what suffices for generating offspring." St. Augustine himself had quite the experience of unlawful sexual indulgence and was well aware of the fact that sexual pleasure indulged in – and not restrained – holds us in bondage and is immensely powerful in taking over and controlling our soul: "Because of a perverse will was lust made; and lust indulged in became custom; and custom not resisted became necessity. By which links, as it were, joined together (whence I term it a "chain"), did a hard bondage hold me enthralled. Thus came I to understand, from my own experience, what I had read, how

that ‘the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.’...‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death’ but Thy grace only, through Jesus Christ our Lord?” (*The Confessions of Augustine*, Book VIII, Chapter 5)

He added that marital chastity fights valiantly for and demanded an end to spousal intercourse when a wife was “no longer able to conceive on account of age” since nature itself teaches that it’s unnecessary to perform the marital act at this time. In sum, the only time marital intercourse was good and lawful was the one instance when the married couple used their marriage bed as a place to conceive a child:

“It, [conjugal chastity] too, combats carnal concupiscence lest it exceed the proprieties of the marriage bed; it combats lest concupiscence break into the time agreed upon by the spouses for prayer. If this conjugal chastity possesses such great power and is so great gift from God that it does what the matrimonial code prescribes, it combats in even more valiant fashion in regard to the act of conjugal union, lest there be indulgence beyond what suffices for generating offspring. **Such chastity abstains during menstruation and pregnancy, nor has it union with one no longer able to conceive on account of age.** And the desire for union does not prevail, but ceases when there is no prospect of generation.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 21, Section 43)

It is thus clear that “Marriage is good, as long as sexual relations are for procreation and not for pleasure. ... The law of nature recognizes the act of procreation: **have relations with your wife only for the sake of procreation, and keep yourself from relations of pleasure.**” (St. Athanasius the Great, *Fragments on the Moral Life*, Section 2)

St. Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament*, Sermon 1:25: “It was thus [from duty] those holy men of former times, those men of God sought and wished for children. For this one end—the procreation of children—was their intercourse and union with their wives. It is for this reason that they were allowed to have a plurality of wives. For if immoderateness in these desires could be well-pleasing to God, it would have been as much allowed at that time for one woman to have many husbands, as one husband many wives. Why then had all chaste women no more than one husband, but one man had many wives, except that for one man to have many wives is a means to the multiplication of a family, whereas a woman would not give birth to more children, how many soever more husbands she might have. Wherefore, brethren, if our fathers’ union and intercourse with their wives, was for no other end but the procreation of children,

it had been great matter of joy to them, if they could have had children without that intercourse, since for the sake of having them they descended to that intercourse only through duty, and did not rush into it through lust. So then was Joseph not a father because he had gotten a son without any lust of the flesh? God forbid that Christian chastity should entertain a thought, which even Jewish chastity entertained not! **Love your wives then, but love them chastely. In your intercourse with them keep yourselves within the bounds necessary for the procreation of children. And inasmuch as you cannot otherwise have them, descend to it with regret.** For this necessity is the punishment of that Adam from whom we are sprung. Let us not make a pride of our punishment. It is his punishment who because he was made mortal by sin, was condemned to bring forth only a mortal posterity. This punishment God has not withdrawn, that man might remember from what state he is called away, and to what state he is called, and might seek for that union, in which there can be no corruption.”

St. Augustine, in his work *On Marriage and Concupiscence* continues to explain the reason why all should despise and hate the concupiscence and sexual desire of the flesh:

“But what in this action does it effect [sometimes even against our own will], unless it be its evil and shameful desires? For if these [evil lusts and desires] were good and lawful, the apostle would not forbid obedience to them, saying, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey the lusts thereof." [Rom. 6:12] He does not say, that you should have the lusts thereof, but that you should not obey the lusts thereof; in order that (as these desires are greater or less in different individuals, according as each shall have progressed in the renewal of the inner man) we may maintain the fight of holiness and chastity, for the purpose of withholding obedience to these [evil and shameful] lusts [caused by original sin]. Nevertheless, our wish ought to be nothing less than the nonexistence of these very desires [which war against the Spirit], even if the accomplishment of such a wish be not possible in the body of this death. This is the reason why the same apostle, in another passage, addressing us as if in his own person, gives us this instruction: "For what I would," says he, "that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." [Rom. 7:15] In a word, "I covet." For he was unwilling to do this, that he might be perfect on every side. "If, then, I do that which I would not," he goes on to say, "I consent unto the law that it is good." [Rom. 7:16] Because the law, too, wills not that which I also would not. For it wills not that I should have concupiscence, for it says, "Thou shall not covet;" and I am no less unwilling to cherish so evil a desire. In this, therefore, there is complete accord between the will of the law

and my own will. But because he was unwilling to covet, and yet did covet, and for all that did not by any means obey this concupiscence so as to yield assent to it, he immediately adds these words: "Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" [Rom. 7:17]." (*On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book I, Chapter 30.-- The Evil Desires of Concupiscence; We Ought to Wish that They May Not Be, A.D. 419)

Finally, Athenagoras the Athenian in his *A Plea for the Christians* (c. 175 A.D.), writes on the elevated sexual morality of the Christians:

"Therefore, having the hope of eternal life, we [Christians] despise the things of this life, even to the pleasures of the soul, each of us reckoning her his wife whom he has married according to the laws laid down by us, and that only for the purpose of having children. For as the husbandman throwing the seed into the ground awaits the harvest, not sowing more upon it, so to us the procreation of children is the measure of our indulgence in appetite. Nay, you would find many among us, both men and women, growing old unmarried, in hope of living in closer communion with God. But if the remaining in virginity and in the state of an eunuch brings nearer to God, while the indulgence of carnal thought and desire leads away from Him, in those cases in which we shun the thoughts, much more do we reject the deeds. For we bestow our attention, not on the study of words, but on the exhibition and teaching of actions,—that a person should either remain as he was born, or be content with one marriage..." (*A Plea for the Christians*, Chapter XXXIII)

Since the Holy Fathers of the Church unanimously teach that spouses should hate, despise and fight against the sexual pleasure even in marriage, and that virginity and chastity is better and more blessed than matrimony, this makes these doctrines infallible since "*the unanimous consent of the Fathers*" in a doctrinal matter is the official teaching of the Church according to the infallible teaching of the Catholic Church from the councils of Trent and Vatican I.

A great and edifying example of how good and virtuous spouses should view the marital sexual act and sexual pleasure is like a man that is tied to a chair and drugged with heroin or other substances against his will. This man would not commit any sin or fault even though his body became incredibly high or intoxicated by the drug and his body enjoyed the pleasure to the fullest. This is because his will refused to accept the drug intake that was forced on him. Spouses should view the marital act in the exact same way. They should hate the pleasure that is included in the marital act with their will, while accepting that their body must experience a delight of sorts for conception to occur. Just like the man that was tied to the chair and

drugged against his will, they should not be accepting of the dose of pleasure that is given them, even though their body experiences the pleasure.

Spouses should thus not accept the dose of pleasure that is given them as anything else than an evil and unwelcome product of the fall of Adam and Eve, and of original sin. Although their body will be experiencing the pleasure, their will and heart should be firmly set against it, without seeking after it or loving it.

Sexual pleasure is not love or a cause of holiness but a “tribulation of the flesh” that makes a person “divided” according to the Holy Bible

Today, there are many heretical people who argue that the marital act is holy in itself, and that it brings us closer to God. This, however, is a direct contradiction of Our Lord’s words in the Holy Scripture and the Natural Law which teaches us that ***those who are married and perform the sexual act “shall have tribulation of the flesh”*** (1 Corinthians 7:28) and that the married life makes a person ***“divided”***. Strangely enough, this heresy that extols the sexual experience as a way to achieve holiness or oneness with God is not new, since those people who teach this heresy today are in perfect agreement with a second century heretical Gnostic cult that opposed the early Christian Church by advocating participation in the sexual experience. While little is known about their liturgies, it seems that sexual orgasm was regarded as a means of revelation according to their teachings. These impious heretics were reported as making a parody of the Christian meal, the agape, which followed the celebration of the Eucharist. Deploring such activity, the holy Bishop St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215 A.D.) noted that “they have impiously called by the name of communion any common sexual intercourse.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter IV, Section 27)

Indeed, “They [the heretics] maintain that one should gratify the lusts and passions, teaching that one must turn from sobriety to be incontinent. They set their hope on their private parts. [Phil. 3:19] Thus they shut themselves out of God’s kingdom and deprive themselves of enrollment as disciples, [Rev. 20:12, 15; 21:27] and under the name of knowledge, falsely so called, they have taken the road to outer darkness. [Matt. 8:12] “For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is holy, whatever is righteous, whatever is pure, whatever is attractive, whatever is well spoken of, whatever is virtuous, and whatever is praiseworthy, think on these things. And whatever you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, this do. And the God of peace shall be with you.” [Phil. 4:8-9] And Peter in his epistle says the same: “So that your faith and hope may be in God, because you have purified your souls in obedience to the truth,” [1 Peter 1:21] “as obedient children, not behaving after the fashion of

the lusts in which in your ignorance you formerly indulged; but as he who has called you is holy, so also must you be holy in all your conduct; as it is written, 'Be ye holy for I am holy'" [1 Peter 1:14-16 (Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7)]." (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XVIII, Section 109-110)

St. Epiphanius (310-403) also refers to certain Gnostic heretics who, in addition to being opposed to procreation, also loved copulation and the impure pleasure they could derive from it. He explains that in the early Church, the lustful heretics who were called Gnostics tried to excuse their unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts by deceptively lying about and perverting the Holy Scriptures. This is exactly what we see today. Many heretics, married as well as unmarried, pervert and lie about the Holy Scriptures in order to excuse their abominable sexual acts. St. Epiphanius describes them this way: "Mastered by the pleasure of fornication they invent excuses for their uncleanness, to tell themselves that their licentiousness fulfills [Paul's commandment]." He also added that "Their eager pursuit of seduction is for enjoyment, not procreation, [just like the married who perform non-procreative sexual acts] since the devil mocks people like these, and makes fun of the creature fashioned by God. They come to climax but absorb the seeds in their dirt—not by implanting them for procreation, but by eating the dirt themselves." (St. Epiphanius, *Panarion* or *Medicine Chest Against Heresies*, Section II, Chapter 26.--Against Gnostics or Borborites)

Because of many false and heretical teachings, almost every spouse now equates love with lust. How to enjoy sex more with your husband or wife is all over the TV, radio, music, newspapers, and magazines. If one spouse does not sexually gratify the other, then the unsatisfied spouse cries out that the other spouse does not love him or her. How perverse this is and totally destructive to true love! How in the world can a shameful momentary sexual pleasure to the flesh be compared to true love—the love that spouses are supposed to have for one another, 24 hours a day and in every thought and deed of the day, even during hard times when they must suffer. And if one spouse cannot give sexual pleasure to the other for whatever reason, the non-satisfied spouse looks elsewhere to another man or woman or to an animal or inanimate object to get that sexual pleasure and so-called love that the inadequate spouse cannot give. How great indeed are the evils caused by spouses who indulge in sexual pleasure instead of fighting against it, instead of quieting it! Satan, indeed, has power over them to cause all kinds of trouble and sins in their life (Tobias 6:16-17, 22; 8:9). In truth, such spouses are like drug addicts that use each other to get their sexual "fix". What a sick love they have: to equate sexual lust or concupiscence with love! Indeed, "Those who copulate not to procreate offspring but to satisfy lust seem to be not so much spouses as fornicators." (Gratian, *Decretum* 2.32.2.1)

For instance, Saint Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary never needed to perform the sexual act in order to foster their love for one another or in order to grow in holiness. And no married couple could ever have a greater love for one another than these two holiest Saints in Heaven! One must realize that the Holy Family was completely chaste for a purpose, to designate God's goal for families—that is, to remain chaste as much as possible and only have relations with the intention of bearing children.

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book I, Chapter 13, A.D. 419: “The entire good, therefore, of the nuptial institution was effected in the case of these parents of Christ [Saint Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary]: there was offspring, there was faithfulness, there was the bond. As offspring, we recognize the Lord Jesus Himself... because He who was to be without sin, and was sent not in sinful flesh [sinful because of original sin], but in the likeness of sinful flesh, [Rom. 8:3] could not possibly have been made in sinful flesh itself without that shameful lust of the flesh which comes from [original] sin, and without which He willed to be born, in order that He might teach us, that every one who is born of sexual intercourse is in fact sinful flesh [but made pure through baptism], since that alone which was not born of such intercourse was not sinful flesh. Nevertheless conjugal intercourse is not in itself sin, when it is had with the intention of producing children; because the mind's good-will leads the ensuing bodily pleasure, instead of following its lead [that is, the sexual act is no sin when spouses perform the normal, natural and procreative marital act while also directly desiring the procreation of children before the marital act]; and the human choice is not distracted by the yoke of [original] sin pressing upon it, inasmuch as the blow of the sin [of concupiscence] is rightly brought back to the purposes of procreation.”

St. Aquinas made some astute observations on the nature of the love of friendship. “Perfect love,” wrote Aquinas, “is that whereby a man is loved in himself, as when someone wishes a person some good for his own sake; thus a man loves his friend. Imperfect love is that whereby a man love something, not for its own sake, but that he may obtain that good for himself; thus a man loves what he desires.” (Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I:II, q. 17, art. 8) Therefore, St. Thomas divided love into two categories, the love of friendship, which was pure and the true kind of love, and the love of fleshly desire or concupiscence, which was an impure, selfish and false kind of love. And so, a good husband and wife “must love each other not as adulterers love, but as Christ loved the Church.” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #23)

So why has sex become equated with “love”? Because it tends to pleasure and appease man’s senses. That’s why. But this is a dangerous love and not a true love for it is only an external form of love based on a pleasurable, intimate act—and one cannot truly foster a true love for one another based on one act that is often violent and bestial in nature. Many people, for example, have sex often but they don’t truly love one another because of it as one would think they should do if sex now really was an expression of love; hence that the majority of couples today are divorcing, committing adultery or fornicating or entering second sinful unions that are not marriages. They do not really love one another but rather only love the other person in so far as he or she can fulfill their pleasures in life. *“Men shall be lovers of themselves... and lovers of pleasures more than of God.”* (2 Timothy 3:4)

St. Augustine rightly points out that true love is not founded on selfishness but on a love for the person—an inherent truth about love that is found in the Natural Law—which sadly is something that most people totally lack today since almost all are selfish pleasure-seekers: **“I shall win my point that the love of the world by which a man is a friend of this world is not from God, and that the love of enjoying any creature whatsoever without love of the Creator is not from God; but the love of God which leads one to God is only from God the Father through Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit. Through this love of the Creator everyone uses even creatures well. Without this love of the Creator no one uses any creature well. This love is needed so that conjugal modesty may also be a beatific good; and that the intention in carnal union is not the pleasure of lust but the desire for offspring.”** (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book IV, Chapter 3, Section 33, A.D. 421)

In contrast to the selfish pleasure-seekers mentioned above, other people might have sex more seldom or never and yet show true love to one another in other ways, such as through appreciation, affection and self-sacrifice, and by doing things together or by being intimate and caring in other ways. This is true love because this love is not centered on self-love or self-gratification that the worldly and impure couple seek after. This true love is sadly never found amongst the worldly people who equates true love with self-gratification. That is why they can go and abort their babies as if they were trash since having children doesn’t fit their sinful lifestyle; and why they can commit adultery and be unfaithful or abusive and dishonest etc., for their love is not centered on real love that seek to please others, but is self-centered and selfish in nature. When Pope Pius XI speaks of charity, it is not charity “founded on a mere carnal and transitory desire nor does it consist in pleasing words only, but it is a deep-seated devotion of the heart” and a love free from selfishness.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 23), Dec. 31, 1930: “This conjugal faith, however, which is most aptly called by St. Augustine the "faith of chastity" blooms more freely, more beautifully and more nobly, when it is rooted in that more excellent soil, the love of husband and wife which pervades all the duties of married life and holds pride of place in Christian marriage. For matrimonial faith demands that husband and wife be joined in an especially holy and pure love, not as adulterers love each other, but as Christ loved the Church. This precept the Apostle laid down when he said: "Husbands, love your wives as Christ also loved the Church," [Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19] that Church which of a truth He embraced with a boundless love not for the sake of His own advantage, but seeking only the good of His Spouse. **The love, then, of which We are speaking is not that based on the passing lust of the moment nor does it consist in pleasing words only, but in the deep attachment of the heart which is expressed in action, since love is proved by deeds.** This outward expression of love in the home demands not only mutual help but must go further; must have as its primary purpose that man and wife help each other day by day in forming and perfecting themselves in the interior life, so that through their partnership in life they may advance ever more and more in virtue, and above all that they may grow in true love toward God and their neighbor, on which indeed "dependeth the whole Law and the Prophets." [Matt. 22:40] For all men of every condition, in whatever honorable walk of life they may be, can and ought to imitate that most perfect example of holiness placed before man by God, namely Christ Our Lord, and by God’s grace to arrive at the summit of perfection, as is proved by the example set us of many saints.”

Love is a constant theme in modern culture. Modern music, cinema, newspapers, radio, and television constantly assault our senses with stories and features about love. Unfortunately, the attributes of authentic human love, that is, the values of fidelity, exclusiveness, dependability, stability, childbearing, the establishing of a nuclear family and love of children are downgraded, while the values of sexual compatibility, amorous passion, and emotional ecstasy are given special attention. In modern parlance, the term “making love” has come to mean having sexual intercourse, and its value is measured solely in terms of erotic intensity and sexual climax. This understanding of “lovemaking” makes no attempt to characterize sexual intercourse as an expression of genuine love of God and of children. It completely ignores the fact that the only primary purpose of the marital act is the procreation of children. Contemporary society has, in essence, separated love from sex, thus creating a chasm of moral ambiguity from which emerges a plethora of disordered sexual desires and carnal appetites.

Hence, Saint Augustine rightly remarks, “Evil [sexual] union is the work of the men operating

evilly from their good members. The condition of the newborn is the work of God operating well from evil men. If you say that, even when there is adultery, the union is good in itself, since it is natural, but adulterers use it evilly, why will you not acknowledge that in the same way lust can be evil, yet the married may nevertheless use it well for the purpose of begetting children? Will you assert there can be evil use of good, but there cannot be good use of evil? We see how well the Apostle used Satan himself, when he delivered a man over to him for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord, and when he delivered others up to him that they might learn not to blaspheme [1 Cor. 5:5].” (*Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 7, Section 16, A.D. 421)

Pope Gregory XVI, in his encyclical “*Mirari Vos*” that condemned all forms of liberalism as well as religious indifferentism, firmly rejected this kind of lustful and selfish pseudo-marriage that so many in today’s world enter into, and directed all the faithful to hold fast to the teaching of the Church:

“Recalling that matrimony is a sacrament and therefore subject to the Church, let them consider and observe the laws of the Church concerning it. Let them take care lest for any reason they permit that which is an obstruction to the teachings of the canons and the decrees of the councils. **They should be aware that those marriages will have an unhappy end which are entered upon contrary to the discipline of the Church or without God’s favor or because of concupiscence alone, with no thought of the sacrament and of the mysteries signified by it [that is, the procreation and education of children, faithfulness, and mutual love and help].**” (Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* #12, Aug. 15, 1832)

But why does he say this? Because all those kinds of selfish, lustful and impious “marriages” devoid of God mentioned above in effect are nothing but fornication in disguise of a marriage. **It seems evident that a woman taken merely to have sex is not a wife, because God instituted marriage for propagation, not merely for satisfying lust.** For the nuptial blessing [in Gen. 1:28] is, “Increase and multiply.”... It is shameful for a woman when her marriage bears no fruit, for this alone is the reason for marrying... bearing children is the fruit of marriage and the blessing of matrimony is without doubt the reason that Mary’s virginity defeated the Prince of this World. **Thus anyone who joins himself to another, not for the sake of procreating offspring, but rather to satisfy lust is less a spouse than a fornicator.** ... As no congregation of heretics can be called a Church of Christ because they do not have Christ as their head, so no matrimony, where one has not joined her husband according to Christ’s precept, can properly be called marriage, but is better called adultery.”

(Gratian, *Marriage Canons From The Decretum* 32.2.1.1-2)

Most people living today, especially those in the more developed nations, have become totally perverted through the media, television, music, magazines, internet sites, billboard ads, and posters. Almost everywhere one looks today, one will see impurities along with men and women who are scantily clothed or literally naked. The world has changed much over the years. Few people consider and think about how much the world have changed in a comparatively short time, but the world was very different just a 100 years ago. Back then, there were no sexual education; neither were there (generally) any pornography or immoral movies, series and magazines; and one would never find billboards plastered with images of literally naked or semi-naked women at totally public places for everyone to see, no matter the age. Before in time, one could indeed go and shop for food or clothing in total peace of mind without having to worry about seeing half naked, sensual women and men being displayed all over the place. This doesn't exist today, at least not in the western culture. But however bad that is, it cannot be compared to the sheer horrors of the media. In the media, perverted viewers observe perverted characters and families and imitate them. This destroys their conscience as they imitate them and their sinful behavior and sexual perversions.

One can only shudder in horror over the number of people that actually have imitated what they have heard, read or seen in the media, magazines and television that they otherwise wouldn't have known about. Who among men who frequently watch media can honestly say that he hasn't learned to commit some new sin that he before didn't know about through the media? The media is indeed the devil's favorite playground in the total and complete destruction of human morality. In fact, the media has such power to normalize trends and sinful behaviors – as one frequently witness when fans starts to behave and dress as their “idols” seen on the media – that it has normalized and preconditioned peoples minds into believing that it's totally normal to act like this and that everyone commits such acts as are shown and promoted. A few examples one almost always encounters are: immodest dress (hence the reason why virtually the whole world has gone from being somewhat modestly dressed to half-naked in just 50 years or so), homosexuality, cursing, taking God's name in vain, tips or recommendations on how to increase sexual pleasure, or the constant viewing of lustful kisses, touches, and unlawful and mortally sinful sexual practices. Such depraved sexual sins were much more, if not totally uncommon before since most, if not all people, were ignorant about them, and as a result, were less likely to know even how to commit them.

St. Clement of Alexandria, *On Marriage* (c. 198 A.D.): “For the marriage of other [sinful, selfish and lustful] people is an agreement for indulgence; but that of

philosophers leads to that agreement which is in accordance with reason, bidding wives adorn themselves not in outward appearance, but in character; and enjoining husbands not to treat their wedded wives as mistresses, making corporeal wantonness their aim; but to take advantage of marriage for help in the whole of life, and for the best self-restraint.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XXIII)

It is the purpose behind the marital act, the will of not wanting to live a sensual life, the thought of wanting to have children for the glory and honor of God—that produces the good fruits in parents. It is not merely a natural act or process that achieves this good fruit, but again, the intention. True love thus resides in the will or thought, and not first and foremost in an external deed. This is not to say, however, that an external act if performed with a good intention cannot be a sign of true love, because it can (examples being alms-giving or other good and charitable deeds), and in this sense intimacy can be called love, but only in so far as it is **not selfish or self-centered in nature**.

St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Art of Dying Well*, Chapter XV, On Matrimony: “There are three blessings arising from Matrimony, if it be made a good use of, viz: Children, fidelity, and the grace of the sacrament. **The generation of children, together with their proper education, must be had in view, if we would make a good use of matrimony; but on the contrary, he commits a most grievous sin, who seeks only carnal pleasure in it.** Hence Onan, one of the children of the patriarch Juda, is most severely blamed in Scripture for not remembering this, which was to abuse, not use the holy Sacrament. But if sometimes it happen that married people should be oppressed with the number of their children, whom through poverty they cannot easily support, there is a remedy pleasing to God; and this is, by mutual consent to separate from the marriage-bed, and spend their days in prayer and fasting. For if it be agreeable to Him, for married persons to grow old in virginity, after the example of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, (whose lives the Emperor Henry and his wife Chunecunda endeavoured to imitate, as well as King Edward and Egdida, Eleazor a knight, and his lady Dalphina, and several others,) why should it be displeasing to God or men, that married people should not live together as man and wife, by mutual consent, that so they may spend the rest of their days in prayer and fasting?”

In this context of speaking about selfish pleasure seekers, it is necessary to speak about the male population, that especially today are completely consumed by the search for and gratification of their foul, sensual and carnal appetites. St. Thomas Aquinas denounces such men unequivocally, teaching that: “On the contrary, Augustine says... **thou shouldst excel**

thy wife in virtue, since chastity is a virtue, thou yieldest to the first onslaught of lust, while thou wishest thy wife to be victorious.” (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 1; *De Decem Chord*, Sermon ix de Tempore)

Just as an external deed can be done for a good cause, so it can also be done for an evil cause, even if it outwardly appears to be good or devout. For example, if someone were to give alms in order to achieve human praise and glory from other men and not from God, this deed of alms-giving would be worthless before God and would in no way profit the giver for salvation, but would actually only increase his torment in Hell, since it was a sin of vanity and vainglory. Therefore, a physical deed can never be meritorious in itself, but it is the intention behind the deed that defines its goodness or badness of the action. This truth is important to make clear since so many people today erroneously seem to believe that the sexual act in itself is a source of love.

Matthew 6:1-4 “Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward of your Father who is in heaven. Therefore when thou dost an almsdeed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth. That thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee.”

Spouses who love their spouse with an adulterous love are adulterers

According to the teachings of the Doctors, Theologians and Saints of the Catholic Church, any man who is a too ardent lover of his spouse, (that is, he or she who loves his wife’s or husband’s body too much or the lust or pleasure that he or she receives from them too much or more than he loves God or his spouse’s soul,) is an adulterer of his God and of his wife.

St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus*, Book 1, Section 20, 40, A.D. 393: “Do you imagine that we approve of any sexual intercourse except for the procreation of children? . . . **He who is too ardent a lover of his own wife is an adulterer [of his God and wife].**”

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 8: “And since **the man who is too ardent a lover of his wife** acts counter to the good of marriage if he use her indecently, although he be not unfaithful, he **may in a**

sense be called an adulterer; and even more so than he that is too ardent a lover of another woman.”

Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law*, Case Thirty-Two, Question IV: “Also, Jerome, [in *Against Jovinian*, I]: C. 5. Nothing is more sordid than to make love to your wife as you would to an adulteress. The origins of love are respectable, but its perversion is an enormity. §1. It gives no respectable motive for losing one’s self control. Hence, the Sentences of Sixtus says, “**He is an adulterer who is too passionate a lover of his wife.**” **Just as all passion for another’s wife is sordid, so also is excessive passion for one’s own.** The wise man should love his wife reasonably, not emotionally. The mere stimulus of lust should not dominate him, nor should he force her to have sex. Nothing is more sordid than to make love to your wife as you would to an adulteress.”

Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law*, Case Thirty-Two, Question VI: “You shall not commit adultery.’ [Ex. 20:14]... You ought to excel over your wife in virtue (for chastity is indeed a virtue). Are you captive to the impulses of lust? Do you expect your wife to be victorious in this while you lie vanquished? As the head of your wife, you lead her to God. Would you be willing to follow a head like yourself? The husband is the head of the wife [Eph. 5:23]. So where the wife behaves better than the husband, the home is turned upside down on its head. If the husband is the head, the husband should behave better, and so lead his wife in all good deeds.”

St. Augustine, quoting St. Ambrose, also speaks about the fact that all who are “intemperate in marriage” are “adulterer of his own wife” in his work *Against Julian*, the Pelagian heretic:

“...But the mother of all vices is incontinence, which turns even the lawful into vice. Therefore, the Apostle not only warns us against fornication, but also teaches a certain moderation in marriage itself, and prescribes times of prayer. **For he who is intemperate in marriage, what is he but the adulterer of his own wife?**’ You see how he [St. Ambrose] says marriage should have true soundness even within itself. You see how he says that incontinence turns even the lawful into vice, where he shows that marriage is lawful, and he does not wish incontinence to defile what is lawful in it. You notice how you should understand with us in what disease of desire the Apostle was unwilling that one possess his vessel, not like the Gentiles who do not know God. (Cf. 1 Thess. 4:4) But to you lust seems culpable only toward one other than one’s wife. What will you say of Ambrose, who calls intemperance in marriage a kind of adultery of

one's wife? Do you honor marriage more in which you would allow a very licentious range to lust, lechery, perjury, the one offended might find another defender for herself? (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book 2, Chapter 6)

People who are in a marriage should ask themselves these questions: "Whom do I love during the act of marriage: God and my spouse in all honesty and virtue, or my spouse's body and the lust I derive from it?" "Have the thought of God or that He is present ever even entered my mind during marital relations?" "Have this absence of God's presence in my mind also driven me into committing shameful sins by inflaming my concupiscence in unlawful ways?" In truth, those couples who doesn't shut God out from themselves or their hearts during marital relations will undoubtedly be less likely to fall into other sins during the act of marriage. St. Alphonsus, in his great book called the *True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, explains this crucial truth to us.

St. Alphonsus, *Doctor of the Church*, On the Presence of God: "**The Saints by the thought that God was looking at them have bravely repelled all the assaults of their enemies...** This thought also converted a wicked woman who dared to tempt St. Ephrem; the saint told her that if she wished to sin she must meet him in the middle of the city. But, said she, how is it possible to commit sin before so many persons? And how, replied the Saint, **is it possible to sin in the presence of God, who sees us in every place?** At these words she burst into tears, and falling prostrate on the ground asked pardon of the saint, and besought him to point out to her the way of salvation." (*True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, p. 497)

And Gratian says that: "Unbridled desire and shameful employment of marriage are licentiousness and impurity... Second [in Gal. 5:19], the works of the flesh are called "impurity," and "licentiousness," its companion, is included with it. In the Old Law, the Scriptures generally include these among those horrible crimes committed in secret, which are said to be so filthy as to pollute the mouth that speaks of them, or the ears that hear of them. It says [Lev. 15:31], "You shall teach the children of Israel to take heed of uncleanness," including in this passage all unbridled desires, **even those acts within marriage that are not performed as though God were present, with shame and modesty, for the sake of children. Such are called licentiousness and impurity.**" (Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law*, Case Thirty-Two, Question IV, Part 4, C. 12)

If it's God we love the most, then it must naturally be Him that we are seeking to please, and not ourselves, our flesh, or our spouse. Our Lord God Jesus Christ Himself taught us this

specific truth in the holy gospels, saying: “*He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.*” (Matthew 10:37)

In answering the question “Whether it is a mortal sin for a man to have knowledge of his wife, [that is, to perform the sexual act with his wife] with the intention not of a marriage good but merely of pleasure?” St. Thomas Aquinas explains that “the right answer to this question is that if pleasure be sought in such a way as to exclude the honesty [and chastity] of marriage, so that, to wit, it is not as a wife but as a woman that a man treats his wife, and that he is ready to use her in the same way if she were not his wife [and merely for fulfilling his own lust], it is a mortal sin; wherefore such a man is said to be too ardent a lover of his wife, because his ardor carries him away from the goods of marriage.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 6)

St. Clement of Alexandria, in his book “*The Instructor*” shows us very clearly how “he violates his marriage adulterously who uses” the marital sexual act in a forbidden, obscene or lewd way: “For many think such things to be pleasures only which are against nature, such as these sins of theirs. And those who are better than they, know them to be sins, but are overcome by pleasures, and darkness is the veil of their vicious practices. For he violates his marriage adulterously who uses it in a meretricious way, and hears not the voice of the Instructor [the Lord], crying, “The man who ascends his bed, who says in his soul, Who seeth me? darkness is around me, and the walls are my covering, and no one sees my sins. Why do I fear lest the Highest will remember?” [Sirach 23:18] Most wretched is such a man, dreading men’s eyes alone, and thinking that he will escape the observation of God. “For he knoweth not,” says the Scripture, “that brighter ten thousand times than the sun are the eyes of the Most High, which look on all the ways of men, and cast their glance into hidden parts.” [Sirach 23:27-28] Thus again the Instructor threatens them, speaking by Isaiah: “Woe be to those who take counsel in secret, and say, Who seeth us?” [Isaiah 29:15] For one may escape the light of sense, but that of the mind it is impossible to escape. For how, says Heraclitus, can one escape the notice of that which never sets? Let us by no means, then, veil our selves with the darkness; for the light dwells in us. “For the darkness,” it is said, “comprehendeth it not.” And the very night itself is illuminated by temperate reason. The thoughts of good men Scripture has named “sleepless lamps;” although for one to attempt even to practice concealment, with reference to what he does, is confessedly to sin. And every one who sins, directly wrongs not so much his neighbor if he commits adultery, as himself, because he has committed adultery, besides making himself worse and less thought of. For he who sins, in the degree in which he sins, becomes worse and is of less estimation than before; and he who has been overcome by base pleasures,

has now licentiousness wholly attached to him. Wherefore he who commits fornication is wholly dead to God, and is abandoned by the Word as a dead body by the spirit. For what is holy, as is right, abhors to be polluted. But it is always lawful for the pure to touch the pure. Do not, I pray, put off modesty at the same time that you put off your clothes; because it is never right for the just man to divest himself of continence. For, lo, this mortal shall put on immortality; when the insatiableness of desire, which rushes into licentiousness, being trained to self-restraint, and made free from the love of corruption, shall consign the man to everlasting chastity. "For in this world they marry and are given in marriage." But having done with the works of the flesh, and having been clothed with immortality, the flesh itself being pure, we pursue after that which is according to the measure of the angels." (*The Paedagogus* or *The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X.--On the Procreation and Education of Children, c. 198 A.D.)

Indeed, "The good of marriage remains a good, as it has always been a good among the People of God. ... Now it allows human beings to procreate children, not like animals by merely copulating with females, but in a decent conjugal order. Nevertheless, when a Christian mind focuses on celestial things, it wins a victory beyond all praise. Yet, since, as the Lord says [Mt. 19:11-12], not all can accept this message, let those who can do so, and let those who cannot be content to marry. Let them weigh well what they have not chosen, and persevere in what they have embarked on. Let no opportunity be given to the Adversary, and let Christ be robbed of no offering. If purity is not preserved in the conjugal bond, one should fear damnation." (Gratian, *Marriage Canons From The Decretum*, Case Twenty-Seven, Question I, Part 2, C. 41)

In a sense, one can truly say that the person who sets his heart on loving a physical pleasure with his will – whatever it may be – worships and loves a kind of idol. That is why we as humans must always do our utmost to try to escape or minimize the pleasures that are addictive to us. For the stronger a pleasure is and the more delightful it is to our senses, the more potential there is for it to become a sin and for a person to grow attached to it. St. Thomas Aquinas writes concerning this, "If the sexual pleasure is sought beyond the limits of integrity proper to marriage, in the sense that in conjugal relations the spouse sees in the partner not any more the characteristics proper to the spouse, but only a female/woman and is disposed to do with her the same things even if she were not his wife, he has sinned mortally." (*In Sententiarum*, d.31, q.2, art, 3) Also, "It is needed to be said that a man seeks in the wife pleasure as from a prostitute when he looks at her with the same look with which he would look at a prostitute." (*Ibid.*, d.31, q.2, art, 3) And so, "Self-restraint is to prevail over sensual pleasure; on the other hand, the prevalence of the latter is what I call licentiousness."

(St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Vol. II, *Epi Ithika or Moral Epopees* 31, *Ori pachimereis*, PG 37, 651A)

Another good example how loving one's spouse (like an adulterer) – in an inordinate, unreasonable and sensual manner is sinful and evil – is found in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* in a chapter about a damned person who **“was married and had no more than one wife and did not have intercourse with any other woman. However, he maintained his fidelity in marriage not because of divine charity and fear but because he loved the body of his wife so tenderly that he was not attracted by sexual union with any other body.”** This example shows us that even in the time of St. Bridget in the 14th century, men and women of bad will loved the carnal pleasure they could derive from their spouse in an unreasonable and evil manner. Indeed, even though this man only loved his wife in a sensual manner rather than other women, he was still damned, thus showing us God's hatred of and severity in judging marital sexual sins.

“The bride [St. Bridget] had a vision of what seemed to be two demons, alike in every limb, standing before the judgment seat of God. They had mouths wide open like wolves, glass-like eyes with burning flames inside, hanging ears like rabbits, swollen and protruding bellies, hands like those of a griffin, legs without joints, feet that looked mutilated and half cut-off. One of them said then to the judge: “Judge, sentence the soul of this knight who matches me to be united to me as my mate!”

The judge [Our Lord Jesus Christ] replied: “Tell me what rightful claim you have to his soul!”

The demon answered: “I ask you first, since you judge fairly: Is it not said, where an animal is found similar in type to another, that it belongs to the lion species or wolf species or some other such species? So now I ask to which species this soul belongs—is she like angels or demons?”

The judge said: “She does not match the angels but you and your mates, that is clear enough.”

Then, almost in mockery, the demon said: “When this soul was created from the fire of your unction, heat of union, that is, of your love, she was like you. Now, however, since she despised your sweet love, she is mine by a triple right: first, because she is like me in disposition; second, because we have the same tastes; third, because we both have a single will.” ... Her belly is swollen, because the extent of her greed had no measure. She was filled but never satisfied. ... I have a similar greed. If I alone could gain possession of all the souls in heaven and earth and purgatory, I would gladly seize them. And if only a single soul was left, I would out of my greed never let her go free

from torment. Her breast is icy cold just like my own, since she never had any love for you and your commandments were never to her liking. So too, I feel no love for you. Rather, out of the envy I have toward you, I would willingly let myself be continuously killed in the bitterest of deaths and resuscitated again for the same punishment if only you were killed, if it were possible for you to be killed. ...

This person was married and had no more than one wife and did not have intercourse with any other woman. **However, he maintained his fidelity in marriage not because of divine charity and fear but because he loved the body of his wife so tenderly that he was not attracted by sexual union with any other body.** ...

Then the judge [Jesus Christ] turned to me [St. Bridget] who had seen all this and said: “Woe to this man who was worse than a robber! He had his own soul on sale; **he thirsted for the impurity of the flesh**; he cheated his neighbor. This is why voices of men cry out for vengeance on him, the angels turn away their faces from him, the saints flee his company.”

Then the demon drew close to the soul that matched him and said: “O judge, look: here am I and I again! Here am I, wicked through my own wicked will, unredeemed and unredeemable. But this one here is another me: though he was redeemed, he made himself like me by obeying me more than you. ... So she is mine! Therefore, as they say, her flesh will be my flesh, though, of course, I have no flesh, and her blood will be my blood.” The demon seemed to be very happy about this and began to clap his hands.

The judge said to him: “Why are you so happy and what kind of happiness is that you feel in the loss of a soul? Tell me while this bride of mine stands here listening. Although I know all things, answer me, for the sake of this bride, who can only grasp spiritual matters figuratively.”

The demon said: “As this soul burns, I burn even more fiercely. When I burn her with fire, I am burned even more. Yet, because you redeemed her with your blood and loved her to such an extent that you, God, gave yourself for her, and I still was able to deceive her, I am made glad.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 6, Chapter 31)

Sad to say, the truth of the matter is that most people in this world fits the description of this damned soul, since they love their spouse in an inordinate way. The Son of God, in a Revelation spoken to Saint Bridget, speaks of this, saying: “**But now, the redeemed soul of man has become like the most ugly and shameless frog**, jumping in its arrogance and **living in filth through its sensuality**. She has taken my gold away from me, that is, all my justice. **That is why the devil rightly can say to me: ‘The gold you bought is not gold but a frog, fostered in the chest of my lust. Separate therefore the body**

from the soul and you shall see that she will jump directly to the chest of my lust where it was fostered.’ ... Such is the soul of the man I am talking about to you. She is namely like the most vile frog, full of filthiness and lust, fostered in the chest of the devil.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 21)

It is therefore a fact of the unanimous teaching of the Fathers that those spouses who love their spouse in an inordinate way, are adulterers and sinning against God’s Law: “... a man who loves his wife very much [like an adulterer] is an adulterer. Any [sensual] love for someone else’s wife or too much love for one’s own is shameful. The upright man should love his wife with his judgment, not his affections.” (Vincent of Beauvais, A Dominican Friar (c. 1190 – 1264), *Seculum Doctrinale* 10.45)

Hierarchy of sexual sins, licentiousness and illicit marital relations

Thomas N. Tentler, author of *Sin and confession on the eve of the Reformation*, and who studied the topic of the hierarchy of sexual sins developed in the Catholic Church from confession manuals, have listed the rank ordering of sexual sins committed by married and unmarried people. Now this is interesting, for this is how Catholic priests (before the beginning stages of the Great Apostasy) would have viewed and judged many of the sexual acts people today commit without any shame. Many of the things you perhaps would think are acceptable, will be seen are not — and in fact to be totally sinful. This will give us an overview on what is acceptable and what is not while having marital relations. The sins are ordered in 16 categories and applies to both the married and unmarried. They are as follows:

(1) unchaste kiss, **(2)** unchaste touch, **(3)** fornication, **(4)** debauchery, **(5)** simple adultery (one partner married, one single), **(6)** double adultery (both partners married), **(7)** voluntary sacrilege (one partner under religious vows), **(8)** rape or abduction of virgin, **(9)** rape or abduction of wife, **(10)** rape or abduction of nun, **(11)** incest, **(12)** masturbation, **(13)** improper sexual position (even between spouses), **(14)**, improper orifice or opening (most heinous crime between spouses), **(15)** sodomy (homosexuality), **(16)** bestiality.

There are obviously many other mortal sins included in the above categories that are not directly listed by name. So what other mortally sinful sexual activities or acts not listed above are commonly practiced today between married and unmarried people? The following list are only some of the most common examples of sins many people today are guilty of when they are having marital relations. It must of course be understood that if we have not listed some

other sin that you might be doing that are lustful and shameful, it is still forbidden and a mortal sin to commit it. All of the following deeds are forbidden and are illicit marital relations, and must therefore be considered as the mortal sin of lust. Mortal sins always lead a soul to Hell unless one performs an *Act of Contrition* which includes *Perfect Contrition* and performs the other acts the Church requires for salvation.

- **Striptease.**
- **Dressing sensual** (both before, during or after marital relations).
- **Sex games** (or sexual role play).
- **Sex toys** (or other objects used for this purpose).
- **Sensual, foul, unchaste or dirty talking** (both before, during or after marital relations).
- **Uncontrollable or unrestrained moaning.** This is always a mortal sin if it's done intentionally or with the intention to inflame one's own or the other spouse's lust. Most women can control themselves, but many choose not to since they are promiscuous. Some women indeed are very cruel and want to hurt others when it comes to this, and one can only say that such women who act in this way are abominable and demonic since they are searching for a foul pleasure and since they are hurting and killing their husband's soul.
- **The shaving of the genital hair** (can be mortally sinful or non-sinful depending on the reason why it is done). If it's done with the intention of enhancing sexual pleasure and/or for seeing more of the spouse, it is always a mortal sin.
- **Inappropriate sexual position.** This is often a sign of passion according to St. Thomas Aquinas, and if so, it is a mortal sin. (See next section for appropriate sexual position according to the teaching of the Church.)
- **Aphrodisiacs or substances used to enhance lust.** If the intention of the spouses when using aphrodisiacs is the enhancement of their shameful and damnable lust, they are absolutely committing a mortal sin. The only exception to this that is absolutely necessary would be if a husband couldn't achieve an erection and so took a substance that helped him achieve this end. In this case it wouldn't even be a venial sin since his intention for using it is not to increase his pleasure, but rather to conceive children and fulfilling the marital duty. However, a husband must never use pills or compounds that he knows will increase his lust. There are many pills and natural herbs that can be used to achieve an erection without necessarily increasing the pleasure (such as PDE-5 inhibitors). Erection first and foremost has to do with blood-flow, and so that is what should be looked for in herbs, medicines and supplements.

- Pausing, interrupting or prolonging the marital act** (can be mortally sinful or non-sinful depending on the intention). It is always a mortal sin if it's performed with the intention of increasing length or intensity of the sexual pleasure or for making the wife or husband reach climax outside of the natural, normal marital act. It is unnatural to interrupt the sexual act for the sake of mere pleasure. It is also a sign of passion, which is mortal (see St. Thomas in next section). For when a husband or wife engages in acts of unnatural prolonging or interrupting of the marital sexual act, they are no longer following the primary or secondary purpose of the sexual act (procreation and quenching of lust), but are rather following the motive of satisfying and inflaming their shameful and damnable lust as their (new) primary end or motive during marital relations. That's why it's a mortal sin to interrupt the act of marriage for the above mentioned reasons. Further, consider that the Catholic Church teaches that even the normal marital act *when performed for the sole sake of pleasure* is at least a venial sin, but spouses who are interrupting the marital act for the sake of lust are not even performing the normal and natural marital act, but are hindering or interrupting it. As a consequence, they are committing an action that is inherently sinful and unnatural. Resting or taking pauses however is not sinful whenever the situation demands it. For example, the intercourse could be giving the wife pain or be exhausting the husband who, in sincerity, is trying to finalize the act but cannot do it. All of these and similar examples are not sinful, because they are not performed for the sake of lust. Hence, it is the evil intention of enhancing sexual pleasure while refusing to consummate the marital act in the natural way, by unreasonably interrupting it, or by unreasonably holding on too long, that makes the deed of prolonging marital relations sinful. For everything not following reason in the marital act, as explained by St. Thomas Aquinas in the beginning of this article, is sinful.
- Masturbation of self or spouse** (before, during or after the act of marriage). Masturbation has always been considered as a mortal sin in the Catholic Church and it doesn't cease to be a mortal sin just because the spouses are married. Despite this ancient, constant and infallible dogmatic moral teaching of the Catholic Church on the evilness and total sinfulness of masturbation—not only the perverted, evil Vatican II “Catholics” and “do what do wilt” satanic protestants, but even many so-called “traditional Catholic” couples—actually believe that masturbation is right to do within the marriage act! Although they know and even admit that it's a mortal sin to masturbate outside of the marriage act, they nevertheless believe that it is right to do within the marriage act—and that it is an exception. But what Church teaching or saint can they cite to support this heresy? None! Only evil, perverted and heretical theologians (or other heretical modern “Catholic” laymen's private opinions) during

the last 100 years or so, can they even cite to support this teaching. This fact, then, is quite telling, and it proves that this teaching is directly inspired by the Devil from the pits of Hell, since it was totally unheard of before the beginning stages of the Great Apostasy and the modern world. Those who teach that such a degraded and debauched lifestyle is “good”, “right” or “moral” are complete perverts and their opinions are utterly worthless. All masturbatory touching of the genitals of oneself or one’s spouse (i.e. manipulative sexual acts), is immoral and a mortal sin. Any type of masturbatory touching is immoral (regardless of whether or when climax occurs) because it is an act that is not natural, procreative or necessary for conception to occur and is, therefore, an unreasonable act.

- **Kisses, touches, hugs, caresses** etc. (can be sinful or non-sinful). All kisses, touches, hugs, and caresses performed for the sake of lust or sensual pleasure are mortally sinful and must always be avoided at all cost by all people at all times. Natural, honorable and non-lustful touches, kisses, hugs, caresses, embraces and the like (such as those performed by family members and by lovers in public) are not sinful, but non-procreative and shameful touches, kisses, hugs, caresses, and embraces performed for the sake of sensual or lustful reasons either as an individual act separated from the marital act, or as an act connected to the marital act, before, during, or after it, are always sinful. Spouses must be aware though, for even though it is not sinful to embrace one another out of affection, excess or unreasonability in embracing happens easily during the heat of concupiscence, and this is certainly sinful. Also, if spouses hug or kiss each other out of affection and they perceive that their lust is aroused by this act, they must immediately cease with this deed that is arousing their lust or be guilty of the mortal sin of unlawfully inflaming their lust. The more spouses indulge in these lawful embraces and are careless therein, the more likely it will become sinful. So to be on the safe side and to become perfect, spouses should never touch, kiss or even see each other naked during intercourse. Kissing and touching before intercourse are also particularly problematic as they lead to intercourse that is not governed by a desire to procreate. Spouses should also never walk around at home undressed or partially dressed. Women especially should never walk in their underwear or naked in the presence of their husband, as this behavior without a doubt will incite his lust. This specific problem we have today of people walking around naked or dressed like whores in public or at home was typically unheard of before in society, as most men and women in the past was much more well dressed and modest, even at home. As an example demonstrating this fact, consider how women’s underwear looked like just 200 years ago. Believe it or not, but these *underwear* were in fact more modest than what many women wear as *skirt* or *dress* in public today!

- **Unnatural sexual acts** (always gravely sinful). An unnatural sexual act or touch is any type of sexual act that is not natural, reasonable, or procreative. Some examples of unnatural sexual acts include shameful acts with the mouth, sodomy, acts performed on different parts of the body not intended for this purpose, and manipulative sexual acts (i.e. masturbation of self or the spouse). All unnatural sexual acts are intrinsically evil and always gravely immoral because these acts lack the natural and procreative meaning, and therefore right reason, which are required by God for sexual acts to be moral. These acts are not procreative because they are not the type of act that is inherently directed at procreation. This is not the type of sexual union intended by God for human persons. Unnatural sexual acts are not justified by being done within marriage, nor by the circumstance that these acts occur in connection to or the context of natural marital relations, because the moral law requires each and every sexual act to be not only reasonable and marital, but also natural and procreative. All unnatural sexual acts and embraces are thus intrinsically evil and always gravely immoral due to the deprivation of the procreative purpose and right reason that always must accompany the marital act.

Examples of things a couple could do to inflame concupiscence accidentally (and that are bad, since it enhance lust!) but that are perhaps not sinful in every case depending on the intentions of the spouses while they're doing it, is to have marital relations in light instead of in darkness, to come together naked or partially naked instead of clothed, or to touch each other more than what is absolutely necessary during the marital act by hugs and the like. All of these things however should be avoided by the spouses as much as possible in order to cultivate a virtuous, honorable and good marriage. In truth, the inflaming of concupiscence usually starts out as a venial sin and if continued always ends in mortal sin, because all control is lost. *“Go not after thy lusts, but turn away from thy own will.”* (Ecclesiasticus 18:30)

Appropriate sexual position

Christian moralists, canonists, and theologians from the patristic period onward commonly maintained that only one posture was appropriate and natural for human sexual intercourse.

St. Albertus Magnus the Great, *Doctor of the Church*, (c. 1206-1280): **“Nature teaches that the proper manner is that the woman be on her back with the man lying on her stomach.”** (Commentarii in IV Sententiarum (Dist. XXIII-L))

Deviation from this was sanctioned only when illness or physical obesity necessitated or when

there was danger of smothering the foetus in the advanced stages of pregnancy.

Many readers will undoubtedly question why the missionary position would be considered as the only appropriate form of sexual intercourse between a husband and wife. The simple answer to this question is because of the **natural order of the hierarchy so established by God**, because in marriage the *husband* is the head of the wife.

Ephesians 5:23 “Because the *husband* is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church. He is the savior of his body.”

The missionary position is simply a bodily manifestation of this. If it were otherwise, the woman would be more like a man (more like the head and in control) and the man more like a woman (more submissive and receptive), which is contrary to nature.

Genesis 1:27 “And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them.”

St. Thomas Aquinas teaches the same concept in his “Summa Theologica”:

“These species are differentiated on the part of the woman rather than of the man, **because in the venereal act the woman is passive** and is by way of matter, whereas the **man is by way of agent [in way of acting]...**” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

Thus, the Catholic Church teaches that any sexual position performed by the spouses where the woman is by way of agent, (that is, when she is more in control of the sexual act with her movements) is contrary to nature and tradition, in addition to the natural hierarchy so established by God.

But there are also other reasons why the Church commonly have recommended only the missionary position. The most obvious reason, of course, is because these other positions or “experimentations” are usually more “exciting” to people who practice them, since it enhances their lust and gives them greater levels of pleasure or enjoyment than they otherwise would have, in addition to making the act more bestial. So that’s why Church tradition holds as contrary to nature those other positions. The Church has as it’s main goal the preservation of morality and the salvation of souls, and not that of appeasing stiff-necked, lust-seeking couples who are searching for new ways to damn themselves. The Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas

Aquinas, who was well aware of the sexual depravity of humankind, refers to these most obvious reasons in his writings as well:

St. Thomas Aquinas, *In Libros Sententiarum*, Chapter IV, Section 31, 2, 3: “Marital relations are contrary to nature when either the right receptacle or the **proper position required by nature is avoided**. In the first case it is always a mortal sin because no offspring can result, so that the purpose of nature is completely frustrated. But in the second case [of inappropriate sexual positions] it is not always a mortal sin, as some say, **though it can be the sign of a passion which is mortal**; at times the latter can occur without sin, as when one’s bodily condition does not permit any other method. ***In general, this practice is more serious the more it departs from the natural way.***”

St. Thomas Aquinas’ mentor, St. Albertus Magnus the Great, also a *Doctor of the Church*, taught that to depart from the “natural position” for human intercourse, the husband on top of his wife, was to become like the “brute animals.” (Albert the Great, *On the Sentences*, 4.31.24) St. Thomas Aquinas elaborated on that concept, teaching that: “by not observing the natural manner of copulation, either as to undue means, or as to other monstrous and bestial manners of copulation,” the married couple commits sin by going “contrary to the natural order of the venereal act as becoming to the human race.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I:II, q. 154, art. 11)

In truth, “Some, then, as we have shown, have tried to go beyond what is right and the concord that marks salvation which is holy and established. ... They have abandoned themselves to lust without restraint and persuade their neighbors to live licentiously; as wretches they follow the Scripture: “Cast your lot in with us; let us all have a common purse and let our moneybag be one.” [Prov. 1:14] On account of them the same prophet gives us advice saying: “Go not in the way with them, withdraw thy foot from their steps. For not unjustly are nets spread out to catch birds; for they are guilty of bloodshed and treasure up evil for themselves” [Prov. 1:15-18] that is, they seek for immorality and teach their neighbors to do the same. According to the prophet they are “fighters struck with their own tails” (ourai), to which the Greeks give the name kerkoi. Those to whom the prophecy refers might well be lustful, incontinent, men who fight with their tails, children of darkness and wrath... And again in anger at such people he directs that we should “have no fellowship with any one called a brother if he is a fornicator or covetous man or idolater or reviler or drunkard or robber; with such a man one ought not even to eat.” [1 Cor. 5:11] “For I through the law am

dead to the law," he says, "that I may live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; it is no longer I that live," meaning that I used to live according to my lusts, "but Christ lives in me," and I am pure and blessed by obeying the commandments; so that whereas at one time I lived in the flesh carnally, "the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God" [Gal. 2:19-20]." (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XVIII, Section 105-106)

Kisses and touches performed for sensual motives is condemned as a mortal sin by the Catholic Church and Her Saints for both married and unmarried people alike

Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #40, September 24, 1665 and March 18, 1666: "It is a probable opinion which states that a kiss is only venial when performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss, if danger of further consent and *pollution* [or ejaculation] is excluded." – **Condemned statement by Pope Alexander VII.** (Denz. 1140)

The Church's moral teaching that condemns kisses "performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight" might come as a surprise to many married couples who thought that this was lawful to do within a marriage. Now some people will indeed be quick to suggest that this statement only applies to unmarried people. However the truth of the matter is that there is not a single indication in the decree that even remotely suggests this. This objection is also easily refuted by considering the wording and reason behind the decree, which of course applies both to the married and unmarried people. Note that "pollution" is an older term used to describe "ejaculation" or "discharge of semen" other than during lawful sex.

The Free Dictionary, *The Origin & History*, **pollution:** c.1340, "discharge of semen other than during sex," later, "desecration, defilement" (late 14c.), from L.L. pollutionem (nom. pollutio) "defilement," from L. polluere "to soil, defile, contaminate,"

Therefore, according to the above Church condemnation, even if spouses or unmarried people do not consent to do anything more than the act of kissing itself and don't commit any other sexual sin or act, **it would still be considered as a mortal sin for them to be kissing "for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight" even if "danger of further consent and pollution [or ejaculation] is excluded."** This, of course, is true both before, during, and after the marital act, **and applies both to married and unmarried**

people alike. Thus, spouses may never kiss each other in a sensual way or in this way provoke themselves into sexual lust or “pollution,” either as an act that is separated completely from the marital act or as an act that is committed in relationship to the marital act (such as foreplay), even if pollution or ejaculation is excluded.

Again, the condemned proposition specifically mentioned that kisses “for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss” is mortally sinful even though “danger of further consent and pollution [or ejaculation] is excluded” so that no one, whether married or unmarried, should get the idea that they would be allowed to kiss another person for sensual pleasure as long as they did not proceed any further than that.

This point is important to mention since many lustful couples use all kinds of unnecessary acts before, during and after sexual relations. They try to excuse these shameful acts by claiming that they cannot complete the sexual act without them. However, their sinful excuse is condemned by this decree alone.

Now, the main reason for why the act of kissing for the sake of venereal pleasure is mortally sinful according to the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Saints and the Doctors of the Church is because it’s *lust* and serves no reasonable purpose other than wickedly arousing the selfish sexual desire of the spouses while not being able to effect the conception of a child. This fact then shows us that sensual kissing is a completely selfish and unnecessary act with no other purpose than to inflame a person’s shameful lust, which is contrary to virtue and the good of marriage. Again, unless husband or wife are totally degenerated, the mere thought of having sex with their spouse should be enough to inflame their lust and make them ready—at least on the part of the husband. And if this is true with mere thoughts, how much more with kisses and touches?

There can be no doubt about the fact that many men who are ignorant about sex and women would be in danger of “pollution” by the mere thought of, or act of, sensual kissing or touching. It happens even today amongst some men, mostly in young men who are unlearned in the ways of lust—if one can call it that. That’s why the condemned proposition **that tried to excuse this mortal sin** even mentioned if “pollution is excluded,” as if wanting to argue that only ejaculation or climax (or pollution) was the mortal sin and not also the evil intention of seeking the pleasure. However, as we all could see above, whether pollution actually happens or not, sensual kisses was still condemned as a mortal sin according to God’s Holy Law.

The fact that many men today have no danger of pollution from sensual kisses or touches does not make it lawful or right either. Because it is obvious that the act is not made lawful just because some men have hardened their hearts and become perverted. Simply said, all kisses and touches performed for the sake of sensual or fleshly pleasure is condemned as a mortal sin by the Catholic Church.

There are three main reasons for why all kisses “when performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss” are mortally sinful and a sin against the Natural Law. *The first reason* is that they are a kind of **drug abuse** since they are **selfish, intoxicating and unnecessary just like drug abuse is**, and this intoxication is also the reason why the Natural Law and the Church teaches that even sensual kisses performed “**for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss**” is condemned as a mortal sin for both the married and the unmarried people alike (Pope Alexander VII, Denz. 1140) and why even the normal, natural and **procreative** “marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5) even when it is performed by two married spouses; *the second* is that they are **shameful** since the people who commit these unnecessary acts are ashamed to commit them in front of other people; and *the third* is that they are **non-procreative** even though God’s law teaches that the “**the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, #54). These three reasons are also why the Church teaches that even **the normal, natural and procreative “act of marriage exercised for pleasure only” is condemned as a sin for both the married and unmarried people alike (Blessed Pope Innocent XI, Denz. 1159)** and why this truth about sexual morality in marriage was taught already in the Old Testament by God long before even the New Testament was revealed to us by Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Holy Bible, Tobias 6:16-17, 22; 8:9 “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: **Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.** ... And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said] And now, Lord, thou knowest, **that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife**, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.”

One of the three greatest reasons for why all non-procreative and unnecessary forms of sexual acts are mortally sinful is that all sexual acts (even marital, natural, lawful and procreative ones) are intoxicating and affects the person similar to the effect of a drug. In fact, the sexual pleasure is many times more intoxicating than many drugs that are unlawful to abuse. But when people are performing unnatural and non-procreative forms of sexual acts, they are abusing the marital act in a similar way that a drug user abuses drugs, or a glutton abuses food. It is an inherently selfish act that are not founded on reason, but only on their unlawful and shameful search for carnal pleasure, similar to the action of a person that uses drugs in order to get intoxicated or high. This absolutely proves that all unnecessary and non-procreative forms of sexual acts, such as sensual kisses and touches, are sinful and unreasonable to abuse in the same way that drugs are sinful and unreasonable to abuse.

This is also why the Church teaches that even the normal, natural and ***procreative*** “***act of marriage exercised for pleasure only***” is condemned as a sin for both the married and unmarried people alike (Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters Condemned in Decree (# 8), March 4, 1679*). Since the Church and the Natural Law condemns even the normal, natural and ***procreative*** “***act of marriage exercised for pleasure only***”, even though this act is ***procreative*** in itself, it is obvious that all ***non-procreative*** and unnecessary forms of sexual acts (such as sensual kisses and touches) are condemned as even worse sins (that is, as mortal sins), since they are utterly **unnatural, unreasonable, shameful, and selfish.**

This obvious fact is also why it is patently absurd and illogical for anyone who agree with the Church’s condemnation of the normal, natural and ***procreative*** “***act of marriage exercised for pleasure only***” even though this act is directly ***procreative*** in itself, to then turn around and say that the Church and the Saints allows spouses to perform unnatural or ***non-procreative*** sexual acts, such as foreplay, and sensual kisses or touches! In truth, it is a marvel how anyone who accept such a contradictory, illogical and absurd position as described above is even able to justify such a stupid position in his own conscience, but free will being what it is, we can only pray that those who have fallen into this false and unreasonable position see their error, and convert. Again, since the Church and Her Saints teach that even the normal, natural and ***procreative*** sexual act is sinful for the married unless it is excused with the motive of procreation, how much more obvious does it have to get for a person to realize that all ***non-procreative*** or unnecessary sexual acts, such as kisses and touches for venereal pleasure, are even more sinful for the married?

A sick person is allowed by God’s permission to take drugs in order to lessen his pain. But

when this sick person uses more drugs than he needs in order to get intoxicated, or continues to use the drugs after he gets well, he commits the sin of drug abuse. This is a perfect example of those who perform non-procreative or unnecessary forms of sexual acts (such as sensual kisses and touches) either by themselves or in relationship to the marital act. They are gluttonous or overindulgent in the marital act, and are thus sinning against their reason and the Natural Law. For **“the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason...”** and **“lust there signifies any kind of excess.”** (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

The “any kind of excess” that St. Thomas and the Church condemns as a sin are all sexual acts except for what is inherent in the normal, natural and procreative marital act itself. All other sexual acts are by their own nature inexcusable and a sin against the Natural Law, which means that even though a person has never been told or taught that they are sins, they are still committing a mortal sin, just like a person do not have to be told or taught that murder, abortion, stealing, or getting intoxicated or drunk is a sin against the Natural Law in order for this person to be able to commit a mortal sin. As the Haydock Bible and Commentary correctly explains about The Natural Law and Romans 2:14-16: **“these men are a law to themselves, and have it written in their hearts, as to the existence of a God, and their reason tells them, that many sins are unlawful...”**

It is totally obvious that “any kind of excess” in the sexual act, such as by acts of lascivious kisses and touches between married spouses is a sin against the Natural Law, and not only some acts, such as masturbation of self or of spouse, as some perversely claim nowadays. Again, notice that he specifically mentions that the sin of lust regards “any kind of excess” instead of only some excess, and this of course totally excludes all sensual kisses and touches between married spouses in their sexual acts. In truth, **“We may also reply that “lasciviousness” relates to certain acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth.”** (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1) Notice that St. Thomas even rejects as lascivious and unlawful **“acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth”** and so it is clear that St. Thomas taught that all non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts are sinful and against nature. This is also why the Natural Law and the Church teaches that even sensual kisses performed **“for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss”** is condemned as a mortal sin for both the married and the unmarried people alike (Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Morals Condemned in Decree #40*, September 24, 1665; Denz. 1140). Thus, it could not be more clear from the teaching of the Church and the Saints that “any kind of excess” in the marital sexual act between two married

spouses, such as by acts of sensual kisses and touches, are mortal sins against the Natural Law.

St. Augustine also confirms the fact that it is utterly shameful to even think that one could use “kisses and embraces” for venereal pleasure: “... and you [the Pelagian heretic Julian] do not **blush** to say you think: ‘It is the more to be commended because the other parts of the body serve it [the reproductive member], that it may be more ardently aroused; be it the eyes for lusting, or the other members, in kisses and embraces.’” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book V, Chapter 5, Section 23) Indeed, the people of the modern world **shamelessly** do not **blush** to proclaim that kisses and touches for venereal pleasure are lawful and even good, just like the heretics of the early Church did! Since many of the heretics of our own times, like Julian, are Pelagians in their doctrine and rejects the Church’s teaching concerning *Original Sin*, they also fail to see the inherent evilness of unnatural or non-procreative sexual acts, (such as sensual kisses and touches) since they have chosen to call concupiscence or sexual desire “good” or a “gift from God” rather than a defect that arose from the Original Sin of Adam and Eve. In addition to all of this evidence, this quotation also shows us that even the married are forbidden to perform unnatural or non-procreative sexual acts such as sensual kisses and touches. The Pelagian heretic Julian that St. Augustine is citing in this quotation, did not teach that sexual acts (such as sensual kisses and touches) could be performed by unmarried people, but that only the married were allowed to perform them, which shows us that it is shameful to even dare to suggest that the married can perform such acts. This fact, then, directly refutes those who claim that the Church and Her Saints only condemns kisses and touches for venereal pleasure for those who are unmarried.

This is also why St. Augustine teaches that **all** non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts are sinful even for the married.

St. Augustine, *On The Good of Marriage*: “For **necessary** sexual intercourse for begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is **alone** worthy of marriage. **But that which goes beyond this necessity [of begetting children, such as sensual kisses and touches] no longer follows reason but lust.**” (Section 11, A.D. 401)

Thus, St. Augustine taught that the only lawful sexual act was the procreative sexual act itself. This obviously *excludes* all other sexual acts that are not part of the normal and natural intercourse “for the begetting of children”. Notice that St. Augustine is also speaking about married people in this quotation, since he says that “**necessary** sexual intercourse for

begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is ***alone*** worthy ***of marriage***”, thus showing us that he is speaking about the married in this quotation, and not only the unmarried.

The fact that he is speaking about the married and of the normal sexual intercourse, of course, totally refutes all who say that only the unmarried but not the married are forbidden by the Saints and the Church to perform unnatural, non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts—such as sensual kisses and touches. Thus, “as regards ***any part of the body*** [such as the mouth] which is not meant for generative [procreative] purposes, ***should a man use even his own wife in it, it is against nature and flagitious*** [that is, atrociously wicked; vicious; outrageous].” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 2, Chapter 35).

Again, for those who would claim that only some non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts, such as masturbation of self or of spouse, oral and anal sex, or foreplay, are condemned by the Church and Her Saints, but not sensual touches or kisses, St. Augustine answers that “as regards ***any part of the body*** [such as the mouth] which is not meant for generative [procreative] purposes, ***should a man use even his own wife in it, it is against nature and flagitious***” in order to show us that no sexual act without exception that is non-procreative could ever be performed by married spouses without sin, and that ***all unnecessary*** sexual acts are “against nature” and condemned and utterly detested by God.

Indeed, we know that St. Augustine even teaches that spouses who perform the normal, natural and procreative sexual act itself *but without excusing it with the explicit motive of procreation, are committing a sin*; and since this is so even though this act is directly ***procreative*** in itself, how much more must not those acts that are ***non-procreative*** be condemned by him?

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*: “It is, however, one thing for married persons to have intercourse only for the wish to beget children, which is not sinful: it is another thing for them to desire carnal pleasure in cohabitation, but with the spouse only, which involves venial sin. For although propagation of offspring is not the motive of the intercourse, there is still no attempt to prevent such propagation, either by wrong desire or evil appliance.” (Book 1, Chapter 17, A.D. 419)

Therefore, it is patently absurd and illogical to claim that St. Augustine teaches that the normal, natural and procreative sexual act itself, but without excusing it with the explicit motive of procreation, is sinful to perform for the married, but then turn around and claim

that he allows spouses to perform non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts, such as sensual kisses and touches.

The fact of the matter is that every shred of evidence from the Great Saint Augustine's writings utterly destroys the heresy against the Natural Law which teaches that sensual kisses and touches are allowed or lawful for the married: "But those who, giving the rein to lust, either wander about steeping themselves in a multitude of debaucheries, **or even in regard to one wife not only exceed the measure necessary for the procreation of children, but with the shameless license of a sort of slavish freedom heap up the filth of a still more beastly excess...**" (St. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Book III, Chapter 19:28)

St. Augustine makes it perfectly clear that all sexual acts that "exceed the measure necessary for the procreation of children" are acts of "beastly excess". Are sensual kisses and touches "necessary for the procreation of children". Of course not! Only the most dishonest person would ever dare to claim such a thing. Thus, it is a fact that St. Augustine, Doctor of the Church, condemns those who "**even in regard to one wife not only exceed the measure necessary for the procreation of children, but with the shameless license of a sort of slavish freedom heap up the filth of a still more beastly excess...**" and anyone who denies this is simply said not being honest, sad to say!

Furthermore, Pope Pius XI clearly proclaims the Magisterium's definitive teaching in his encyclical *Casti Connubii*, which is also found in Holy Scripture, Sacred Tradition and the Natural Law, that each and every marital sexual act must include the procreative function as well as that "the intrinsic nature of the act" must be "preserved" in order for the spouses to even be able to consider the secondary ends of marriage. This teaching necessarily prohibits the married couple from engaging in any kind of unnatural, non-procreative or unnecessary sexual act (with or without climax), because all such acts lack the procreative function. Pope Pius XI teaches that spouses are not forbidden to consider the secondary ends of marriage "**SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]**" and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved."

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: "For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial right there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO**

THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN] and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.”

Notice how clearly and unambiguously Pope Pius XI teaches that married people are not even allowed to “consider” the secondary ends of marriage unless they are subordinated to the primary purpose of marriage (procreation) and unless “the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved” **which means that one may never perform anything other than the normal, natural and procreative marital act itself since all other sexual acts are not in conformity to procreation and “the intrinsic nature of the [marital] act”**. By using the words, “the intrinsic nature of the [marital] act”, Pope Pius XI makes it abundantly clear that everything concerning the mechanics or operation of the marital act must be directly procreative in itself, for he says that there are two direct necessities to even be allowed to “consider” the secondary ends of marriage, that is, procreation, and keeping oneself to only performing the normal, natural and procreative marital act or “the intrinsic nature of the [marital] act”. It is therefore clear that it is totally “forbidden” and mortally sinful to even consider the secondary ends or motives, much less to perform the sexual act, unless “the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved”, and this totally excludes all non-procreative sexual acts.

Since the Church even condemns only “considering” in one’s thoughts the secondary ends of marriage unless these motives are “SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved”, and that this fact is true even though a person has not yet even performed the actual sexual act but only consented to a thought in his mind, only a liar can claim that one can lawfully perform real and actual sexual acts, such as foreplay, oral sex or sensual kisses and touches, that are non-procreative in nature, or that such acts can be only venial sins.

The secondary ends “such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence” can follow after the primary end or purpose of begetting children if the spouses choose this, but the secondary ends or motives are not absolutely needed to lawfully perform the marital act in the same way as the primary purpose of begetting children, nor is the secondary motive of quieting concupiscence meritorious even though it is allowed.

In truth, Pope Pius XI rightly defines all non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts as “***intrinsically against nature***” and he says that those who perform such vile acts “***sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious***” which shows us that such acts are not only some slight venial or light sin, but a dark and grave

mortal sin against nature “**which is shameful and intrinsically vicious**” and thus condemned and rejected by the Church and Her Saints with a specific detestation and hatred because of its evilness.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent: “Two lessons of instruction are then to be specially impressed on the mind of the faithful. **The first is that marriage is not to be used from motives of sensuality or pleasure**, but that its use is to be restrained within those limits, which, as we have above shown, are prescribed by the Lord. **They should be mindful of the exhortation of the Apostle: “They that have wives, let them be as though they had them not,” (1 Cor. 7:29)** and that St. Jerome says: **“The love which a wise man cherishes towards his wife is the result of judgment, not the impulse of passion; he governs the impetuosity of desire, and is not hurried into indulgence. There is nothing more shameful than that a husband should love his wife as an adulteress.”**”

Good and virtuous spouses always remember that God is present with them, and that is also why they do not stoop to the evil and unnatural sexual sins that so plague humanity today. “The activities of marriage itself, if they are not modest and do not take place under the eyes of God as it were, so that the only intention is children, are filth and lust.” (St. Jerome, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, Book III, Chapter 5:21)

In truth, “filth” is the most suitable word that sums up the worth of every marital act that lacks a procreative purpose. Thus, “...when it [the sexual act] is from lust or for the sake of pleasure, then the coition is a mortal sin and the man sins mortally. ... **And these dicta assume that the man and his wife have sex according to the order of nature, for anyone who goes against nature always sins mortally and more seriously with his wife than with anyone else and should be punished more seriously...** Note the difference between the two cases of husband-wife sex, for incontinence and for pleasure and lust... **In the second case, he seeks to procure pleasure with hands or thought or passionate uses and incentives [such as sensual kisses] so he can do more than just have sex with his wife...** [thus sinning mortally] because he acts as an adulterer when he burns like an adulterer even with his own wife.” (Gratian, *On Marriage*, Dictum Post C. 32. 2. 2)

Footnote 359 to *The Shepherd of Hermas*: “‘To the pure, all things are pure;’ but they who presume on this great truth to indulge in kissings and like familiarities are tempting a dangerous downfall.”

St. Cyprian of Carthage, *To Pomponius* (c. A.D. 249): “Assuredly the mere lying together, the mere embracing, the very talking together, and the act of kissing, and the disgraceful and foul slumber of two persons lying together, how much of dishonour and crime does it confess!” (*The Epistles of Cyprian*, Epistle LXI)

St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata*, Book II, Chapter XX (c. 199 A.D.): “Socrates accordingly bids ‘people guard against enticements to eat when they are not hungry, and to drink when not thirsty, and the glances and kisses of the fair, as fitted to inject a deadlier poison than that of scorpions and spiders.’” (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol 2, p. 613)

The Church teaches that all unnecessary and non-procreative sexual acts are *sinful* before, during and after the act of marriage, and that these acts may never be performed in any circumstance or for any reason whatsoever by anyone. For just as it is blameworthy and sinful to have sexual relations only for sensual pleasure for both the married and unmarried people alike, so too is this true with other pleasures as well, such as “eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only,” and kissing “for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss”. **This has always been the teaching of the Catholic Church and Her Saints.**

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #8, March 4, 1679: “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only, are not sinful, provided this does not stand in the way of health, since any natural appetite can licitly enjoy its own actions.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.**

Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #40, September 24, 1665 and March 18, 1666: “It is a probable opinion which states that a kiss is only venial when performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss, if danger of further consent and pollution is excluded.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Alexander VII.** (Denz. 1140)

St. Alphonsus Liguori, one of the most well known doctors of the Church, expounds on this teaching of Pope Innocent XI in his masterpiece “*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*”, showing us the inherent evilness of acting in accordance to our sensual desires: “Pope Innocent XI Odescalchi has condemned the proposition which asserts that it is not a sin to eat or to drink from the sole motive of satisfying the palate. However, it is not a fault to feel pleasure in

eating: for it is, generally speaking, impossible to eat without experiencing the delight which food naturally produces. **But it is a defect to eat, like beasts, through the sole motive of sensual gratification, and without any reasonable object. Hence, the most delicious meats may be eaten without sin, if the motive be good and worthy of a rational creature; and, in taking the coarsest food through attachment to pleasure, there may be a fault.**” (*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, p. 282)

This condemnation of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” and kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” is not only reasonable, but part of the Natural Law, yet it may come as a surprise to many, but this is only because so many commit sins of this nature.

Ask yourself this question: Which is the most pleasurable of the acts of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” or kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight”? An honest person can only answer that kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” is a much more pleasurable experience. Since it is obvious that the act of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” is a much less pleasurable action than the act of kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” since those who eat or drink “even to satiety for pleasure only” are normally not intoxicated by this inherently evil act as those who perform sensual kisses are, it is clear to all but liars, that if God condemns one unreasonable or unnecessary act that is less pleasurable, he also condemns the other act that is more pleasurable, since it too, is unreasonable and unnecessary.

Since both the act of “Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only” as well as the act of kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” are unreasonable and unnecessary, we can therefore know by natural instinct and thus through the Natural Law that both of these actions are inherently evil and sinful, but while both are sinful, we can also know that the act of kissing “performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight” is a much greater sin since it not only is unreasonable and unnecessary, but also shameful and intoxicating.

Indeed, the argument that sensual kisses and touches are sinful for both the married and unmarried alike because they are intoxicating like a drug is just one of the three main arguments against it, the other two being that they are shameful and non-procreative. If one wants to read more about these two arguments and why they refute all those who perversely claim that one may perform kisses and touches for sensual reasons (or any other unnecessary or non-procreative sexual act), one can read more about them in the beginning of Part 2 of

this Book, which is named "[Sexual Pleasure, Lust, And The Various Sexual Acts In Marriage](#)".

Lustful kisses and touches between spouses are definitely mortal sins

Master Jean Charlier de Gerson (13 December 1363 – 12 July 1429), French scholar, educator, reformer, and poet, Chancellor of the University of Paris, a guiding light of the conciliar movement and one of the most prominent theologians at the Council of Constance, who "was the most popular and influential theologian of his generation", **had the following interesting things to say about lustful kisses and touches in marriage between two married spouses, contraception and about sensually arousing oneself:**

Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres Complètes*: "Several doctors [of Divinity] maintain that willingly fostering wicked carnal thoughts in order to enjoy oneself is a deadly sin, even without doing the deed. Be sure, however, that kisses, gazes, and fondling, mainly caused by such wicked and lustful thoughts, without anything more, is an even greater sin. ... it is even worse if these kisses do not respect the honesty which is usually kept in public.

"... You have committed the sin of lust: If you have fondled and stroked yourself on your shameful member until you obtain the dirty carnal pleasure. If you initiated such sins with others, by words, kisses, fondling, or other signs, or immodest paintings. ... If you committed this sin differently from Nature ordered, or against the honesty that belongs to marriage. ... If you wanted to be desired and lusted after for your beauty, your behavior, your clothes, makeup, dancing or dissolute gazes.

"... What a young boy should tell in confession: I sometimes stroked myself or others, urged by disorderly pleasure; I fondled myself, in my bed and elsewhere, something I would not have dared to do if people had been there. Sometimes the priest cannot absolve such fondling. If they are not confessed and the details given, whatever the shame, one cannot be absolved, and the confession is worthless: one is destined to be damned for ever in Hell. The action and the way it has been done must be told.

"... Is it a sin to kiss? I answer that kisses between spouses who maintain the same modesty as the kiss of peace at church, or who do them openly, are without sin. **If they do them so immodestly [and lustfully] that I cannot be more precise, it is an abominable deadly sin.** If kisses are made between strangers and publicly, as a sign of peace, by friendship or kinship, without wicked thought, there is no sin. They could be dangerous between clerics, or people of the same sex or lineage, or in a secret place, and in a prolonged way.

"... Is it a mortal sin to eat and drink in order to carnally arouse oneself? Yes, if it is out of wedlock, and even with one's spouse, if it is to enjoy a

pleasure which is not required in marriage.

“... **The fifth commandment is: thou shall not kill.** ... They commit this sin who succeed, in whatever way, in preventing the fruit which should come from carnal intercourse between man and woman [such as by NFP, contraception or abortion]. ... It is forbidden for two people, *married or not*, to do any kind of lustful fondling without respecting the way and the vessel Nature requires for conceiving children [that is, one cannot perform “extra” sexual acts not able to procreate in themselves or that are not intended for procreation]. It is worse when it is outside of the natural way [unnatural sexual acts], either if it is out of wedlock **or even worse, within it [that is, all unnecessary and non-procreative sexual acts within marriage are considered as worse sins than when they are committed outside of marriage].**

“**Is it permitted for spouses to prevent the conception of a child?** No: I often say that it is a sin worse than murder [hence that contraception or NFP is equivalent to murder]. It is a sin which deserves the fires of Hell. Briefly, any way of preventing conception during intercourse is dishonest and reprehensible.”

Here we see the very obvious truth of the Natural Law that spouses are committing “**an abominable deadly sin**” when they kiss each other for sensual or venereal pleasure. “**Is it a sin to kiss?** I answer that kisses between spouses who maintain the same modesty as the kiss of peace at church, or who do them openly, are without sin. **If they do them so immodestly [and lustfully] that I cannot be more precise, it is an abominable deadly sin.**” Thus, it is clear that anyone who either performs acts of kissing or touching for venereal pleasure or who thinks that these acts are moral acts are sinning against nature, which means that they are in a state of damnation since acts or heresies against nature can never be excused since no one can be a “material heretic” or in “ignorance” in regards to such things.

Anyone with even a speck of decency and morality in their soul can understand from the Natural Law that “It is forbidden for two people, *married or not*, to do any kind of lustful fondling without respecting the way and the vessel Nature requires for conceiving children...” and “It is worse when it is outside of the natural way [unnatural sexual acts], either if it is out of wedlock or even worse, within it.” This shows us that non procreative sexual acts occurring in marriage are far worse sins against God than those committed out of wedlock, since they offend not only against the Natural Law but also the Holy Sacrament of Marriage.

Lustful kisses and touches are mortal sins against the Natural Law

It is clear from the evidence thus far covered that sensual kisses and touches are not only mortal sins, but in fact also sins against the Natural Law. That means that any person who thinks it's right to kiss or touch for the sake of carnal pleasure or lust is a heretic against the Natural Law, and as such, are therefore outside the Church of God and thus excluded from salvation. Everyone without exception who have kissed or touched someone or something for the sake of sensual pleasure proved by their deed that their primary or secondary purpose for doing this inherently evil, selfish and shameful deed was not the lawful motive to procreate or quench concupiscence, but rather the sinful and unlawful gratification and excitation of their shameful lust like brute beasts without any reason. No, it would be an insult to beasts to call these vile spouses beasts! It would be more accurate not to call them beasts, but demons, since beasts have no reason, and thus are blameless. In truth, such husbands and wives are lower in their actions than the beasts of the Earth! **“Bodies corrupted by lust are the dwelling places of devils.”** (St. Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Gospel*, Matt. 11:2-10)

Everyone without exception that kisses and touches “for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises” from these acts, are committing a mortal sin against the Natural Law. How so, you might ask? Well, I answer that it is easy to prove.

First of all, acts of lust that are performed for the sake of pleasure and sensual kisses are completely selfish, shameful, intoxicating and unnecessary for conception to occur. Only a blind person could fail to see the fact that **“the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason...”** and that **“lust there signifies any kind of excess”** (St. Thomas Aquinas) and this obvious fact totally excludes all kinds of sensual kisses and touches, since only a liar can deny that sensual kisses falls under the category of “any kind of excess” in the marital sexual act.

Second, consider how people will not kiss or touch their spouse in a sexual way or for carnal pleasure in front of other people (unless they are totally degenerated). And consider that they would be very ashamed if their parent, child or friend walked in on them when they were committing this shameful, selfish and unnecessary act with their spouse. It is thus clear that their conscience tells them that it is an inherently evil, shameful and unnecessary act; and yet, though they know this truth in their conscience, they nevertheless refuse to feel this very same shame when they are committing this act of lust in the presence of God and Mary and all the Saints and Angels in Heaven.

Sad to say, a little known truth known today taught by the Saints is also that pleasures of

various kinds and sexual lusts and acts blinds people from perceiving spiritual truths and facts (see [The evil of lust makes man blind to spiritual things](#)) and that is why people can sin so boldly against their natural conscience and God since they have allowed their conscience to be smothered by their evil lusts.

Some people may object that there are many other events that are shameful and that are not yet inherently sinful such as soiling one's pants or being forced to show oneself naked to other people against one's own will. This objection, however, fails to notice the obvious difference between 1) people committing acts of lust with a desire or longing; and 2) events which are shameful but who are not desired or longed for by a person in a sensual way.

Acts of lust are acts performed for the sake of a pleasure and are performed with the will and purpose of satisfying a sensual desire while the events or acts of soiling one's pants or being forced to show oneself naked to other people is not a desire or lust that is sought after. Thus, these people do not desire that these events should happen. If those people who endured the events of soiling their clothes or naked exhibition against their will would sensually desire or lust for that these shameful events would happen in the same way that a man or a woman lust for and desire that acts of lust happen, they would indeed be declared the most disgusting perverts. Who but a complete and satanic pervert would sensually desire or lust after soiling their pants or being exhibited naked?

When Our Lord was going to be crucified, He was forced to be without any covering for His private parts for a while before someone handed Him something to cover Himself with. Our Lord was obviously ashamed for having to appear naked before a lot of people, but He didn't desire that this should happen, and most importantly, He didn't lust at it when it happened! and so, there was no fault in Him. If, however, a person should lust or desire (in a sensual way) that he or she should appear naked before other people (such as nude models), he or she would commit a mortal sin and be a pervert.

Consequently, it is not a mere shameful act that is sinful, but the shameful act that is performed with the intention of pleasing oneself sensually—that is sinful. Kissing for the sake of a venereal pleasure is a completely selfish act that only serves to increase lust, and as such, is against the natural law just like gluttony is against the natural law. It is indeed very similar to the sin of gluttony. One could say that those who commit this sin are gluttonous in the marital act. It is completely self evident that no one ever needed to break God's law by kissing or touching their spouse in a sexual way in order to perform the marital act. No one ever needed to kiss or touch in a sensual way in order to be able to make a child. This is just a

selfish, shameful and condemned excuse used by sexually perverted, morally depraved people in order to try to enhance or inflame their sexual pleasure. Kisses and touches must not and cannot be used to satisfy sensual pleasure as is totally clear from the above Church condemnation and from the words of Jean Gerson and St. Augustine (and as we will see even more clearly, of St. Thomas Aquinas).

Kisses, touches, hugs, caresses etc. can of course be sinful or non-sinful depending on why they are performed. All kisses, touches, hugs, and caresses performed for the sake of lust or sensual pleasure is mortally sinful and must always be avoided at all cost by all people at all times. Natural touches, kisses, hugs, caresses, embraces and the like (such as those performed by family members and by lovers in public) are not sinful provided they are not performed for the sake of sensual or lustful reasons. Spouses must be aware though, for even though it is not sinful to embrace one another out of affection, excess or unreasonability in embracing happens easily during the heat of concupiscence, and this is certainly sinful. Also, if spouses hug or kiss each other out of affection and love and they perceive that their lust is aroused by this act, they must immediately cease with this deed that is arousing their lust, or be guilty of the mortal sin of unlawfully inflaming their lust.

St. Finnian of Clonard, *The Penitential of Finnian*, #46: “**We advise and exhort that there be continence in marriage, since marriage without continence is not lawful, but sin, and [marriage] is permitted by the authority of God not for lust but for the sake of children...**”

It is totally clear that the reason for why so many people of our times consider kisses and touches for venereal or sensual pleasure to be a moral act in marriage and between married spouses is that the satanic media from the beginning of the 20th century have bombarded them with films, series and music that promotes this unnatural and non-procreative perversity that were totally rejected by the Christian world if we just moved back in time a little. Indeed, just like all the other moral laws that have been flouted through the media in our time, such as the laws of modesty and marriage, sensual kisses have been promoted increasingly much in the media through films, music and series, and those who watch media with such kinds of perversity, rightly and justly fall into error concerning the Natural Law about how all non-procreative sexual acts are unlawful and unnatural, since they chose to put themselves into a proximate or near occasion of sinning, which the Church condemns.

A good example of how people who get married today sin by kissing each other is the kiss that the husband and wife perform after the wedding ceremony. It is obvious that those who kiss

each other in a lascivious and shameful manner are following what they have learned from the world and the media by watching perverted and evil shows, series and films, and that as a consequence of watching this filth, their shame and conscience have been completely smothered due to their lust and sensuality. Only people who have had their conscience seared with a hot iron could ever dare to kiss another human being in a shameful and lascivious manner, or for the sake of venereal pleasure, and this is much more true in the case of those who do this evil deed in public and in front of other people, and by this act, maliciously tempt other people to sins of impurity and sensual thoughts and desires. People who get married as well as anyone else who want to show affection towards someone close to them must instead learn to kiss them in a pure way as brothers and sisters kiss each other, or as modest married people in public kiss each other, for this is the only kind of kiss that God allows.

Tertullian, *Against Marcion*, Book I, Chapter 29, A.D 207: "For He [God] bestowed His blessing on matrimony also, as on an honorable estate, for the increase of the human race; as He did indeed on the whole of His creation, for wholesome and good uses. Meats and drinks are not on this account to be condemned, because, when served up with too exquisite a daintiness, they conduce to gluttony; nor is raiment to be blamed, because, when too costly adorned, it becomes inflated with vanity and pride. So, on the same principle, the estate of matrimony is not to be refused, because, when enjoyed without moderation, it is fanned into a voluptuous flame. There is a great difference between a cause and a fault, between a state and its excess. Consequently it is not an institution of this nature that is to be blamed, but the extravagant use of it; according to the judgment of its founder Himself, who not only said, "Be fruitful, and multiply," [Genesis 1:28] but also, "You shall not commit adultery," and, "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife;" and who threatened with death the unchaste, sacrilegious, and monstrous abomination both of adultery and unnatural sin with man and beast."

St. Thomas Aquinas condemns lustful kisses and touches as mortal sins for married and unmarried people alike

Now we shall look at what St. Thomas Aquinas has to say about kisses and touches.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 4:

“Whether there can be mortal sin in touches and kisses?”

“Objection 1: It would seem that there is no mortal sin in touches and kisses. For the Apostle says (Eph. 5:3): "Fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints," then he adds: "Or obscenity" (which a gloss refers to "kissing and fondling"), "or foolish talking" (as "soft speeches"), "or scurrility" (which "fools call geniality---i.e. jocularly"), and afterwards he continues (Eph. 5:5): "For know ye this and understand that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person (which is the serving of idols), hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God," thus making no further mention of obscenity, as neither of foolish talking or scurrility. Therefore these are not mortal sins.”

“[St. Thomas Aquinas’] Reply to Objection 1: The Apostle makes no further mention of these three because they [kisses and touches] are not sinful except as directed to those that he had mentioned before [i.e. fornicators, unclean and covetous people].”

As we have seen, married people can of course also be *unclean* and *covetous* according to St. Thomas’ teaching concerning the sexual acts of married people since “since the man who is too ardent a lover of his wife acts counter to the good of marriage *if he use her indecently*, **although he be not unfaithful, he may in a sense be called an adulterer**; and even more so than he that is too ardent a lover of another woman.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 8) This of course totally destroys the thesis of those who claim that the Church allows non-procreative sexual acts in marriage. Notice in this quote that St. Thomas held sexual sins within marriage to be worse than adultery, because the act occurs within marriage. Therefore, unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts, such as sensual kisses and touches, do not become permissible when these take place within marriage. Instead, **unnatural sexual acts are made even more sinful when they take place within marriage because they offend not only against nature and a Holy Sacrament, but also against God and the Law written in our hearts.**

The phrase ‘*if he use her indecently*’ used by St. Thomas refers to unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts—such as sensual kisses and touches within marriage. This is clear because the good of marriage emphasized by St. Thomas is the procreation of children (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 2). St. Thomas could not be referring to natural marital relations when he says ‘*if he use her indecently*’ because even natural marital relations done with some disorder of desire still retains the procreative function. But unnatural or non-procreative sexual acts lack this meaning, and so are contrary

to the good of marriage. **The use of unnatural or non-procreative sexual acts within marriage are therefore worse than adultery, according to St. Thomas Aquinas!** since such people who commit these acts “may in a sense be called an adulterer; and even more so than he that is too ardent a lover of another woman.” This of course totally destroys the thesis of those who claim that the Church allows non-procreative sexual acts in marriage.

Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 4 [continued]:

“Objection 2: Further, fornication is stated to be a mortal sin as being prejudicial to the good of the future child’s begetting and upbringing. But these are not affected by kisses and touches or blandishments. Therefore there is no mortal sin in these.”

“[St. Thomas Aquinas’] Reply to Objection 2: Although kisses and touches do not by their very nature hinder the good of the human offspring, **they proceed from lust**, which is the source of this hindrance [of why kisses and touches are made sinful]: **and on this account [in so far as they are lustful] they are mortally sinful.**”

Notice that St. Thomas here said that kisses and touches was mortal sins in the general sense if “they proceed from lust”, and that he did not say that “it depends on whether they occur in the context of marriage/fornication or not” or that “this is what decides or determines whether it becomes sinful.” St. Thomas clearly says that **the source of the hindrance** of why sensual kisses and touches are sinful **is because they proceed from lust**, and that these acts are sinful *not* because they “hinder the good of the human offspring” but because **they proceed from lust**. Thus, it is totally clear from this definition of St. Thomas that he views the **lustful intention** when performing these acts as the **source** of the mortal sin itself, and not simply because they occur in context of marriage or not (as we shall also see further down).

Again, notice above that St. Thomas says that kisses and touches does *not* “by their very nature **hinder the good of the human offspring**” and that he said if “they proceed from lust... they are mortally sinful” since this is the *source* of this hindrance of why they have become unlawful to do; **and that he said this in reply to the objection which stated that kisses and touches were not mortal sins since they do not hinder the good of the human offspring as fornication is said to do.** What does St. Thomas reply show? **It shows that it is the lust that determines if the act is to be regarded as a sin,** and not whether it is a hindrance for the good of the future offspring. We know that this is the case, since St. Thomas himself said that kisses and touches **do not hinder the good of the future**

offspring, since kisses and touches can be made without lustful intention, or be made without an intention to procreate, or even be made in context of wanting to procreate in marriage, (hence that they do not necessarily hinder the good of the future offspring), *but if they proceed from lust, they are made unlawful and sinful anyway* (regardless of the cause).

That is why St. Thomas even rejects as lascivious and unlawful “**acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth**”: “**We may also reply that "lasciviousness" relates to certain acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth.**” (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

In another part of his *Summa*, St. Thomas deals with the question of “**Whether the unnatural vice is a species of lust?**” and his answer affirms, once again, that all non-procreative sexual acts are unnatural and sinful lust: “**Objection 3:** Further, lust regards acts directed to human generation, as stated above (Q[153], A[2]): **Whereas the unnatural vice concerns acts from which generation cannot follow.** Therefore the unnatural vice is not a species of lust. [**St. Thomas’ Reply:**] **On the contrary**, It is reckoned together with the other species of lust (2 Corinthians 12:21) where we read: "And have not done penance for the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness," where a gloss says: "**Lasciviousness, i.e., unnatural lust.**" [**St. Thomas’ Reply to Objection 3:** The lustful man intends not human generation but venereal pleasures. It is possible to have this [pleasure] without those acts from which human generation follows: and it is that which is sought in the unnatural vice.” (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 11)

And so it is clear that St. Thomas taught that all non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts (such as sensual kisses and touches) are sinful and against nature (unnatural), since they are the very sensual acts condemned by St. Thomas “from which human generation” cannot follow that the “lustful man” seeks after. “Therefore, since in matrimony man receives by Divine institution the faculty to use his wife **for the begetting of children, he also receives the grace without which he cannot becomingly** do so.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 42, Art. 3) Thus, according to St. Thomas, all spouses are given the grace by God to use his spouse in an appropriate or suitable way (that is, for the procreation of children), which means that any man who acts contrary to this rejects God’s *grace* and damns himself, since he does not use his wife “becomingly”. “**We may also reply that "lasciviousness" relates to certain acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth.**” (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

In addition, St. Thomas also affirms (as St. Augustine) that even married spouses sin in their normal, natural and procreative sexual acts if they do not excuse them; and this proves that he utterly rejects all non-procreative sexual acts as unlawful.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Suppl., Q. 49, Art. 5: “Whether the marriage act can be excused without the marriage goods [of procreation, sacrament, and fidelity]? On the contrary, If the cause be removed the effect is removed. Now the marriage goods are the cause of rectitude in the marriage act. Therefore the marriage act cannot be excused without them. Further, the aforesaid act does not differ from the act of fornication except in the aforesaid goods. But the act of fornication is always evil. Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused by the aforesaid goods. ... Consequently there are only two ways in which married persons can come together without any sin at all, namely in order to have offspring, and in order to pay the debt. Otherwise it is always at least a venial sin.”

Since St. Thomas condemns as sinful even the normal, natural and procreative sexual act when it is not excused – **even though this act is still procreative in itself**, – how much more must he not utterly reject the notion **that non-procreative sexual acts, such as sensual kisses and touches, are allowed for spouses to perform?** To deny this obvious truth is simply said to be dishonest! However, while St. Thomas here erroneously taught that the payment of the marital debt is a sufficient motive for excusing the marital sexual act from sin, this teaching by him is nevertheless contradicted by Pope Pius XI’s authoritative encyclical *Casti Connubii*, which, as we have already shown, **teaches that the marital debt is a secondary end or purpose after the primary motive of procreation of children** (*Casti Connubii*, # 59); still, the fact that this great Saint and Doctor of the Church teaches that the procreative sexual act itself is sinful unless it is excused, totally proves that St. Thomas teaches that all non-procreative sexual acts are unlawful and sinful.

Indeed, it is so obvious that St. Thomas *really* teaches **that even spouses can sin in their lustful touches and kisses when they do them before, during or after the marital sexual act** that he actually teaches that **spouses can even commit mortal sin from simply performing an improper sexual position while performing the procreative sexual act!**

St. Thomas Aquinas, *In Libros Sententiarum*, Chapter IV, Section 31, 2, 3: “Marital

relations are contrary to nature when either the right receptacle or the **proper position required by nature is avoided**. In the first case it is always a mortal sin because no offspring can result, so that the purpose of nature is completely frustrated. But in the second case [of inappropriate sexual positions that are procreative] it is not always a mortal sin, as some say, **though it can be the sign of a passion which is mortal**; at times the latter can occur without sin, as when one's bodily condition does not permit any other method. ***In general, this practice is more serious the more it departs from the natural way.***"

The above of course refutes the idea that St. Thomas does not teach that spouses can sin in their sexual acts by their unnecessary, lustful, or passionate acts or deeds—such as lustful kisses and touches—since St. Thomas even teaches that married spouses can commit the mortal sin of “passion” by merely performing another sexual position beside from the missionary position, even though this act is procreative in itself.

Continuing on with the topic of “**Whether there can be mortal sin in touches and kisses?**”—St. Thomas Aquinas' general refutation of, and reply to all the objections against the Church's moral teaching that there can be mortal sins in sensual kisses and touches also for married people, utterly destroys the notion that one may perform these acts.

Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 4 [continued]:

“On the contrary, A lustful look is less than a touch, a caress or a kiss. But according to Mat. 5:28, "Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." **MUCH MORE THEREFORE ARE LUSTFUL KISSES AND OTHER LIKE THINGS MORTAL SINS.**"

This means that St. Thomas views lustful kisses “and other like things” as *worse* sins than adultery or fornication! This is probably due to the fact that St. Thomas views sexual sins that cannot serve for procreation as **worse sins** than those that can. Notice also that St. Thomas says that “A lustful look is less than a touch, a caress or a kiss” in order to show us that the main sin is in the intention when we lust against our reason and consent to committing unnecessary, intoxicating and shameful acts; but that external acts, such as “a touch, a caress or a kiss” aggravate the guilt of the act, and that these are therefore worse mortal sins than just the lustful look and thought. Thus, if even St. Thomas condemns as mortally sinful a lustful look, in addition to teaching that married people's sexual sins are worse than adultery, **MUCH MORE THEREFORE ARE LUSTFUL KISSES AND OTHER LIKE THINGS**

MORTAL SINS.

In fact, St. Thomas abhors all non-procreative sexual acts with such a detestation and hatred that he even views the vices of fornication, rape or incest as a **lesser sexual crime** than the vice of masturbation. However, one must not think that St. Thomas teaches that fornication, rape or incest are generally lesser sins than masturbation or other non-procreative sexual acts. Fornication, rape and incest are *greater* crimes in the sense of justice, but masturbation is a greater violation of the Natural Law with respect to the sexual act since **it more grievously “transgresses that which has been determined by nature [for the procreation of children]”**. It is therefore considered, according to St. Thomas, as a greater crime in the sense of sins against human sexuality.

Here is the text itself. In the *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q. 154, a. 12, Aquinas says:

“In every genus, worst of all is the corruption of the principle on which the rest depend. Now the principles of reason are those things that are according to nature, because reason presupposes things as determined by nature, before disposing of other things according as it is fitting. This may be observed both in speculative and in practical matters. Wherefore just as in speculative matters the most grievous and shameful error is that which is about things the knowledge of which is naturally bestowed on man, so in matters of action it is most grave and shameful to act against things as determined by nature. **Therefore, since by the unnatural vices man transgresses that which has been determined by nature [for the procreation of children] with regard to the use of venereal actions, it follows that in this matter this sin is gravest of all. After it comes incest**, which, as stated above (Article 9), is contrary to the natural respect which we owe persons related to us. With regard to the other species of lust they imply a transgression merely of that which is determined by right reason, on the presupposition, however, of natural principles. **Now it is more against reason to make use of the venereal act not only with prejudice to the future offspring, but also so as to injure another person besides.**

Wherefore simple fornication, which is committed without injustice to another person, is the least grave among the species of lust. Then, it is a greater injustice to have intercourse with a woman who is subject to another’s authority as regards the act of generation, than as regards merely her guardianship. Wherefore adultery is more grievous than seduction. And both of these are aggravated by the use of violence. Hence rape of a virgin is graver than seduction, and rape of a wife than adultery. And all these are aggravated by coming under the head of sacrilege, as stated above (10, ad 2). ...

Reply to Objection 4. Gravity of a sin depends more on the abuse of a thing than on the omission of the right use. Wherefore among sins against nature, the lowest place belongs to the sin of uncleanness, which consists in the mere omission of copulation with another. While the most grievous is the sin of bestiality, because use of the due species is not observed. Hence a gloss on Genesis 37:2, "He accused his brethren of a most wicked crime," says that "they copulated with cattle." After this comes the sin of sodomy, because use of the right sex is not observed. **Lastly comes the sin of not observing the right manner of copulation, which is more grievous if the abuse regards the "vas" [orifice] than if it affects the manner of copulation in respect of other circumstances.**"

The first objection of the article argues that sins against nature are *not* the worst, because they are not the most contrary to charity: "The more a sin is contrary to charity the graver it is. Now adultery, seduction and rape, which are injurious to our neighbor, seem to be more contrary to the love of our neighbor, than unnatural sins, by which no other person is injured. Therefore sin against nature is not the greatest among the species of lust." St. Thomas replies to this objection: "As the order of right reason is from man, so the order of nature is from God himself. And therefore in sins against nature, in which the very order of nature is violated, injury is done to God himself, the one who ordains nature." In reply to the second objection, St. Thomas says: "Vices against nature are also against God, as stated above (ad 1), and are so much more grievous than the depravity of sacrilege, as the order impressed on human nature is prior to and more firm than any subsequently established order."

Aquinas is focusing on the sins precisely as a violation of the right use of sexuality, and abstracting from other aspects of them. As justice is a greater virtue than chastity, so injustice is a greater evil than unchastity, and thus all things considered, Aquinas would consider rape a greater evil than masturbation or contraception. This formal way of speaking is recognized by some more considerate authors:

"The teaching of medieval theologians that such sexual sins as masturbation, sodomy, and contraception are more perverse, as sexual sins, than fornication or adultery or even rape (the former were said to be *contra naturam* whereas the latter were said to be *praeter naturam*), angers many people today. But this teaching must be understood properly. The medieval theologians are claiming that certain kinds of sexual sins more seriously offend the virtue of chastity than do others. They are not saying that these sins are for this reason less grave as sins than adultery or rape, for instance. After all, adultery and rape are very serious violations of the virtue of justice as well as being

violations of the virtue of chastity. Thus, as a sin, rape is far more serious than masturbation or homosexual sodomy because it not only offends chastity but also gravely violates justice.” (Ronald David Lawler, Joseph M. Boyle, William E. May, *Catholic sexual ethics: a summary, explanation & defense*)

Therefore, non-procreative sexual acts cannot be justified by saying that it leads to the marital act; it is by nature a separate action whose object is gravely immoral. St. Thomas Aquinas confirms this fact: “Now the end which nature intends in sexual union is the begetting and rearing of the offspring. ... **Accordingly to make use of sexual intercourse on account of its inherent pleasure, without reference to the end for which nature intended it, [procreation] is to act against nature, as also is it if the intercourse be not such as may fittingly be directed to that end.**” (*Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 65, Art. 3)

The meaning of St. Thomas is that, if the intercourse is, in part or in entirety, unnatural or non-procreative in nature, such as by acts of foreplay or sensual kisses and touches before, during or after the normal marital act, it is an “act against nature” and thus a mortal sin against the Natural Law since it is not “directed to that end [procreation]” in addition to the fact that it is “to make use of sexual intercourse on account of its inherent pleasure” alone, which the Church have always condemned. Indeed, it is clear that St. Thomas defines all non-procreative sexual acts as “vice against nature” since he says that: “the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason... Now this same matter may be discordant with right reason... because it is inconsistent with the end of the venereal act [procreation]. On this way, as hindering the begetting of children, there is the "vice against nature," which attaches to **every venereal act from which generation cannot follow** [such as foreplay and sensual kisses and touches etc. which are inherently non-procreative sexual acts *from which generation cannot follow*]”. (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1) “Consequently, when kisses and embraces and so forth are for the sake of this [sensual] pleasure they are mortal sins.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 4)

St. Thomas Aquinas continues to answer the question of “**Whether there can be mortal sin in touches and kisses**” between married and unmarried people in the Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 4:

“Further, Cyprian says (Ad Pompon, de Virgin., Ep. lxii), "By their very intercourse, their blandishments, their converse, their embraces, those who are associated in a sleep

that knows neither *honor* nor *shame*, acknowledge their disgrace and crime."

Therefore by doing these things a man is guilty of a crime, that is, of mortal sin."

"I answer that, A thing is said to be a mortal works/sin in two ways. First, by reason of its species, and in this way a kiss, caress, or touch does not, of its very nature, imply a mortal sin, for it is possible to do such things without lustful pleasure, either as being the custom of one's country, or on account of some obligation or reasonable cause. Secondly, a thing is said to be a mortal sin by reason of its cause: thus he who gives an alms, in order to lead someone into heresy, sins mortally on account of his corrupt intention. Now it has been stated above [I-II, Q. 74, A. 8], that it is a mortal sin not only to consent to the act, but also to the delectation [or pleasure] of a mortal sin. Wherefore since fornication is a mortal sin, and much more so the other kinds of lust ^[1] **it follows that in such like sins [that is, sins of lust] not only consent to the act but also consent to the pleasure is a mortal sin.** Consequently, when these kisses and caresses are done for this pleasure [lust] **it follows that they are mortal sins, and only in this way are they said to be lustful. Therefore in so far as they are lustful, they are mortal sins.**"

[1]. "and much more so the other kinds of lust..." i.e., lust committed both inside and outside of marriage. And by the way, St. Thomas also views sexual sins committed **within a marriage** as worse sins than those committed outside of marriage, as we have seen and shall see further on.

And for those who object that St. Thomas Aquinas must be speaking about the unmarried only since he mentions the word "fornicator" or "fornication" in some instances (but not others), know that St. Thomas also teaches that married people can be fornicators, by using the word "fornication" to refer to all unlawful sexual acts, whether in marriage or out of marriage: "If the **husband** [refuses to pay the marital debt without a just cause] . . . then he sins, and his **wife's sin**, should she fall into **FORNICATION** [adultery, impure thoughts or masturbation] on this account, is somewhat imputable to him." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

While the word "fornication" have taken on a meaning in the English language of illicit sexual acts for those who are unmarried, the word that comes from the Latin that St. Thomas uses refers to all unlawful sexual acts, which makes it a fact that cannot be contradicted that St. Thomas teaches that sensual kisses are sinful even in marriage, since it is obvious that

married people, according to St. Thomas, also can be “*fornicators, unclean and covetous people*”.

Hence, it is totally clear from above that when St. Thomas was mentioning the word “fornication,” “lascivious,” “unclean,” or “covetous” person, he was using it to refer to the sins of the married and unmarried people alike. And we know that this is the case, for when St. Thomas condemned lustful kisses and touches above as mortal sins – in the Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1 & 4 – we know that he was referring to *both*, since, as he said, **all fornicators, all unclean people, all covetous and all lascivious people was included in this category of mortal sinners (see objection 1 and reply to objection 1 quoted above).**

Indeed, Our Lord and God Jesus Christ himself defines sexual sin for those who are married as fornication in the Holy Bible: “And I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery. His disciples say unto him: If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry.” (Matthew 19:9-10) Douay Rheims Bible Commentary explains verse 9: “Except it be: In the case of fornication... the wife may be put away: but even then the husband cannot marry another as long as the wife is living.”

The Greek term “*Porneia*” in the Bible that is translated to “fornication” in the English, refers to all unlawful sexual acts. According to the New Testament Greek Lexicon, it is defined as “*illicit sexual intercourse*” and another translation defines it as “*sexual immorality*” and a third defines it as “*unchastity*”. The Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament states, “PORNEIA means “prostitution, unchastity, fornication,” and is used “of every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse” Since in Rom. 1:26f. Paul clearly alludes to homosexuality as sexual immorality, PORNEIA can also refer to homosexuality as sexual immorality...”

Thus, we see that Our Lord allows married people to separate from their spouse or “put away his wife” (but not divorce and remarry) if their spouse commits any “*sexual immorality*” or “*unchastity*”, which includes things **such as acts of masturbation of self or of spouse, oral and anal sex, foreplay, and sensual touches and kisses, or tempting others or the wife to perform such acts or be a part of such acts.** The reason Our Lord allows a good and pure spouse to separate from their lustful spouse is because He knows how much the soul is harmed by non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts, and that the people who perform such acts, are always more eager to tempt other people with their foul lusts and acts, which is why Our Lord have allowed spouses to separate from their lustful and evil spouse. In

truth, to remain with such a lustful spouse could very well be mortally sinful, since one places oneself in the occasion of sin by refusing to avoid things one knows will seriously tempt oneself.

St. Thomas Aquinas explains himself further in another part of his *Summa*, saying that acts “such as **impure** looks, kisses, and touches” regards the virtue of purity, while the virtue of “chastity regards rather sexual union.”

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4: “Consequently **purity regards venereal matters** properly, and especially the **signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches**. And since the latter are more wont to be observed, purity regards rather these external signs [i.e., looks, kisses, and touches], while chastity regards rather sexual union.”

Here we have another great evidence that kisses and touches for venereal pleasure was known very clearly to be sinful, shameful and contrary to purity even by the lay people of St. Thomas’ time. St. Thomas tells us that the virtue of “purity regards venereal matters properly, **and especially the signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches.**” But he adds that the virtue of purity were “**more wont to be observed**” by the people of his own time in regards to these “impure” acts of “impure looks, kisses, and touches,” thus confirming the fact that unnecessary sexual acts, such as kisses and touches for sensual pleasure, is a completely foreign concept to the Church and Her Saints that have been foisted on the modern man and woman through the diabolical media to be a cause of, or even to be “love”, “affection”, or an integral part of the marital act, when it in fact is nothing but filthy lust! “**The activities of marriage itself, if they are not modest and do not take place under the eyes of God as it were, so that the only intention is children, are filth and lust.**” (St. Jerome, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, Book III, Chapter 5:21)

Thus, according to St. Thomas, in contrast to the lustful spouses of our own times, the people of the former times were lucky enough to have this good “shamefacedness” that kept them from performing unnecessary and unlawful sexual acts “**such as impure looks, kisses, and touches.**” Today, it is safe to say that most people have totally rejected and turned upside down the practice of the majority of the people of St. Thomas’ time to abstain from “impure looks, kisses, and touches”, for while people still certainly perform the normal sexual act, each such act is suffused by sensual kisses and touches, in addition to the fact that most of them also performs acts of just kissing and touching as individual acts without performing the normal sexual act at all.

In addition, it is very important and of worth noting that St. Thomas, in the context of this quotation, referred to the marital sexual act, by using the words **“the conjugal act”** as well as **“of marriage,”** which directly refutes one of the principle objections of the heretical objectors to the condemnation of sensual kisses and touches by the Church and Her Saints (that is, that the quotes doesn’t apply to marriage or the marital act):

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4: **“I answer that,** As stated above (Objection 2), "pudicitia" [purity] takes its name from "pudor," which signifies shame. Hence purity must needs be properly about the things of which man is most ashamed. Now men are most ashamed of venereal acts, as Augustine remarks (De Civ. Dei xiv, 18), **so much so that even the conjugal act, which is adorned by the honesty [Cf. 145] of marriage, is not devoid of shame: and this because the movement of the organs of generation is not subject to the command of reason, as are the movements of the other external members.** Now man is ashamed not only of this sexual union but also of all the signs thereof, as the Philosopher observes (Rhet. Ii, 6). Consequently **purity regards venereal matters properly, and especially the signs thereof, such as impure looks, kisses, and touches.** And since the latter are more wont to be observed, purity regards rather these external signs [i.e., looks, kisses, and touches], while chastity regards rather sexual union.”

In another part of his *Summa*, St. Thomas speaks about the **“shamefacedness,” whereby one recoils from the disgrace that is contrary to temperance** – which sadly is lacking in deviant lustful spouses – and he shows that **“vices of intemperance”** that arouse the sexual desire, such as “kissing, touching, or fondling,” **are contrary to the virtue of “purity.”**

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 143, Art. 1: “... there are two integral parts of temperance, **“shamefacedness,” whereby one recoils from the disgrace that is contrary to temperance,** and "honesty," whereby one loves the beauty of temperance. For, as stated above (Q[141], A[2], ad 3), temperance more than any other virtue lays claim to a certain comeliness, **and the vices of intemperance excel others in disgrace.** The subjective parts of a virtue are its species: and the species of a virtue have to be differentiated according to the difference of matter or object. Now temperance is about pleasures of touch, which are of two kinds. For some are directed to nourishment: and in these as regards meat, there is "abstinence," [from gluttony] and as regards drink properly there is "sobriety." [from

drunkenness] Other pleasures are directed to the power of procreation, [that is, they arouse the sexual desire] and in these as regards the principal pleasure of the act itself of procreation, there is "chastity," [from acts of adultery, fornication or other unlawful sexual acts] **and as to the pleasures incidental to the act, resulting, for instance, from kissing, touching, or fondling, we have "purity [from all such non-procreative sexual acts]."** ... Now it belongs to temperance to moderate pleasures of touch, which are most difficult to moderate. Wherefore any virtue that is effective of moderation in some matter or other, and restrains the appetite in its impulse towards something, may be reckoned a part of temperance, as a virtue annexed thereto."

Here St. Thomas Aquinas is discussing temperance as a virtue *as opposed to the "vices of intemperance"*, and he says that the contrary species of the matter or object of "kissing, touching, or fondling," is purity. This means that "kissing, touching, or fondling" can be a means of *impurity*, and a *vice of intemperance*, and it shows us that St. Thomas, in this context (as in the other quoted above), referred to it as impurity.

Furthermore, we here see the fact we have already spoken about that only spouses who have lost their "shamefacedness" that St. Thomas speaks about are able to perform such shameful acts as kisses and touches for venereal pleasure. Sad to say, but it is exactly their lack of the most beneficial "**shamefacedness, whereby one recoils from the disgrace that is contrary to temperance**" as well as their lack of shame and their forgetfulness of God's presence, and that God's eyes sees them and all their unnecessary and lascivious acts, kisses and touches that are performed in connection to the marital act, or as an individual act separated from it—that are the reason for why they dare to perform these unlawful and shameful acts. "**Damascene** (De Fide Orth. ii, 15) **and Gregory of Nyssa** [Nemesius, (De Nat. Hom. xx)] **say that "shamefacedness is fear of doing a disgraceful deed or of a disgraceful deed done."**" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 144, Art. 2) And in Reply to Objection 1 of the same article, St. Thomas states: "**Shamefacedness properly regards disgrace as due to sin which is a voluntary defect [of the will]. Hence the Philosopher says (Rhet. ii, 6) that "a man is more ashamed of those things of which he is the cause [of doing]."**"

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 144, Art. 1, Reply to Objection 2: "**As stated above, shamefacedness is fear of baseness and disgrace. Now it has been stated (142, 4) that the vice of intemperance is most base and disgraceful.** Wherefore shamefacedness pertains more to

temperance than to any other virtue, by reason of its motive cause, which is a base action though not according to the species of the passion, namely fear [from being shamed*]. **Nevertheless in so far as the vices opposed to other virtues are base and disgraceful, shamefacedness may also pertain to other virtues.**”

* **“Now shamefacedness is inconsistent with perfection, because it is the fear of something base, namely of that which is disgraceful. ... Therefore shamefacedness, properly speaking, is not a virtue, since it falls short of the perfection of virtue.”** (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 144, Art. 1)

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 144, Art. 4: “I answer that, As stated above (1 and 2) shamefacedness is fear of some disgrace. **Now it may happen in two ways that an evil is not feared: first, because it is not reckoned an evil;** secondly because one reckons it impossible with regard to oneself, or as not difficult to avoid. Accordingly shame may be lacking in a person in two ways. **First, because the things that should make him ashamed are not deemed by him to be disgraceful; and in this way those who are steeped in sin are without shame, for instead of disapproving of their sins, they boast of them.** Secondly, because they apprehend disgrace as impossible to themselves, or as easy to avoid. On this way the old and the virtuous are not shamefaced. Yet they are so disposed, that if there were anything disgraceful in them they would be ashamed of it. Wherefore the Philosopher says (Ethic. iv, 9) that "shame is in the virtuous hypothetically.””

Though they are not in themselves mortal sins when they are *not* performed for the sake of venereal pleasure, St. Thomas Aquinas clearly recognizes that kisses and touches come to be treated as such “ex sua causa,” “because of a wicked intention,” as the Blackfriars edition of the *Summa* renders it (cf. *Summa Theologica* 2a.2ae.154.4; 43: 220-221); kisses that are intended to arouse, to incite venereal pleasure, are properly called libidinous and are condemned as mortal sins.

In fact, the Angelic doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, defines lust in the following manner:

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 153, Art. 3: “I answer that, The more necessary a thing is, the more it behooves one to observe the order of reason in its regard; wherefore the more sinful it becomes if the order of reason be forsaken. Now the use of venereal acts, as stated in the foregoing Article,

is most necessary for the common good, **namely the preservation of the human race**. Wherefore there is the greatest necessity for observing the order of reason in this matter: so that if anything be done in this connection **against the dictate of reason's ordering, it will be a sin.** *Now lust consists essentially in exceeding the order and mode of reason in the matter of venereal acts.* Wherefore without any doubt lust is a sin.”

All of this absolutely proves that all unnecessary sexual acts like sensual kisses and touches are sinful! for according to St. Thomas, whenever spouses go beyond “the order and mode of reason in the matter of venereal acts” during marital relations, they committed the sin of lust. Notice that St. Thomas says “that if **anything** be done in this connection against the dictate of reason's ordering, it will be a sin.” He says that **“anything”** that is done “against the dictate of reason's ordering” is sinful, and not only *some* things (as many heretics of our own times claim), and that “lust consists essentially in exceeding the order and mode of reason in the matter of venereal acts”, that is, exceeding that which “is most necessary for the common good, **namely the preservation of the human race.**” Since the venereal act “is most necessary for the common good, **namely the preservation of the human race**” it is a direct sin against nature to perform unnatural or non-procreative sexual acts. Thus, according to St. Thomas, since “the use of venereal acts” are permitted for the purpose of procreation, “there is the greatest necessity for observing the order of reason in this matter: so that if anything be done in this connection **against the dictate of reason's ordering, it will be a sin.** *Now lust consists essentially in exceeding the order and mode of reason in the matter of venereal acts.* Wherefore without any doubt lust is a sin.” Therefore, it is obvious from the Natural Law itself that sensual kisses and touches are “exceeding the order and mode of reason in the matter of venereal acts” since they are unnecessary and not able to procreate children, which is the purpose of the marital sexual act, according to the teaching of the Church.

St. Thomas continues to expound on this teaching in the following question:

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1: “I answer that As stated above (Question 153, Article 3), **the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason.** ... Reply to Objection 6. According to a gloss on this passage [Galatians 5:19] ***“lust” there signifies any kind of excess.***”

What, then, is excess in the marital act? Again, let's ask St. Thomas Aquinas.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1: “Reply to Objection 5. As a gloss says on this passage, "uncleanness" stands for **lust against nature**... Reply to Objection 6. **We may also reply that "lasciviousness" relates to certain acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth.**”

Notice that St. Thomas even rejects as lascivious and unlawful “**acts circumstantial to the venereal act, for instance kisses, touches, and so forth**” and so, it is clear that St. Thomas taught that all non-procreative and unnecessary sexual acts are sinful and against nature. And the infallible word of God of course agrees with this truth of nature, teaching us that: “*The works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury [lust]... Of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, **that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God.**” (Galatians 5:19, 21)*

Commenting on Ephesians 5:3-5 just mentioned by St. Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica*, *The Haydock Bible Commentary* explains the sin of **covetousness** and **uncleanness**:

“**Ver. 3. Covetousness.** The Latin word is generally taken for a coveting or immoderate desire of money and riches. St. Jerome and others observe, that the Greek word in this and divers other places in the New Testament may signify **ANY UNSATIABLE DESIRE, OR THE LUSTS OF SENSUAL PLEASURES;** and on this account, **St. Jerome thinks that it is here joined with *fornication* and uncleanness** [i.e., sexual sins]. --- **Ver. 5. Nor covetous person, which is a serving of idols. It is clear enough by the Greek that the covetous man is called an idolater**, whose idol is mammon; though it may be also said of other sinners, **that the vices they are addicted to are their idols.** (Witham)”

The main point we can gather from this explanation of St. Thomas that he so eloquently gives to us is that kisses and touches for sensual pleasure are completely unnecessary for procreation of children and serves nothing but a shameful, selfish, sinful and condemned lust. They are therefore mortal sins for both the married and unmarried and are unreasonable and unnatural. “*May marriage be honorable in every way, and may the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.*” (Hebrews 13:4)

Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #40, September 24, 1665 and March 18, 1666: “It is a probable opinion which states that a kiss is only venial when

performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss, if danger of further consent and *pollution* [or ejaculation] is excluded.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Alexander VII.** (Denz. 1140)

Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres Complètes*: “Several doctors [of Divinity] maintain that willingly fostering wicked carnal thoughts in order to enjoy oneself is a deadly sin, even without doing the deed. Be sure, however, that kisses, gazes, and fondling, mainly caused by such wicked and lustful thoughts, without anything more, is an even greater sin. ... it is even worse if these kisses do not respect the honesty which is usually kept in public.

“... **Is it a sin to kiss?** I answer that kisses between spouses who maintain the same modesty as the kiss of peace at church, or who do them openly, are without sin. If they do them so immodestly [and lustfully] that I cannot be more precise, it is an abominable deadly sin.”

Athenagoras the Athenian (c. 175 A.D.): “On behalf of those, then, to whom we apply the names of brothers and sisters, and other designations of relationship, we exercise the greatest care that their bodies should remain undefiled and uncorrupted; for the Logos again says to us, “If any one kiss a second time because it has given him pleasure, [he sins];” adding, “Therefore the kiss, or rather the salutation, should be given with the greatest care, since, if there be mixed with it the least defilement of thought, it excludes us from eternal life.”” (*A Plea for the Christians*, Chapter XXXII.--Elevated Morality of the Christians)

St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 198 A.D.): “Love and the Kiss of Charity. And if we are called to the kingdom of God, let us walk worthy of the kingdom, loving God and our neighbour. But love is not proved by a kiss, but by kindly feeling. But there are those, that do nothing but make the churches resound with a kiss, not having love itself within. For this very thing, the shameless use of a kiss, which ought to be mystic, occasions foul suspicions and evil reports. The apostle calls the kiss holy. When the kingdom is worthily tested, we dispense the affection of the soul by a chaste and closed mouth, by which chiefly gentle manners are expressed. But there is another unholy kiss, full of poison, counterfeiting sanctity. Do you not know that spiders, merely by touching the mouth, afflict men with pain? And often kisses inject the poison of licentiousness. It is then very manifest to us, that a kiss is not love. For the love meant is the love of God. "And this is the love of God," says John, "that we keep His commandments;" not that we stroke each other on the mouth. "And His commandments are not grievous." But salutations of beloved ones in the ways, full as

they are of foolish boldness, are characteristic of those who wish to be conspicuous to those without, and have not the least particle of grace. For if it is proper mystically "in the closet" to pray to God, it will follow that we are also to greet mystically our neighbour, whom we are commanded to love second similarly to God, within doors, "redeeming the time." "For we are the salt of the earth." (*The Paedagogus* or *Instructor*, Book III, Chapter XI)

About sexual thoughts and fantasies inside and outside of the marital act

It is of the Divine law that a person may never willfully entertain sexual thoughts in his mind, even about his wife, outside of the marital act. The only sexual act the Church allows is the normal, natural, and procreative marital act. Everything else is contrary to the only primary end or intent of the sexual act—the procreation of children. If a person willfully entertains sexual thoughts outside of the marital act or unnecessarily puts himself into sexual temptations when there is no need to, he or she commits a mortal sin. Consequently, one may not even entertain or consent to sexual thoughts about one's own wife or husband outside of the marital act, but must resist these thoughts or temptations as one would resist the thought of adultery or fornication: "Several doctors [of Divinity] maintain that willingly fostering wicked carnal thoughts in order to enjoy oneself is a deadly sin, even without doing the deed. Be sure, however, that kisses, gazes, and fondling, mainly caused by such wicked and lustful thoughts, without anything more, is an even greater sin. ... it is even worse if these kisses do not respect the honesty which is usually kept in public." (Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres Complètes*)

Athenagoras the Athenian (c. 175 A.D.): "But we [Christians] are so far from practising promiscuous intercourse, that it is not lawful among us to indulge even a lustful look. "For," says He [Christ], "he that looks on a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery already in his heart." [Matthew 5:28] Those, then, who are forbidden to look at anything more than that for which God formed the eyes, which were intended to be a light to us, and to whom a wanton look is adultery, the eyes being made for other purposes, and who are to be called to account for their very thoughts, how can any one doubt that such persons practice self-control?" (*A Plea for the Christians*, Chapter XXXII.--Elevated Morality of the Christians)

Simply said, women or men are not toys, playthings, or "bunnies" from which to derive sexual stimulation. When women or even one's own wife are used in sexual fantasies, they are sexually abused, even if they are untouched. Many men rape many women each day and commit adultery, fornication and illicit sexual acts without laying a hand on them. Women

also rape men and commit adultery, fornication and illicit sexual acts in this way. These rapes, fornications, illicit sexual acts and adulteries are not marked by physical violence but by psychological warfare. Because a person is often unaware of being used and abused, and because the abuser often does not fathom the real extent of the severity of his crime, this makes these mental and visual rapes/abuses/sexual crimes seem less devastating. Nevertheless, grave sin with all its degradation and death is being committed.

For instance, it would be quite sick for a husband not to resist sexual thoughts about his wife or to continually entertain such thoughts while at work or while on a trip, because while at work or while on a trip there is no chance for him to lawfully quiet his concupiscence and perform the marital act for procreational purposes. That's why dwelling on such thoughts only would distract him spiritually and temporally and could even lead him into committing other sins, such as masturbation or adultery (in thought as well as in deed). All who do not wish to be damned must thus resist sexual thoughts and temptations outside of the marital act and may not entertain them in anyway.

It is of course one thing to be tempted to have sexual relations with one's own wife or someone else (which is not sinful) and a whole other thing to consent to having sex with them in one's thought or mind (which is sinful). Thus, a husband and wife may never consent to any sexual thoughts or fantasies about their spouse outside of the normal and natural marital act. However, that is not to say that it's licit to think about bad or illicit things or give consent to them during the marital act—as so many evil and heretical people and so-called theologians actually teach today—for that is not what it means. What it means is simply that a person can only fully consent to, and give way to, sexual thoughts and desires (about their spouse) during the sexual act without committing any sin, **so long as these thoughts range within what is lawful, natural, reasonable and necessary for the completion of the marital act to occur.**

St. Thomas Aquinas wonderfully explains this thought process further to us in his *Summa*:

“Accordingly a man who is thinking of fornication, may delight in either of two things: first, in the thought itself [*by merely thinking about it but not necessarily giving consent to it or the pleasure derived from it*], secondly, in the fornication thought of. Now the delectation [pleasure] in the thought itself results from the inclination of the appetite to the thought; and the thought itself is not in itself a mortal sin; sometimes indeed it is only a venial sin, as when a man thinks of such a thing for no purpose; and sometimes it is no sin at all, as when a man has a purpose in thinking of it; for instance,

he may wish to preach or dispute about it. Consequently such affection or delectation [pleasure] in respect of the thought of fornication is not a mortal sin in virtue of its genus, but is sometimes a venial sin and sometimes no sin at all: wherefore neither is it a mortal sin to consent to such a thought [*it only becomes a mortal sin if one consents to and wants to have the illicit pleasure in the thought*]. In this sense the first opinion is true. But that a man in thinking of fornication [or other unreasonable or sinful sexual acts] takes pleasure in the act thought of, is due to his desire being inclined to this act. Wherefore the fact that a man **consents to such a delectation [pleasure], amounts to nothing less than a consent to the inclination of his appetite to fornication [or other sinful sexual acts]**: for no man takes pleasure except in that which is in conformity with his appetite. **Now it is a mortal sin, if a man deliberately chooses that his appetite be conformed to what is in itself a mortal sin. Wherefore such a consent to delectation [or pleasure] in a mortal sin, is itself a mortal sin, as the second opinion maintains.**” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part of the Second Part, Q 74, Art. 8)

Thus, if even pleasurable sexual thoughts outside of the marital act of one’s own legitimate spouse is sinful if not fought against, how much more must not the sensual thoughts of one’s neighbor be? If even kisses between married spouses for the purpose of carnal pleasure is condemned as a mortal sin by the Catholic Church, how much more must not the perversions of the marital acts be that so many spouses today practice? **“For to Christians this rule of life is given**, that we should love the Lord Our God with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind, and our neighbor as ourselves... God alone, to find whom is the happiest life, must be worshiped **in perfect purity and chastity... in chaste and faithful obedience, not to gratify passion, but for the propagation of offspring**, and for domestic society.” (St. Augustine, *On the Morals of the Catholic Church*, Chapter 30, Section 62, A.D. 388)

St. Alphonsus, Precepts of the Decalogue, Chapter VI, The Sixth and Ninth Commandments: “1. WHAT IS ONE OBLIGED TO CONFESS IN THE MATTER OF IMPURITY?

“I will only observe here, in general, that it is necessary to confess not only all the acts, but also improper touches, all unchaste looks, all obscene words, especially when spoken with pleasure, or with danger of scandal to others. It is, moreover, necessary to confess all immodest thoughts.

“Some ignorant persons imagine that they are bound only to confess impure actions: they must also confess all the bad thoughts to which they have consented.

Human laws forbid only external acts, because men only see what is manifested externally; but God, who sees the heart, condemns every evil thought: "*Man sees those things that appear; but the Lord beholdeth the heart.*" (I Kings, xvi. 7.) **This holds good for every species of bad thoughts to which the will consents. Indeed, whatever it is a sin to do, it is also in the sight of God a sin to desire.**

"2. WHAT DISTINCTION IS TO BE MADE IN REGARD TO BAD THOUGHTS?

"I said, thoughts to which the will consents. Hence, it is necessary to know how to determine when a bad thought is a mortal sin, when it is venial, and when it is not sinful at all. In every sin of thought there are three things: the suggestion, the pleasure, and the consent.

"1. The *suggestion* is the first thought of doing an evil action that is presented to the mind. This is no sin; on the contrary, when the will rejects it we merit a reward. "As often," says St. Antonine, "as you resist, so often you are crowned." Even the saints have been tormented by bad thoughts. To conquer a temptation against chastity, St. Bernard threw himself among thorns, St. Peter of Alcantara cast himself into an icy pool. ... St. Catharine of Siena was once assailed by the devil for three days with impure temptations; after the third day our Lord appeared to her in order to console her. She said to him: "Ah, my Saviour, where hast Thou been these three days?" He replied: "I was in your heart to give you strength to resist the temptation by which you were attacked." He then showed her that her heart had become purer than it was before.

"2. After the suggestion comes the *pleasure*. [Generally] **When a person is not careful to banish the temptation immediately, but stops to reason with it, the thought instantly begins to delight him, and give him pleasure, and thus draws the person on to give his consent to it.** As long as the will withholds the consent, the sin is only venial, and not mortal. **But if the soul does not then turn to God, and make an effort to resist the pleasure, it will easily go on to give its consent. "Unless," says St. Anselm, "a person repel the pleasure, it passes into consent, and kills the soul."** A woman who had the reputation of a saint was tempted to sin with one of her servants; she neglected to banish the thought instantly, and so in her heart consented, and fell into sin, but only in thought. She afterwards fell into a more grievous sin, for she concealed in confession the complacency she had taken in the bad thought, and died miserably. But because she was believed to be a saint, the bishop had her buried in his own chapel. On the morning after her burial she appeared to him, enveloped in flames, and confessed, but without profit, that she was damned on account of the bad thought to which she had consented.

"3. **The soul loses the grace of God and is condemned to hell the instant a person *consents* to the desire of committing sin, or delights in thinking of**

the immodest action as if he were then committing it. This is called *morose delectation*, which is different from the sin of desire.

“My dear Christians, be careful to banish these bad thoughts, by instantly turning for help to Jesus and Mary. He who contracts the habit of consenting to bad thoughts exposes himself to great danger of dying in sin, for the reason that it is very easy to commit sins of thought. In a quarter of an hour a person may entertain a thousand wicked desires, and for every evil desire to which he consents he deserves hell. At the hour of death the dying cannot commit sins of action, because they are unable to move; but they can easily indulge sins of thought, and the devil suggests every kind of wicked thought and desire to them when they are in that state. St. Eleazar, as Surius relates, was so violently and frequently tempted by bad thoughts at the hour of death, that he exclaimed: "Oh, how great is the power of the devils at the hour of death!" The saint, however, conquered his enemies, because he was in the habit of rejecting bad thoughts; but woe to those who have acquired a habit of consenting to them! Father Segneri tells us of a man who during his life had often consented to bad thoughts. At the hour of death he confessed his sins with great compunction, so that every one regarded him as a saint; but after death he appeared and said that he was damned; he stated that he made a good confession, and that God had pardoned all his sins; but before death the devil represented to him that, should he recover, it would be ingratitude to forsake the woman who loved him so much. He banished the first temptation: a second came; he then delayed for a little, but in the end he rejected it: he was assailed by a third temptation, and consented to it. Thus, he said, he had died in sin, and was damned.”
(*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 466-469)

Foreplay is intrinsically evil

The Catholic Church teaches that foreplay between spouses is intrinsically evil. Hence, any sexual activity that cannot procreate if procreation were possible is intrinsically evil and thus a mortal sin.

Tobias 8:9 “And now, Lord, thou knowest, that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity [children], in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.”

Therefore, any sexual activity between spouses for any purpose outside of sexual intercourse is intrinsically evil because any such sexual activity cannot procreate even if the wife was

fertile and hence the primary motive of procreation cannot be present.

*Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to St. Bridget, saying: “**They [lustful spouses] seek a warmth and sexual lust that will perish and love flesh that will be eaten by worms.** ... When the couple comes to bed, my Spirit leaves them immediately and the spirit of impurity approaches instead because they only come together for the sake of lust and do not discuss or think about anything else with each other.... **Such a married couple will never see my face unless they repent.**” (Jesus Christ speaking to St. Bridget – Excerpt from *The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 26)*

St. Augustine of Hippo, in his moral treatise ‘On the Good of Marriage,’ writes on the subject of sexual intercourse within marriage.

St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 11, A.D. 401: “... nor be changed into that use which is against nature, on which the Apostle could not be silent, when speaking of the excessive corruptions of unclean and impious men... by changing the natural use into that which is against nature, which is more damnable when it is done in the case of husband or wife.”

The expression ‘*that use which is against nature*’ refers to unnatural sexual acts, such as oral, anal, or manual sex (masturbation). St. Augustine condemns such acts unequivocally. He even states that such unnatural sexual acts are more damnable (i.e. even more serious mortal sins) when these take place within marriage. The reason why is that God is even more offended by a sexual mortal sin that takes place within the Sacrament of Marriage, since this offense is not only against nature, but also against a Holy Sacrament. “*So then, of all to whom much has been given, much will be required. And of those to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be asked.*” (Luke 12:48)

Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law*: “Also, Jerome, [on Ephesians 5:25]: C. 14. The procreation of children in marriage is praiseworthy, but a prostitute’s sensuality is damnable in a wife. So, as we have said, the act is conceded in marriage for the sake of children. But the sensuality found in a prostitute’s embraces is damnable in a wife.”

St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 12, A.D. 401: “For, whereas that natural use, when it pass beyond the compact of marriage, that is, beyond the necessity of begetting, is pardonable in the case of a wife, damnable in the case of an harlot; that

which is against nature is execrable when done in the case of an harlot, but more execrable in the case of a wife.... But, when the man shall wish to use the member of the wife not allowed for this purpose, the wife is more shameful, if she suffer it to take place in her own case, than if in the case of another woman.”

In this passage, St. Augustine first compares natural and normal sexual relations within marriage done out of impure desires to the same natural sexual acts outside of marriage. He teaches that having natural and normal sexual relations within marriage, when done to satisfy a somewhat impure desire, is pardonable, that is, a venial sin, but that natural sexual relations outside of marriage is damnable, which means a mortal sin. Then St. Augustine goes on to consider ‘*that which is against nature*,’ that is, unnatural sexual acts such as oral and anal sex, foreplay, kisses and touches for sensual pleasure, and masturbation of self or of spouse. He condemns such unnatural sexual acts as ‘*execrable*’ (utterly detestable, abominable, abhorrent). Therefore these acts are among the worst of the sexual mortal sins. He also teaches that unnatural sexual acts within marriage, far from being permitted because they take place within marriage, are even worse, calling them ‘*even more execrable*,’ than the same unnatural sexual acts outside of marriage. Again, this is because the sin is not only against nature, but against a Holy Sacrament instituted by Christ Himself for the sake of our salvation.

Therefore, unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts do not become permissible when these take place within marriage. Instead, **unnatural sexual acts are made even more sinful when they take place within marriage because they offend against both nature and a Holy Sacrament.**

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 8: “And since the man who is too ardent a lover of his wife acts counter to the good of marriage if he use her indecently, although he be not unfaithful, he may in a sense be called an adulterer; and even more so than he that is too ardent a lover of another woman.”

Notice in the quote above that St. Thomas held sexual sins within marriage to be worse than adultery, because the act occurs within marriage. He did not teach that all sexual acts between a husband and wife are moral as many perverted “Catholics” nowadays do.

The phrase ‘*if he use her indecently*’ refers to unnatural sexual acts within marriage. This is clear because the good of marriage emphasized by St. Thomas is the procreation of children

(*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 2). St. Thomas could not be referring to natural marital relations when he says ‘*if he use her indecently*’ because even natural marital relations done with some disorder of desire still retains the procreative function. But unnatural sexual acts lack this meaning, and so are contrary to the good of marriage. **The use of unnatural sexual acts within marriage is therefore worse than adultery.**

St. Thomas again condemns this same type of act later in the same question.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 12: “Lastly comes the sin of not observing the right manner of copulation, which is more grievous if the abuse regards the ‘vas’ [the woman] than if it affects the manner of copulation in respect of other circumstances.”

First, the word ‘*vas*’ is Latin for vessel, referring to the use of other bodily orifices for sexual acts. If a husband treats his wife lustfully or inordinately during natural marital relations, (or if he sees his wife as a mere sexual object given him to satisfy his lust) he sins. But he commits a more grievous offense, which is called “abuse” by St. Thomas, if he sins by committing unnatural sexual acts (that is, using any part of the body as a ‘vessel’ or ‘means’ for achieving sexual arousal). Here St. Thomas explicitly (but in discrete language) condemns the sin of unnatural sexual acts within marriage.

Second, it is clear (in the quote from article 8 above) that St. Thomas taught that a married couple is not justified in committing any unnatural sexual acts whatsoever within marriage. Otherwise, he would not have taught that a man who is too ardent a lover of his wife commits a sin that is like adultery and yet worse than adultery. Therefore, those who claim that there are no sins for a husband and wife having sexual relations with each other are in error.

Third, neither does St. Thomas even consider the absurd argument that acts which are intrinsically evil and gravely immoral by themselves could become good and moral when combined in some way with natural marital relations open to life. If this were the case, St. Thomas could not have compared a man who is too ardent a lover of his wife to an adulterer. For if he took the position of certain heretical modern-day commentators, he would have to say that a husband’s ardent love would be entirely justified, as long as “the semen are not misdirected.” Notice that St. Thomas takes no such position. He does not sum up the marital act as merely the proper direction of semen, as so many persons teach today.

In order for a sexual act to be moral, each act must be natural, marital, and procreative. When considering whether or not an act is natural, marital, and procreative, each sexual act must be considered by itself. One cannot combine or string together several sexual acts, where only some are open to life, and then justify one act by combination with another act. One cannot precede, combine, or follow an act of natural marital relations with a sexual act that is unnatural or not open to life, and then justify one by the other. Indeed, **“There would be no adulteries, and debaucheries, and prostitution of women, if it were known to all, that whatever is sought beyond the desire of procreation is condemned by God.”** (Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes*, Book V, Chapter VIII, A.D. 307)

Therefore the excuse that some spouses must perform sexual activities outside of normal and natural sexual intercourse as a preparation for sexual intercourse is condemned by the Church. It is a sinful excuse that allows spouses to perpetuate their sexual perversions by sexually abusing their body parts that have nothing whatsoever to do with procreation. If people practice any variation of foreplay, they will without a doubt be cast to Hell to suffer and burn for all eternity.

Ephesians 5:3-12 “But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints: Or obscenity, or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose; but rather giving of thanks. For know you this and understand, that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person (which is a serving of idols), hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words. For because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. For you were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord. Walk then as children of the light. For the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice, and truth; Proving what is well pleasing to God: And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For the things that are done by them in secret, it is a shame even to speak of.”

Oral and anal sex and stimulation is intrinsically evil and against the Natural Law

St. Barnabas, *Letter of Barnabas*, Chapter 10:8, A.D. 74: **“Moreover, he [Moses] has rightly detested the weasel [Leviticus 11:29]. For he means, ‘Thou shalt not be like to those whom we hear of as committing wickedness with the mouth through uncleanness [oral sex]; nor shalt thou be joined to those impure women who commit iniquity with the mouth with the body through**

uncleanness.” (Chapter X.--Spiritual Significance of the Precepts of Moses Respecting Different Kinds of [Forbidden] Food)

Very simply, the mouth and the anus have a purpose. Nature tells us that God made the mouth for the intake of food and drink, and the anus for the excretion of feces. Moreover, nature tells us that if we begin to use the mouth and the anus in improper ways, then bodily infection, disease, and death may be the result.

St. Augustine, *On The Good of Marriage*, Section 11-12, A.D. 401: “For necessary sexual intercourse for begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is alone worthy of marriage. **But that which goes beyond this necessity [of begetting children] no longer follows reason, but lust.** ... [And] they [must] not turn away from them the mercy of God... **by changing the natural use into that which is against nature, which is more damnable when it is done in the case of husband or wife.** Of so great power is the ordinance of the Creator, and the order of creation, that... **when the man shall wish to use a body part of the wife not allowed for this purpose, the wife is more shameful, if she suffer it to take place in her own case, than if in the case of another woman.**”

St. Theodore of Tarsus (A.D. 602-690), Archbishop of Canterbury, in *The Penitential of Theodore*, which is based directly on his teachings written down by his pupil, says the following concerning these evil sins: “He who ejaculates into the mouth of another shall do penance for seven years; this is the worst of evils.’ Elsewhere it was his judgment that both participants in the offense shall do penance to the end of life; or twelve years, or as above seven.” (*The Penitential of Theodore*, Chapter 2, Of Fornication)

And, as we have seen, St. Thomas Aquinas brands as an unnatural sin the behavior of a man and woman who “do not observe the right manner of copulation”. But he adds that such a sin “is more grievous if the abuse regards the receptacle (vas) than if it affects the manner of copulation in respect of other circumstances”. The only “fitting receptacle” was of course the wife’s vagina. Any place else was called an “unfitting receptacle” (vas indebitum). “Lastly comes the sin of not observing the right manner of copulation, which is **more grievous** if the abuse regards the ‘vas’ [vessel, orifice] than if it affects the manner of copulation in respect of other circumstances.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 12)

Among other early condemnations of birth prevention and unnatural sexual acts are the first

century *Letter of Barnabas*, the holy Apostle and Saint of Jesus Christ who was born in Cyprus and died in Salamis in around 61 A.D., which denounces the wicked practice of “those impure women who commit iniquity with the mouth [oral sex] with the body through uncleanness” (*Barnabas X*, 8) and of having intercourse while making conception impossible. Another important writing concerning this topic is the mid-second century *Apology* of St. Justin the Martyr (c. 100-165 A.D.) who describes the marital problems of a young Christian convert. Her evil husband tried to satisfy his sexual urges by copulating with her “against the law of nature and against what is right.” Her family prevailed on her to remain with the man for a while, but finally she could not tolerate his morals and left him. Justin praises her conduct in refusing to participate in the man’s “impious conduct” (*Apologia II*, 1).

In the canons of John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople, we find that:

“If someone commits sodomy upon his wife, he is penanced for eight years, eating dry foods after the ninth hour, and doing two hundred prostrations.” (*The Canons of John the Faster*, Canon 35, Interpretation, A.D. 580)

Another translation reads:

“If any man perform arseneocotia upon his wife, he shall be penanced for eight years, faring the while with xerophagy after the ninth hour and doing two hundred metanies daily.” (Ibid)

“Arseneocotia” is a term used quite often in the ancient canons to refer to male homosexual behavior (oral and anal sex), but here it refers specifically to such acts being performed upon a wife. Compare this to the penance for bestiality from John:

“If any man lie with a beast many times, when he has a wife, he shall be penanced eight years; but if he had no wife, and did so only once or twice or three times at the most, he shall be penanced three years, with xerophagy [or, more explicitly speaking, with only bread and water] after the ninth hour and doing three hundred metanies.” (Ibid)

The penance for committing sodomy on the wife is greater than for an unmarried man to commit bestiality! That really tells you how the Church views this vile act. It is totally degrading to the wife, making her a beast, or even less than one.

The Interpretation (by Nikodemus) of *The Canons of John the Faster* (580 A.D.) explains this

fact in further detail: “Note that in the Canons of the Faster, from a manuscript codex which was found, sodomy has the following divisions: sodomy is of two types, either committed upon women, when men fall with them into that which is against nature, or committed upon men. Another division is that, among men, one commits the act, while the other suffers the act, while another both commits and suffers the act. The worst sin is for someone to both commit and suffer the act. And for someone to commit the act upon a woman that is not his wife is worse than committing it with men. **But for someone to commit it upon his own wife is worse than committing it upon a woman who is not his wife. For these things then, we conclude that, the married couple which falls into that which is against nature, is penanced more heavily than a sodomist committing it upon another man or upon a woman who is not his wife.**”

Other testimonies of the truth that sodomitical acts are damnable and inherently sinful and even comparable to the crime of murder, is found in Canon 7 and 87 of the Canons of St. Basil the Great (c. 329-379 A.D.), and it shows us how the Church views such perverted sexual acts:

St. Basil the Great, Bishop, Confessor and Doctor of the Church: “**Sodomists and bestialists and murderers and sorcerers and adulterers and idolaters deserve the same condemnation...** for they have surrendered themselves to Satan...” (*The Canons of St. Basil the Great*, Canon 7)

St. Basil the Great, Bishop, Confessor and Doctor of the Church: “**But how many other forms of impure passions the school of demons invented, but Holy Writ does not even refer to, being averse to sully its fair character by naming shameful things, but merely alluding to them in general terms, as St. Paul the Apostle says: "But fornication, and all other filth, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints" (Eph. 5:3), comprehending under the noun "filth" the unspeakable doings of sodomy and those of females too, so that silence does not by any means afford a license to lovers of pleasures.** As for me, however, I say that the Legislator did not even remain silent concerning these matters either, but in fact very vehemently prohibited such things.” (*The Canons of St. Basil the Great*, Canon 87)

The Interpretation of Canon 7 states: “As for adultery, sodomy [anal and oral sex], and bestiality, the Fathers canonized these sins doubly more than fornication, or, more expressly, each of them eighteen years, because the sin involved in them is also double. ... **As for sodomy, on the other hand, and bestiality (or sexual intercourse with beasts), in**

these too besides the unlawful pleasure they afford, there is an actual injustice done to what is strange or unnatural, or, more explicitly speaking, they violate the laws of nature, in that they are sins contrary to nature. The number of years for each of these sinful deeds has likewise been economically fixed like those for fornication, but doubly as many: that is to say, in other words, adulterers are to spend six years in weeping outside the church, and so are those guilty of sodomy and of bestiality; they are to listen for six years, and to kneel for six years more, and then they are to commune.”

The anus or mouth is clearly not intended for procreation. Such acts are against the nature of sex itself – oral or anal sex serves no purpose of nature – it cannot lead to the begetting of a child. Its only purpose is for base, filthy, physical pleasure. Such acts do not in any way fit into the nature of the Christian who has undergone the washing of regeneration and has given himself to the natural end that God originally intended for us – to be glorified and united with Him. Such acts, as the Canons show, make us like animals and keep us mired in merely physical pleasures. They are against nature in every way.

The mouth and the anus were not made to stimulate the genital organs. Nothing could be more evident than this fact. Catholic Tradition and the Natural Law clearly teach us that oral and anal stimulation are sinful, lustful acts and deviant sexual behavior. Those who promote such perversions or believe them to be not sinful are guilty of the mortal sin of heresy for denying the Natural Law and, as such, are outside the Catholic Church.

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book I, Chapter 20, A.D. 419: “God forbid that a man who possesses faith should, when he hears the apostle bid men love their wives, [Col. 3:19] love that carnal concupiscence in his wife which he ought not to love even in himself; as he may know, if he listens to the words of another apostle: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever, even as also God abides for ever.” [1 John 2:15-17]. . . . Now this concupiscence, this law of sin which dwells in our members, to which the law of righteousness forbids allegiance, saying in the words of the apostle, “Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin:” [Rom. 6:12-13]. . . . But what in this action does it effect, unless it be its evil and shameful desires? For if these were good and lawful, the apostle would not forbid obedience to them, saying, “Let not sin therefore

reign in your mortal body, that you should obey the lusts thereof." [Rom. 6:12] He does not say, that you should have the lusts thereof, but that you should [not] obey the lusts thereof; in order that (as these desires are greater or less in different individuals, according as each shall have progressed in the renewal of the inner man) we may maintain the fight of holiness and chastity, for the purpose of withholding obedience to these [evil and shameful] lusts."

Evil theologians say sodomy between spouses is not mortally sinful

The worst mortal sin in regard to forbidden sexual activity between spouses is sodomy (also known as the sin of Sodom), which is one of the four sins that cry out to God for vengeance.

Penny Catechism (A Catechism of Christian Doctrine), 16th century: "**Q. 327. Which are the four sins crying to heaven for vengeance?** A. The four sins crying to heaven for vengeance are: 1. Wilful murder (*Gen. iv*); 2. The sin of Sodom (*Gen. xviii*); 3. Oppression of the poor (*Exod. ii*); 4. Defrauding laborers of their wages (*James v*)."

Yet in spite of this dogmatic teaching on morals, Fr. Heribert Jone, in every edition of his book *Moral Theology* from 1929 onwards, teaches that a husband can sodomize his wife and his wife can allow it and neither commit mortal sin as long as he consummates his act naturally with the intention to procreate. And the pervert Jone teaches that this act is not sodomy at all because the husband does not spill his seed when sodomizing his wife. Note that the term "imperfect sodomy" used by Fr. Jone means the mortal sin of sodomy between persons of the opposite sex, and "perfect sodomy" is the mortal sin of sodomy between those of the same sex.

Moral Theology, Fr. Heribert Jone, 1951: "**I. Imperfect Sodomy**, i.e., rectal intercourse, is a grave sin when the seminal fluid is wasted: Excluding the sodomitical intention it is neither sodomy nor a grave sin if intercourse is begun in a rectal manner with the intention of consummating it naturally or if some sodomitical action is posited without danger of pollution..." ("3. The Sins of Married People," Section 757)

Hence the pervert Fr. Jone says that rectal intercourse between a husband and wife is not a grave sin as long as the husband does not spill his seed when sodomizing his wife. And according to the pervert Fr. Jone, this is not even sodomy! One must ask, then, "What is it?" and "What is the purpose of this filthy and perverted act?" It is sodomy, plain and simple! And the purpose is to mock God and to degrade and disgrace the wife. Not only is this sodomitical

act by the spouses contrary to nature and cries out to God for vengeance, but it is also physically destructive to the health of both spouses.

However, Fr. Jone contradicts his above teaching within his same book. In Section 230 he gives the correct definition of sodomy as follows.

Moral Theology, Fr. Heribert Jone: “230. – II. Sodomy. 1. Definition. Sodomy is unnatural carnal copulation either with a person of the same sex (perfect sodomy) or of the opposite sex; the latter of heterosexual sodomy consists in rectal intercourse (imperfect sodomy). Either kind of sodomy will be consummated or non-consummated according as semination takes place or not.”

Therefore, whether the seed is spilled during sodomy or not, it is still sodomy, but one is called consummated sodomy and the other is non-consummated sodomy. Hence in Section 230 he correctly teaches that a husband who sodomizes his wife but does not consummate the sodomy is still guilty of sodomy, which he correctly classifies as non-consummated sodomy. His teaching in this section contradicts what he teaches in Section 757 when he says that the husband’s non-consummated sodomy is not sodomy at all. Nature itself tells even a pagan that any form of rectal intercourse for any reason as well as any kind of sexual activity outside what is necessary for procreation is intrinsically evil and selfish.

Since people are so degraded and consumed by sins of impurity nowadays, most of them do not know that the word “*Sodomy*” actually refers to **all non-procreative sexual acts**. *Wikipedia* explains that “Sodomy is generally anal or oral sexual activity between people or sexual activity between a person and a non-human animal (bestiality), but may also include any non-procreative sexual activity. ... Sodomy laws in many countries criminalized not only these behaviors, but other disfavored sexual activities as well. In the Western world, however, many of these laws have been overturned or are not routinely enforced.” Indeed, since the western world have become so degraded in their morals in the last 50 years, the millennial teaching of the Natural Law that non-procreative sexual acts are banned and sinful had to go – in order to satisfy the perverts.

Contrary to many perverted “Catholics” who claim that only anal sex is sodomy and that this act alone is banned by the Church (or that this act is only forbidden if it is consummated in that way), while other sodomitical acts, such as oral sex, are lawful to perform—this definition of sodomy also proves that even the western world considered not only anal sex an evil and sodomy, but also other sexual acts that were not able to procreate in themselves. Only in this

end time apostasy did God allow the formerly Christian people to fall into such a diabolical mind frame that they even dared to claim that non-procreative sexual acts are actually allowed by God and His Church!

Merriam Webster's Dictionary also confirms that Sodomy is “Noncoital carnal copulation [that is, all sexual acts apart from the normal, natural and procreative marital act]. Sodomy is a crime in some jurisdictions. ... Other sodomy laws proscribe a variety of other forms of sexual contact and apply even to married couples. No such regulations are found in the law codes of Denmark, France, Italy, Sweden, The Netherlands, or Switzerland, among other countries. The Wolfenden committee in Britain and the American Law Institute recommended abolition of criminal penalties for sodomy, except in cases involving violence, children, or public solicitation. This position was adopted in England in 1967 and has been adopted in many U.S. states as well.”

It is a sad thing that the world and so called Catholics have fallen into such a state of degradation that one is even forced to have to remark on such obvious truths from the Natural Law that all people know about. In marriage the husband and wife face the ever-present temptation to sin by seeking sexual pleasure with each other. However, as we have seen, the Catholic Church have always condemned the evil perversity of all unnatural sexual acts within or without marriage. Because the Church's members understood the evil of such acts in former times, it was more common to see holy pictures depicting the fact that those wretched people who committed “sins of lust within the holy state of Matrimony” were especially guilty of the brutal scourging and crucifixion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. A good example demonstrating this was pictures of a Roman soldier beating Jesus with a whip with the caption saying that: “Christ expiated sins of the flesh by enduring the merciless scourging at the pillar.” And that: “Sins of lust within the holy state of Matrimony play their cruel part in these sufferings of our Divine Savior.” In truth, married people are especially guilty for the torture and crucifixion of Our Lord Jesus Christ since their sin is not only against the Natural Law, but also against the Holy Sacrament of Marriage instituted by Our Lord.

And it should come as no surprise to those who heed the words of the Blessed and Ever Virgin Mary who said that massive immorality prevailed among most priests in 1846 and that their behavior “will put an end to faith little by little”, which we are now seeing being fulfilled before our eyes.

Our Lady of La Salette (1846), in a Revelation approved by the Church spoke, saying: “The priests, ministers of my Son, the priests, by their wicked lives, by irreverence and

their impiety in the celebration of the holy mysteries, by their love of money, their love of honors and pleasures, **the priests have become cesspools of impurity...** The chiefs, the leaders of the people of God have neglected prayer and penance, and the devil has bedimmed their intelligence. They have become wandering stars which the old devil will drag along with his tail to make them perish... In the year 1864, Lucifer together with a large number of demons will be unloosed from hell; they will put an end to faith little by little, even in those dedicated to God. They will blind them in such a way, that, unless they are blessed with a special grace, these people will take on the spirit of these angels of hell; several religious institutions will lose all faith and will lose many souls... Evil books will be abundant on earth and the spirits of darkness will spread everywhere a universal slackening in all that concerns the service of God... **Rome will lose the faith and become the see of Antichrist... The Church will be in eclipse, the world will be in dismay...**”

To those who have attentively read the Book of Lamentations, it should come as no surprise that God’s chosen people have yet again returned to their own vomit of paganism and the sins of Sodom. *“And the iniquity of the daughter of my people is made greater than the sin of Sodom, which was overthrown in a moment.”* (Lamentations 4:6) Sad to say, “But those who, giving the rein to lust, either wander about steeping themselves in a multitude of debaucheries, **or even in regard to one wife not only exceed the measure necessary for the procreation of children, but with the shameless license of a sort of slavish freedom heap up the filth of a still more beastly excess**, such men do not believe it possible that the men of ancient times used a number of wives with temperance, looking to nothing but the duty, necessary in the circumstances of the time, of propagating the race; and what they themselves, who are entangled in the meshes of lust, do not accomplish in the case of a single wife, they think utterly impossible in the case of a number of wives.” (St. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Book III, Chapter 19, Section 28.--Wicked Men Judge Others by Themselves, A.D. 397)

Marital relations during a woman’s infertile period should be avoided

As recorded in the Old Testament Scripture and in order to increase even more virtue and grace in God’s chosen people, God defined most exquisite laws about when and how marital relations are to be performed. For instance, He commanded that the woman shall be considered unclean at the time of her infertile monthly cycle and also seven days after it, thus prohibiting marital relations during the infertile monthly period. A woman’s menstrual cycle is about 28 days long, and the menstrual phase is about 5 days. Adding 7 days after the

menstrual phase in accordance with God's word would mean that a woman should remain chaste for 12 days out of 28 days during her menstrual cycle.

The Holy Bible, Leviticus 15:19-28 "The woman, who at the return of the month, hath her issue of blood, shall be separated seven days. Every one that toucheth her, shall be unclean until the evening. And every thing that she sleepeth on, or that she sitteth on in the days of her separation, shall be defiled. He that toucheth her bed shall wash his clothes: and being himself washed with water, shall be unclean until the evening. Whosoever shall touch any vessel on which she sitteth, shall wash his clothes: and himself being washed with water, shall be defiled until the evening. If a man copulateth with her in the time of her flowers, he shall be unclean seven days: and every bed on which he shall sleep shall be defiled. The woman that hath an issue of blood many days out of her ordinary time, or that ceaseth not to flow after the monthly courses, as long as she is subject to this disease, shall be unclean, in the same manner as if she were in her flowers. Every bed on which she sleepeth, and every vessel on which she sitteth, shall be defiled. Whosoever toucheth them shall wash his clothes: and himself being washed with water, shall be unclean until the evening. If the blood stop and cease to run, she shall count seven days of her purification."

This means that God commanded the man and his wife to only have marital relations on the days that are most favorable for begetting children. This was practiced and followed by the Jews many thousands of years before the medical knowledge was learned that conception do not normally occur during these time periods, thus showing us, once again, that the Christian God is the One and only true God who possess all knowledge in Heaven and on Earth. May the Holy Trinity be blessed for all eternity! By commanding such wondrous laws that inspires to perfection, God limited the time a couple could have marital relations, thus decreasing their carnal temptations. For what reason did he do this, someone might ask? The answer is very simple, for it is very obvious that a man or a woman who have sex often will be tempted either to start loving the sexual pleasure or to commit various sexual sins or to have sex with other people that they are not married with, while people who are completely chaste or who have sex very seldom will be stronger in resisting unclean temptations. Sexual pleasure is easier to get addicted to than most drugs, and so, it is very important to guard oneself from being overcome by it. This teaching from the Holy Bible clearly shows us that God does not want spouses to perform the marital act during a woman's infertile period.

St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 21, Section 43, A.D. 421: "It, [conjugal chastity] too, combats carnal concupiscence lest it exceed the proprieties of the

marriage bed; it combats lest concupiscence break into the time agreed upon by the spouses for prayer. If this conjugal chastity possesses such great power and is so great gift from God that it does what the matrimonial code prescribes, it combats in even more valiant fashion in regard to the act of conjugal union, lest there be indulgence beyond what suffices for generating offspring. **Such chastity abstains during menstruation and pregnancy, nor has it union with one no longer able to conceive on account of age. And the desire for union does not prevail, but ceases when there is no prospect of generation. ...** there must be warfare against evil of concupiscence, which is so evil it must be resisted in the combat waged by chastity, lest it do damage.”

If spouses wish to nurture virtue, and if there is a mutual consent for abstaining from marital relations, then both husband and wife can separate from each other any amount of time they decide in order to cultivate virtue and evangelical perfection. By God’s holy inspiration, we pray and beg that all may consider to do this from time to time.

1 Corinthians 7:1-10 “Now concerning the thing whereof you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. But for fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render the debt to his wife, and the wife also in like manner to the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband. And in like manner the husband also hath not power of his own body, but the wife. **Defraud not one another, except, perhaps, by consent, for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer;** and return together again, lest Satan tempt you for your incontinency. But I speak this by indulgence, not by commandment. For I would that all men were even as myself: but every one hath his proper gift from God; one after this manner, and another after that. But I say to the unmarried, and to the widows: It is good for them if they so continue, even as I. But if they do not contain themselves, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to be burnt. But to them that are married, not I but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband.”

Many Christian writers have written about the depth of love existing between those blessed and holy spouses who renounce marital intercourse, in order to try to help and inspire married people to seek the higher spiritual things. Stories about loving spouses in sexless or spiritual marriages appears from the beginning of the Church. In one story the bones of a spouse who had lived in a spiritual marriage moved over to make room for her husband’s recently deceased body and in another story a wife’s corpse was embraced by her departed

husband's arm when she was placed in the tomb. In truth, such couples perceived their lives of sexual abstinence as an anticipation of Heaven. Denying their sensual and fallen nature, they embraced a state of spiritual holiness and loved each other in a perfect and true love, rather than in an impure and selfish love that, sad to say, almost all of humanity now does. Ida of Boulogne (1040–1113) endured rather than enjoyed marital relations and Waletrude “abhorred sexual relations, though she loved her husband in a spiritual way”.

In answering the question, “Whether carnal intercourse is an integral part of this sacrament [of Matrimony]?” St. Thomas Aquinas replied: “A sacrament by its very name denotes a sanctification. But matrimony is holier without carnal intercourse... Therefore carnal intercourse is not necessary for the sacrament.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 42, Art. 4)

Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law* 32.1.11: “Hence Augustine writes, in *Against Julian*, I: ‘True marriage does not consist in mere intercourse between a male and a female. Contrary to your raving, true marriage does not consist merely of intercourse between a male and a female, although, without that, marriages could not procreate children. Other elements are essential to marriage, and these distinguish marriage from adultery. For example, fidelity to the conjugal yoke, actions directed to the procreation of children, and (here is the greatest difference) the good use of something evil, that is, the good use of carnal desire, something which the adulterer misuses.’ Gratian: ‘The goods he commends here must be distinguished from their misuse.’”

Path to purity and perfection

An honest person should now be able to see clearly that “the devil has power” over all those who come together in the marital act for the sake of fleshly lust. St. Raphael the Archangel, one of the seven archangels that stand before God's throne, reveals what God's will is for spouses in the use of the marital act:

“Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will show thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power. ... And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said] And now, Lord, thou knowest,

that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.” (Tobias 6:16-17, 22; 8:9)

According to God’s holy will, spouses are to engage in the marital act for the “love of posterity” (children), not for lust. No, contrary to what most people today say, the Holy Bible is clear that spouses are to come together “only for the love of posterity” if they want to please Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Word of God in the Bible is indeed true when it says that “the devil has power” over all spouses who come together for the purpose of gratifying their fleshly pleasures, giving “themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding”.

The goal of every true Catholic is to be a Saint. That means they must strive to be perfect and holy as God is perfect and holy. “*Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect.*” (Matthew 5:48) “*It is written: You shall be holy, for I am holy.*” (1 Peter 1:16)

In this path to perfection, the lustful aspect, the love of the momentary pleasure of the flesh is fought against, conquered, and thus utterly despised. “*Flying the corruption of that concupiscence which is in the world.*” (2 Peter 1:4) To say that this cannot be achieved is to deny the power of God and His grace. “*Being confident of this very thing: that he who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus.*” (Philippians 1:6) The weapons of the Catholic faith: grace, persevering prayer, sacrifice, mortification, and penance are more than sufficient to conquer any sin, sinful inclination, or fault and reach perfection in a short time.

Not many people, however, seek after perfection or even the beginning stages of perfection, and this is the tragic reason for that the greater number of Catholics will be eternally condemned. Sad to say, but most people give to their flesh whatever it wants, whenever it desires it, all day long. Food, media, music, sensual pleasure or what have you, and these are just some of the many reasons why they cannot control their lust. If they would start praying the Holy Rosary and doing penances like fasting and other works of abstinence and piety and cease with all deeds of sin and vanity, their fleshly lust would in many cases be smothered or decreased. But penances and mortifications are utterly despised by the natural man, and so, only a few elect souls ever reach the point where they can experience that their fleshly lusts and desires are decreased or smothered.

All sins, including sexual sins that men and women commit are controllable as long as one choose to cut of all deliberate sin and occasions of sin, like the media, food or friends etc. But

since most people do not avoid all their sinful and worldly activities totally, and especially the direct occasions of their sin—that is, the things which are the cause for their falls into sin—they do not experience an alleviation in their temptations. Many people who are living in sexual sins or fleshly desires indeed tries in some ways to end their sins, but since they do not cut off the occasions of their sins completely, they fail sooner or later. The consequence of their failure in attempting to stop sinning (and that they do not experience a decrease of their fleshly lusts and desires) is that many people fall into the abominable sin of accusing God for their sins, perversely claiming that they cannot stop sinning and extricate themselves from a life of sin. Others inspired by their father the devil tries to excuse the severity of their crimes, claiming that God is merciful to this passion. Indeed, “Our relentless enemy [the devil], the teacher of fornication, whispers that God is lenient and particularly merciful to this passion, since it is so very natural. Yet if we watch the wiles of the demons we will observe that after we have actually sinned they will affirm that God is a just and inexorable judge. They say one thing to lead us into sin, another thing to overwhelm us in despair.” (St. John Climacus, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, Step Fifteen, On Chastity)

Contrary to those wretches who try to excuse or blame God for their sins and failures, the Holy Bible and the Teaching of the Church, however, teaches us that all sin is a direct product of man’s perverted will, and at the moment of death such blasphemers who question God’s goodness, or who tries to excuse their vile and unnatural sexual crimes, shall be forever damned and banished by God’s justice to the boiling kettle that is Hell.

James 1:13-15 “Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted by God. For God is not a tempter of evils, and he tempteth no man. **But every man is tempted by his own concupiscence, being drawn away and allured. Then when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.** But sin, when it is completed, begetteth death.”

Our Lord is perfectly able to help us to conquer our temptations as long as we are doing our part and perform acts of virtue. The only thing that stands in the way of our salvation is not a lack of grace from God, but rather our own sloth in prayer, spiritual reading and cutting of all the occasions of sin. For “*The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly from temptation, but to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be tormented. And especially them who walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government, audacious, self willed, they fear not to bring in sects, blaspheming.*” (2 Peter 2:9)

The reasons of why spouses as well as all others fall into sin of various kinds are almost

innumerable today, and the reason for this is since debauchery and sensuality almost rule the whole earth as though it was built in the very law and fabric of society. In general, however, one can say that a human deed becomes more dangerous and potent to damn a person the more pleasure one seeks to derive from it. St. Gregory Nazianzen, *Doctor of the Church*, in his admirably written “*Orations of St. Gregory Nazianzen*,” gives us a thorough and almost perfect description of the causes that strengthen the power of sin in our members and mind and that weaken our resolve against our enemy, the Devil. “Let us not adorn our porches, nor arrange dances, nor decorate the streets; let us not feast the eye, nor enchant the ear with music, nor enervate the nostrils with perfume, nor prostitute the taste, nor indulge the touch, those roads that are so prone to evil and entrances for sin; let us not be effeminate in clothing soft and flowing, whose beauty consists in its uselessness, nor with the glittering of gems or the sheen of gold [Rom. 13:13] or the tricks of color, belying the beauty of nature, and invented to do despite unto the image of God; Not in rioting and drunkenness, with which are mingled, I know well, chambering and wantonness, since the lessons which evil teachers give are evil; or rather the harvests of worthless seeds are worthless. Let us not set up high beds of leaves, making tabernacles for the belly of what belongs to debauchery. Let us not appraise the bouquet of wines, the kickshaws of cooks, the great expense of unguents. Let not sea and land bring us as a gift their precious dung, for it is thus that I have learned to estimate luxury; and let us not strive to outdo each other in intemperance (for to my mind every superfluity is intemperance, and all which is beyond absolute need), and this while others are hungry and in want, who are made of the same clay and in the same manner.” (*Orations of St. Gregory Nazianzen*, Oration XXXVIII, Section 5)

St. Caesarius of Arles in his sermons also admonishes and warns us not to get controlled by our desires, and teaches us of the strong effects they have in influencing our lives for the worse, but that we are able to control and become master over it, and that it is how we live our life that determines whether we are able to gain the victory and control over them. “Now, someone says: I am young; I can in no way control myself. Perhaps you do not control yourself because you eat more than is necessary, and drink more wine than you should. Perhaps you even occupy your mind with shameful thoughts, neither fearing nor blushing to willingly and frequently utter dissolute words or to hear them from others. With God’s help begin to restrain your gluttonous desires, and to occupy your mind and your tongue with chaste thoughts and upright words. You will see that, if God assists you, you will be able to observe chastity. If no bodily infirmity hinders you, do not mind fasting rather often or rising a little earlier for church, so that you may guard your soul against the stains of lust. If in spite of your faithful obedience you see yourself exhausted by assaults of the flesh, and if several times you are persuaded [by the devil] to know your wife without any desire for children [that is, if you

perform the normal, natural and procreative marital act but without performing it for the motive of procreation which is required in order for the act to be lawful and excused from being a sin], give alms every day according to your means, for we read: ‘As water queneth a fire, so alms destroyeth sins.’ [Eccli. 3:33] Moreover, grant full pardon to all who may have offended you, for this is a great and salutary remedy against all sins. Thus, what was defiled by incontinence may be cleansed by fasting and almsgiving, but most of all by the forgiveness of enemies.” (*Sermons of St. Caesarius of Arles*, Sermon 44, Section 4)

When and how the marital act should be performed

The way to perfection regarding the marital act is that spouses only perform the act with the sole intention and hope of conceiving children. That means spouses are to be chaste during the monthly infertile period of the woman and when she is pregnant. We read in the Old Testament that God had forbidden even the married to perform the marital act during the infertile monthly cycle of the woman: “*The woman, who at the return of the month, hath her issue of blood, shall be separated seven days.*” (Leviticus 15:19) Haydock commentary explains: “*Days, not only out of the camp, but from the company of men.*” As soon as a woman showed signs of infertility (menstruation), intercourse would cease until the cessation of the flow of blood and she became fertile again: “*Thou shalt not approach to a woman having her flowers: neither shalt thou uncover her nakedness.*” (Leviticus 18:19) Haydock commentary: “*Saint Augustine believes that this law is still in force. [On Lev. 20:18] This intemperance was by a positive law declared a mortal offense of the Jews.*” This clearly shows us that God does not want spouses to perform the marital act during this time.

To abstain from sexual intercourse during a woman’s menstrual period or pregnancy and subsequent restricted days has all but been ignored by most of today’s people. Observing the period of restriction for sexual activity not only diminishes sexual sins and temptations, but it also places a woman into her fertile period when it is most beneficial for conception to occur. This helps to fulfill the initial command of God to “be fruitful and multiply,” a command that is clearly not being observed today by many people.

Good husbands and wives do not have sexual relations whenever their unbridled lust desires it, but only at times prescribed for this purpose and when it is necessary. The guide of good and pious husbands and wives are thus their conscience and reason instead of their selfish and unbridled lusts. In the book of Ecclesiastes, this concept is eloquently explained to us in the following way:

“All things have their season, and in their times all things pass under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted. A time to kill, and a time to heal. A time to destroy, and a time to build. A time to weep, and a time to laugh. A time to mourn, and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather. **A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.**”

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-5)

The phrase “A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces” refers to the marital act. Haydock Commentary: “*Ver. 5. Embraces. Continnence was sometimes prescribed to married people, Leviticus xx. 18., and 1 Corinthians vii. (St. Jerome) (St. Augustine, Enchiridion 78.) (Calmet).*” This shows that the marital act must sometimes be abstained from altogether and not engaged in everyday as the evil and immoral world teaches. As said already, one of the reasons for abstaining from the marital act is in order to cultivate virtue and chastity. This is important to do from time to time, for people who have sex often are more likely to become enslaved by this pleasure and fall into sexual sin.

Indeed, *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, in the section “*Married Persons should sometimes abstain from the Marriage Debt*” explains that this is a “*holy injunction of our Fathers*”: “But as all blessings are to be obtained from God by holy prayer, the faithful are also to be taught sometimes to abstain from the marriage debt, in order to devote themselves to prayer and supplication to God. This religious continence, according to the proper and holy injunction of our Fathers, they should know is to be observed in particular for at least three days previous to receiving the holy Eucharist, and oftener during the solemn Fast of Lent; for thus will they find the blessings themselves of marriage augmented by a daily increasing accumulation of divine grace; and living in the pursuit and practice of piety, they will not only spend this life tranquilly and placidly, but will also rest on the true and firm hope, which “confoundeth not” (Romans 5:5), of attaining, through the goodness of God, life eternal.”

People who never try to control their lust and that let their temptations roam freely—indulging in it whenever it pleases them—have in fact allowed their lust to become their “fix” or “high”. People who act in this way have become worshipers of a fleeting fleshly pleasure and grown attached to it. Such people must be very careful about themselves, for whenever they die and are called before the throne of Our Lord Jesus Christ, their eternal destiny will be decided based on what they loved more in this life: Our Lord and His Love, or themselves and their unbridled, selfish lust. If they loved themselves and their lust more than they loved the Lord, they will not be saved. Only in Hell will many spouses regret that they never thought of controlling their lust or that they never had relations at proper times or at proper seasons.

We can read the following interesting points about proper marital relations in St. Bridget's Revelations, Book 5. This book is rightly entitled the "Book of Questions" because it proceeds by way of questions to which our Lord Jesus Christ gives wonderful answers.

St. Bridget's Revelations, Book 5, Interrogation 5: "[A monk and theologian of high learning asked our Lord Jesus Christ in a vision:] **Fourth question.** Why did you give men and women the seed of intercourse and a sexual nature, if the seed is not to be spilled according to the carnal appetite?

"Answer to the fourth question. "I [Jesus] gave them the seed of intercourse so that it might germinate **at the right place and in the right way and bear fruit for a just and rational cause.**"

If one of the spouses is incontinent and want to gratify his lust often and unreasonably, then it is the incontinent spouse that is sinning while demanding the debt.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 64, Art. 9, Reply to Objection 1: "As far as he is concerned he does not consent, but grants unwillingly and with grief [the marital debt on a holy day] that which is exacted of him; and consequently he does not sin. For it is ordained by God, on account of the weakness of the flesh, that the debt must always be paid to the one who asks lest he be afforded an occasion of sin."

So long as the other spouse's intention is not to live a lustful life, he or she will be excused from any possible sin of incontinence and lust that the incontinent spouse will make himself guilty of. That is not to say, however, that the spouse should not to try to persuade the other partner from sin or from seeking to overindulge in sexual pleasure. On the contrary, Our Lord and His Church demands that good husbands and wives should do their utmost in deterring their respective partner from sin.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: "Holy Church knows well that not infrequently one of the parties is sinned against rather than sinning, when for a grave cause he or she reluctantly allows the perversion of the right order. In such a case, there is no sin, provided that, mindful of the law of charity, he or she does not neglect to seek to dissuade and to **deter** the partner from sin."

A spouse who is obstinate in sexual sins like Onanism or masturbation etc., must of course be hindered from committing this sin as far as one is able to hinder him or her. A spouse must do

all in his or her power to hinder sexual sins from being committed, and must obviously end marital relations until the sinful spouse agrees to stop committing this sin. If a spouse continues to perform the marital act with a person who is obstinate in committing sexual sin, this deed will undoubtedly make such a spouse an accomplice in this sexual sin, and as such, will make him or her lose his soul along with the one actually committing the sin, since, if the spouse was really against this sin, he or she would not allow it to happen or give an occasion for it to occur, unless the spouse beforehand had repented and promised not to commit this sin again. It also frequently happens that although one of the spouses may indeed object to the sexual sins that are committed by an evil spouse, he or she nonetheless does not resist this sin properly, or even at all, and even finds pleasure in it. One cannot of course truly be against a sin unless one fully resists it and fights against it. Otherwise it is a sign that one has an inclination to this sin.

“The union, then, of male and female for the purpose of procreation is the natural good of marriage. But he makes a bad use of this good who uses it bestially, so that his intention is on the gratification of lust, instead of the desire of offspring.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book I, Chapter 5.--The Natural Good of Marriage, A.D. 419)

Not only is it more beneficial for couples to minimize the amount of sex they have, but people who reserve sex for marriage enjoy greater stability and communication in their relationships. A new scientific study published in the American Psychological Association’s Journal of Family Psychology found that those couples who waited until marriage rated their relationship stability 22 percent higher than those who started having sex (fornication) in the early part of their relationship. The relationship satisfaction was 20 percent higher for those who waited, and communication was 12 percent better. This evidence shows us, once again, how sexual abstinence allows people to be free from the influence of the demon Asmodeus, who have been given permission by God to cause troubles for those men and women who are not virtuous or chaste. Couples that became sexually involved later in their relationship – but prior to marriage – reported benefits that were about half as strong as those who waited for marriage.

“Most research on the topic is focused on individuals’ experiences and not the timing within a relationship,” said lead study author Dean Busby, a professor in Brigham Young University’s School of Family Life. “There’s more to a relationship than sex, but we did find that those who waited longer were happier...” Busby added. “I think it’s because they’ve learned to talk and have the skills to work with issues that come up.”

Sociologist Mark Regnerus of the University of Texas at Austin, who was not involved in the study, responded to its findings, saying that “couples who hit the honeymoon too early – that is, prioritize sex promptly at the outset of a relationship – often find their relationships underdeveloped when it comes to the qualities that make relationships stable and spouses reliable and trustworthy.” Because religious belief often plays a role for couples who choose to wait, Busby and his co-authors controlled for the influence of religious involvement in their analysis. “Regardless of religiosity, waiting helps the relationship form better communication processes, and these help improve long-term stability and relationship satisfaction,” Busby said.

All this, of course, once again shows us the good effects and inherent goodness of a pure, virtuous, and chaste lifestyle. “Marriage, therefore, is a good in all the things which are proper to the married state. ... In respect of its ordination for generation the Scripture says, "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house;" [1 Tim. 5:14]... **For, inasmuch as the wedded state is good, insomuch does it produce a very large amount of good in respect of the evil of concupiscence; for it is not lust, but reason, which makes a good use of concupiscence.** Now lust lies in that law of the "disobedient" members which the apostle notes as "warring against the law of the mind;" [Rom. 7:23] whereas reason lies in that law of the wedded state which makes good use of concupiscence [for the procreation of children]." (St. Augustine, *On the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin*, A.D. 418)

St. Clement of Alexandria, *On Marriage* (c. 198 A.D.): “To be subjected, then, to the passions, and to yield to them, is the extremest slavery; as to keep them in subjection is the only liberty. The divine Scripture accordingly says, that those who have transgressed the commandments are sold to strangers, that is, to sins alien to nature, till they return and repent. Marriage, then, as a sacred image, must be kept pure from those things which defile it. We are to rise from our slumbers with the Lord, and retire to sleep with thanksgiving and prayer, "Both when you sleep, and when the holy light comes," confessing the Lord in our whole life; possessing piety in the soul, and extending self-control to the body. For it is pleasing to God to lead decorum from the tongue to our actions. Filthy speech is the way to effrontery; and the end of both is filthy conduct.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XXIII)

Fundamental rules for the marital act

There are some fundamental rules that all spouses need to learn in order to have a happy marriage. First, spouses should always pray the Rosary together or individually before the time they intend to have marital relations and beg God on their knees to grant them children for the honor and glory of His Holy name, if this is His will. Second, they should also pray to God for help that none of them will sin in thought or deed during the marital act. Third, they should always remember that God is present with them during the marital act and try their best to acknowledge the presence of Our Lord during marital relations by short thoughts of mental supplication, asking Him to protect them from falling into sin. These thoughts will hinder the spouses from searching to inflame their lust in sinful ways. Fourth, in order to not inflame concupiscence, they should always have darkness in the room instead of the lights turned on. Fifth, they should always expose as little flesh as possible while they are having marital relations in order to not give the devil any chance to tempt them to commit any sexual sins. Sixth, the marital act should always be done as fast as possible and must always be performed without any fore-or-after play and without any deed or move by the spouse to inflame their lust, beyond what is permitted. Man's natural lust after the fall is, in most cases, enough to finalize the act without any further inflaming of the flesh by the spouses. But even if spouses are not inflamed naturally through old age, sickness or some other cause, they would still sin mortally if they were to inflame their own or their spouse's lust in unlawful ways.

Seventh, they must never prolong the marital act for the sake of lust. Many husbands, for instance, try to prolong the marital act as much as they are able by refusing to finalize the act it even though they are able to do so. The only reason why they commit this sin is so that they may derive more sexual pleasure out of the act for themselves or their spouse. This deed of prolonging the marital act by refusing to finish it in the natural way for the sake of inflaming and enhancing sexual pleasure goes against the primary and secondary purposes of marriage and the marriage act, that is, the procreation of children and the quieting of concupiscence (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubi*, #59) and is always sinful, since it is an act that is completely lustful, unnecessary and unreasonable. It is an unnatural act that acts counter to the inherent primary purpose of marriage, which is procreation and the Catholic education of children. It also acts directly counter to the secondary end of *quieting* of concupiscence, which is not being followed, but acted contrary against. Those who act in this lustful way are utterly detested and hated by God (Psalms 5:5-7) since they are searching for a shameful bodily gratification, and they will burn in Hell for all eternity just as they burned on earth in fleshly lusts, unless they learn to control their lust and repent by doing penance for their sins. Eight, spouses must never kiss or touch each other in order to enhance concupiscence or sensual pleasure, either before, during or after the marital act. Kisses and touches for the sake of carnal pleasure are totally condemned by the Catholic Church and Her Saints.

Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #40, September 24, 1665 and March 18, 1666: “It is a probable opinion which states that a kiss is only venial when performed for the sake of the carnal and sensible delight which arises from the kiss, if danger of further consent and pollution is excluded.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Alexander VII.** (Denz. 1140)

Nine, spouses should always remain chaste during the woman’s infertile periods and perform as few marital acts as possible each month in order to nurture virtue and perfection. The virtuous fruit and glory that such spouses give to Our Lord are undoubtedly very great, for those who have access to pleasure yet mortifies themselves can in a sense truly be called martyrs. These mortifications and sacrifices will also help make the power and influence of the devil grow less powerful in their life, and as a direct consequence to this, make the power and influence of God and His Holy Spirit grow stronger in their life—in those good spouses who abstain from performing the marital except for the procreation of children for the love of Our Lord. This will also make the home of these spouses more loving and free from those troubles and demons that most worldly couples are plagued with.

A woman’s menstrual cycle is about 28 days long, and the menstrual phase is about 5 days. Adding 7 days after the menstrual phase in accordance with God’s word in the Bible would mean that men and women should remain chaste for 12 days out of every 28 days during the woman’s natural menstrual cycle.

St. Finnian of Clonard, *The Penitential of Finnian*, #46: “**We advise and exhort that there be continence in marriage, since marriage without continence is not lawful, but sin, and [marriage] is permitted by the authority of God not for lust but for the sake of children**, as it is written, ‘And the two shall be in one flesh,’ that is, in unity of the flesh for the generation of children, not for the lustful concupiscence of the flesh. Married people, then, must mutually abstain during three forty-day periods in each single year, by consent for a time, that they may be able to have time for prayer for the salvation of their souls; and after the wife has conceived he shall not have intercourse with her until she has borne her child, and they shall come together again for this purpose, as saith the Apostle. But if they shall fulfill this instruction, then they are worthy of the body of Christ... and there they shall receive the thirty-fold fruit which as the Savior relates in the Gospel, he has also plucked for married people.” (*Medieval Handbooks of Penance* by John T. McNeil and Helen Gamer. New York: Columbia University Press, 1938)

Ten, spouses should always abstain from marital relations after the woman have become pregnant since during pregnancy, the primary end or purpose of procreation is not possible to be fulfilled, and thus, it is a defective action to have marital relations during this time period. We see this distinction being made in the Church's teachings in these words: "Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children" (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, # 54). Athenagoras the Athenian (c. 133-190), an early Christian author, explains it thus: "After throwing the seed into the ground, the farmer awaits the harvest. He does not sow more seed on top of it. Likewise, to us the procreation of children is the limit of our indulgence in appetite." (*A Plea For the Christians*, Chapter XXXIII.--Chastity of the Christians with Respect to Marriage). In truth, it is not natural to sow one's seed when one "awaits the harvest."

The virtue of chastity is sexual purity according to one's state of life. For married persons, this does not refer merely to refraining from adultery. Every kind of sexual immorality must be driven out of the holy matrimonial bond, so that not even any unchaste thoughts enter the mind of the husband or the wife. The chastity of husband and wife should extend to their entire selves, body and soul, even reaching to the inner thoughts of the heart and mind. There are no exceptions to chastity. No one is exempt from chastity according to their state of life. Even when a husband and wife have marital relations, the conjugal act cannot be lustful in heart or mind, nor can it be morally disordered in the particulars of the act itself. "Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:48)

St. Clement of Alexandria, *On Marriage and Self-Control* (c. 198 A.D.): "In general all the epistles of the apostle teach self-control and continence and contain numerous instructions about [virtuous] marriage, begetting children, and domestic life. But they nowhere rule out self-controlled marriage [or give license to lasciviousness]. Rather they preserve the harmony of the law and the gospel and approve both the man who with thanks to God enters upon marriage with sobriety and the man who in accordance with the Lord's will lives as a celibate, even as each individual is called, making his choice without blemish and in perfection." (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XII, Section 86)

The idea that unnatural sexual acts can be used in the service of natural marital relations open to life is fundamentally incompatible with the holiness and chastity required of all married couples. Unnatural sexual acts are intrinsically evil, and so they cannot be used as the servants of natural marital relations open to life. No good employer would knowingly choose to hire

employees entirely lacking in what is good and necessary to the task at hand. No holy king and queen would choose advisers or assistants who were fundamentally opposed to every good upon which their kingdom depends. No married Christian couple can morally choose to use unnatural sexual acts, partial or completed, even if the intention is to use these acts in the service of natural marital relations open to life. Evil cannot be used in the service of good, because good and evil are fundamentally incompatible. This is also why the Church teaches “that those marriages will have an unhappy end which are entered upon... **because of concupiscence alone**, with no thought of the sacrament and of the mysteries signified by it” since those kinds of selfish, lustful and impious “marriages” in effect are nothing but fornication in disguise of a marriage (Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* #12). Indeed, “... [since] **men do not reap the full fruit of the Sacraments which they receive after acquiring the use of reason unless they cooperate with grace**, the grace of matrimony will remain for the most part an unused talent hidden in the field unless the parties exercise these supernatural powers and cultivate and develop the seeds of grace they have received.” (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* #41)

St. John Chrysostom, *Doctor of the Church*, On Marriage and Family Life: “To this end every marriage should be set up so that it may work together with us for chastity. This will be the case if we marry such brides as are able to bring great piety, chastity, and goodness to us. The beauty of the body, if it is not joined with virtue of the soul, will be able to hold the husband for twenty or thirty days, but will go no farther before it shows its wickedness and destroys all its attractiveness. As for those who radiate the beauty of the soul, the longer time goes by and tests their proper nobility, the warmer they make their husband’s love and the more they strengthen their affection for him. Since this is so, and since a warm and genuine friendship holds between them, every kind of immorality is driven out. Not even any thought of wantonness ever enters the mind of the man who truly loves his own wife, but he continues always content with her. By his chastity he attracts the good will and protection of God for his whole household.” (St. John Chrysostom, *On Marriage and Family Life*, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press: 1986, trans. Roth and Anderson, p. 100)

Ask God to eliminate or minimize sexual pleasure

Even though a husband must consummate the marital act for conception to occur, this does not mean he must have much pleasure to his flesh when doing so. He can pray to God to remove the pleasure and turn it to a strange, despised, and hated sensation or at least to a neutral sensation. To try to suppress or minimize the sensual pleasure in the marital act is

surely a most pious and good thing to ask God for if one wish to become perfect. If this goal was achieved, then concupiscence would be conquered and the marital act would only occur with the intention of procreation and with no other motive, and the act itself would produce no particular pleasure to the flesh but only a strange and unwanted sensation caused by the venom of original sin in the flesh. “But continence doing this, that is, moderating, and in a certain way limiting in married persons the lust of the flesh, and ordering in a certain way within fixed limits its unquiet and inordinate motion, uses well the evil of man, whom it makes and wills to make perfect good: as God uses even evil men, for their sake whom He perfects in goodness.” (St. Augustine, *On Continence*, Section 27) Thus, “Our will is to be directed only towards that which is necessary. For we are children not of desire but of will. A man who marries for the sake of begetting children must practice continence so that it is not desire he feels for his wife, whom he ought to love, and so that he may beget children with a chaste and controlled will.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter VII, Section 58)

The Blessed Virgin Mary revealed to St. Bridget that her virtuous parents, St. Anna and St. Joachim, were united in the marital act in a perfect way and without any lust or will to please their own flesh, and the consequence of this virtuous act was that it produced the most perfect human that have ever lived after our Lord: Our Blessed Lady.

Our Lady spoke about her parents, saying: “He united my father and mother in a marriage so chaste that there could not be found a more chaste marriage at that time. **They never wanted to come together except in accordance with the Law, and only then with the intention to bring forth offspring.** When an angel revealed to them that they would give birth to the Virgin from whom the salvation of the world would come, **they would rather have died than to come together in carnal love; lust was dead in them. I assure you that when they did come together, it was because of divine love and because of the angel’s message, not out of carnal desire, but against their will and out of a holy love for God.** In this way, my flesh was put together by their seed and through divine love.” (St. Bridget’s Revelations, Book 1, Chapter 9)

At one time in the history of the Catholic Church, some Catholic spouses actually tried to achieve this goal of minimizing pleasure during the marital act, and to only come together for a reasonable and just cause. Empirical evidence proves this fact. When I was young and into my teenage years, it was a joke among non-Catholics, such as Protestants, that Catholics are prudes because Catholic spouses do not enjoy sex, that they only had relations with the lights

out and with only as much flesh exposed as necessary to consummate the marital act, which took place as quickly as possible in order to consummate the act. Catholic women were ridiculed the most because they never had or searched for any pleasure during the marital act. The lust-filled non-Catholics did their best to tell Catholic women to enjoy sex—and then to its fullest. This started to happen in my lifetime. And now almost all men, as well as women, are lust-filled whores! Almost all so-called Catholics now looks upon pleasure during sex as normal and good instead of something strange and abnormal caused by original sin. **The majority of them also commit sexual sins of various sorts.**

St. Jerome, *Letter LXIX*, To Oceanus, A.D. 397: “He took a wife that he might have children by her; you [took a ‘wife’] by taking a harlot [for the sake of lust]... He withdrew into the privacy of his own chamber when he sought to obey nature and to win God’s blessing: “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.” [Gen. i. 28] You on the contrary outraged public decency in the hot eagerness of your lust. He covered a lawful indulgence beneath a veil of modesty; you pursued an unlawful one shamelessly... For him it is written “Marriage is honorable and the bed undefiled,” while to you the words are read, “but whoremongers and adulterers God wilt judge,” [Heb. 13:4] and “if any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy” [1 Cor. 3:17].” (*The Letters of St. Jerome*, Letter LXIX, To Oceanus, Section 4)

Contrary to these miscreants and impure spouses who use each other as though their spouse was a harlot given them to satisfy their sinful lust, the infallible word of God teaches us that true spouses are to regard each other as brothers and sisters instead of pieces of human meat that they wish to acquire in order to satisfy their sexual imaginations or perversions: “**And now, Lord, thou knowest, that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.**” (Tobias 8:9) And so, living in Christ, all servants of the Almighty must seek God with a perfect and honest will, “purifying your souls in the obedience of charity, with a brotherly love, from a sincere heart love one another earnestly: Being born again not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God who liveth and remaineth for ever. For all flesh is as grass; and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass is withered, and the flower thereof is fallen away. But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel hath been preached unto you.” (1 Peter 1:22-25)

Good spouses who wish to save their souls should not be concerned about the momentary pleasure they experience during the act of marriage or be working on enhancing it in unusual or unnecessary ways, but should rather be focusing their minds on God and to love and please

Him, by feeling close to Him. “But we maintain our modesty not in appearance, but in our heart we gladly abide by the bond of a single marriage; in the desire of procreating, we know either one wife, or none at all. ... So far, in fact, are they [the modest] from indulging in incestuous desire, that with some even the (idea of a) modest intercourse of the sexes causes a blush.” (Marcus Minucius Felix, *The Octavius of Minucius Felix*, Chapter XXXI, A.D. 210)

The Patriarchs and the Prophets of the Old Testament time understood that God hated that spouses should perform the marital act for any other motive than the begetting of children, and that is also why they were honored so much by Our Lord. One finds—over and over again in Holy Scripture—that their main concern when taking wives was the begetting of offspring, contrary to the lustful and selfish people of today. “For I pray that, being found worthy of God, I may be found at their feet in the kingdom, as at the feet of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; as of Joseph, and Isaiah, and the rest of the prophets... that were married men. For they entered into these marriages not for the sake of appetite, but out of regard for the propagation of mankind.” (St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, Chapter IV, A.D. 107)

St. Augustine who similarly wrote extensively about procreation and sexuality explains in his “*Sermons on the New Testament*,” that the Patriarchs and the Prophets of old searched for and desired children and purity rather than fulfilling their own selfish and sensual interests, thus living a chaste lifestyle directly opposed to most of the lustful people of today: “Hence, my brethren, understand the sense of Scripture concerning those our ancient fathers, whose sole design in their marriage was to have children by their wives. For those even who, according to the custom of their time and nation, had a plurality of wives, lived in such chastity with them, as not to approach their bed, but for the cause I have mentioned, thus treating them indeed with honor... So then, my brethren, give heed. Those famous men who marry wives only for the procreation of children, such as we read the Patriarchs to have been, and know it, by many proofs, by the clear and unequivocal testimony of the sacred books; whoever, I say, they are who marry wives for this purpose only, if the means could be given them of having children without intercourse with their wives, would they not with joy unspeakable embrace so great a blessing? would they not with great delight accept it? For there are two carnal operations by which mankind is preserved, [eating and sex] to both of which the wise and holy descend as matter of duty, but the unwise rush headlong into them through lust; and these are very different things.” (St. Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament*, Sermon 1:22-23)

St. Augustine, *Against Faustus*, Book XXII, Section 47, A.D. 400: “Again, Jacob the son of Isaac is charged [by heretics] with having committed a great crime because he had

four wives. But here there is no ground for a criminal accusation: for a plurality of wives was no crime when it was the custom; and it is a crime now, because it is no longer the custom. There are sins against nature, and sins against custom, and sins against the laws [of God]. In which, then, of these senses did Jacob sin in having a plurality of wives? As regards nature, he used the women not for sensual gratification, but for the procreation of children. For custom, this was the common practice at that time in those countries. And for the laws [of God], no prohibition existed. The only reason of its being a crime now to do this, is because custom and the laws [of God] forbid it. Whoever despises these restraints, even though he uses his wives only to get children, still commits sin, and does an injury to human society itself, for the sake of which it is that the procreation of children is required.”

Though marriage remains good and honorable in the New Law, believers should not “pine” after the earthly blessings of marriage and family life as though they were living in the Old Covenant. This would be to live like a Jew concerned with wealth, long life, large families, etc. This would be to ignore the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ came calling us to Heaven, and that He is now urging us to spurn this present life and all it has to offer (St. Chrysostom, *Exp. in Ps. IV*; PG 55.55). It is possible for one to live married with a great number of children and things, and still to “despise what they have.” (Chrysostom, *Hom. X in 1 Thess.*; PG 62.459; NPNF, p. 368.) The one who finds his happiness in God drives out every earthly pleasure, and shows them to be pleasures in name only. Belonging to God is true pleasure and happiness. Anyone who experiences this pleasure will care little for others (Chrysostom, *Exp. in Ps. LX*; PG 55.124). This is St. John’s maxim, “He who desires earth shall not obtain heaven and shall lose earth.” (Chrysostom, *Hom. I in Mt.*; PG 57.62.) Chrysostom thought that many Christians of his time were living as Old Covenant believers, and for this reason, they radically misinterpreted the true signs both of God’s friendship and of His enmity (*Exp. in Ps. XII*; PG 55.149). They thought that the presence of wealth, long life, and many children were the signs of God’s blessing when in fact they were often just the opposite. Such was not the case at the foundation of the Church. During those blessed days the married lived like monks, and so St. Paul called married men “saints” (Chrysostom, *Hom. I in Eph.*; PG 62.9). One ought not, however, to think that God has abandoned a person because of wealth, long life, many children, or even because of the presence of personal misfortune. On the contrary, the sure sign that God has abandoned someone is if they are living in sin and all is going swimmingly! As Hebrews 12:6 states, “For whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth; and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

In order for marital intercourse to be legitimate it must be chaste. Commenting on Proverbs 5,

St. Chrysostom interprets the references to one's fountain and stag as references to one's wife. A husband is to enjoy his wife sexually with temperance. King Solomon uses the image of the fountain and stag because of the purity of marital intercourse (Chrysostom, *Exp. in Ps. IX*; PG 55.126). "Desire managed with moderation makes you a father, but neglected it in many cases drives you down into lewdness and adultery." (*Ibid.*, *CXLVIII*; PG 55.491.) Again we see the essential connection in Chrysostom between sexual intercourse and procreation. Many today would say, "Desire managed with moderation makes you happy/fulfilled/satisfied", while St. Chrysostom says, "Desire managed with moderation makes you *a father*." And, "Use marriage with moderation, and thou shalt be first in the kingdom." (*Hom. VIII in Heb.*; PG 63.68.) For the married to "take pleasure is not forbidden but in chastity, not with shame, and reproach and imputations." (Chrysostom, *Hom. VII in Mt.*; PG 57.81; NPNF, p. 49.)

One of several helps to moderation in marriage is the pious practice of fasting from sexual relations. St. Ephrem the Syrian writes, "Chastity's wings are greater and lighter than the wings of marriage. Intercourse, while [it remains] pure, is lower. Its house of refuge is modest darkness. Confidence belongs entirely to chastity, which light enfolds." (*Hymn 28 On the Nativity*) Throughout the history of the Church certain pious couples have embraced a permanent fasting from sexual relations in their marriages. At certain periods when the ascetic strength of the Church was high the literature bears witness to the fact that the practice of marital celibacy was not at all uncommon. See Tertullian, "How many are there who from the moment of their baptism set the seal of virginity upon their flesh? How many who by equal mutual consent cancel the debt of matrimony: voluntary eunuchs for the sake of their desire after the celestial kingdom." (*A Son Epouse*, VI.2.8-11; SC 273, p. 110; ANF, p. 42.) St. Athanasius the Great says that St. Paul taught this practice in 1st Cor. 7:29 (*First Letter to Virgins*). The Jews in the Old Covenant practiced such sexual fasting as is evident in many places in the Old Testament. We who enjoy so much grace and have received the Holy Spirit should have far more zeal in this practice than the Jews (Chrysostom, *Virg.*, XXX, 1.1-15; SC 125, pp. 188, 190). If we do not, we will find ourselves without excuse. Sexual fasting was particularly taught by the Holy Fathers for three days prior to receiving holy communion.

The asceticism involved in taming the sexual impulse is especially difficult for the married man. He has a task more difficult than the monk, for he must crucify his desires while in the actual presence of his wife, and to be deprived of gratification that appears immediately before his eyes may be considered the very definition of punishment (Chrysostom, *Hom. XIV in 1 Cor.*; PG 61.120). However, it is possible, if we only will it, to win every contest against nature (Chrysostom, *Laud. Paul.* 6.3.16-17; SC 300, p. 264). By spiritual labors in marriage one can reject the influence of society which has made "sins into an art." Not only can married

Christians, through asceticism appropriate to their station in life, nearly rival the monks, according to St. Chrysostom, but their marriage can become a “type of the presence of Christ,” and Christ and the choir of His angels will come to such a marriage. Christ will again work a wedding miracle as He did at Cana, and turn water into wine. He will turn the water, which is the unstable, dissolving, and cold desire for sex, into something truly spiritual (Chrysostom, *Hom. XII in Col.*: PG 62.389). Married Christians can become virgin souls by freeing themselves from worldly thoughts. “The incorrupt soul is a virgin, even if having a husband.” (Chrysostom, *Hom. XXVIII in Heb.*; PG 63.201.)

Although difficult for the married man, the expectation of the blessing of increased marital love born of marital abstinence is enough to encourage him. John Cassian, relating the words of Abbot Abraham, an aged ascetic, writes: “A hundred times greater delight is to be gotten from married abstinence, too, than that which is offered to two people in sexual intercourse... I once used to have a wife in the wanton “passion of lust” but now I have her in the dignity of holiness and in the true love of Christ. The woman is the same, but the value of the love has grown a hundredfold.” (John Cassian, *Conlatio XXIII, XXVI.3.27-4.1. 6.22-25*; CSEL XIII, pp. 705-706.) “For, in good truth, a friend is more to be longed for than the light; I speak of a genuine one. And wonder not: for it were better for us that the sun should be extinguished, than that we should be deprived of friends; better to live in darkness, than to be without friends. And I will tell you why. Because many who see the sun are in darkness, but they can never be even in tribulation, who abound in friends. I speak of spiritual friends, who prefer nothing to friendship. Such was Paul, who would willingly have given his own soul, even though not asked, nay would have plunged into hell for them. With so ardent a disposition ought we to love.” (Chrysostom, *Homilies on First Thessalonians*, Homily II)

Chastity should especially involve the control of one’s gaze (Chrysostom, *Hom. VII in Mt.*; PG 57.81). Desire grows by looking (Chrysostom, *Hom. XVII in Mt.*; PG 57.256-257). St. Ephrem writes, “Do not annul by your eyes the vows of virginity your mouth has vowed.” (*Hymn 2 On Virginity*) Tertullian encourages Christian women to do all that they can to insure that others do not look upon them lustfully: “In the eye of perfect Christian modesty, carnal desire of one’s self by others is not only not to be desired, but even execrated, by you. Why excite toward yourself that evil passion? Why invite toward yourself that which you profess yourself a stranger? ... Let a holy woman, if naturally beautiful, give none so great occasion for carnal appetite... she ought not to set off her beauty, but even to obscure it.” (*De Cultu Feminarum*, II.1.1-3, III.1.1-3; CCSL 1, pp. 354, 357; ANF, pp. 19-20.) In contrast to those who ruin their souls via improper gazing, the Virgin Mary “turned her face away from everything to gaze on one beauty alone [that is, God].” (St. Ephrem, *Hymn 24 On Virginity*) To look upon another is

to touch that person with one's eyes and to wrong both your spouse and the one being gazed upon (Chrysostom, *Hom. XVII in Mt.*; PG 57.257). If you practice chastity in marriage nothing is equal to the pleasure of wife and children (Chrysostom, *Hom. XVIII in Mt.*; PG 57.428). Chastity in marriage is ensured especially by the practice of chastity before marriage. For this reason, young men should marry early, not long after the onset of desire at about fifteen years of age (Chrysostom, *Hom. IX in 1 Tim.*; PG 62.546; NPNF. p. 437).

St. Augustine could rightly see the amount of wickedness and damnation that concupiscence was responsible for, teaching that: "Concupiscence is worse than ignorance, because to sin in ignorance without concupiscence is lesser sin; but concupiscence without ignorance makes sin more serious. Moreover, ignorance of evil is not always evil, but lust after evil is always evil. It is sometimes useful to be ignorant of a good, in order to learn of it at an opportune time; it is never possible that man's good be lusted after by carnal concupiscence, since not even offspring itself is desired by the lust of the body, but by the intention of the soul, even though offspring is not sowed without the lust of the body. For, indeed, we are concerned with that concupiscence by which the flesh lusts against the spirit; not with the good concupiscence by which the spirit lusts against the flesh, [Gal. 5:17] and by which is desired the continence through which concupiscence is overcome. By this concupiscence of the flesh no one ever desires any good of man, unless the pleasure of the flesh is the good of man." (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book VI, Chapter 16, Section 50, A.D. 421)

In our day and age, many people who are incontinent and who wish to satisfy their sensual appetites at every turn, sadly pervert and lie about the Holy Scripture in order to justify and excuse their immoderate and immoral sexual lifestyle. St. Methodius, in his work "*Banquet of the Ten Virgins*" (c. 311 A.D.) wrote against and exposed such people in his own time, showing us very clearly how such people pervert certain passages of Holy Scripture to their own destruction: "Now Paul, when summoning all persons to sanctification and purity, in this way referred that which had been spoken concerning the first man and Eve in a secondary sense to Christ and the Church, in order to silence the ignorant, now deprived of all excuse. For men who are incontinent in consequence of the uncontrolled impulses of sensuality in them, dare to force the Scriptures beyond their true meaning, so as to twist into a defense of their incontinence the saying, "Increase and multiply;" and the other, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother;" and they are not ashamed to run counter to the Spirit, but, as though born for this purpose, they kindle up the smoldering and lurking passion, fanning and provoking it; and therefore he, cutting off very sharply these dishonest follies and invented excuses, and having arrived at the subject of instructing them how men should behave to their wives, showing that it should be as Christ did to the Church, "who gave Himself for it, that He

might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the Word," he referred back to Genesis, mentioning the things spoken concerning the first man, and explaining these things as bearing on the subject before him, that he might take away occasion for the abuse of these passages from those who taught the sensual gratification of the body, under the pretext of begetting children." (Discourse III, Chapter X.--The Doctrine of the Same Apostle Concerning Purity)

Continuing to describe the lustful captives who refuse to practice virtue or abstinence, St. John Chrysostom, commenting on the words of St. Paul, writes: "[St. Paul] Again implying their weakness of character... the imperiousness... their utter slavery. And this is evident also from the advice which Paul gave. For from that lust he leads men quite away, saying... having separated them "for a season" only, and that by "consent," he advises to 'come together again' (1 Cor. vii. 5.) **For he feared the billows of lust lest they should occasion a grievous shipwreck.** ... Wherefore I beseech you to do all you can, both that ye be not taken captive by it [evil desire], and that if taken, ye continue not in captivity, but break asunder those hard bonds. For so shall we be able to secure a footing in heaven and to obtain the countless good things; whereunto may all we attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen." (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Corinthians*, Homily XXII, On Evil Desire)

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book I, Chapter 8, A.D. 419: "The Evil of Lust Does Not Take Away the Good of Marriage - Forasmuch, then, as the good of marriage could not be lost by the addition of this evil [lust], some imprudent persons suppose that this is not an added evil, but something which appertains to the original good. A distinction, however, occurs not only to subtle reason, but even to the most ordinary natural judgment, which was both apparent in the case of the first man and woman, and also holds good still in the case of married persons today. What they afterward effected in propagation—that is the good of marriage; but what they first veiled through shame—that is the evil of concupiscence, which everywhere shuns sight, and in its shame seeks privacy."

God wants all spouses to pray to Him before the marital act to protect them and keep them from sinning

It is clear from the Bible and the Saints that spouses who wish to be perfect should pray to God and ask Him to keep them from sinning during the marital act as well as that He may

grant them offspring to the honor and glory of His Holy name, if this is His will; and that He might minimize the amount of pleasure they will feel, so that they may not grow attached to it. God might grant this prayer to a couple if they so desire, but if they are not granted this gift (the minimizing of pleasure or the begetting of children) they should still focus their pleasure and love towards God, and not on themselves. God namely demands of us to not forget about Him during the procreative act. People usually tend to forget about God when they put too much attention on themselves, their spouse, or the pleasure derived from different acts. We can read about this truth in the book of Tobias:

“For they who in such manner receive matrimony, **AS TO SHUT OUT GOD FROM THEMSELVES, AND FROM THEIR MIND**, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.”
(Tobias 6:17)

Notice the words “from their mind”. All our thoughts and desires exist in the mind (or heart), and God wishes us to have Him there. The best thing then, and which God demands of you, is that you think about Him and love Him during all times, even during the procreative act, and husbands and wives should not be ashamed of doing so. Is not God better or more worthy of being desired or lusted after than a husband or wife will ever be? The more a person loves God, the more will also that person desire to be close to God, during all times.

One of the greatest mistakes many couples undoubtedly commit today is that they strive to know and be close with their loved ones and their spouse rather than with God (who knows everything and sees everything), and that they rather think of pleasing their loved ones and their spouse more than pleasing God (who created them and redeemed them, yes even died for them). This is also the reason for why so many of them commit shameful sexual sins of various sorts; for they know not God nor care to please Him.

Tobias 8:4-5 “Then Tobias exhorted the virgin, and said to her: Sara, arise, **and let us pray to God** today, and tomorrow, and the next day: because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock. For we are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God.”

Some may perhaps object that praying to or thinking about God during the marital act is shameful and that one must pray to or think of God only in those circumstances when one is composed and calm, which a person normally is not during the marital act. This objection

however is completely false since there is not a single instance in this life when we cannot pray to God for His help or have Him present in our thought. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself commanded “that we ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1). Even when we are in mortal sin, which is infinitely more shameful and evil than the marital act, we are allowed and encouraged to pray and beseech God, since all people need God’s help in order to be saved.

Saint Alphonsus Maria de Liguori, in his work “*The Way Of Salvation And Of Perfection*,” explains to us the necessity to pray always:

“Let us pray, then, and let us always be asking for grace, if we wish to be saved. Let prayer be our most delightful occupation; let prayer be the exercise of our whole life. **And when we are asking for particular graces, let us always pray for the grace to continue to pray for the future; because if we leave off praying we shall be lost. There is nothing easier than prayer. What does it cost us to say, Lord, stand by me! Lord, help me! give me Thy love! and the like? What can be easier than this? But if we do not do so, we cannot be saved.**

Let us pray, then, and let us always shelter our selves behind the intercession of Mary: “Let us seek for grace, and let us seek it through Mary,” says St. Bernard. And when we recommend ourselves to Mary, let us be sure that she hears us and obtains for us whatever we want. She cannot lack either the power or the will to help us, as the same saint says: “Neither means nor will can be wanting to her.” And St. Augustine addresses her: “Remember, O most pious Lady, that it has never been heard that any one who fled to thy protection was forsaken.” Remember that the case has never occurred of a person having recourse to thee, and having been abandoned. Ah, no, says St. Bonaventure, he who invokes Mary, finds salvation; and therefore he calls her “the salvation of those who invoke her.” Let us, then, in our prayers always invoke Jesus and Mary; and let us never neglect to pray.

“... But before concluding, I cannot help saying how grieved I feel when I see that though the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers so often recommend the practice of prayer, yet so few other religious writers, or confessors, or preachers, ever speak of it; or if they do speak of it, just touch upon it in a cursory way, and leave it. **But I, seeing the necessity of prayer, say, that the great lesson which all spiritual books should inculcate on their readers, all preachers on their hearers, and all confessors on their penitents, is this, to pray always; thus they should admonish them to pray; pray, and never give up praying. If you pray, you will be certainly saved; if you do not pray, you will be certainly damned.**”
(St. Alphonsus, *The Way Of Salvation And Of Perfection*, The Ascetical Works. Vol. II)

All people need God's grace in order to be saved, and it is a heresy to say otherwise. It is indeed very true that a person cannot, by his own power or without God's help, save himself or avoid even committing a slight venial sin. This is true even with pagans, who do not know or believe in God. God helps even them and gives them strength to do good. That is why only those people who have neglected God's presence and prayer (which is the same as talking with God everyday as with a real person, supplicating Him for help and giving Him glory) have been lost.

St. Alphonsus Liguori continues to expound on the necessity of prayer in his "*Short Treatise on Prayer*," Chapter IV, that speaks "Of the Humility of with Which We Ought to Pray":

"The Lord regards the prayers of His servants who are humble: 'He hath had regard to the prayers of the humble.' (Ps. 101:18). But to the prayers of the proud He does not attend; no, He rejects them with disdain: 'God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.' (St. James 4:6). The Almighty does not hear the supplications of the proud who trust in their own strength, but leaves them to their own weakness and misery, which, when they are abandoned by divine grace, will infallibly lead them to perdition. 'Before I was humbled,' said holy David, 'I offended.' (Ps. 118:67), as if he said, I have sinned because I have not been humble. A similar misfortune befell St. Peter. When this apostle was admonished by Jesus Christ, that on the night of His passion all the disciples should abandon Him their Lord and Master, instead of acknowledging his own weakness, and asking strength from above to remain faithful, he trusted in his own power, and exclaimed, 'Although all shall be scandalized in thee, I will never be scandalized.' (St. Matt. 26:33). Jesus said to him: Amen I say to thee that in this night before the cock crow, thou wilt deny me thrice; Peter confiding in his own courage, rejoined boastingly, 'Yea, though I should die with thee, I will not deny thee.' (ver. 35). And what was the result? Scarce had Peter entered the house of the high priest, when he three times denied the charge of being a disciple of Jesus, and to his denial added the solemnity of an oath. And again he denied with an oath, that 'I know not the man.' (Matt. 26:72). Had Peter been humble, and had asked of God the gift of constancy, he would not have denied his master.

"Each one should consider that he is, as it were, on the top of a lofty mountain, suspended over the abyss of all sins, and supported only by the thread of God's grace; if this thread give way he shall infallibly fall into the abyss, and shall perpetrate the most enormous crimes. 'Unless the Lord had been my helper, my soul had almost dwelt in hell.' (Psalm 43:17). If God had not succoured me, I would have fallen into numberless

sins, and should now be buried in hell. Such, were the sentiments of the Psalmist, and such should be the sentiments of each one of us. It was from a conviction of his own nothingness and misery, that St. Francis used to say, that he was the greatest sinner in the world. His companion, on one occasion, said to him, 'Father, what you say cannot be true, surely, there are many greater sinners than you.' 'What I have said,' replied the saint, 'is too true, for if God had not preserved me, I would have committed sins of every kind.'

"It is of faith, that without the assistance of grace we cannot perform any good work, or even have a good thought. 'Without grace,' says St. Augustine, 'men do nothing whatever either by thought or action.'--S. Augus. de Corr. et Grat. cap 2. 'As the eye cannot see without light,' said the saint, 'so we can do nothing without grace.' 'Not,' says the apostle, 'that we are sufficient to think any thing of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God.' (1 Cor 3:5). And the royal prophet says, 'Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' (Ps. 126:1). In vain does a man labor to sanctify himself unless God assist him. 'Unless,' he says in the same Psalm, 'the Lord keep the city, he watcheth in vain that keepeth it.' (Ibid). If God does not guard the soul from sin, in vain will man by his own strength endeavor to preserve her from its stain. Hence the Psalmist says, 'For I will not trust in my bow.' (Ps. 43:7). I will not confide in my own arms, but in God, who is able to save me.

"Hence, whosoever had done good, or has abstained from great sins, should say with St. Paul, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' (1 Cor 15:10), and ought to tremble, lest on the first occasion he should fall. 'Wherefore he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall.' (1 Cor 10:12). By these words the apostle insinuates that he who considers himself secure, is in very great danger of falling. For in another place he says, 'if any man think himself to be something, whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.' (Gal. 6:3). Hence St. Augustine wisely observes, 'The presumption of stability renders many unstable; no one will be so strong as he who feels his own weakness.' (Ser. 13 de verb. Dom). Whosoever says that he entertains no fear of being lost, betrays a pernicious self-confidence and security by which he deceives himself. For, confiding in his own strength, he ceases to tremble, and being free from fear, he neglects to recommend himself to God, and left to his own weakness, he infallibly falls. For the same reason, every one should be careful to abstain from indulging vain glory at not having committed the sins into which others have fallen; and should even esteem himself worse than them, saying, Lord if you had not assisted me, I would have been guilty of much more grievous transgressions. But if any one glory in his own works, and prefer himself before others, the Almighty, in chastisement of his pride, will permit him to fall into the most grievous and horrible crimes. The apostle says, 'With fear and

trebling work out your salvation.’ (Phil. 2:12). The timid distrust their own powers, and placing all their confidence in God fly to His protection in all dangers. He will enable them to overcome the temptations to which they are exposed, and they shall be saved. St. Philip Neri walking one day through Rome, was heard frequently to say, ‘I despair.’ Being corrected by a religious, he replied; ‘Father, I despair of being saved by myself, but trust in God.’ We should continually distrust ourselves, and thus we shall imitate St. Philip, who was accustomed to say every morning as soon as he awoke. ‘Lord preserve me this day, otherwise I will betray you.’

“We may then conclude with St. Augustine, that the great science of a Christian is to know that he is nothing, and that he can do nothing. ‘This is the great science, to know that man is nothing.’ A Christian who is convinced of his own nothingness will constantly seek and obtain from God by humble prayer, the strength which he does not possess, without which he cannot resist temptation or do good, and with which he can do all things. ‘The prayer of him that humbleth himself, shall pierce the clouds: and he will not depart till the most high behold.’ (Eccles. 35:21). The prayer of a humble soul penetrates the heavens, and ascending to the throne of God, will not depart till it is regarded with complacency by the Almighty: and however enormous the sins of such a soul may be, the supplications of a humble heart cannot be rejected: ‘A contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.’ (Ps 50:19). ‘God resisteth the proud and gives His grace to the humble.’ (St. James 4:6). God treats the proud with scorn and refuses their demands; but to the humble He is sweet and liberal. This is precisely the sentiment which Jesus Christ one day expressed to St. Catherine of Sienna: ‘Be assured, my child, that a soul who perseveres in humble prayer obtains every virtue.’ (Ap. Blos. In. Con. Cap. 3)

“I shall here insert the beautiful observations addressed to those who aspire to perfection, by the learned and pious Palafox, Bishop of Osma, in a note on the 18th letter of St. Teresa. In that letter the saint gives to her confessor, a detailed account of all the degrees of supernatural prayer with which she had been favored. The bishop, in his remarks on the letter, observes that these supernatural graces which God deigned to bestow on St. Teresa and other saints, are not necessary for the attainment of sanctity; since without them, many are arrived at a high degree of perfection, and obtained eternal life, while many enjoyed them, and were afterwards damned. He says that the practice of the gospel virtues, and particularly of the love of God, being the true and only way to sanctity, it is superfluous and even presumptuous to desire and seek such extraordinary gifts. These virtues are acquired by prayer, and by corresponding with the lights and helps of God, who ardently desires our sanctification.’ (Thess. 4:3)

“Speaking of the degrees of supernatural prayer described by St. Teresa, the holy

bishop wisely observes, that as to the prayer of quiet, we should only desire and beg of God, to free us from all attachment and affection to worldly goods, which, instead of giving peace to the soul, fills it with inquietude and affliction. Solomon justly called them, ‘vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit.’ (Eccl. 1:14) The heart of man can never enjoy true peace till it is divested of all that is not God, and entirely devoted to His holy love, to the exclusion of every object from the soul. But man of himself cannot arrive at this perfect consecration of his being to God; he can only obtain it by constant prayer. As to the sleep or suspension of the powers, we should entreat the Almighty to keep them in a profound sleep with regard to all temporal affairs, and awake only to meditate on His Divine goodness, and to seek divine love and eternal goods. For, all sanctity and the perfection of charity, consists in the union of our will with the holy will of God. As to the union of the powers, we should only pray that God may teach us by his grace, not to think or seek, or wish any thing but what He wills.

“As to ecstasy or rapture let us ask the Lord to eradicate from our hearts inordinate love of ourselves and of creatures and to draw us entirely to Himself to the flight of the Spirit, we will merely implore the grace of perfect detachment from the world, that, like the bird which never rests on the earth, and feeds in its flight, we may never fix the heart on any sensual enjoyment, but by attending towards heaven, employ things of this world only for the support thereof. As to the impulse of Spirit, let us ask God courage and strength to do the violence to ourselves which may be necessary to resist the attacks of the enemy, to overcome our passions, or to embrace suffering even in the midst of spiritual dryness and desolation. Finally, as to the wound as the remembrance of a wound is constantly kept alive by the pain it inflicts, we should supplicate the Lord to fill our hearts with His holy love to such a degree, that we may be always reminded of His goodness and affection towards us and thus we may devote our lives to love, and please Him by our works and affections. These graces will not be obtained without prayer; but by humble, confident, and persevering prayer, all God’s gifts may be procured.” (St. Alphonsus, *A Short Treatise on Prayer*, Chapter IV, “Of the Humility of with Which We Ought to Pray”)

The necessity of praying to God that the marital act will beget children before coming together in the marital act

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself indicates in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* that those couples who are lustful and perform the marital sexual act for the sole motive of pleasure without excusing it with the motive of procreation or a prayer that the act will beget children before they perform every single marital act, are sinning against His Law and He says that “such a

married couple will never see my face unless they repent”, which thus means that all who do not excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation will be damned unless they repent.

*Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to Saint Bridget, saying: “Those who unite with divine love and fear for the sake of procreation and to raise children for the honor of God are my spiritual temple where I wish to dwell as the third with them.” Speaking about damned and lustful spouses, however, Our Lord tells us that: “**They seek a warmth and sexual lust that will perish and love flesh that will be eaten by worms.** Therefore do such people join in marriage without the bond and union of God the Father and without the Son’s love and without the Holy Spirit’s consolation. **When the couple comes to bed, my Spirit leaves them immediately and the spirit of impurity approaches instead, because they only come together for the sake of lust and do not discuss or think about anything else with each other** [and through this refusal to excuse the marital sexual act with the motive of procreation, such a couple is damned]. ... **Such a married couple will never see my face unless they repent. For there is no sin so heavy or grave that penitence and repentance does not wash it away.**” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 26)*

This Revelation also gives us an indication that Our Lord wants the spouses to be with each other when they perform the short prayer to God that their marital sexual act will beget children if it is His Holy Will, rather than only performing the prayer alone. Indeed, Our Lord wants spouses to pray both individually and together to Him to grant them children through their marital act if this is His holy will since he explicitly condemns spouses who “**do not discuss or think about anything else [than lust] with each other**” before they intend to perform the marital act. In addition, this Revelation of Our Lord also shows us the inherent evil of NFP or contraception; for, since it is clear that the Church and Her Saints teaches that it is even sinful to perform the normal, natural and **procreative** sexual act without excusing it with the motive of procreation, how much more must not those who try to hinder procreation, as in the case of those who use NFP, be guilty of a most grievous sin against God and nature?

Jesus tells us of the necessity of praying always (Luke 18:1). We are never to cease praying (1 Thess. 5:17). Thus, Christian married couples will always have marital relations in the context of prayer. Tobias’ prayer before marital relations with his wife is an example of this (Tobit 8:4-8). In prayer, we express our weakness and God’s power (2 Cor. 12:9) to rectify problems in

marital relations.

Praying the Rosary before, during and after marital relations is highly recommended since it is the most powerful prayer ever given to mankind. Praying the Rosary will undoubtedly give countless of graces that diminishes sinful inclinations, thoughts and temptations that constantly plague people. Granted, it might be hard to pray during or right before the marital act, at least in a worthy and proper manner, but spouses should do their best to at least silently acknowledge the presence of God Almighty and His Mother, by loving Them deeply during the act, expressing loving words towards God and His Blessed Mother, supplicating Them for Their Help to resist sinful inclinations. And husband and wife should not be ashamed of having recourse to Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin during intercourse. In contrast, what better thing can there possibly be for a couple than to always have God and the thought of loving God in their minds during all times?

Sister Lucy of Fatima, regarding the Holy Rosary, said the following words to Fr. Augustin Fuentes on December 26, 1957:

“Look, Father, the Most Holy Virgin, in these last times in which we live, has given a new efficacy to the recitation of the Rosary. She has given this efficacy to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or above all spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families, of the families of the world or of the religious communities, or even of the life of peoples and nations, that cannot be solved by the Rosary. There is no problem I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the Holy Rosary.”

We highly recommend that all 15 decades of the Rosary be prayed daily. Our Lady repeatedly emphasized the importance of praying the Rosary each day in her messages at Fatima. She even said that Francisco would have to pray ‘many rosaries’ before he could go to Heaven. You should prioritize reading the word of God (Catholic books and the Catholic Bible) and praying before other activities to grow in the spirit. Praying all 15 decades of the Rosary each day can be accomplished in a variety of ways. However, for many it is best accomplished by praying a part of the Rosary at different times of the day, for example, the joyful mysteries in the morning, sorrowful mysteries at midday, and glorious mysteries in the evening. ‘Salve Regina’ only needs to be prayed at the end of the entire day’s rosary. An essential part of the Rosary is meditation on the mysteries, episodes in the life of Our Lord and Our Lady. This means thinking about them, visualizing them, considering the graces and merits displayed in them,

and using them for inspiration to better know and love God. It is also common to focus on a particular virtue with each mystery.

You can easily accomplish praying the fifteen decades of the Rosary each day by dividing it up to small sections during the day. For example, you can make a habit to go down on your knees and pray 1 to 10 Hail Marys every time you enter or exit your room. The best time for prayer is in the morning, since the mind is more clear from the thoughts and discussions of the world, so we advise you to always dedicate time in the morning for the Rosary. The Rosary is the most powerful weapon in existence against the Devil and those who neglect it will indeed be eternally sorry for refusing to honor our Lady as she deserves! Think and reflect upon what greatness it is to be able to speak with the God of the whole creation and His Mother whenever we want. It is almost impossible for a man to be able to speak with a king or queen of this world, and yet the King of kings and his beloved Mother hear your every word. In truth, I tell you, that even one good word of prayer has more worth than all gold and jewels and an infinite amount of universes, for they will all perish, but God's words will never perish. Think about how much you would concentrate and fight against distracting thoughts if someone were to tell you that you could have 10,000 dollars or a new car if you prayed a Rosary with full concentration and without yielding to distracting thoughts. This example should shame us all since we humans are, by our very nature, wicked at heart and are inclined to search for filth rather than gold (worldly things rather than heavenly ones). Everyone should try to remember this example, and then we will all be able to pray better which will bring us an everlasting, heavenly reward! The devils concentrate exceedingly much on getting a person to despise prayer in these ways: either they try to make you bored by it, or to have a difficulty in concentrating when praying, or to pray a little; for they know that prayer is the only way to salvation.

Indeed, St. Alphonsus, in his book *"The Great Means of Salvation and of Perfection,"* in the section "On the Necessity and Power of Prayer", explains that "the devil is never more busy to distract us with the thoughts of worldly cares than when he perceives us praying and asking God for grace":

"On this point, then, we have to fix all our attention, namely, to pray with confidence, feeling sure that by prayer all the treasures of heaven are thrown open to us. "Let us attend to this," says St. Chrysostom, "and we shall open heaven to ourselves." Prayer is a treasure; he who prays most receives most. St. Bonaventure says that every time a man has recourse to God by fervent prayer, he gains good things that are of more value than the whole world: "Any day a man gains more by devout prayer than the whole

world is worth.” Some devout souls spend a great deal of time in reading and in meditating, but pay but little attention to prayer. There is no doubt that spiritual reading, and meditation on the eternal truths, are very useful things; “but,” says St. Augustine, “it is of much more use to pray.” By reading and meditating we learn our duty; but by prayer we obtain the grace to do it. “It is better to pray than to read: by reading we know what we ought to do; by prayer we receive what we ask.” What is the use of knowing our duty, and then not doing it, but to make us more guilty in God’s sight? Read and meditate as we like, we shall never satisfy our obligations, unless we ask of God the grace to fulfill them.

“And, therefore, as St. Isidore observes, the devil is never more busy to distract us with the thoughts of worldly cares than when he perceives us praying and asking God for grace: “Then mostly does the devil insinuate thoughts, when he sees a man praying.” And why? Because the enemy sees that at no other time do we gain so many treasures of heavenly goods as when we pray. This is the chief fruit of mental prayer, to ask God for the graces which we need for perseverance and for eternal salvation; and chiefly for this reason it is that mental prayer is morally necessary for the soul, to enable it to preserve itself in the grace of God. For if a person does not remember in the time of meditation to ask for the help necessary for perseverance, he will not do so at any other time; for without meditation he will not think of asking for it, and will not even think of the necessity for asking it. On the other hand, he who makes his meditation every day will easily see the needs of his soul, its dangers, and the necessity of his prayer; and so he, will pray, and will obtain the graces which will enable him to persevere and save his soul. Father Segneri said of himself, that when he began to meditate, he aimed rather at exciting affections than at making prayers. But when he came to know the necessity and the immense utility of prayer, he more and more applied himself, in his long mental prayer, to making petitions.” (St. Alphonsus, *The Great Means of Salvation and of Perfection*, “On the Necessity and Power of Prayer”)

In truth, the devil knows that mental prayer and prayer from the heart is very effective in weakening and destroying his hold and power over us, and that is also why he tries to get people to leave it off completely, telling them that it’s useless when it in fact is one of the best ways, if not the best way to use in order to conquer the might of the Devil and his temptations:

“Some one may say, I do not make mental prayer [from the heart], but I say many vocal prayers [with the tongue]. But it is necessary to know, as St. Augustine remarks, that to obtain the divine grace it is not enough to pray with the tongue: it is necessary also to pray with the heart. On the words of David: “I cried to the Lord with my voice,” the holy

Doctor [Augustine] says: “Many cry not with their own voice (that is, not with the interior voice of the soul), but with that of the body. Your thoughts are a cry to the Lord. Cry with in, where God hears.” This is what the Apostle inculcates. Praying at all times in the spirit. In general, vocal prayers are said distractedly [through mere habit] with the voice of the body, but not of the heart [as in mental prayer], especially when they are long, and still more especially when said by a person who does not make mental prayer [from the heart]; and therefore God seldom hears them, and seldom grants the graces asked [since they only pray by habit or custom and thus lack the real disposition of a true purpose, love, faith and desire required in order to be heard]. Many say the Rosary, the Office of the Blessed Virgin, and perform other works of devotion; but they still continue in sin. But it is impossible for him who perseveres in mental prayer to continue in sin; he will either give up meditation or renounce sin. A great servant of God used to say that mental prayer and sin cannot exist together. And this we see by experience: they who make mental prayer rarely incur the enmity of God; and should they ever have the misfortune of falling into sin, by persevering in mental prayer, they see their misery, and return to God. Let a soul, says St. Teresa, be ever so negligent, if she persevere in meditation, the Lord will bring her back to the haven of salvation.” (St. Alphonsus, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, CHAPTER XV: MENTAL PRAYER, Moral Necessity of Mental Prayer for Religious)

Thus, in accordance with the advice of St. Alphonsus, a person should not be afraid of also praying from the heart, preferably at all times, in addition to saying vocal prayers, since this is the most perfect, highest and unitive form of prayer with God.

It is, however, a really bad sign when a person feels an aversion or contempt to holy prayers like the Rosary. A person should do his utmost to persevere in praying the Rosary and other vocal and mental prayers since the Devil often tempts people to stop praying them because he knows and feels how much they lessen his power over a person’s soul.

St. Louis De Montfort (A.D. 1710): “Blessed Alan de la Roche who was so deeply devoted to the Blessed Virgin had many revelations from her and we know that he confirmed the truth of these revelations by a solemn oath. Three of them stand out with special emphasis: the first, that if people fail to say the ‘Hail Mary’ (the Angelic Salutation which has saved the world – Luke 1:28) out of carelessness, or because they are lukewarm, or because they hate it, this is a sign that they will probably and indeed shortly be condemned to eternal punishment.” (*Secret of the Rosary*, p. 45)

Most people, for instance, do not frequently give themselves enough time to perform their prayers, and especially longer prayers, and the consequence of this will be that most of them will pray very little, or seldom. A good form of prayer, then, that is more easily performed by everyone, no matter how troublesome prayer may ever feel to you, or however little time you might imagine that you have to spare, is simply that you talk with God as with a real person at all times: in your car, in the toilet, in your work, when you eat... yes everywhere and at all times a man can talk with God, Our Creator and Father as with a real person in the same way as little children does towards their own Father, like when they tell Him how much they love Him, and mentioning all their troubles and worries and that He might help them and protect them, supplicating His help all the time. We should thus learn from these little Children and imitate them and behave as they do towards our own Father and Mother in Heaven, by telling Them that we love Them and that we want to love Them very much and that we need Their help to love Them even more and that we need Their help to resist sin and do good, whatever it might be. A person who prays with confidence in this way everyday will certainly not be lost or be neglecting his duty to pray well. Jesus Christ himself teaches us this very concept in the Bible.

Luke 18:1 “And he [Jesus] spoke also a parable to them, that we ought **always to pray**, and not to faint...”

Haydock Commentary: “*Always to pray*, i.e. to pray daily, and frequently; (Witham) and also to walk always in the presence of God, by a spirit of prayer, love, and sorrow for sin.”

In truth, if we are like children, rejecting the vanity, shallowness, greed and lust of the world, we shall never be damned: “Then were little children presented to him, that he should impose hands upon them and pray. And the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said to them: Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to me: for the kingdom of heaven is for such. And when he had imposed hands upon them, he departed from thence.” (Matthew 19:13-15)

Haydock Commentary explains these verses: “*Jesus said... Suffer the little children...* and declares that the kingdom of heaven is the portion of such as resemble these little ones, by the innocence of their lives and simplicity of their hearts. He, moreover, shews that confidence in our own strength, in our own free-will, and in our merits, is an invincible obstacle to salvation.”

The word of God in the Holy Bible teaches spouses to practice chastity for three days while praying to God to beget offspring for the glory of His Holy Name

before consummating the marriage by the marital act

The word of God and Holy Scripture further teaches that one should not consummate the marriage immediately after one has been married, but that one should wait for three days while praying earnestly to God to bless their marriage, *“because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock.”* (Tobias 8:4) The Holy Archangel Raphael, acting as God’s messenger, instructs husbands and wives to always wait three days in prayer before consummating the marriage. *“But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her.”* (Tobias 6:18)

These words shows us that spouses must remember their bond with the Lord first and foremost and that the fleshly or physical part of the marriage must always come secondhand. By this highly virtuous act of abstaining from marital relations for three days, the devil’s power over married couples is undoubtedly thwarted and diminished. Holy Scripture thus advices spouses to be “joined to God” for three days in prayer before performing the marital act. Not only that, but spouses should always fervently pray to God before every marital act and ask Him to protect them from falling into sin, and also after the marital act in order to ask Our Lord to forgive them if they committed any sin during the act. This is the safe road of the fear of God that every righteous man or woman should follow if they wish to enter Heaven.

Tobias 6:18, 20-22 “[St. Raphael said to Tobias:] But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her.... But the second night thou shalt be admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs. And the third night thou shalt obtain a blessing that sound children may be born of you. And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children.”

Haydock Commentary explains: “Verse 18. *Days*. No morality could be more pure. The Christian Church has given similar counsels [of abstinence before marital consummation], in the Capitulars of France, and of Erard, archbishop of Tours, and in many rituals published in the 16th century. The council of Trent only advises people to approach to the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, three days at least before marriage. The Greeks, in their third council of Carthage, (canon 13) order the first night to be spent in continence.”

Notice how Our Lord and God in the biblical book of Tobias promises that those who pray and

abstain from the marital act for three days before having marital relations shall receive the inestimable graces of “sound children” on the third night and that they shall be admitted “into the society of the holy Patriarchs” on the second. The honor of being “admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs” is of course too great to even describe in human terms. The blessing on the third night of “sound children” obviously means that those couples who do not perform the marital act for the sake of lust or too often, and who are virtuous and wait for three days in accordance with the promise of Holy Scripture, will receive a child without birth deformities or defects. This may be hard for many to believe, but this is really and truly what Holy Scripture is promising and saying.

It is sad to see that none today seem to care anything about these promises or virtuous deeds that promise these remarkable and wondrous graces that Our Lord said He would bless a virtuous couple with. One could think that even a worldly or ungodly couple would appreciate the grace of not receiving a child that is deformed and that they, if they believed in God or were aware of these promises, would act in accordance to the words of the Holy Scripture; but now neither “Catholics” or so-called Christians nor any people of the world care anything about these words of our Lord that promises the inestimable grace of receiving “a blessing that sound children may be born of you.”

Tobias 8:4-10 “Then Tobias exhorted the virgin, and said to her: Sara, arise, and let us pray to God today, and tomorrow, and the next day: because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock. For we are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God. So they both arose, and prayed earnestly both together that health might be given them, And Tobias said: Lord God of our father, may the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains, and the rivers, and all thy creatures that are in them, bless thee. Thou made Adam of the slime of the earth, and gave him Eve for a helper. And now, Lord, thou know that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever. Sara also said: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, and let us grow old both together in health.”

St. Augustine also taught that the first man and woman were waiting for God’s order and commandment to engage in intercourse since God created Adam and Eve without sexual desire for each other. Thus, St. Augustine, with the rest of the Church, understood that sexual desire was not an aspect of God’s design for the male and the female: “For why should they not await God’s authorization for this, since there was no drive of concupiscence coming from

rebellious flesh?” Augustine concluded that sexual intercourse was “fundamentally alien to the original definition of humanity.” By this we can understand that the biblical teaching (in Tobias 6:18) of chaste and humble prayer for three days (before one consummates the marriage by the marital act) comes directly from God’s original plan and will for humanity before the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden; for before the fall, the human will was infinitely more directed to obeying and following God’s perfect will and direction in all things rather than their own reason and judgment, as it sadly is now.

This is also why St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215) taught that “the first man of our race [Adam] did not await the appropriate time, desiring the favor of marriage before the proper hour and he fell into sin by not waiting the time of God’s will... they [Adam and Eve] were impelled to do it before the normal time because they were still young and were persuaded by deception.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, On Marriage XIV:94, XVII:102-103)

It is thus certain and an established fact by both the Holy Bible and Apostolic Tradition that those spouses who do not practice chastity and prayer for a while before they perform the marital act will much more easily fall into sexual sins of various sorts since they will be more easily controlled by the devil and his demons because of their carelessness and sloth in praying to God and invoking His Holy aid in resisting sinful inclinations and temptations.

Anne Catherine Emmerich was also told in her Revelations that Adam and Eve performed penance for seven years before “Seth, the child of promise, was there conceived and brought into the world”. Our Lord and God – whom they had offended – consoled them with this child for their loss of their first son, Abel, after seven years penance, which shows us that God requires penance from spouses who behaves badly or lustfully and that penance should be done without command. “I have learned many things which took place in ancient times in the Grotto of the Crib. I remember only that Seth, the child of promise, was there conceived and brought into the world by Eve, **after a penitence of seven years**. It was there that the angel told her that God had given her this offspring in the place of Abel.” (Anne Catherine Emmerich, *The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ*) Either one makes penance in this life or in the next in Hell or in purgatory. God always requires penance when people commits evil acts. That is just a fact.

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself indicates in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* that after the fall and sin of Adam and Eve, the devil aroused sensuality in them, and that their first sexual act or acts after the fall were heedlessly and thoughtlessly planned. The reason for this was that they were inspired by the devil to act more in accordance to their selfish lust than their reason,

and that they did not pray to Our Lord before the marital act in humility, pleading to and asking Him to guard them from sinning during the act, as Our Lord wants all spouses to do. The Revelations also shows that Adam and Eve understood their lustful error after this happened, and that they thereafter were afraid to perform the marital act, and chose to completely abstain from the marital act for a while because of their fear of God's wrath. They thus learned that Our Lord wanted them to pray for a while before they performed the marital act, and awaited Our Lord's commandment for them to come together in marital union again, and after a while, God directly told them that they could have marital relations again.

The Son of God speaks: "After the disobedience was enacted, my angel came over them [Adam and Eve] and they were ashamed over their nakedness, and they immediately experienced the lust and desire of the flesh and suffered hunger and thirst. ... And for the sensuality the devil had aroused in them after their disobedience, I gave and created souls in their seed through my Divinity. And all the evil the devil tempted them with, I turned to good for them entirely.

"Thereafter, I showed them how to live and worship me, and I gave them permission to have relations, because before my permission and the enunciation of my will they were stricken with fear and were afraid to unite and have relations. Likewise, when Abel was killed and they were in mourning for a long time and observing abstinence, I was moved with compassion and comforted them. And when they understood my will, they began again to have relations and to procreate children, from which family I, their Creator, promised to be born." (*St. Bridget's Revelations*, Book 1 Chapter 26)

It is thus clear that "he who neglects prayer in the time of temptation is like a general, who, when surrounded by the enemy, does not ask for reinforcements from his monarch. **Adam fell into sin because when he was tempted he did not look to God for help.** We should say a Hail Mary, or at least devoutly utter the holy names of Jesus and Mary. "These holy names," St. John Chrysostom declares, "have an intrinsic power over the devil, and are a terror to hell." At the name of Mary the devils tremble with fear; when she is invoked their power forsakes them as wax melts before the fire." (Rev. Francis Spirago, *The Catechism Explained*, A.D. 1899)

St. Ephraim, On Prayer Before Intercourse: "O Blessed Fruit conceived without intercourse, bless our wombs during intercourse. Have pity on our barrenness, Miraculous Child of virginity." (*Hymns of St. Ephraim: Hymn 7 On the Nativity*)

Loving God during intercourse and at all times

We have already seen that Our Lord wants us to love and think about Him both before, during and after the marital act. There are many pious examples in Holy Scripture and the lives of the Patriarchs, Prophets and Saints that we can learn from in this regard. Saint Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary, however, never had marital relations. So the holiest example of a marriage that includes natural marital relations is the marriage of the Blessed Virgin Mary's parents: St. Joachim and St. Anna. They were chosen by God to be the parents of our Lord's Mother.

Concerning their married life, Joachim and Anna certainly engaged in natural marital relations. But does any faithful Catholic believe that these two Saints would either make use of unnatural sexual acts or advise anyone in any situation whatsoever to do so? Certainly not! The very idea is incompatible not only with the holiness of Saints, but with the ordinary holiness required by Christ of every married couple. All married persons are of course required by God to refrain from every kind of mortal sin, including sexual sins. We are all called to imitate the Saints, even the least worthy among us.

In truth, The Mother of God also reveals to us in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* that Her holy parents Anna and Joachim: "*would rather have died than to come together in carnal love; lust was dead in them.* I assure you that when they did come together, it was because of divine love and because of the angel's message [that revealed that they would be the parents of the holy Mother of God], not out of carnal desire, but against their will and out of a holy love for God. In this way, my flesh was put together by their seed and through divine love." (*St. Bridget's Revelations*, Book 1, Chapter 9)

Since Anna and Joachim's marriage was so holy, pious spouses should also pray to these two holy Saints in Heaven to protect them from sinning in the marital act. When one reads these words about these most holy parents of Our Lady, and see how they despised the carnal and sensual love of the flesh and of the world, one can clearly see the great power chastity has in drawing down blessings from God. If God would have noticed any kind of sensuality in St. Anna and St. Joachim, they would never have become the parents of Our Lady. In truth, it was not fitting that the vessel of grace and the real Ark of the Covenant in which the Word of God made flesh dwelt, should be conceived in any other way than with a perfect and pure will, and without any shameful lust, just like it would have been for all parents in the Garden of Eden before the original sin of Adam and Eve.

Although a normal couple will not be spared from feeling any lust or concupiscence as it happened to Anna and Joachim through a special and divine grace, this should in no way hinder them from loving and desiring God during the procreative act. The Love of God should thus be the primary motive of the marital act along with the love of and desire to beget children for a couple rather than desiring or lusting after their own spouse. Most couples however choose to think about themselves or their spouse in an inordinate way and consequently to love themselves or their spouse during the procreative act. Anna and Joachim, however, clearly chose the best part, that is, loving, thinking about, and desiring to please God. If we think about pleasing God during the act of marriage and in our daily life, then our love will be directed towards Him – which is the best part. God’s love never dies! so it’s clearly a great mistake to seek love from a fleshly object that will rot and be eaten by worms in the grave, rather than seeking it from God, who lives and reigns forever and ever! Husbands and wives should thus love their own, their spouse and their children’s souls, instead of their own and other peoples bodies that will rot and be eaten by worms in the grave. This is an advice to those couples who wish to be perfect, as Anna and Joachim were perfect, and for those who wish to be united with God through love.

St. Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Part 3, Chapter 38, **Instructions For Married Persons**: “Matrimony is a great Sacrament, but I speak in Christ, and in the Church... Would to God that his most beloved Son were invited to all marriages, as he was to that of Cana; then the wine of consolations and benedictions would never be wanting; for the reason why there is commonly a scarcity of it at the beginning is, because Adonis [the god of beauty and desire] is invited instead of Jesus Christ, and Venus [the goddess whose functions encompassed love, beauty, sex, fertility and prosperity] instead of his blessed Mother. He that would have his lambs fair and spotted as Jacob’s were, must, like him, set fair rods of divers colors before the sheep when they meet to couple; and he that would have a happy success in marriage ought in his espousals to represent to himself the sanctity and dignity of this sacrament. But, alas! instead of this there are a thousand disorders committed in diversions, feasting, and immodest discourse; it is not surprising, then, that the success of marriages should not correspond. Above all things, I exhort married people to that mutual love which the Holy Ghost so much recommends in the Scripture. O you that are married! I tell you not to love each other with a natural love, for it is thus that the turtles love; nor do I say, love one another with a human love, for the heathens do this; but I say to you, after the great Apostle, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church." [Ephesians 5:25] And you, wives, love your husbands, as the Church loveth her Saviour. It was God that brought Eve to our first father, Adam, and gave her him in marriage; it

is also God, O my friends! who, with his invisible hand, has tied the knot of the holy bond of your marriage, and given you to one another; why do you not, then, cherish each other with a holy, sacred, and divine love?

“... But while I exhort you to advance more and more in this mutual love, which you owe one another, beware lest it degenerate into any kind of jealousy; for it often happens, that as the worm is bred in the apple which is the most delicate and ripe, so jealousy grows in that love of married people which is the most ardent and affectionate, of which, nevertheless, it spoils and corrupts the substance, breeding, by insensible degrees, strifes, dissensions, and divorces. But jealousy is never seen where the friendship is reciprocally grounded on solid virtue: it is, therefore, an infallible mark that the love is in some degree sensual and gross, and has met with a virtue imperfect, inconstant, and subject to distrust. Jealousy is an absurd means of proving the sincerity of friendship. It may, indeed, be a sign of the greatness of the friendship, but never of its goodness, purity, and perfection; since the perfection of friendship presupposes an assurance of the virtue of those whom we love, and jealousy presupposes a doubt of it.

“If you desire, O husbands! that your wives should be faithful to you, give them a lesson by your example. "How," says St. Gregory Nazianzen, "can you exact purity of your wives, when you yourselves live in impurity? How can you require of them that which you give them not? Do you wish them to be chaste? behave yourselves chastely towards them: and, as St. Paul says, 'let every man know how to possess his vessel in sanctification.' But if, on the contrary, you yourselves teach them not to be virtuous, it is not surprising if you are disgraced by their perdition. But you, O wives! whose honor is inseparably joined with purity and modesty, be zealous to preserve this your glory, and suffer no kind of loose behavior to tarnish the whiteness of your reputation."

“... Ladies formerly, as well as now, were accustomed to wear ear-rings of pearl, for the pleasure... But for my part, as I know that the great friend of God, Isaac, sent ear-rings, as the first earnest of his love, to the chaste Rebecca, I believe that this mysterious ornament signifies that the first part which a husband should take possession of in his wife, and which his wife should faithfully keep for him, is her ears; in order that no other language or noise should enter there but only the sweet and amiable music of chaste and pure words, which are the oriental pearls of the gospel; for we must always remember that souls are poisoned by the ear, as the body is by the mouth.”

Love is necessary for Salvation

For a person to be Saved, the word of God teaches that one must love his God with “his whole

heart, and with his whole soul, and with all his strength, and with all his mind” (Luke 10:27). If any person fails to do this, that is, if he chooses to love something more than he loves God, whatever it may be or however small it may be, he will not be Saved. Consequently, it is of the greatest importance that all people who desires their salvation must do everything in their power to acquire and foster the love of God in their own hearts, soul, mind and body, by loving Him very deeply and at all times, and by praying to Him for help in loving Him worthily. Indeed, if a person can grow a deep love and attachment for their husband or wife or their children and have a fervent desire for them constantly, then, likewise, a person should have no problem in growing an even greater love and longing for God in his own heart, if he only so wish and desire: “For to Christians this rule of life is given, that we should love the Lord Our God with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind, and our neighbor as ourselves... God alone, to find whom is the happiest life, must be worshiped in perfect purity and chastity... in chaste and faithful obedience, not to gratify passion, but for the propagation of offspring, and for domestic society.” (St. Augustine, *On the Morals of the Catholic Church*, Chapter 30, Section 62, A.D. 388)

Jesus Christ in the Revelations of St. Bridget gives us a perfect description of how good spouses in the spiritual marriage are to love and desire God above all else.

The Son of God speaks to St. Bridget: “For that reason, I wish to turn to the spiritual marriage, the kind that is appropriate for God to have with a chaste soul and chaste body. There are seven good things in it opposed to the evils mentioned above: First, there is no desire for beauty of form or bodily beauty or lustful sights, but only for the sight and love of God. Second, there is no desire to possess anything else than what is needed to survive, and just the necessities with nothing in excess. Third, they avoid vain and frivolous talk. Fourth, they do not care about seeing friends or relatives, but I am their love and desire. Fifth, they desire to keep the humility inwardly in their conscience and outwardly in the way they dress. Sixth, they never have any will of leading lustful lives. Seventh, they beget sons and daughters for their God through their good behavior and good example and through the preaching of spiritual words.

“They preserve their faith undefiled when they stand outside the doors of my church where they give me their consent and I give them mine. They go up to my altar when they enjoy the spiritual delight of my Body and Blood in which delight they wish to be of one heart and one body and one will with me, and I, true God and man, mighty in heaven and on earth, shall be as the third with them and will fill their hearts. The worldly spouses begin their marriage in lustful desires like brute beasts, and even worse than brute beasts! But these spiritual spouses begin in love and fear of God and

do not bother to please anyone but me. The evil spirit fills and incites those in the worldly marriage to carnal lust where there is nothing but unclean stench, but those in the spiritual marriage are filled with my Spirit and inflamed with the fire of my love that will never fail them.” (St. Bridget’s Revelations, Book 1, Chapter 26)

In contrast to the seven good fruits of the holy marriage described by Jesus Christ above, this is how Our Lord describes the seven evil fruits of the evil and worldly marriage:

“But people in this age are joined in marriage for seven [evil] reasons: First, because of facial beauty. Second, because of wealth. Third, because of the despicable pleasure and indecent joy they get out of their impure intercourse. Fourth, because of feasts with friends and uncontrolled gluttony. Fifth, because of vanity in clothing and eating, in joking and entertainment and games and other vanities. Sixth, for the sake of procreating children but not to raise them for the honor of God or good works but for worldly riches and honor. Seventh, they come together for the sake of lust and they are like brute beasts in their lustful desires. ... **Such a married couple will never see my face unless they repent.** For there is no sin so heavy or grave that penitence and repentance does not wash it away.” (St. Bridget’s Revelations, Book 1, Chapter 26)

In truth, only the ungodly or idolatrous couple would want to join in marriage to gratify carnal pleasures and evil desires or be working so selfishly in pleasing only themselves rather than pleasing God, who created them and even died for them. God must always come first! and He is always present in Spirit in every action, deed or move we will ever make. Let’s get this saving concept imprinted on our minds: “I am one God in three Persons, and one in Divinity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Just as it is impossible for the Father to be separated from the Son and the Holy Spirit to be separated from them both, and as it is impossible for warmth to be separated from fire, so it is impossible for these spiritual spouses to be separated from me; I am always as the third with them. Once my body was ravaged and died in torments, but it will never more be hurt or die. Likewise, those who are incorporated into me with a true faith and a perfect will shall never die away from me; for wherever they stand or sit or walk, I am always as the third with them.” (St. Bridget’s Revelations, Book 1, Chapter 26)

Jesus infallibly over and over again demands of us that we are to love Him even more than we love ourselves, our wife or even our children.

Matthew 10:37-39 **“He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not**

worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not up his cross, and followeth me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that shall lose his life for me, shall find it.”

Haydock Commentary adds: “**Ver. 39.** But if he continues moderately happy as to temporal concerns till death, and places his affections on them, he hath found life here, but shall lose it in the next world. But he that shall, for the sake of Christ, deprive himself of the pleasures of this life, shall receive the reward of a hundred fold in the next.”

And in St. Bridget’s Revelations, Our Lord spoke these words describing how Adam and Eve’s love for God was perfect before the fall, saying: “**but I alone was all their good and pleasure and perfect delight.**” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 26)

The meaning of the above words, “but I alone was all their good and pleasure and perfect delight,” isn’t that a person can’t delight in or feel pleasure in/from God anymore after the fall, but rather that before the fall, God was the only delight and pleasure man ever felt and desired. Before the fall, man did all in God and for God, and no selfish love existed as it does now. After the fall, however, God had to compete for man’s love with human concupiscence and fleshly lusts. God is a jealous God (Exodus 20:5), and He wants us to love and desire Him above everything else. So to love God during all times, even during intercourse, is an advice to those couples who wish to be perfect, as Adam and Eve were perfect, and for those who ardently longs and desires to be united with God through love.

St. Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Part 3, Chapter 39, **Of The Sanctity Of The Marriage Bed**: “Now, excess in eating consists not only in eating too much, but also in the time and manner of eating. It is surprising, dear Philothea [to whom the book was written], that honey, which is so proper and wholesome a food for bees, may, nevertheless, become so hurtful to them as sometimes to make them sick: for in the spring, when they eat too much of it, being overcharged with it in the forepart of their head and wings, they become sick, and frequently die. In like manner, nuptial commerce... is, nevertheless, in certain cases dangerous to those that exercise it; for it frequently debilitates the soul with venial sin, as in cases of mere and simple excess; **and sometimes it kills it effectually by mortal sin, as when the order appointed for the procreation of children is violated and perverted; in which case according as one departs more or less from it, the sins are more or less abominable, but always mortal: for the procreation of children**

being the principal end of marriage one may never lawfully depart from the order which that end requires; though, on account of some accident or circumstance, it cannot at that time be brought about, as it happens when barrenness... prevents generation.

“In these occurrences corporal commerce may still be just... provided the rules of generation be followed: no accident whatsoever being able to prejudice the law which the principal end of marriage has imposed. Certainly the infamous and the execrable action of Onan in his marriage was detestable in the sight of God, as the holy text of the 38th chapter of Genesis testifies: for although certain heretics of our days, much more blamable than the Cynics, of whom St. Jerome speaks in his commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, have been pleased to say it was the perverse intention only of that wicked man which displeased God, the Scripture positively asserts the contrary, and assures us that the act itself which he committed was detestable and abominable in the sight of God.

“It is a certain mark of a base and abject spirit to think of eating before meal time, and, still more, to amuse ourselves afterwards with the pleasure which we took in eating, keeping it alive in our words and imagination, and delighting in the recollection of the sensual satisfaction we had in swallowing down those morsels; as men do who before dinner have their minds fixed on the spit, and after dinner on the dishes; men worthy to be "scullions" of a kitchen, "who," as St. Paul says, "make a god of their belly." Persons of honor never think of eating but at sitting down at table, and after dinner wash their hands and their mouth, that they may neither retain the taste nor the scent of what they have been eating.

“The elephant, although a gross beast, is yet the most decent and most sensible of any other upon earth. I will give you a specimen of his chastity: although he never changes his female, and hath so tender a love for her whom he hath chosen, yet he never couples with her but at the end of every three years, and then only for the space of five days, but so privately that he is never seen in the act. On the sixth day afterwards, when he makes his appearance, the first thing he does is to go directly to some river, where he washes his body entirely, being unwilling to return to the herd till he is quite purified. May not these modest dispositions in such an animal serve as lessons to married people, not to keep their affections engaged in those sensual and carnal pleasures which, according to their vocation, they have exercised; but when they are past to wash their heart and affection, and purify themselves from them as soon as possible, that afterwards, with freedom of mind, they may practice other actions more pure and elevated.

“In his advice consists the perfect practice of that excellent doctrine of St. Paul to

the Corinthians. "The time is short," said he; "it remaineth that they who have wives be as though they have none." For, according to St. Gregory, that man has a wife as if he had none, who takes corporal satisfaction with her in such a manner as not to be diverted from spiritual exercises. Now, what is said of the husband is understood reciprocally of the wife. "Let those that use the world," says the same apostle, "be as though they used it not." Let every one, then, use this world according to his calling, but in such manner that, not engaging his affection in it, he may be as free and ready to serve God as if he used it not. "It is the great evil of man," says St. Augustine, "to desire to enjoy the things which he should only use." We should enjoy spiritual things, and only use corporal, of which when the use is turned into enjoyment, our rational soul is also changed into a brutish and beastly soul. I think I have said all that I would say to make myself understood, without saying that which I would not say."

Indeed, the Holy Scripture makes it clear that when Christians, the children and offspring of God, are reborn in the Spirit, and serve Our Lord in the newness of the Spirit, we cannot allow our passions and sensual selfishness to rule our hearts and lives: "For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are loosed from the law of death, wherein we were detained; so that we should serve in newness of spirit..." (Romans 7:5-6)

Holy children

It's a fact of history and tradition that holy parents often raise pious and holy children. The reasons behind this is that the children of holy and devout parents often imitate the good and righteous deeds of their parents as much as they are able. In contrast, according to numerous saints and spiritual revelations, sinful and lustful parents influence and affect their children by their bad life and example, inflicting sinful thoughts, impulses and temptations upon their children. Thus, every parent who love their children and their future children should do their utmost to live in holiness, knowing that every act they will ever do can have an effect on their children – for better or for worse. Only in Hell will bad parents understand how their deeds effected their children in a negative way, but then it is sadly too late for them. In *St. Bridget's Revelations*, it is described how such evil parents will be damned for their sinful lives.

The Son of God speaks: "Sometimes I let evil parents give birth to good children, but more often, evil children are born of evil parents, since these children imitate the evil and unrighteous deeds of their parents as much as they are able and would imitate it even more if my patience allowed them. **Such a married couple will never see**

my face unless they repent. For there is no sin so heavy or grave that penitence and repentance does not wash it away.” (*St. Bridget’s Revelations*, Book 1, Chapter 26)

St. Francis de Sales, in his book *Introduction to the Devout Life*, in the chapter *Instructions For Married Persons*, gives parents important information about how they are to raise and care for their children: “St. Monica, being pregnant of the great St. Augustine, dedicated him by frequent oblations to the Christian religion, and to the service and glory of God, as he himself testifies, saying, that "he had already tasted the salt of God in his mother’s womb." This is a great lesson for Christian women, to offer up to his divine Majesty the fruit of their wombs, even before they come into the world; for God, who accepts the offerings of an humble and willing heart, commonly at that time seconds the affections of mothers; witness Samuel, St. Thomas of Aquinas, St. Andrew of Fiesola, and many others. The mother of St. Bernard, a mother worthy of such a son, as soon as her children were born, took them in her arms, and offered them up to Jesus Christ; and, from that moment, she loved them with respect as things consecrated to God and entrusted by him to her care. This pious custom was so pleasing to God that her seven children became afterwards eminent for sanctity. But when children begin to have the use of reason, both their fathers and mothers ought to take great care to imprint the fear of God in their hearts.

“The devout queen Blanche performed this duty most fervently with regard to St. Lewis [King St. Louis IX], her son. She often said to him, "I would much rather, my dear child, see you die before my eyes, than see you commit only one mortal sin." This caution remained so deeply engraved in his soul that, as he himself related, not one day of his life passed in which he did not remember it, and take all possible care to observe it faithfully. Families and generations are, in our language, called houses; and even the Hebrews called the generations of children the building up of a house; for, in this sense, it is said that God built houses for the midwives of Egypt. Now, this is to show that the raising of a house, or family, consists not in storing up a quantity of worldly possessions, but in the good education of children in the fear of God, and in virtue, in which no pains or labor ought to be spared; for children are the crown of their parents. Thus, St. Monica fought with so much fervor and constancy against the evil inclination of her son St. Augustine, that, having followed him by sea and land, she made him more happily the child of her tears, by the conversion of his soul, than he had been of her blood, by the generation of his body.”

The lack of fear of God is one of the greatest reasons why spouses sin sexually

The Book of Tobias of the Holy Bible describes how The Holy Archangel Raphael delivered a message from God to the youth Tobias, telling him that: “when the third night is past, **thou**

shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said] And now, Lord, thou knowest, that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.” This shows us that one must have the fear of God both with regard to the marital sexual act, as well as with all other acts. One should, however, fear to offend God in the marital act more than other acts, as it is so potent to offend God and damn and deceive a person because of its intoxicating and shameful nature.

Adam and Eve’s lack of the fear of God as well as their lack of belief that the punishment of death that they were told would befall them if they disobeyed God’s command and ate of the fruit “of the tree of knowledge of good and evil,” shows us that the fear of God was and still is necessary both before and after the fall of man. “*And He [God] commanded him [Adam], saying: Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat: But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat. For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death.*” (Genesis 2:16-17)

If Adam and Eve had feared God, they would never have dared to do anything that would have contradicted His Holy Will or angered Him. In truth, the fear of God is not only necessary on this earth and for us humans, but it was and is also necessary for the angels in Heaven. Satan and the third of the angels that he deceived to follow him in his rebellion against God all lacked a fear of God. In contrast to these fallen angels, St. Michael and the rest of the angels all feared God, and thus were confirmed in their station as the most high servants of the Eternal and Almighty. Indeed, the very definition of the name “Michael” is “Who is like God” which is the exclamation and rebuke St. Michael made in Heaven in answer to Lucifer’s proud opposition to God. This defense St. Michael made for God, rebuking Satan, and saying “Who is like God”, as sweet as it is sublime, is an exclamation that represents both awe and reverence for God but also fear and the knowledge of one’s nothingness in the presence of Our Lord. The most common theme in the Bible is that ***The Fear of the Lord*** is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 110:10), and that *His mercy is only upon those who fear Him* (Psalm 102:17; Lk. 1:50; 2 Cor. 5:11; etc.) and thus, it is evident that only wicked spouses who refuse to fear God or Hell dare to commit sexual sins or unnatural and non-procreative sexual acts with each other.

Ecclesiasticus 1:11-40 “The fear of the Lord is honour, and glory, and gladness, and a crown of joy. The fear of the Lord shall delight the heart, and shall give joy, and gladness, and length of days. With him that feareth the Lord, it shall go well in the

latter end, and in the day of his death he shall be blessed. The love of God is honourable wisdom. And they to whom she shall shew herself love her by the sight, and by the knowledge of her great works.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and was created with the faithful in the womb, it walketh with chosen women, and is known with the just and faithful. The fear of the Lord is the religiousness of knowledge. Religiousness shall keep and justify the heart, it shall give joy and gladness. It shall go well with him that feareth the Lord, and in the days of his end he shall be blessed. To fear God is the fulness of wisdom, and fulness is from the fruits thereof.

“She shall fill all her house with her increase, and the storehouses with her treasures. The fear of the Lord is a crown of wisdom, filling up peace and the fruit of salvation: And it hath seen, and numbered her: but both are the gifts of God. Wisdom shall distribute knowledge, and understanding of prudence: and exalteth the glory of them that hold her. The root of wisdom is to fear the Lord: and the branches thereof are longlived.

“In the treasures of wisdom is understanding, and religiousness of knowledge: but to sinners wisdom is an abomination. The fear of the Lord driveth out sin: For he that is without fear, cannot be justified: for the wrath of his high spirits is his ruin. A patient man shall bear for a time, and afterwards joy shall be restored to him. A good understanding will hide his words for a time, and the lips of many shall declare his wisdom.

“In the treasures of wisdom is the signification of discipline: But the worship of God is an abomination to a sinner. Son, if thou desire wisdom, keep justice, and God will give her to thee. For the fear of the Lord is wisdom and discipline: and that which is agreeable to him, Is faith, and meekness: and he will fill up his treasures.

“Be not incredulous to the fear of the Lord: and come not to him with a double heart. Be not a hypocrite in the sight of men, and let not thy lips be a stumblingblock to thee. Watch over them, lest thou fall, and bring dishonour upon thy soul, And God discover thy secrets, and cast thee down in the midst of the congregation. Because thou camest to the Lord wickedly, and thy heart is full of guile and deceit.”

This lack of the fear for God that so rules this wicked society today also verifies the sorrowful truth told by Our Lord in the Holy Gospels that very few of all humans escape being condemned to an eternal torment in Hell. Our Blessed Lady, also echoing this truth of Our Lord, revealed to the Children at Fatima, Portugal, in the year 1917 that, “**The sins of the world are too great! The sins which lead most souls to hell are sins of the flesh! ... Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God**”

[since these spouses marry for carnal and lustful motives and perform unlawful and non-procreative sexual acts].”

Catholics must understand that **few are saved**. Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed that the road to Heaven is straight and narrow and few find it, while the road to Hell is wide and taken by most (Mt. 7:13).

Matthew 7:13 “**Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it!**”

Luke 13:24 “**Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able.**”

Scripture also teaches that almost the entire world lies in darkness, so much so that Satan is even called the “prince” (John 12:31) and “god” (2 Cor. 4:3) of this world. “We know that we are of God, **and the whole world is seated in wickedness.**” (1 John 5:19) The sexual sin that so pervades society is undoubtedly one of the greatest causes of why so many are damned. Some saints even say that the sexual sin is the greatest cause in the world of why people are damned, and this is highly probable since this sin is so much more pleasurable than the other sins. Thus, if a person wants to be saved, he or she must make it their highest priority to correct or amend their sexual sins, for all other sins will in almost every case be less hard to conquer since our flesh is not as effected by them as the sexual sin is.

God must always come first

St. Paul, the chosen vessel of God, a former persecutor of Christ worthy of conversion, worthy of praise in the Lord and now one of the great apostles, teaches us in his first letter to the Corinthians how spouses should live in marriage.

1 Corinthians 7:29-35 “This therefore I say, brethren; the time is short; it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as if they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you to be without solicitude. He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please

God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your profit: not to cast a snare upon you; but for that which is decent, and which may give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment.”

What St. Paul is saying here is that even those who are married should not place the love of their family or the pleasures or affections they have from them above God, but consider that all are dust and that One, and One only is to be loved above all else—Our Lord Jesus Christ.

When St. Paul mentions “that they also who have wives, be as if they had none”, he is speaking about how spouses must not place the carnal love they have for each other above their love for the Lord. St. Paul’s words are clear: The spouses must act as though they were not married (within due limits of course) since the married man “is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided.” This division of the married man makes it a great necessity that even married people should consider themselves in their own thought processes as though they are unmarried and chaste, although their external and physical marital duties hinders them from pursuing this endeavor to the fullest. As St. Paul says: “it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none”.

One must obviously love all people as much as one can, but one must also remember that most people, however dear or near, often reject God and hinder one’s own spiritual advancement. The only one who will always remain true to us and that we know with a certainty will never become evil, is God, and with God, His angels and Saints in Heaven. But humans, however dear or near, often fall away from the truth and this rejection of God by our family or friends requires us to exclude them from our communion. Our Lord explicitly mentions that such acts are necessary sometimes.

Luke 18:29 “Amen, I say to you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.”

Luke 14 gives us an even clearer example from the gospel which shows us that we must be able to renounce all association to our family or friends when necessity requires it.

Luke 14:26 “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and

children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”

Douay Rheims Commentary on Luke 14:26: “Hate not: The law of Christ does not allow us to hate even our enemies, much less our parents: but the meaning of the text is, that we must be in that disposition of soul, as to be willing to renounce, and part with every thing, how near or dear soever it may be to us, that would keep us from following Christ.”

Our Lord does not only teach us to follow this principle, but he also practiced what he taught himself. His deepest belonging was to the Father, the Father’s House, the Father’s concerns. This commitment would reverberate at later times, severing ultimate claims on Him of his closest family. In the presence of these and to their hearing, He would ask, “Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And stretching forth his hand towards his disciples, he said: Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father, that is in Heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother.” This, in His own life, was the moral authority to demand the same of all others, “You cannot serve two masters...”

Most spouses in this world undoubtedly commit a most grievous act of faithlessness against Our Lord when they love their spouse or the carnal love they derive from them more than God. Their treasure is sadly a most vile corpse that will rot and be eaten by worms in the grave. “*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*” (Luke 12:34)

The Christian servant is one who, “risen with Christ, seeks the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God” and one who “minds the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth. For you are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, who is your life, then you also shall appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, **lust, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is the service of idols.**” (Colossians 3:1-5)

Luke chapter 18 is another excellent example in the gospels of how Our Lord wants people to think in their own thought processes.

Luke 18:15-17 “And they brought unto him also infants, that he might touch them. Which when the disciples saw, they rebuked them. But Jesus, calling them together, said: Suffer children to come to me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of

God. Amen, I say to you: Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a child, shall not enter into it.”

Notice that Our Lord states that those who shall not receive the kingdom of God as a child, shall not be saved: “Amen, I say to you: Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a child, shall not enter into it.” What are the good virtues or characteristics of children that Our Lord refers to in this verse that men must have in order to be saved? There are obviously many virtues that children have but two of the most notable ones are purity, and humility, among many other virtues such as strong faith and trust. The first virtue that children are naturally endowed with is purity, and just like children, men must also be pure and chaste in their own thought processes in accordance with Our Lord’s words, even though some must fulfill their marital duties. All children are also humble in a way since they know that they know nothing compared to grown ups, and that they need to learn more in order to understand different things. Men and women should also think in the same way. They should humbly think that they know nothing, and that they need to learn more in order to understand different things. Until the moment of death, all men can learn more about God, goodness or other things conducive to spiritual growth. Every day is a new day with new opportunities to practice virtues of different kinds, like patience, kindness, purity, love of neighbor and God etc. However, whoever states the contrary, that is, that he already knows all, is a proud liar who attributes to himself God’s perfect knowledge.

Children also love their parents in many ways and desire their presence at all times. Children also frequently tend to express their love for their parents in different ways. For instance, it is not uncommon for children to simply walk up to their parents for no other purpose than to express their love for them, and say they love them. Children also have total childlike faith and confidence in their parents, firmly believing that they know what’s best for them. It is indeed by children that God wishes to teach us how we should act towards Him, and love Him. Even though we are grown ups and not as children, we should still act in our mind towards God as do small, defenseless children towards their own parents; that is, we should have the same desire, love, longing and confidence for Our God and Father in Heaven as do children for their parents. And just like children, we should admit our own utter dependance on Him, seeking His protection and Fatherly care, having childlike trust in Him, firmly believing that He will do what’s best for us and our salvation; and just like children, we are to feel a deep desire and longing for God as do small children for their parents, who simply cannot stop crying until they are embraced by them; and finally, just like children, we are by our prayers, meditations and thoughts to confidently walk up to God and tell Him how much we love Him.

Every one has two lives. The first life (which is the most important life) is the inner life of the soul, consisting for the most part of desires, thoughts and affections. The second life is the outer or external life made up of the daily actions of the visible life. The pitiful state of today's humanity however, is that most people completely lack the inner life and because of this, they lose their immortal souls. How trivial indeed must not those small trifles and things seem for those lost souls who loved and desired earthly and perishable goods and pleasures more than they loved God when after a billion years in Hell have gone by in the smoke that smothers and suffocates their whole being, while the painful and tormenting fire that will never be quenched however much they plead with Our Lord to alleviate their torment, continues to torment them mercilessly!

Romans 6:3-6; 6:12-23 “Know you not that all we, who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in his death? For we are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, to the end that we may serve sin no longer.

“... **Let no sin therefore reign in your mortal body, so as to obey the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of iniquity unto sin;** but present yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of justice unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are whom you obey, whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto justice.

“But thanks be to God, that you were the servants of sin, but have obeyed from the heart, unto that form of doctrine, into which you have been delivered. Being then freed from sin, we have been made servants of justice. I speak an human thing, because of the infirmity of your flesh. For as you have yielded your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity, unto iniquity; so now yield your members to serve justice, unto sanctification. For when you were the servants of sin, you were free men to justice. What fruit therefore had you then in those things, of which you are now ashamed? For the end of them is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting. For the wages of sin is death. But the grace of God, life everlasting, in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: Why do you say that the marital sexual act must be excused with the motive of procreation? Eating does not need to be excused, and therefore, neither does the marital act need to be excused. This argument also shows that one can lawfully perform non-procreative forms of sexual acts, such as sensual kisses and touches, that are not able to procreate in themselves, since one does not need to excuse an act just because it is pleasurable, as in the case of eating.

Answer: St. Thomas Aquinas speaks about this question of the sexual act compared with eating in great detail in his *Summa*, and he shows, as we also have shown, that the marital sexual act is intoxicating and oppressive on the reason, which makes it necessary for the marital act to be excused with the absolutely necessary motive of procreation. In contrast to the intoxicating power of the sexual act, however, “**in the act of eating there is not such an intense pleasure overpowering the reason**”, and so this shows us that this objection is completely false and without any merit.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1: “[Objection 1: Eating doesn’t need to be excused. Therefore neither does the marriage act.] Reply to Objection 1: **In the act of eating there is not such an intense pleasure overpowering the reason as in the aforesaid action, both because the generative power, whereby original sin is transmitted, is infected and corrupt, whereas the nutritive power, by which original sin is not transmitted, is neither corrupt nor infected**; and again because each one feels in himself a defect [of hunger] of the individual more than a defect of the species [of mankind]. Hence, in order to entice a man to take food which supplies a defect of the individual, it is enough that he feel this defect; but in order to entice him to the act whereby a defect of the species is remedied, Divine providence attached pleasure to that act, which moves even irrational animals in which there is not the stain of original sin. Hence the comparison [between eating and having sex] fails.”

Here we see St. Thomas explaining the very evident truth of the Natural Law that the sexual act is more oppressive on the reason than eating, thus making it similar to the effect of a drug. In addition, we see that St. Thomas explains that there are two reasons why the sexual act have “**such an intense pleasure overpowering the reason... both because the generative power, whereby original sin is transmitted, is infected and corrupt, whereas the nutritive power, by which original sin is not transmitted, is neither**

corrupt nor infected; and again because each one feels in himself a defect [of hunger] of the individual more than a defect of the species [of mankind].” First, St. Thomas mentions the fact that “the generative power, whereby original sin is transmitted, is infected and corrupt”, in order to show why the marital sexual act is so intoxicating and oppressive on the reason. Thus, the reason why the marital sexual act is so intoxicating is because Adam and Eve’s original sin in the Garden of Eden affected the genital organs in a very detrimental way, which in turn made all of us humans ashamed to show our private parts after the fall. As a second argument why the marital sexual act is so oppressive on the reason, St. Thomas confirms the very obvious fact that since a person suffers more personally from the defect of being hungry or fatigued from lack of food, than from a defect of the human species, or that fewer people are being born to him, “in order to entice him to the act” so that more children can be born in this world “Divine providence attached pleasure to that [sexual] act, which moves even irrational animals in which there is not the stain of original sin.” It is therefore clear that “in order to entice a man to take food which supplies a defect of the individual, it is enough that he feel this defect; but in order to entice him to the act whereby a defect of the species is remedied, Divine providence attached pleasure to that [sexual] act, which moves even irrational animals in which there is not the stain of original sin. Hence the comparison [between eating and having sex] fails.”

In another part of his *Summa*, St. Thomas Aquinas confirms the fact that the pleasure of eating and having sex are quite different.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 153, Art. 2: “**Venereal pleasures are more impetuous, and are more oppressive on the reason than the pleasures of the palate:** and therefore they are in greater need of chastisement and restraint, since if one consent to them this increases the force of concupiscence and weakens the strength of the mind. Hence Augustine says (Soliloq. i, 10): ‘I consider that nothing so casts down the manly mind from its heights as the fondling of women, and those bodily contacts which belong to the married state.’”

St. Thomas continues to speak about the necessity for the marital sexual act to be excused:

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1: “Whether certain blessings are necessary in order to excuse [marriage and sexual intercourse in] marriage? Wherever there is indulgence [as St. Paul states], there must needs be some reason for excuse. Now marriage is allowed in the state of infirmity "by indulgence" (1 Corinthians 7:6). Therefore it needs to be excused by certain goods. Further, the

intercourse of fornication and that of marriage are of the same species as regards the species of nature. But the intercourse of fornication is wrong in itself. Therefore, in order that the marriage intercourse be not wrong, something must be added to it to make it right, and draw it to another moral species.

I answer that, No wise man should allow himself to lose a thing except for some compensation in the shape of an equal or better good. Wherefore for a thing that has a loss attached to it to be eligible, it needs to have some good connected with it, which by compensating for that loss makes that thing ordinate and right. **Now there is a loss of reason incidental to the union of man and woman, both because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time [as in the case of intoxication of drugs], as the Philosopher says (Ethic. vii, 11); and again because of the tribulation of the flesh which such persons have to suffer from solicitude for temporal things (1 Corinthians 7:28).**

Consequently the choice of this union cannot be made ordinate except by certain compensations whereby that same union is righted, and these are the goods [procreation, sacrament and fidelity] which ***excuse*** marriage and make it right.”

Since all humans knows by instinct and nature that one may not get intoxicated for selfish or unnecessary reasons, it is clear that both the married as well as the unmarried who perform non-procreative or unnecessary forms of sexual acts are in a state of damnation, since they are sinning mortally against both nature and their own reason. “For ***necessary*** sexual intercourse for begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is ***alone*** worthy of *marriage*. **But that which goes beyond this *necessity* [of begetting children, such as sensual kisses and touches] no longer follows reason but *lust*.**” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 11)

Just like in the case of the person who use drugs, one must have an absolutely necessary reason, such as an illness, for using the drugs in order for it to be without sin, and motives that aren't absolutely necessary such as “love”, “pleasure” or “fun” can never be used as an excuse to excuse the marital act from being a sin, just like one cannot use such unnecessary and evil excuses for the purpose of excusing one's drug abuse.

Performing sexual acts or eating food are obviously radically different acts and effects humans very differently, and those who use this defense to try to excuse their non-procreative sexual acts are sinning mortally against the Natural Law, since their conscience knows very well that the two actions are not comparable: “and it is evident that actions connected with the use of

food whereby the nature of the individual is maintained differ generically from actions connected with the use of matters venereal, whereby the nature of the species is preserved. ... Now the uses of meats, drinks, and venereal matters differ in character.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 3, Reply to Objection 1)

In this context of speaking about the truth that the vehemence of the marital sexual act is “**more oppressive on the reason than the pleasures of the palate**”, St. Thomas shows us that the sexual act is intoxicating and thus oppressive on the reason, just like a drug is, which shows us that it is a fact of the Natural Law that the marital sexual act must be excused with the absolutely necessary motive of procreation, just like drug usage must be excused with the absolutely necessary motive of pain relief and health.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 5: “Whether the marriage act can be excused without the marriage goods [sacrament, fidelity, procreation]? On the contrary, If the cause be removed the effect is removed. **Now the marriage goods are the cause of rectitude in the marriage act. Therefore the marriage act cannot be excused without them.** Further, the aforesaid act does not differ from the act of fornication except in the aforesaid goods. But the act of fornication is always evil. Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...”

Therefore, the natural and procreative marital act performed by two married spouses is the only sexual act that can be excused from sin since man knows by nature and instinct that one must excuse an act of intoxication with an absolutely necessary motive. Anything contrary to this is unnatural and evil.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *In Sententiarum*, 4.33.1.3: “I respond, it must be said to the first question that, as is clear from the things said before, that action is said to be against the law of nature which is not fitting to the due end, whether because it is not ordered to it through the action of the agent, or because of itself it is disproportionate to that end. However, the end which nature intends from lying together [in the sexual act] is the offspring to be procreated and educated; and, so that this good might be sought, nature put delight in intercourse, as Augustine says. Whoever, therefore, uses copulation for the delight which is in it, not referring the intention to the end intended by nature, [that is, procreation] acts against nature; and this is also true unless such copulation is had as can be appropriately ordered to that end [that is, one also acts against nature

when one performs non-procreative sexual acts].”

In fact, sexual sins, whether between married or unmarried people are especially reprehensible and evil since they are very similar to the evil effect of a drug user abusing drugs in order to get intoxicated or high, or an alcoholic abusing alcohol in order to get drunk. In this context, St. Thomas Aquinas taught the following concerning the vice of sexual intemperance and how the “the reason is absorbed” when one performs unlawful sexual acts: **“Among the vices of intemperance, venereal sins are most deserving of reproach, both on account of the insubordination of the genital organs, and because by these sins especially, the reason is absorbed.”** (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 151, Art. 4, Reply to Objection 3, Whether purity belongs especially to chastity?)

When married spouses do not excuse the marital act (which is intoxicating in a way similar to a drug) with the honorable motive of begetting children by only performing the normal, natural and procreative marital act, they perform an act that is inherently sinful, selfish, unreasonable, and unnatural since **“the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children”** (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* # 54) and since **“the act of marriage exercised for pleasure only” is condemned as a sin by the Natural Law** (Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #9, March 4, 1679). And so, the marital act needs an absolutely necessary excuse to legitimize and make moral the inherently evil act of getting intoxicated just like one needs an excuse, like a grave illness, to legitimize and make moral the inherently evil act of getting intoxicated by a drug.

Since the marital act performed by two married spouses gives the spouses the same pleasure and sensual intoxication of the flesh that a fornicating unmarried couple experience in their sexual acts, St. Thomas is indeed right to say that: “The marriage act differs not from fornication except by the marriage goods. **If therefore these [the procreative end and intent, fidelity, and faith] were not sufficient to excuse it marriage would be always unlawful;** and this is contrary to what was stated above (Question 41, Article 3). ... Therefore these goods can excuse marriage so that it is nowise a sin.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 4)

An inherently evil act must always be excused with an absolutely necessary motive or purpose. Otherwise, it will always be a sin. Two examples that clearly demonstrates this fact of “excusing” an otherwise evil act are found in the case of a man injuring another person, which is excused in the case of self-defense; or in the case of a man getting intoxicated, which is

excused when a man is sick and requires this intoxication in order to get pain relief. All other inherently evil acts than what is absolutely necessary are strictly condemned as sins, since they cannot be excused by an absolutely necessary motive. For example, a man cannot hurt another man if he wants his money, or if he does not like him; and a man cannot get drunk or intoxicated just because he is sad, unhappy, or want to feel “love”, for none of these excuses are absolutely necessary. Thus, these excuses are not enough by themselves to excuse these acts from being sinful. In truth, some evil acts cannot even be excused at all, such as in the case of a man who is suffering from hunger, but who nevertheless is never allowed to kill another person in order to get food to survive. It is thus a dogmatic fact of the Natural Law that “the generative [sexual] act is a sin unless it is excused.” (St. Bonaventure, *Commentary on the Four Books of Sentences*, d. 31, a. 2, q. 1) It could not be more clear from the Natural Law as well as the teachings of the Church that “Coitus is reprehensible and evil, unless it be excused” (Peter Lombard, Archbishop of Paris, *Sententiarum*, 3, d. 37, c. 4) and that is also why all who commit the marital act without excusing it, will always commit sin. **“Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...”** (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica, Supplement*, Q. 49, Art. 5)

Question: Isn't it true that as long as at some point the husband consummates the act in the normal way and ejaculates into his wife's vagina, all sexual acts are moral and good?

Answer: Nowadays, it is often claimed that any sexual act between a husband and wife is moral as long as at some point the husband consummates the act in the normal way and ejaculates into his wife's vagina. This idea is a gross misrepresentation of the Natural Law and Catholic sexual ethics for several reasons.

First, the act of natural marital relations open to life is not defined by, nor limited to, the male's consummation of that act. Second, if sexual relations were defined by the male's consummation of the act, then one would have to conclude that no sexual relations occurred in the absence of that element of the act. But in many cases of rape, the male does not consummate the act. Yet it would be absurd to claim that no sexual relations has occurred in such a case. If sexual relations were defined by the male's consummation of the act, then one would have to conclude that an unmarried couple had not committed the sin of pre-marital sex as long as that element was not present, which is clearly absurd. If sexual relations were defined by the male's consummation of the act, then one would have to conclude that a man or woman had not lost their virginity, despite numerous sexual acts, as long as that element was not present, which sound absurd to any sane and reasonable person.

The consummation of the sexual act is the end result, but it is not the entire act. But an act is not defined by whether or not the goal of the act is achieved. For example, if a man attempts to rob a bank in order to obtain the money, but he fails to obtain the money, he is still guilty of bank robbery. The end does not justify the means. The end of the male's consummation of the marital act does not justify the means to achieve that end. Both the end and the means must be moral. All knowingly chosen acts fall under the moral law. It is never the case that one act justifies another act, or that, in a set of acts, only one act must be moral. "Lastly comes the sin of not observing the right manner of copulation, which is **more grievous** if the abuse regards the 'vas' [the vessel or the orifice of a woman] than if it affects the manner of copulation in respect of other circumstances." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 12)

As a matter of fact, Tradition, Scripture, and the Magisterium have NEVER taught that unnatural sexual acts (e.g. oral, anal, or manipulative sex) are moral within marriage. A sexual act is unnatural if it is a type of sexual act not inherently capable of procreation. A sexual act is natural if it is the type of intercourse between a man and a woman that is inherently capable of procreation. If the man or woman is infertile, the act is still natural if that act would be capable of procreation in fertile individuals. Natural sexual intercourse is the type of sexual act which has served to propagate the human race since after its inception. Good intentions are not sufficient to make an act moral. The end does not justify the means. So the end of pleasing one's spouse does not justify the means used to do so.

Indeed, it is clear that St. Thomas defines all non-procreative sexual acts as "vice against nature" since he says that: "the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason... Now this same matter may be discordant with right reason... because it is inconsistent with the end of the venereal act [procreation]. On this way, as hindering the begetting of children, there is the "vice against nature," which attaches to **every venereal act from which generation cannot follow** [such as foreplay and sensual kisses and touches etc. which are inherently non-procreative sexual acts *from which generation cannot follow*"]". (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 1)

"What if a wife has a full hysterectomy for medical reasons, is her husband having sex with her casting his seed upon the ground?" No, because the type of act, natural marital relations, is natural, not unnatural. And God is capable of causing the infertile to become fertile (as He did with Sarah and Abraham, and also with Zechariah and Elizabeth). Each and every sexual act must be open to life. The two acts, one unnatural and the other natural, each have their

own moral object. Each sexual act must be considered separately as to whether or not it is an act of natural marital relations open to life. Thus, the only moral sexual act is natural marital relations open to life.

The context of an intrinsically evil act cannot justify that act. The moral object of a non-procreative sexual between husband and wife remains unchanged by whether or not the spouses engaged in natural marital relations before or after the act. But if you think that a husband can commit such acts on his wife before or after natural marital relations, what length of time must separate the two acts? A minute, an hour, a day, a month? How is it that you admit such acts are intrinsically evil by themselves, yet they are justified within a certain time frame before or after natural marital relations? Therefore, it is utterly absurd and erroneous to claim that unnatural, non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts are evil except when done within a certain number of minutes or hours before or after another moral act.

Romans 12:1-3 “And so, I beg you, brothers, by the mercy of God, that you offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, with the subservience of your mind. And do not choose to be conformed to this age, but instead choose to be reformed in the newness of your mind, so that you may demonstrate what is the will of God: what is good, and what is well-pleasing, and what is perfect. For I say, through the grace that has been given to me, to all who are among you: **Taste no more than it is necessary to taste, but taste unto sobriety and just as God has distributed a share of the faith to each one.**”

Since the natural light of reason that we humans have been given by God allows all humans to understand these facts we have just discussed concerning non-procreative sexual acts, all who denies or doubts that non-procreative sexual acts are sinful, are heretics against the Natural Law, which means that they can never be excused or called “material heretics” in this regard, but must be regarded by us as damned and as non-Catholic.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 “Therefore, concerning other things, brothers, we ask and beg you, in the Lord Jesus, that, just as you have received from us the way in which you ought to walk and to please God, so also may you walk, in order that you may abound all the more. For you know what precepts I have given to you through the Lord Jesus. **For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from fornication, that each one of you should know how to possess his vessel [his wife] in sanctification and honor, not in passions of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God,** and that no one should overwhelm or

circumvent his brother in business. For the Lord is the vindicator of all these things, just as we have preached and testified to you. **For God has not called us to impurity, but to sanctification.** And so, whoever despises these teachings, does not despise man, but God, who has even provided his Holy Spirit within us.”

Question: Is it sinful to have marital relations during the menstruation of the woman?

Answer: The question of whether marital relations during the menstruation of the woman is sinful or not is hard to answer since ambiguous statements by Pope Pius XI’s encyclical *Casti Connubii* are interpreted by some to mean that it is allowed. Pope Pius XI explains that a husband and wife may use their marital rights in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons, new life cannot be brought forth, but his teaching does not define whether it is speaking about the menstruation of the woman or some other sickness or defect of the woman, like the monthly infertility of women.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 59), Dec. 31, 1930: “**Nor are those considered as acting against nature who, in the married state, use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons either of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth.** For in matrimony as well as in the use of matrimonial rights there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the **quieting of concupiscence** which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider, **SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]** and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.”

This teaching does not directly address the question of whether it is allowed or not to perform the marital act during the menstruation period of the woman, and so there is some measure of uncertainty whether the Church allows this filthy act to be performed since the Old Testament of the Bible, as well as the Popes, Fathers, Saints and Doctors of the Church throughout the ages, condemned or opposed marital relations during this time period.

Pope St. Gregory the Great, in his “*Epistle To Augustine, Bishop of the Angli [English]*” (c. 597 A.D.) writes that all women: “are forbidden to have intercourse with their husbands while held of their accustomed sicknesses [menses]; so much so that the sacred law smites with death any man who shall go into a woman having her sickness [Leviticus 20:18].” (*Epistles of St. Gregory the Great*, Book XI, Letter 64, To Augustine, Bishop of the Angli)

As mentioned, it was forbidden and a capital offense (that is, it was an act that was punished by death and execution) for spouses to have marital relations during the wife's infertile monthly cycle during the Old Covenant era. This clearly shows us that God does not want spouses to perform the marital act during this time.

Leviticus 20:18 "If any man lie with a woman in her flowers, and uncover her nakedness, and she open the fountain of her blood, both shall be destroyed out of the midst of their people."

We read in the Old Testament that God had forbidden even the married to perform the marital act by separating the wife from her husband during the infertile monthly menstrual cycle of the woman. Leviticus 15:19: "*The woman, who at the return of the month, hath her issue of blood, shall be separated seven days.*" Haydock Commentary explains: "*Days, not only out of the camp, but from the company of men.*" As soon as a woman shows signs of infertility, intercourse would cease. "*Thou shalt not approach to a woman having her flowers: neither shalt thou uncover her nakedness*" (Leviticus 18:19). Haydock Commentary adds: "***Saint Augustine believes that this law is still in force.*** [On Leviticus 20:18] *This intemperance was by a positive law declared a mortal offence of the Jews.*"

This wondrous law from God not only diminished the time a couple could have marital relations, but it also prohibited the women from the company of men, and this certainly includes her husband. What was God's reason for separating the woman from her man you might ask? In truth, God who knows more about human weaknesses and sins than all of humanity combined ordained this so that the temptation to violate His laws and have marital relations during this period would not happen. For most temptations work like this: as long as you take away the source of the temptation, it will always be easier to control.

Ezechiel 18:5-6,9 "And if a man be just, and do judgment and justice, And hath not eaten upon the mountains [that is, of the sacrifices there offered to idols], nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel: and hath not defiled his neighbour's wife, **nor come near to a menstruous woman...** he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God."

Another reason why God made this wondrous law was so that a couple would have marital relations less frequently, which in turn would help them get stronger in resisting and conquering sexual temptations of different kinds. For as we have seen already, those who indulge in the marital act too often commits a sin of gluttony of sorts and will fall more easily

into other sins since they do not order their actions in accordance with right reason, but in accordance with their unmortified and sensual desires like animals or brute beasts.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) also did not believe that it was lawful, and taught very clearly in his *Summa Theologica* that it is a sin to knowingly demand the marital debt when a woman is menstruating. He also compared demanding the debt on such occasions with the case of a madman being dangerous to other people, both bodily and spiritually (*Summa Theologica*, Suppl., Q. 64, Art. 4, Objection 3).

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 64, Art. 3: “Whether it is allowable for a menstruous wife to ask for the marriage debt? On the contrary, "Thou shalt not approach to a woman having her flowers" (Leviticus 18:19) where Augustine observes: "Although he has already sufficiently forbidden this he repeats the prohibition here lest he seem to have spoken figuratively." Further, "All our justices" are become "as the rag of a menstruous woman" (Isaiah 64:6) where Jerome observes: "Men ought then to keep away from their wives [at this time]... so that those parents who are not ashamed to come together in sexual intercourse have their sin made obvious to all": and thus the same conclusion follows.

“I answer that, It was forbidden in the Law to approach to a menstruous woman, for two reasons both on account of her uncleanness, and on account of the [spiritual and bodily] harm that frequently resulted to the offspring from such intercourse. With regard to the first reason, it was a ceremonial precept, but with regard to the second it was a moral precept. For since marriage is chiefly directed to the good of the offspring, all use of marriage which is intended for the good of the offspring is in order. Consequently this precept is binding even in the New Law on account of the second reason, although not on account of the first. Now, the menstrual issue may be natural or unnatural. The natural issue is that to which women are subject at stated periods when they are in good health; and it is unnatural when they suffer from an issue of blood through some disorder resulting from sickness. Accordingly if the menstrual flow be unnatural it is not forbidden in the New Law to approach to a menstruous woman both on account of her infirmity since a woman in that state cannot conceive, and because an issue of this kind is lasting and continuous, so that the husband would have to abstain for always. When however the woman is subject to a natural issue of the menstruum, she can conceive; moreover, the said issue lasts only a short time, wherefore it is forbidden to approach to her. In like manner a woman is forbidden to ask for the debt during the period of that issue.”

We will also see many more quotations from the early Church concerning the traditional teaching against sexual relations during menstruation in the next question.

Question: Is it sinful to have marital relations during the pregnancy of the woman?

Answer: Many have thought that Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Casti Connubii* teaches that one may lawfully have marital relations during the wife's pregnancy, but *Casti Connubii* is highly ambiguous and it is very hard to understand whether it teaches that one may lawfully have marital relations after the woman have become pregnant. *Casti Connubii* teaches that spouses can perform the marital act during those times when "**new life cannot be brought forth**", and this is interpreted by some to give permission for spouses to perform the marital act during a woman's pregnancy, but the Pope then goes on to state that this action is only lawful "**SO LONG AS THEY ARE SUBORDINATED TO THE PRIMARY END [THAT IS, PROCREATION OF CHILDREN]**" and so, this last sentence seem to teach that one may not perform the marital act during the pregnancy of the woman, since the primary end and motive of procreation is already fulfilled.

There is no official and dogmatic Papal Church teaching, as far as we know, that directly teaches that marital relations during a pregnancy is a sin, but that does not mean that it is not a sin, and especially so since the Popes, Fathers, Saints, and Doctors of the Church throughout the ages opposed marital relations without the intent to procreate. This thus seems to be the Catholic Tradition from the beginning.

In contrast to the lack of quotations from the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Church that allows spouses to perform the marital act during pregnancy, there are, however, many quotations that address this question directly from the Fathers and early writers of the Church that rejects this act. The Holy Fathers and Church Tradition (in all the quotes we've found on the subject) unanimously teach that sexual activity during the infertile period of pregnancy as well as menstruation must be avoided at all times since it is unnatural and unreasonable to sow one's seed when one "awaits the harvest."

Athenagoras the Athenian (c. 175 A.D.): "After throwing the seed into the ground, the farmer awaits the harvest. He does not sow more seed on top of it. Likewise, to us the procreation of children is the limit of our indulgence in appetite." (*A Plea For the Christians*, Chapter XXXIII.--Chastity of the Christians with Respect to Marriage)

Nature itself tells us through our inborn instinct that it is unreasonable and unnatural to sow

a seed in the same place where a seed is already growing.

In reference to the same issue, St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 195 A.D.) writes: “To...a spiritual man, after conception, his wife is as a sister and is treated as if of the same father.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book VI, Chapter XII) St. Clement also pointed out that in all the Jewish scriptures there was not a single instance in which “one of the ancients approached a pregnant woman” and taught that the avoidance of sexual relations from the time one’s wife became pregnant to the time of the child’s weaning was “a law of nature given by God.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XI, Section 71, 72)

St. Augustine, in his book *On The Good of Marriage* (A.D. 401), likewise agreed with the Church’s tradition that performing the marital act during pregnancy is unreasonable and unnatural since “**necessary** sexual intercourse for begetting [of children] is free from blame, and itself is **alone** worthy of marriage. **But that which goes beyond this necessity [of begetting children] no longer follows reason but lust...**” (Section 11) He also taught that marital relations during pregnancy “are the sins of the married persons themselves, not the fault of marriage.”

St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 5, A.D. 401: “There also are men incontinent to such a degree that they do not spare their wives even when pregnant. Therefore, whatever immodest, shameful, and sordid acts the married commit with each other are the sins of the married persons themselves, not the fault of marriage.”

In his book *Against Julian*, St. Augustine shows us that conjugal chastity: “combats [carnal concupiscence] in even more valiant fashion in regard to the act of conjugal union, lest there be indulgence beyond what suffices for generating offspring. Such chastity abstains during menstruation and pregnancy, nor has it union with one no longer able to conceive on account of age. And the desire for union does not prevail, but ceases when there is no prospect of generation.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 21:43) Thus the conception of children is “the one alone worthy fruit... of the sexual intercourse.” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 1) No other aspect of the marital act can be described as “worthy.” Therefore, when a husband engages in marital relations during those times when his wife is pregnant, nursing, or menstruating, the husband or the wife or both are seen as seeking the unworthy fruit of sexual pleasure.

Two activities recommended by some heretical NFP teachers are having sex during menstruation and during pregnancy, both of which the earliest extant Church Canons, the

Apostolic Constitutions (c. 375 A.D.), specifically reject: “When the natural purgations do appear in the wives, let not their husbands approach them, out of regard to the children to be begotten; for the law has forbidden it, for it says: "Thou shalt not come near thy wife when she is in her separation." [Lev. xviii. 19; Ezek. xviii. 6.] **Nor, indeed, let them frequent their wives’ company when they are with child. For they do this not for the begetting of children, but for the sake of pleasure. Now a lover of God ought not to be a lover of pleasure.**” (*The Sacred Writings of Apostolic Teaching and Constitutions*, Book V, Chap. XXVIII)

St. Caesarius of Arles (c. 468-542) tells us that marital relations during a woman’s menstruation can result in that “the children who are then conceived... be born as lepers, or epileptics, or perhaps even demoniacs”, thus showing us that it is a great necessity to abstain from marital relations during these times in order to not injure our children. He also adds that married people who perform the marital act during a woman’s pregnancy are worse than beasts.

St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon 44:7*: “Above all, no one should know his wife when Sunday or other feasts come around. Similar precautions should be taken as often as women menstruate, for the Prophet says: ‘Do not come near to a menstruous woman.’ [Ezech. 18:6] If a man is aware that his wife is in this condition but refuses to control himself on a Sunday or feast, the children who are then conceived will be born as lepers, or epileptics, or perhaps even demoniacs [that is, he means that it is common that this happens for such unrestrained and lustful spouses]. Lepers are commonly born, not of wise men who observe chastity on feasts and other days, but especially of farmers who do not know how to control themselves. Truly, brethren, if animals without intellect do not touch each other except at a fixed and proper time, how much more should men who have been created according to God’s image observe this? **What is worse, there are some dissolute or drunken men who sometimes do not even spare their wives when they are pregnant.** Therefore, if they do not amend their lives, we are to consider them worse than animals. Such men the Apostle addresses when he says: ‘Every one of you learn how to possess his vessel in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who have no hope.’ [1 Thess. 4:4-5]”

St. Ambrose (c. 340-397) could rightly declare that it is shameful to continue to have sexual relations after pregnancy, and that those people who do this act “contaminate the former [the child] and exasperate [anger] the latter [God]”: “Youths generally assert the desire of having

children and think to excuse the heat of their age by the desire for generation. How much more shameful for the old to do what is shameful for the young to confess. For even the young who temper their hearts to prudence by divine fear, generally renounce the works of youth when progeny [offspring] have been received. And is this remarkable for man, if beasts mutely speak a zeal for generating, not a desire for copulating? Indeed, once they know the womb is filled, and the seed received by the generative soil, they no longer indulge in intercourse or the wantonness of love, but they take up parental care. **Yet men spare neither the embryo nor God. They contaminate the former and exasperate the latter.** "Before I formed you in the womb," He says, "I knew you and sanctified you in your mother's womb." [Jer. 1:5] To control your impatience, note the hands of your Author forming a man in the womb. He is at work, and you stain with lust the secret of the sacred womb? Imitate the beast or fear God. Why do I speak of beasts? The land itself often rests from the work of generating, and if it is often filled with the seeds thrown by the impatient eagerness of men, it repays the shamelessness of the farmer and changes fertility to sterility. So even in the elements and the beasts it is a shame to nature not to cease from generating." (St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan, *Exposition of the Gospel According to St. Luke* 1:43-45)

St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XI, Section 71, 72, On Marriage and Procreation (c. 198-203 A.D.): "Right from the beginning the law, as we have already said, lays down the command, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," [Ex. 20:17] long before the Lord's closely similar utterance in the New Testament, where the same idea is expressed in his own mouth: "You have heard that the law commanded, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say, Thou shalt not lust." [Matt. 5:27-28] **That the law intended husbands to cohabit with their wives with self-control and only for the purpose of begetting children is evident... For this reason you could not point to any place in Scripture where one of the ancients approached a pregnant woman; later, after the child is born and weaned, you might find that marriage relations of husbands and wives were resumed.** You will find that Moses' father kept this principle in mind. After Aaron's birth three years passed before Moses was born. [Ex. 7:7] Again, the tribe of Levi observed this law of nature given by God, although they were fewer in number than any others which came into the promised land. [Num. 3:39] For a tribe does not easily grow to great numbers if their men have intercourse only within the legal marriage relationship and then wait until the end not only of pregnancy but also of breast-feeding."

St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book II, Chapter XXIII, On

Marriage and Procreation (c. 198-203 A.D.): “Far more excellent, in my opinion, than the seeds of wheat and barley that are sown at appropriate seasons, is man that is sown, for whom all things grow; and those seeds temperate husbandmen ever sow. Every foul and polluting practice must therefore be purged away from marriage; that the intercourse of the irrational animals may not be cast in our teeth, as more accordant with nature than human conjunction in procreation. **Some of these, it must be granted, desist at the time in which they are directed, leaving creation to the working of Providence.**”

Origen (c. 184-254), *Homilies on Genesis*, Homily V, Section 4, On Lot And His Daughters: “Let the married women examine themselves and seek if they approach their husbands for this reason alone [for having children], that they might receive children, and after conception desist. For those [virtuous] women... when they have attained conception, [rightly] do not later assent to copulation with a man. **But some women, for we do not censure all equally, but there are some who serve passion incessantly, like animals without any distinction, whom I would not even compare to the dumb beasts. For even the beasts themselves know, when they have conceived, not to further grant opportunity to their males.** The divine Scriptures also censures such when it says: "Do not become like the [sterile] horse and the mule who have no understanding," [Ps. 31:9] and again, "They have become stallions." [Jer. 5:8] But, O people of God, "who love Christ in incorruption," [Eph. 6:24] understand the word of the Apostle in which he says: "Whether you eat or drink or whatever else you do, do all to the glory of God." [1 Cor. 10:31] For his remark after eating and drinking, "whatever else you do," has designated with a modest word the immodest affairs of marriage, showing that even these acts themselves are performed to the glory of God if they are attended to with a view to posterity [offspring] alone.”

“In fact, a good Christian should not only observe chastity for a few days before he communicates, [that is, before he receives the Holy Eucharist] but he should never know his wife except from the desire for children. A man takes a wife for the procreation of children, not for the sake of lust. Even the marriage rite mentions this: ‘For the procreation of children,’ it says. Notice that it does not say for the sake of lust, but ‘for the procreation of children.’ **I would like to know, dearly beloved, what kind of a harvest a man could gather if he sowed his field in one year as often as he is overcome by dissipation and abuses his wife without any desire for children. If those *who are unwilling to control themselves* plowed and sowed repeatedly their land which was already**

sown, let us see in what kind of fruit they would rejoice. As you well know, no land can produce proper fruit if it is sown frequently in one year. Why, then, does a man do with his body what he does not want done with his field?” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 44:3)

St. Finnian of Clonard (470-549), *The Penitential of Finnian*, #46: “We advise and exhort that there be continence in marriage, since marriage without continence is not lawful, but sin, and [marriage] is permitted by the authority of God not for lust but for the sake of children, as it is written, ‘And the two shall be in one flesh,’ that is, in unity of the flesh for the generation of children, not for the lustful concupiscence of the flesh. **Married people, then, must mutually abstain during three forty-day periods in each single year, by consent for a time, that they may be able to have time for prayer for the salvation of their souls; and after the wife has conceived he shall not have intercourse with her until she has borne her child, and they shall come together again for this purpose, as saith the Apostle.** But if they shall fulfill this instruction, then they are worthy of the body of Christ... and there they shall receive the thirty-fold fruit which as the Savior relates in the Gospel, he has also plucked for married people.” (*Medieval Handbooks of Penance* by John T. McNeil and Helen Gamer. New York: Columbia University Press, 1938)

Thus, the teaching of the Church Fathers is very clear that all sexual relations during pregnancy are to be avoided. “The procreation of children is the remit and ordinance of those who are joined together in marriage; and their objective is that their children be good.... **See how Moses in his great wisdom symbolically rejected sowing one’s seed fruitlessly, saying “You shall not eat the leopard or the hyena”** [Deut. 14:7]. He did not want human beings to share their character or to experience lust of the same magnitude as theirs, for it is said that these animals suffer from a mad frenzy to have sexual intercourse.... It is lawful for you to take sensual pleasures only from your wife in order to beget legitimate offspring, for only these pleasures are lawful according to the Word.... For this reason, Moses himself prohibited his people from sleeping even with their own wives in cases where they were subject to menstrual flows.... For pleasure alone, when experienced in marital intercourse, is unlawful, unjust and foreign to reason. **Again, Moses ordered men not to sleep with pregnant women until they gave birth...**” (St Clement of Alexandria, *The Paedagogus*, c. 198 A.D.)

It is bad to touch a woman during pregnancy since it gives the child in the womb “many sinful impulses” according to Anne Catherine Emmerich

In the revelation of Anne Catherine Emmerich, entitled the “Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary”, we read the following interesting points about marital relations during pregnancy:

“It was explained to me here that the Blessed Virgin was begotten by her parents in holy obedience and complete purity of heart, and that thereafter they lived together in continence in the greatest devoutness and fear of God. **I was at the same time clearly instructed how immeasurably the holiness of children was encouraged by the purity, chastity, and continence of their parents and by their resistance to all unclean temptations; and how continence after conception preserves the fruit of the womb from many sinful impulses. In general, I was given an overflowing abundance of knowledge about the roots of deformity and sin.**” (Anne Catherine Emmerich, *Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, II. The Immaculate Conception)

Despite this, many lustful people will not agree with what Anne Catherine Emmerich had to say here, and some may even be offended by it. The reason for this is because these people and others want to deceive themselves into thinking that there is nothing wrong about lust or concupiscence. Yes, they even claim this even though they know and are fully aware of that lust leads countless of souls to Hell and eternal damnation. However, whether or not they want to agree with it or not, **it’s just a fact that the sexual lusts and temptations that urges people to commit sins of the flesh is an evil product of the fall, and of original sin.** In other words, humans were not originally intended to experience concupiscence and temptations of the flesh according to God’s perfect plan for humanity, but it ended up in that way because of Adam and Eve’s transgression. If a person is honest with himself he will understand that this is true. However, most people want to deceive themselves and therefore choose to overlook this fact.

In summary, the definition or meaning of the revelation of Anne Catherine Emmerich is that lust is evil and that a couple’s marital relations during pregnancy will effect the child in a negative way, inflicting many sinful impulses upon the child. Anne Catherine Emmerich is clear that **“continence after conception preserves the fruit of the womb from many sinful impulses.”** The sensuality and sinful impulses that thus will be aroused by many spouses’ sexual relations during pregnancy is a great evil that will affect both husband and wife, and their future child, in a negative way. Because of this, parents need to do all in their power to abstain from marital relations during all pregnancies.

The biblical Book of Tobit also teaches that the virtue and abstinence of the parents will effect whether their children will be born whole or with defects of different kinds. Thus, we read that **“the third night [of praying and observing chastity before having sexual relations] thou shalt obtain a blessing that sound children may be born of you.”** The blessing on the third night of “sound children” obviously means that those couples who do not perform the marital act for the sake of lust or too often, and who are virtuous and wait for three days in accordance with the promise of Holy Scripture, will receive a child without birth deformities or defects. This may be hard for many to believe, but this is really and truly what Holy Scripture is promising and saying.

Tobias 6:18, 20-22 “[St. Raphael said to Tobias:] But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her. ... But the second night thou shalt be admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs. **And the third night thou shalt obtain a blessing that sound children may be born of you.** And when the third night is past, [of praying and observing chastity] thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children.”

It is sad to see that none today seem to care anything about these promises or virtuous deeds that promise these remarkable and wondrous graces that Our Lord said he would bless a virtuous couple with. One could think that even a worldly or ungodly couple would appreciate the grace of not receiving a child that is deformed and that they, if they believed in God or were aware of these promises, would act in accordance to the words of the Holy Scripture; but now neither “Catholics” or so-called Christians nor any people of the world care anything about these words of our Lord that promises the inestimable grace of receiving “a blessing that sound children may be born of you.”

St. Bridget was also revealed the truth of the spiritual danger of having marital relations during pregnancy in a spiritual revelation. In it she saw a man that was tormented in purgatory. St. Bridget was allowed to communicate with this tormented soul. She asked the man about the specific reasons why he escaped Eternal Hell. He answered saying: “The third [reason I escaped being eternally condemned to burn in Hell] is that I obeyed my teacher who advised me to abstain from my wife’s bed when I understood that she was pregnant.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 9 or Appendix)

In addition to the above facts, it is also evident that many spouses may be more inclined to

commit some form or another of sexual sin during this time period and that they might put too much heart or affection in the sexual act at this time due to the fact that conception cannot occur again, and so they might indulge a little too often or unreasonably and love the act a little too much, and more than what is suitable. *“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”* (Luke 12:34) *“Men shall be... lovers of pleasure more than of God.”* (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

Thus, it is totally clear that those who are having marital relations during pregnancy, and who do not practice virtue, are endangering their own and their child’s spiritual welfare. During pregnancy, the primary purpose of procreation that the Church teaches that spouses always must perform the marital act for is not possible to be fulfilled and thus, it is a defective action to have marital relations during this time. We see this distinction being made in the Church’s teachings in these words: *“Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children”* (Pope Pius XI *Casti Connubii*, #54).

Marital relations during pregnancy can also sometimes be dangerous to the child, and lead to a premature birth or a stillborn child. Many times there also exist a high risk for preterm labor or a medical condition or any other valid reason that makes it absolutely necessary to abstain from the marital act. If the doctor has said that it can cause further complications to the pregnancy – or if there is any risk to engage in marital intercourse during this time period – it is a mortal sin to deliberately engage in marital intercourse at this time. And the husband has no right to ask for the debt during this period. No masturbation, oral sex or other sinful acts are allowed as a substitute during this time period either.

Doctors usually recommend some abstinence after labor, usually four to six weeks before resuming intercourse. This allows time for the woman to heal after birth. Total abstinence, if needed, is required during this time period according to the doctor’s recommendation.

The Old Testament also confirms that Our Lord wants spouses to practice chastity for a while after the birth of the child.

Leviticus 12:1-5 *“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ‘Speak to the children of Israel, and thou shalt say to them: If a woman having received seed shall bear a man child, she shall be unclean seven days, according to the days of the separation of her flowers. And on the eighth day the infant shall be circumcised: But she shall remain three and thirty days in the blood of her purification. She shall touch no holy thing, neither shall she enter into the sanctuary, until the days of her purification be fulfilled. But if she shall*

bear a maid child, she shall be unclean two weeks, according to the custom of her monthly courses, and she shall remain in the blood of her purification sixty-six days.”

Since the Old Testament teaches that a person who becomes defiled cannot touch other people during the time that they are unclean, this shows us that God wants the spouses to abstain from the marital act for a while after they have received the child.

One must really marvel over how the members of the Christian Church, (who should be more virtuous than the people of the Jewish Old Testament religion) have fallen into this degraded and filthy custom of having marital relations during a woman’s pregnancy or menstrual period. The Old Law was only a shell and a sign of the future things in the New Law, and even the Old Law forbade marital relations on many more occasions than the New Law does. The reason of why the Old Law forbade things that now are not sinful is because in the New Law, Our Lord wants us to do many good things, not because we are forced to do it, but only because we know that they are good in themselves, which is a more virtuous and meritorious act. Christian spouses should obviously act and live more virtuously and holy than did those people in the Old Law, since all Christians have received more graces and knowledge of Our Lord than those in the Old Law, and it is really a blemish on the Christian community that this is not happening. The amount of graces that are lost because of these filthy and unnecessary acts of lustful spouses is, sad to say, immeasurable and inestimable. *“Men shall be... lovers of pleasure more than of God.”* (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

It must also be made perfectly clear that natural infertility during pregnancy on the part of the woman is *not* a reward for the spouses to have “great sex” because they were “good” in fulfilling the marital duty (the procreation and education of children), as so many people today nowadays actually (and falsely) seem to believe.

It is reasonable to conclude that if women were not infertile during pregnancy, many bad husbands would be endangering the life of their wives by exposing them to too many childbirths at too short time intervals. Consequently, if women were not infertile during pregnancy, many more mortal sins would be committed by married and unmarried men since they then would be inclined to seek relief of their fleshly lusts in other ways or by other women, so as not to endanger the life of their own wife or mistresses.

Indeed, to St. Jerome and the rest of the Saints and Fathers of the Church, the indulgences granted to the marital act was not something good or praiseworthy because it only acts as a relief valve to avoid a greater evil: **“Thus it must be bad to touch a woman. If**

indulgences is nonetheless granted to the marital act, this is only to avoid something worse. But what value can be recognized in a good that is allowed only with a view of preventing something worse?” (St. Jerome)

Question: Does the Church allow the married to demand the marital debt on holy days?

Response: St. Thomas answers this question in great detail in his *Summa* for us:

“Article 7. Whether it is forbidden to demand the debt on holy days?”

“Objection 1. It would seem that a person ought not to be forbidden to ask for the debt on holy days. For the remedy should be applied when the disease gains strength. Now concupiscence may possibly gain strength on a feast day. Therefore the remedy should be applied then by asking for the debt.

“Objection 2. Further, the only reason why the debt should not be demanded on feast days is because they are devoted to prayer. Yet on those days certain hours are appointed for prayer. Therefore one may ask for the debt at some other time.

“[St. Thomas response:] On the contrary, Just as certain places are holy because they are devoted to holy things, so are certain times holy for the same reason. But it is not lawful to demand the debt in a holy place. Therefore neither is it lawful at a holy time.

“I answer that, Although the marriage act is void of sin, nevertheless since it oppresses the reason on account of the carnal pleasure, it renders man unfit for spiritual things. Therefore, on those days when one ought especially to give one’s time to spiritual things, it is not lawful to ask for the debt.

“Reply to Objection 1. At such a time other means may be employed for the repression of concupiscence; for instance, prayer and many similar things, to which even those who observe perpetual continence have recourse.

“Reply to Objection 2. Although one is not bound to pray at all hours, one is bound throughout the day to keep oneself fit for prayer.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 64, Art. 7)

In article 10 of the same question, St. Thomas speaks about how weddings must not be celebrated on holy days, adding more reasons why one must abstain from the marital sexual act on certain holy days.

“Article 10. Whether weddings should be forbidden at certain times?”

“Objection 1. It would seem that weddings ought not to be forbidden at certain

times. For marriage is a sacrament: and the celebration of the others sacraments is not forbidden at those times. Therefore neither should the celebration of marriage be forbidden then.

“... **Objection 3.** Further, marriages that are contracted in despite of the law of the Church ought to be dissolved. Yet marriages are not dissolved if they be contracted at those times. Therefore it should not be forbidden by a commandment of the Church.

“**[St. Thomas’ response:] On the contrary,** It is written (Ecclesiastes 3:5): "A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces."

“**I answer that,** When the newly married spouse is given to her husband, the minds of husband and wife are taken up with carnal preoccupations by reason of the very newness of things, wherefore weddings are wont to be signalized by much unrestrained rejoicing. On this account it is forbidden to celebrate marriages at those times when men ought especially to arise to spiritual things. Those times are from Advent until the Epiphany because of the Communion which, according to the ancient Canons, is wont to be made at Christmas (as was observed in its proper place, III, 30), from Septuagesima until the octave day of Easter, on account of the Easter Communion, and from the three days before the Ascension until the octave day of Pentecost, on account of the preparation for Communion to be received at that time.

“**Reply to Objection 1.** The celebration of marriage has a certain worldly and carnal rejoicing connected with it, which does not apply to the other sacraments. Hence the comparison fails.

“... **Reply to Objection 3.** Since time is not essential to a marriage contracted within the forbidden seasons, the marriage is nevertheless a true sacrament. Nor is the marriage dissolved absolutely, but for a time, that they may do penance for having disobeyed the commandment of the Church. It is thus that we are to understand the statement of the Master (Sent. iv, D, 33), namely that should a marriage have been contracted or a wedding celebrated at the aforesaid times, those who have done so "ought to be separated." Nor does he say this on his own authority, but in reference to some canonical ordinance, such as that of the Council of Lerida, which decision is quoted by the Decretals.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 64, Art. 10)

Question: You are not right in teaching that concupiscence and sexual desire is the reason why the original sin is transmitted to one’s children. Concupiscence and sexual desire cannot be an evil disease since if it were, God would have led people to evil by allowing people to marry, which is impossible. If concupiscence and sexual desire was an evil disease, this would also make marriage evil, and this proves that concupiscence must be a good gift from

God, and that one do not need to resist it.

Answer: As we will see, concupiscence and sexual desire is an evil disease that transmits the Original Sin to the offspring according to the Holy Bible and the Church. Today, most people are unaware of the fact that the ancient tradition of the Church teaches that concupiscence and sexual desire actually transmits the Original Sin to the offspring, but this has always been the Church's teaching from the very beginning of its foundation by Our Lord Jesus Christ, and it was also taught in the Old Testament long before the New Testament was revealed to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. God Himself revealed this doctrine in *The Book of Psalms*, teaching us that we are conceived in the iniquity of the Original Sin: "For behold I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins did my mother conceive me." (Psalms 50:7)

Pope Innocent III as well, taught that the "foul concupiscence" that is inherent in all marital sexual acts transmits the stain of the *Original Sin* to one's children and that "the conceived seeds [of the children] are befouled and corrupted" by this "foul concupiscence."

Pope Innocent III, *On the Seven Penitential Psalms*: "Who does not know that conjugal intercourse is never committed without itching of the flesh, and heat and foul concupiscence, whence the conceived seeds [of the children] are befouled and corrupted?"

Pope Pius XI confirmed this teaching by the Papal Magisterium in his authoritative encyclical *Casti Connubii*, teaching us that the sexual act became "**the way of death by which original sin is passed on to posterity**" after the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve, and that the only way to cleanse the child from the stain of the original sin is through the Sacrament of Baptism, which makes all of them "living members of Christ, partakers of immortal life, and heirs of that eternal glory to which we all aspire from our inmost heart."

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 14), Dec. 31, 1930: "**For although Christian spouses even if sanctified themselves cannot transmit sanctification to their progeny, nay, although the very natural process of generating life [that is, the marital sexual act] has become the way of death by which original sin is passed on to posterity**, nevertheless, they share to some extent in the blessings of that primeval marriage of Paradise, since it is theirs to offer their offspring to the Church in order that by this most fruitful Mother of the children of God they may be regenerated through the laver of Baptism unto supernatural justice and finally be made living members of Christ, partakers of immortal life, and heirs of that

eternal glory to which we all aspire from our inmost heart.”

In addition to these facts, *The Council of Trent* infallibly teaches that the sexual generative act is the reason behind why humans contract the stain of original sin.

Pope Paul III, *The Council of Trent*, Session 5, On Original Sin, *ex cathedra*: “By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death... so that in them there may be washed away by regeneration, **what they have contracted by generation [that is, by the marital sexual act]**, ‘For unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God [John 3:5].’ (Denzinger 791; *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*)

In another part of the Fifth Session of Trent, the Council confirmed the fact that the sexual act transmits the original sin: “If any one asserts, that this sin of Adam,--which in its origin is one, **and being transfused into all by propagation [that is, by the procreative marital sexual act]**, not by imitation, is in each one as his own,--is taken away either by the powers of human nature, or by any other remedy than the merit of the one mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath reconciled us to God in his own blood, made unto us justice, sanctification, and redemption; or if he denies that the said merit of Jesus Christ is applied, both to adults and to infants, by the sacrament of baptism rightly administered in the form of the church; let him be anathema.”

Indeed, Our Lord and Our Lady’s complete sinlessness and freedom from the stain of original sin is another great proof that shows that the original sin is transmitted through the sexual act and through concupiscence, for both of them were created free from the stain of original sin because they were not created through lust and concupiscence by any sexual act, as is the case with all other humans after Adam and Eve. Even from the standpoint of reason alone, all people understands that the sexual pleasure or concupiscence is evil, since they all know by instinct that getting intoxicated is evil and that the marital sexual act must be excused by an absolutely necessary motive because of this intoxication.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1: “**Now there is a loss of reason incidental to the union of man and woman, both because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time [as in the case of intoxication of drugs], as the Philosopher says (Ethic. vii, 11); and again because of the tribulation of the flesh which such persons have**

to suffer from solicitude for temporal things (1 Corinthians 7:28).

Consequently the choice of this union cannot be made ordinate except by certain compensations whereby that same union is righted, and these are the goods [procreation, sacrament and fidelity] which **excuse** marriage and make it right.”

Indeed, one can easily understand from reason alone that concupiscence and sexual desire is a disease and evil: “Augustine says (De Civ. Dei xiv, 16, seqq., 24) that the infection of original sin is most apparent in the movements of the members of generation, which are not subject to reason. Now those members serve the generative power in the mingling of sexes, wherein there is the delectation of touch, which is the most powerful incentive to concupiscence. Therefore the infection of original sin regards these three chiefly, viz. the generative power, the concupiscible faculty and the sense of touch. I answer that, Those corruptions especially are said to be infectious, which are of such a nature as to be transmitted from one subject to another: hence contagious diseases, such as leprosy and murrain and the like, are said to be infectious. Now the corruption of original sin is transmitted by the act of generation, as stated above (Q[81], A[1]). Therefore the powers which concur in this act, are chiefly said to be infected. Now this act serves the generative power, in as much as it is directed to generation; and it includes delectation of the touch, which is the most powerful object of the concupiscible faculty. Consequently, while all the parts of the soul are said to be corrupted by original sin, these three are said specially to be corrupted and infected.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part of the Second Part, Q. 83, Art. 4)

Concerning the objection that one do not need to resist one’s concupiscence or sexual desire, *The Holy and Council of Trent* infallibly decreed in the Fifth Session on Original Sin that we all need to “**resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ**” our own concupiscence and sensual nature if we wish to be saved, thus proving, once and for all, that concupiscence and sexual desire must be evil, since God would never tell us to resist what is good or a gift from Him.

“But this holy council perceives and confesses that **in the one baptized there remains concupiscence or an inclination to sin, which, since it is left for us to wrestle with, cannot injure those who do not acquiesce but resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ**; indeed, he who shall have striven lawfully shall be crowned. **This concupiscence, which the Apostle sometimes calls sin, the holy council declares the Catholic Church has never understood to be called sin in the sense that it is truly and properly sin in those born again, but in the sense that it is of sin and inclines to sin.**” (Pope Paul III, *Council of*

Trent, Session V, Section 5, June 17, 1546)

In St. Augustine's time, there were many heretics just like today that praised concupiscence and sexual desire and called it a good gift from God instead of what it really is, that is, an evil effect of the original sin of Adam and Eve. By the grace of God, however, the Church from the very beginning was completely united against all of these heretics and condemned and excommunicated those who held to this impious faction and heresy.

Pelagius (350-425), a British monk teaching in Rome, had proposed a heretical and false view of human nature that included the wicked heresy that a man have a capacity for doing good apart from God's grace. Pelagius publicly disagreed with the Church and St. Augustine's teaching that mankind was badly crippled by sin. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* explains that "during his sojourn in Rome he [Pelagius] composed several works... A closer examination of this work... brought to light the fact that it contained the fundamental ideas which the Church afterwards condemned as "Pelagian heresy". In it Pelagius denied the primitive state in paradise and original sin (cf. P.L., XXX, 678, "Insaniunt, qui de Adam per traducem asserunt ad nos venire peccatum"), insisted on the naturalness of concupiscence and the death of the body, and ascribed the actual existence and universality of sin to the bad example which Adam set by his first sin. As all his ideas were chiefly rooted in the old, pagan philosophy, especially in the popular system of the Stoics, rather than in Christianity, he regarded the moral strength of man's will (*liberum arbitrium*), when steeled by asceticism, as sufficient in itself to desire and to attain the loftiest ideal of virtue. The value of Christ's redemption was, in his opinion, limited mainly to instruction (*doctrina*) and example (*exemplum*), which the Savior threw into the balance as a counterweight against Adam's wicked example, so that nature retains the ability to conquer sin and to gain eternal life even without the aid of grace."

In 415 A.D. St. Augustine attacked Pelagius's teachings. By this time in his life Augustine had become a battle-hardened foe of heretics. He had defeated the Manichees and crushed the Donatists. When Pelagius began to oppose the Bible and the Church's teaching, Augustine set out to destroy this deceiver. Contrary to Augustine, Pelagius had concluded that infants had no original sin at all. The biblical core of St. Augustine's teaching of original sin centered on the account of the sin of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3) and St. Paul's teaching that "through one person sin entered the world" (Rom. 5:12).

Thus he understood "that by his sin Adam fell from his original supernatural status, and that through human propagation, which involved concupiscence, the lack of grace was passed on to every human being descended from Adam." In his confrontation with Pelagius, Augustine's

teaching concerning the effects of Adam and Eve's sin took on hard, clear connections involving sex, sin, and shame. Augustine taught that original sin was passed on to persons at their conceptions. When spouses conceived a child, they passed on the effects of Adam's original sin. Thus every human being received a human nature deformed by Adam's sin. St. Augustine's teaching about original sin was "received," that is, accepted as doctrine by the Catholic Church. His clear explanation of original sin helped to resolve three issues. First, it explained the practice of baptizing infants that was taught from the beginning of the Church by the Apostles and Apostolic Tradition. Secondly, it explained why concupiscence remained even after baptism. This sacrament removed original sin, but not its effects. Thirdly, Augustine's teaching about original sin provided a weapon that could be used to defeat Pelagius' false and heretical teachings about the basic goodness of the fallen human nature.

The account of Adam and Eve's recognition of their nakedness and their subsequent sewing of fig leaves to make loincloths (Gen. 3:7) led Augustine to conclude that the human genitals were the means of transmitting original sin: "The truth, however, is, that we are ashamed of that very thing which made those primitive human beings ashamed, when they covered their loins, namely their genital organs." (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence* 1:24) Showing his disapproval of concupiscence, Augustine eloquently taught that concupiscence: "is the penalty of sin; that is the plague and mark of sin; that is the temptation and very fuel of sin; that is the law in our members warring against the law of our mind; that is the rebellion against our own selves, proceeding from our very selves, which by a most righteous retribution is rendered us by our disobedient members. It is this which makes us ashamed, and justly ashamed. If it were not so, what could be more ungrateful, more irreligious in us, if in our members we were to suffer confusion of face, not for our own fault or penalty, but because of the works of God?" (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence* 2:22)

Augustine taught that in Eden the sexual act was totally under the control of the wills of both Adam and Eve because they possessed "the highest tranquility of all the obedient members without any lust." (St. Augustine, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* 1:35) Neither the man nor the woman needed the stirrings of sexual arousal to perform the act that would conceive a child before the fall. Thus, the human experience of sexual arousal was the effect of the concupiscence that resulted from the first sin. Prior to that sin the man "would have sown the seed, and the woman received it, as need required, the generative organs being moved by the will, not excited by lust." (St. Augustine, *City of God*, XIV:24) Human sexual arousal was both a reminder of and a punishment for the first sin.

In his book *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book I, Chapter 8, Augustine pointed out that

concupiscence was comparable to a man's limp. A limping man could still reach his destination. Reaching that destination was good, but the limp was not good. In marital relations the destination was the good of procreation. But the pleasurable orgasm that enabled conception to take place was, like the limp, not good. The pleasure of sexual spontaneity, like the man's limp, was a defect.

Augustine understood that Adam and Eve did not participate in sexual intercourse, as we human beings know it, until after they had sinned, teaching that in Eden the genital organs "would be set in motion at the command of the will; and without the active stimulus of passion, with calmness of mind and with no corrupting of the integrity of the body, the husband would lie on the bosom of his wife." (St. Augustine, *The City of God*, XIV:26) But, after the first sin, whenever married partners felt the desire for sexual union with each other, they experienced the corrupting influence of lust at work in their sin-blighted bodies. Augustine also taught that the act of sexual intercourse was instrumental in passing on original sin. Augustine's proof text came from Psalm 50: "For behold I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins did my mother conceive me." (Psalms 50:7). Thus, Augustine understood that every person after Adam and Eve was conceived in iniquity.

As late as 1930 Pope Pius XI echoed St. Augustine's teaching in his *Casti Connubii*: "Indeed, the natural generation of life has become the path of death by which original sin is communicated to the children." Augustine and the North African bishops condemned Pelagius and his followers in 416. In the following year Pope Innocent excommunicated Pelagius.

In 418 Bishop Julian of Eclanum, Italy, objected to the Church's teaching that unbaptized infants share in the guilt of Adam's sin as well as to Her teachings on marriage and concupiscence. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* explains that "when Pope Zosimus issued, in 418, his "Epistola Tractatoria", Julianus was one of the eighteen Italian bishops who refused to subscribe to the condemnation of Pelagius which it contained. In consequence of this refusal he was exiled under the decree of the Emperor Honorius, which pronounced banishment against Pelagius and his sympathizers. Driven from Italy in 421, he commenced an active literary campaign in the interests of the new heresy and by his writings soon won for himself the position of intellectual leader of the heretical party. To him is due the credit [or blame] of having systematized the teachings of Pelagius and Coelestius. His writings, which were frankly Pelagian, were largely directed against the doctrines which St. Augustine had defended, and for several years after the expulsion of the Pelagians the history of the conflict is merely an account of the controversy between Julian and Augustine. Most of Julian's works are lost, and

are known only through the copious quotations found in the works of his great adversary. ... Driven from Italy, he found refuge for a time with Theodore of Mopsuestia, who, though sympathetic, subsequently subscribed to his condemnation. At the accession of each pontiff Julian sought to have the Pelagian controversy re-opened, but this merely resulted in further condemnations by [the Popes] Celestine, Sixtus III, and Leo I.”

The heretic Julian disagreed with the Church’s teaching that the source of concupiscence was sin and that the defect of sexual activity was demonstrated by the fact that couples engaging in sex do not want to be observed by others. Calling incontinence “the mother of all vices,” Augustine referred to St. Paul’s wanting more than mere avoidance of fornication but also “a certain moderation in marriage itself,” which would be attained by setting aside “times of prayer.” Further rebuking Julian, the bishop of Hippo scolded: “You notice how you should understand with us in what disease of desire the Apostle was unwilling that one possess his vessel. ... But to you lust seems culpable only toward one other than one’s wife.” Augustine then accusingly asked, “Who, then, honors marriage more: you, when you deface its dignity by making it a blameless wallowing place of carnal concupiscence; or he who... recalls that the Apostle recommended times of prayer and abstinence from the pleasure of lust, and who does not wish husbands and wives to be given up to that disease whence original sin is contracted?” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book II, Chapter 7, Section 20)

We see here the Church’s teaching about “original sin,” Her rejection of possessing one’s vessel in the “disease” of desire, Her condemnation of “the pleasure of lust,” and Her revulsion for immoderate marital relations, which St. Augustine calls the “wallowing place of carnal concupiscence.” Julian was driven from his diocese in 419. Nevertheless, he and Augustine continued to debate until 431, their debate only terminating with Augustine’s death. Just as with other heresies, St. Augustine was on the forefront in crushing this heresy of Pelagius and his followers. Clothed with the authority of the Church and Her Popes, the bishop of Hippo clearly proved that Pelagius’s teaching was a heresy, and for a long while after this, this heresy was practically abandoned by all who called themselves Christian.

To St. Augustine, concupiscence is an evil and a disease, although he did not believe the effect of it is evil when it effects procreation. In his many writings on the subject, he clearly proves how those impious heretics who teaches that sexual desire or concupiscence is “good” or not a disease are utterly false and unreasonable. He writes: “... as the Apostle says: "But if they do not have self-control, let them marry." [1 Cor. 7:9] Why do you acknowledge a necessary remedy for concupiscence, yet contradict me when I say concupiscence is a disease? If you acknowledge the remedy [marriage], acknowledge the disease [lust]. If you deny the disease,

deny the remedy. I ask you at last to yield to the truth which speaks to you even through your own mouth. No one provides a remedy for health.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 15, Section 29, A.D. 421)

Indeed, St. Augustine also clearly teaches that Original Sin is transmitted through lust or concupiscence: “Wherefore the devil holds infants guilty [through original sin] who are born, not of the good by which marriage is good, but of the evil of concupiscence, which, indeed, marriage uses aright, but at which even marriage has occasion to feel shame. Marriage is itself honourable in all [Hebrews 13:4]... yet, whenever it comes to the actual process of generation, the very embrace which is lawful and honourable cannot be effected without the ardour of lust, so as to be able to accomplish that which appertains to the use of reason and not of lust. Now, this ardour, whether following or preceding the will, does somehow, by a power of its own, move the members which cannot be moved simply by the will, and in this manner it shows itself not to be the servant of a will which commands it, but rather to be the punishment of a will which disobeys it. It shows, moreover, that it must be excited, not by a free choice, but by a certain seductive stimulus, and that on this very account it produces shame. This is the carnal concupiscence, which, while it is no longer accounted sin in the regenerate, yet in no case happens to nature except from sin. It is the daughter of sin, as it were; and whenever it yields assent to the commission of shameful deeds, it becomes also the mother of many sins. Now from this concupiscence whatever comes into being by natural birth is bound by original sin, unless, indeed, it be born again in Him [through baptism] whom the Virgin conceived without this concupiscence. Wherefore, when He vouchsafed to be born in the flesh, He alone was born without sin.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book I, Chapter 27.--Through Lust Original Sin is Transmitted.)

Although all spouses are free from sin who keep themselves from committing non-procreative or unnatural sexual acts and who perform the marital act for the motive of procreation, they still transmit the original sin to their children through their concupiscence or lust: “The reason those born of the union of bodies are under the power of the Devil before they are reborn through the Spirit is that they are born through that concupiscence by which the flesh lusts against the spirit and forces the spirit to lust against the flesh. There would be no such combat between good and evil if no one had sinned. Just as there was no combat before man’s iniquity, so there will be no combat after man’s infirmity.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book 4, Chapter 4, Section 34)

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, A.D. 419: “This disease of concupiscence is what the apostle refers to, when, speaking to married believers, he

says: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; not in the disease of desire, even as the Gentiles which know not God." [1 Thess 4:3-5] The married believer, therefore, must not only not use another man's vessel, which is what they do who lust after others' wives; but he must know that even his own vessel is not to be possessed in the disease of carnal concupiscence. ... Whosoever possesses his vessel (that is, his wife) with this intention of heart [for the procreation of children], certainly does not possess her in the "disease of desire," as the Gentiles which know not God, but in sanctification and honor, as believers who hope in God. A man turns to use the evil of concupiscence, and is not overcome by it, when he bridles and restrains its rage, as it works in inordinate and indecorous motions; and never relaxes his hold upon it except when intent on offspring, and then controls and applies it to the carnal generation of children to be spiritually regenerated, not to the subjection of the spirit to the flesh in a sordid servitude" (Book I, Chapter 9.--This Disease of Concupiscence in Marriage is Not to Be a Matter of Will, But of Necessity [For the Procreation of Children])

Adultery, fornication and masturbation are examples of bad and damnable lust, hence that it is described as a disease. All kinds of lust or concupiscence (even the lawful kind) is also an evil in marriage and can easily turn into something damnable if husband and wife goes too far (as sadly happens with almost all couples today... even by those who call themselves by the name of Catholic). Just because it's licit to perform the sexual act for procreative purposes in marriage, does not make the lust caused thereof good or praiseworthy. St. Augustine explains this well in the following quotations:

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, A.D. 419: "Forasmuch, then, as the good of marriage could not be lost by the addition of this evil [lust]... Since, therefore, marriage effects some good even out of that evil, it has whereof to glory; but since the good cannot be effected without the evil, it has reason for feeling shame. The case may be illustrated by the example of a lame man. Suppose him to attain to some good object by limping after it, then, on the one hand, the attainment itself is not evil because of the evil of the man's lameness; nor, on the other hand, is the lameness good because of the goodness of the attainment. So, on the same principle, **we ought not to condemn marriage because of the evil of lust; nor must we praise lust because of the good of marriage.**" (Book I, Chapter 8.--The Evil of Lust Does Not Take Away the Good of Marriage)

And in another place he writes:

St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, A.D. 421: "I have never censured the union of the two sexes if it is lawfully within the boundaries of marriage. ... I do not say that children, coming from an evil [lustful] action, are evil, since I do not say that the activity in which married persons engage for the purpose of begetting children is evil. As a matter of fact, I assert that it is good, because it makes good use of the evil of lust, and through this good use, human beings, a good work of God, are generated. But the action is not performed without evil [lust], and this is why the children must be regenerated [baptized] in order to be delivered from evil [which means that the Original Sin is the cause of lust according to Augustine]." (Book III, Chapter 7, Section 15)

In truth, sexual temptations during lawful procreative relations can also be a cause of sin for many people since it may drive them to go further than what is necessary or lawful, either before, during, or after the marital act, and this is of course also a great evil. These temptations, as we have seen, does not turn into something "good" just because a person is married, for he is still tempted to commit sin. And this is just one of the many reasons that shows why lust and sexual temptations are bad, also in marriage, for they are still defects and occasions of falling into sin and an evil product of the fall, and of original sin. Thus, "original evil is not derived from marriage, but from carnal concupiscence. This is the evil... which spouses use well when they come together only for the purpose of procreation." (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 24, Section 54) However, "restraint of carnal concupiscence by the virtue of continence is more laudable than its use for the fruits of marriage. The evil of carnal concupiscence is so great that it is better to refrain from using it than to use it well." (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book IV, Chapter 7, Section 39)

"But now note for a moment how from this law of sin, whose activity the mortal nature even of celibates is compelled to endure; upon which the chastity of marriage strives to place a rule of moderation; whence the concupiscence of the flesh and the pleasure you praise makes its attacks against the purpose of the will whenever it is aroused, even if it does not accomplish its acts... "Behold," he [David] said, "I was conceived in iniquities and in sins did my mother bear me." [Ps. 50:7] Evilly did Eve give birth, thereby leaving to women the inheritance of [original sin and pain in] childbirth, and the result that everyone formed in the pleasure of concupiscence and conceived in it in the womb and fashioned in it in blood, in it wrapped as in swaddling clothes, first undergoes the contagion of sin before he drinks the gift of the life-giving air. ... Should not those first men have blushed, then, at the activity of this concupiscence, which plainly showed

that they themselves were guilty, and also foretold that their children would be subject to the sin of their parents? And just as they blushed to leave exposed those parts of their bodies in which they perceived the disobedience of lust, so may you in obedience to the Catholic faith blush to praise what is shameful.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book II, Chapter 6, Section 15)

Temptations, the sexual pleasure or concupiscence are thus *not* something “good” or “praiseworthy” but are truly the “*evil of concupiscence*” and the “*disease of concupiscence*” that arose as an evil result of the original sin of Adam and Eve, as stated by St. Augustine: “It was, indeed, the sinful corruption which had been sown in them by the devil’s persuasion that became the means of their being born in sin; not the created nature of which men are composed. **Shameful lust, however, could not excite our members, except at our own will, if it were not a disease.** Nor would even the lawful and honorable cohabiting of husband and wife raise a blush, with avoidance of any eye and desire of secrecy, if there were not a diseased condition about it.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 55.--Lust is a Disease; The Word "Passion" In the Ecclesiastical Sense, A.D. 420)

By proving that concupiscence is a disease, St. Augustine perfectly refutes the heretics who dares to contradict the Natural Law with their praises of lust and concupiscence. It could not be more clear that “This concupiscence, shamelessly praised by shameless men, is something to be ashamed of” since all who have some measure of reason knows how shameful it is to perform sexual acts before others and tries to avoid “any eye” in addition to having a will for a complete “desire of secrecy” when they perform the sexual act. Thus, “Let us not try to think what good may come from the concupiscence of the flesh, but what evil it produces. For conjugal modesty permits the lawful and restrains the unlawful to that eager concupiscence which is always seeking pleasure.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 26, Section 64)

“You [Julian] say: ‘If there is no marriage without lust, then whoever condemns lust in general must also condemn marriage.’ You could likewise say that all mortals must be condemned because death will be condemned. But, if lust belonged to marriage itself, there would be no lust before or outside marriage. You say: ‘That without which there is no marriage cannot be called a disease, because there can be marriage without sin, while the Apostle says disease is sin.’ We answer that not every disease is called sin. This disease is that punishment for sin without which human nature not yet healed in every part cannot exist. If lust were rightly said not to be evil simply because there can be no good of marriage without it, then, contrariwise, the body would not be good

because without it there cannot be the evil of adultery. This is false; hence, the other is also false. Everyone knows that the Apostle was speaking to the married, commanding each to know how to possess his own vessel, that is, his wife, not in the disease of desire like the Gentiles who do not know God. [1 Thess. 4:4-5] Whoever reads what the Apostle says about this matter will pass you by. Do you not blush to introduce into Paradise and to attribute to the spouses before sin that disease, that lust, which you also shamefacedly admit to exist? Are you not covered with filth, crowning yourself, as it were, with the lust of flesh and blood as in a rose-colored flower of Paradise? And, as though gladly flushed with that color, you both blush and praise.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book IV, Chapter 10, Section 56)

In truth, the main reason why so many heretics (both in former times as well as today) so fervently defends this wicked heresy concerning foul lust and concupiscence is that they want to defend or justify their unmortified, lustful, unnatural, non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts and desires, which in turn forces them to impiously assert that concupiscence is a good gift given to them by God in order to satisfy their lust instead of an evil effect of original sin that needs to be fought against, quelled and resisted.

That is why St. Augustine could rightly say to Julian the heretic: “You exult over some words from my book, [*On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 1, Chapter 3] that “By the testimony of the Apostle, conjugal modesty is a gift of God,” as though the Apostle praised the evil [of concupiscence] you praise, by which the flesh lusts against the spirit, [1 Cor. 7:7; Gal. 5:17] and which conjugal modesty uses well. I answered this in a former book. It is no small gift of God when this evil is so restrained that it is used for nothing unlawful but serves only for the generation of children who are to be regenerated [and thus rescued from original sin and the domination of the Devil through the Sacrament of Baptism]. Its force is not self-moderating, for no one abstains from unlawful acts if he follows its lead. Hence it is praised, not for its disquieting activity, but for the restrained and good use made of it by the individual. When married believers use well that evil from whose guilt they have been freed by the gift of the Savior [through baptism which removes the guilt, but not the effects of the raging lusts], then those born by the gift of that same Creator are not, as you object to me, “made subject to the kingdom of the Devil,” but, rather, are prepared to be rescued from it and transferred to the kingdom of the Only-begotten. This is and ought to be the intention of godly married persons: to prepare birth for rebirth. If, however, this evil which parents sense in themselves, the evil against which, in your words, “the legion of the Apostles warred,” did not pertain to the children, they would be born without it. But, since they are actually born with it, why do you marvel that they must be reborn in order to be absolved from its guilt, and either be taken

from this life free from this evil or be obliged to fight against it in this life, as free men, and be rewarded as victors in the end?" (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book IV, Chapter 1, Section 2-3, A.D. 421)

That is why it is utterly shameful and heretical to praise or to ascribe the obvious disease of concupiscence to marriage: "Carnal concupiscence, however, must not be ascribed to marriage: it is only to be tolerated in marriage. It is not a good which comes out of the essence of marriage, but an evil which is the accident of original sin." (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 1, Chapter 19) Just like Julian the heretic did at the time of St. Augustine, so many people in our own days defend and praise the evil disease of concupiscence or lust just like the ancient heretics did, rejecting the ancient teaching of the Holy Bible, Apostolic Tradition as well as "all the honesty of temperance" in their marriages and teachings.

St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book V, Chapter 9:40, A.D. 421: "You think the Apostle's warning against possessing one's vessel in the disease of lust refers only to fornication, not to marriage, and thus you remove from the union of the married all the honesty of temperance, so that none could possess his vessel in the disease of lust, no matter what the passion drawing him to this in his wife. For, if you thought there should be moderation there, you could also have censured the excess of concupiscence in marriage itself, and seen that the Apostle's "disease of lust" signifies this excess, instead of your groundless denial that "his vessel" means a man's wife. The Apostle Peter in this matter also uses the word when he tells husbands to honor their wives as weaker vessels and as co-heirs of grace, and adds: "See to it your prayers be not hindered." [1 Peter 3:7] He [St. Paul] speaks as his fellow Apostle, who prescribed conjugal temperance for times of prayers [1 Cor. 7:5]... **Let Christian marriage hear this, let it not listen to you [the heretics], who would have it not restrain concupiscence, but satisfy it whenever aroused, and thus secure its dominion. Let the faithful of Christ who are bound in marriage hear this, I say, that they may by consent establish times of temperance for prayer; and when, because of their intemperance, they return from prayer to the same habit, they may also know how to say to God: "Forgive us our trespasses."** [Matt. 6:12]"

When many of these heretics, such as the protestants and perverted so-called Catholics, hear the arguments from the Holy Scripture and the Saints, they resort into using straw-man arguments and "they argue thus," says St. Augustine, "Is not, then, marriage an evil, and the

man that is produced by marriage not God's work?' As if the good of the married life were that [evil] disease of concupiscence [i.e. lust] with which they [lustful people] who know not God love their wives—a course which the apostle forbids; [1 Thess. 4:5] and not rather that conjugal chastity, by which carnal lust is reduced to the good purposes of the appointed procreation of children.” (St. Augustine, *On the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin*, Book II, Chapter 38.--Original Sin Does Not Render Marriage Evil, A.D. 418)

As long as spouses keep themselves from committing unlawful sexual acts with each other, the Holy Sacrament of Marriage is good even though the evil of concupiscence exists, because, “From and with this concupiscence is born a man, a good work of God, but not born without the evil which the origin of generation contracts and which the grace of regeneration heals. Therefore, I had good reason for saying: “The goodness of marriage cannot be accused on account of the evil by way of origin which it there contracted, just as the evil of adultery and fornication cannot be excused on account of the natural good which is born therefrom.”” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 21, Section 46)

Even before the fall, marriage would have existed since procreation was needed even in the garden of Eden, “but shame-producing concupiscence, which is impudently praised by impudent men”, or sensual pleasure, would not have existed. “For there would have been none of this shame-producing concupiscence, which is impudently praised by impudent men, if man had not previously sinned; while as to marriage, it would still have existed even if no man had sinned, since the procreation of children in the body that belonged to that life would have been effected without that malady which in the body of this death [Romans 7:24] cannot be separated from the process of procreation.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 1, Chapter 1)

Thus, “Now, this being the real state of the question, they undoubtedly err who suppose that, when fleshly lust is censured, marriage is condemned; as if the malady of concupiscence was the outcome of marriage and not of sin. Were not those first spouses, whose nuptials God blessed with the words, ‘Be fruitful and multiply,’ [Genesis 1:28] naked, and yet not ashamed? Why, then, did shame arise out of their members after sin, except because an indecent motion arose from them, which, if men had not sinned, would certainly never have existed in marriage? ... No; they were both naked, and were not ashamed, [Genesis 2:25] not because they had no eyesight, but because they perceived no reason to be ashamed in their members, which had all along been seen by them. For it is not said: They were both naked, *and knew it not*; but “*they were not ashamed.*” Because, indeed, nothing had previously happened which was not lawful, so nothing had ensued which could cause them shame.” (St. Augustine, *On*

Marriage and Concupiscence, Book 1, Chapter 6)

The false argument that asserts that marriage must be evil if “what is born therefrom, being formed in the pleasure of concupiscence, undergoes the contagion of sins” is of course not new at all. Heretics from the very early Church have tried to rend the Church in two by their praise of concupiscence and rejection of the fact that the original sin stains everyone through the marital sexual act. St. Augustine speaks about this topic in great detail in his book “*Against Julian.*” Julian was a Pelagian heretic, who just like the people of our own times, impudently praised carnal concupiscence and the shameful acts of “beastly excess” that are commonly performed in the carnal marriages of the world.

In his refutation of Julian’s foul teaching concerning concupiscence and lust, St. Augustine also confirms the fact that “he who is intemperate in marriage, what is he but the adulterer of his own wife?” by quoting the great St. Ambrose: “Or are you going to say that he [St. Ambrose] condemns marriage, because he says that what is born therefrom, being formed in the pleasure of concupiscence, undergoes the contagion of sins? Then hear the opinion of Ambrose on marriage in his book about holy David. (St. Ambrose, *Apologia prophetae David*, 11.56) ‘Marriage is good,’ he says; ‘the union is holy. But let those who have wives be as if they had none. The marriage bed is undefiled, and neither should deprive the other of it, except perhaps for a time, that they may give themselves to prayer. Yet, according to the Apostle, no one can give himself to prayer at the time when he exercises this bodily function.’ (Cf. 1 Cor. 7) Listen to another statement in his book *On Philosophy*. ‘Contenance,’ he says, ‘is good, being as it were a kind of support of piety, for it makes stable the footsteps of those who slip on the precipices of this life; it is a careful watcher, lest anything unlawful creep up on them. But the mother of all vices is incontinence, which turns even the lawful into vice. Therefore, the Apostle not only warns us against fornication, **but also teaches a certain moderation in marriage itself, and prescribes times of prayer. For he who is intemperate in marriage, what is he but the adulterer of his own wife?**’ You see how he says marriage should have true soundness even within itself. You see how he says that incontinence turns even the lawful into vice, where he shows that marriage is lawful, and he does not wish incontinence to defile what is lawful in it. You notice how you should understand with us in what disease of desire the Apostle was unwilling that one possess his vessel, not like the Gentiles who do not know God. (Cf. 1 Thess. 4:4) But to you lust seems culpable only toward one other than one’s wife. What will you say of Ambrose, who calls intemperance in marriage a kind of adultery of one’s wife? Do you honor marriage more in which you would allow a very licentious range to lust, lest, perchance, the one offended might find another defender for herself? ... nor did you dare mention in your reply the fact that the

husband and wife are admonished to abstain from this act in order to give themselves to prayer, which I recorded entirely; fearing, I believe, that your defense might seem false if on your admission it should appear that even the prayers of husband and wife are impeded by lust, which you are not ashamed to defend. Thus, since you desired to answer me on its behalf but did not dare resist the Apostle and were not able to twist his testimony into another meaning as you usually do, you preferred to be completely silent about it. Who, then, honors marriage more: **you, when you deface its dignity by making it a blameless wallowing place of carnal concupiscence; or he [that is, St. Ambrose] who, while he says marriage is not only lawful but also good and its union holy, yet recalls that the Apostle recommended times of prayer and abstinence from the pleasure of lust, and who does not wish husbands and wives to be given up to that disease whence original sin is contracted?** Thus, according to the same Apostle, he wishes those who have wives to be as if they had none, and he does not hesitate to call an intemperate husband the adulterer of his wife; weighing all the good of marriage not by the lust of the flesh but by the faith of chastity, not by the disease of passion but by the contract of union, not by the pleasure of lust but by the will for offspring. He asserts that woman was given to man only for the purpose of generation, a matter which you thought it necessary to argue so long in vain, as if any of us denied this statement.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book 2, Chapter 6)

This heretical teaching about concupiscence and original sin that is now held by many people in this world, is a teaching that undoubtedly destroys the Christian Faith for many when one considers its ramifications, since if their teaching was really true, God created us in the way we are now with all the evil temptations, suffering and death that we all have to endure in this world. Thus, all of these evils existed from the original creation of God according to this evil and perverse teaching, which is absurd and impossible since Our Lord and God said in *The Book of Genesis* that all He created during the first six days of the universe was “very good” (Gen. 1:31)—and evil temptations that tempts us to commit sins of the flesh as well as all the other defects of nature such as death, suffering, and disease are obviously not good. St. Augustine writes concerning this and explains how marriage existed before sin was committed: “Suppose, however, that nature had not been dishonored by sin, God forbid that we should think that marriages in Paradise must have been such, that in them the procreative members would be excited by the mere ardor of lust, and not by the command of the will for producing offspring,—as the foot is for walking, the hand for labor, and the tongue for speech [so the procreative members are for producing offspring].” (*On the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin*, Book II, Chapter 40.—Marriage Existed Before Sin Was Committed. How God’s Blessing Operated in Our First Parents, A.D. 418)

In truth, it is very hard to understand how a reasonable human being cannot see the current defective nature of the human race, and continue to believe that God actually made the world in this way in the beginning. Consider the child who suffers from excruciating illnesses: how can anyone believe that this is how a totally good and merciful God would make the world originally? Reason itself proclaims that all the defects such as sensual lusts and temptations as well as suffering and death are defects that cannot come from a good God originally; but heretics, and especially Protestant and Muslim groups contradict their own reason and hold heresies against the Church's doctrine on original sin.

In light of all of these irrefutable facts both from reason itself as well as from Scripture and the Saints of the Church that defines concupiscence and sexual desire as evil and a disease, all those who continue to obstinately defend concupiscence as good “must be regarded as the lover of shameful pleasure, rather than the encomiast of desirable fecundity”, for he attributes to God all of these shameful and evil things that we see in this world, which is the height of blasphemy and a great insult to the Majesty of Our Perfect Lord: “For why can we not suppose that God could have granted to man in his happy state in paradise, the same course with regard to his own seed which we see granted to the seeds of grain, in such wise that the former might be sown without any shameful lust, the members of generation simply obeying the inclination of the will; just as the latter is sown without any shameful lust, the hands of the husbandman merely moving in obedience to his will? There being, indeed, this difference, that the desire of begetting children in the parent is a nobler one than that which characterizes the farmer, of filling his barns. Then, again, why might not the almighty Creator, with His incontaminable ubiquity, and his power of creating from human seed just what it pleased Him, have operated in women, with respect to what He even now makes, in the self-same manner as He operates in the ground with grain seeds according to His will, making blessed mothers conceive without lustful passion, and bring forth children without parturient pains, inasmuch as there was not (in that state of happiness, and in the body which was not as yet the body of this death, but rather of that life) in woman when receiving seed anything to produce shame, as there was nothing when giving birth to offspring to cause pain? Whoever refuses to believe this, or is unwilling to have it supposed that, while men previous to any sin lived in that happy state of paradise, such a condition as that which we have sketched could not have been permitted in God's will and kindness, must be regarded as the lover of shameful pleasure, rather than the encomiast of desirable fecundity.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book II, Chapter 29)

Indeed, even after about a thousand years after the lives of the heretics Pelagius, Julian and their followers, the devil through his servants *the protestants* tried again to corrupt the

Church's changeless doctrine concerning *Original Sin*. The devil, knowing full well that both married and unmarried lustful people try to excuse their unlawful sexual acts with the excuse that God made their lust or that concupiscence is a good gift from God rather than a punishment due to sin, could not remain silent concerning this doctrine, since he knows how much this doctrine means to people's understanding of sin and concupiscence. As soon as people start to contradict this doctrine, there immediately opens up an almost infinite amount of perversity, since those who start to hold this heresy, use this heresy to claim that their lust is lawful and God-given. Because of this, the Holy Council of Trent in the 16th century "assembled in the Holy Ghost" in order to quench the flames of heresy against the Church's doctrine of *Original Sin*, by infallibly declaring the Church's definitive position on this matter.

Pope Paul III, *The Council of Trent*, On Original Sin, Session 5, June 17, 1546, *ex cathedra*: "That our Catholic faith, without which it is impossible to please God, may, errors being purged away, continue in its own perfect and spotless integrity, and that the Christian people may not be carried about with every wind of doctrine; whereas that old serpent, the perpetual enemy of mankind, amongst the very many evils with which the Church of God is in these our times troubled, has also stirred up not only new, but even old, dissensions touching original sin, and the remedy thereof; the sacred and holy, ecumenical and general Synod of Trent,--lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the three same legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein,--wishing now to come to the reclaiming of the erring, and the confirming of the wavering,--following the testimonies of the sacred Scriptures, of the holy Fathers, of the most approved councils, and the judgment and consent of the Church itself, ordains, confesses, and declares these things touching the said original sin:

"1. If any one does not confess that the first man, Adam, when he had transgressed the commandment of God in Paradise, immediately lost the holiness and justice wherein he had been constituted; and that he incurred, through the offence of that prevarication, the wrath and indignation of God, and consequently death, with which God had previously threatened him, and, together with death, captivity under his power who thenceforth had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil, and that the entire Adam, through that offence of prevarication, was changed, in body and soul, for the worse; let him be anathema.

"2. If any one asserts, that the prevarication of Adam injured himself alone, and not his posterity; and that the holiness and justice, received of God, which he lost, he lost for himself alone, and not for us also; or that he, being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has only transfused death, and pains of the body, into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul; let him be anathema:--whereas he

contradicts the apostle who says; *By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.*

“3. **If any one asserts, that this sin of Adam,--which in its origin is one, and being transfused into all by propagation, [that is, by the procreative marital sexual act] not by imitation, is in each one as his own,**--is taken away either by the powers of human nature, or by any other remedy than the merit of the one mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath reconciled us to God in his own blood [through the sacrament of baptism], made unto us justice, sanctification, and redemption; or if he denies that the said merit of Jesus Christ is applied, both to adults and to infants, by the sacrament of baptism rightly administered in the form of the church; let him be anathema: *For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved. Whence that voice; Behold the lamb of God behold him who taketh away the sins of the world; and that other; As many as have been baptized, have put on Christ.*

“4. If any one denies, that infants, newly born from their mothers' wombs, even though they be sprung from baptized parents, are to be baptized; or says that they are baptized indeed for the remission of sins, but that they derive nothing of original sin from Adam, which has need of being expiated by the laver of regeneration for the obtaining life everlasting,--whence it follows as a consequence, that in them the form of baptism, for the remission of sins, is understood to be not true, but false, --let him be anathema. For that which the apostle has said, *By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men in whom all have sinned,* is not to be understood otherwise than as the Catholic Church spread everywhere hath always understood it. **For, by reason of this rule of faith, from a tradition of the apostles, even infants, who could not as yet commit any sin of themselves, are for this cause truly baptized for the remission of sins, that in them that may be cleansed away by regeneration, which they have contracted by generation [that is, by the procreative marital sexual act].** For, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

St. Augustine in his book “*On the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin*” also elaborates on the fact that Adam and his descendents were rightly condemned to the servitude of the devil for his *Original Sin*. In truth, “Where God did nothing else than by a just sentence to condemn the man [Adam] who willfully sins, together with his stock [that is, all the descendants of Adam]; there also, as a matter of course, whatsoever was even not yet born is justly condemned in its sinful root. In this condemned stock carnal generation holds every man; and from it nothing but spiritual regeneration liberates him. In the case, therefore, of regenerate

parents, if they continue in the same state of grace, it will undoubtedly work no injurious consequence, by reason of the remission of sins which has been bestowed upon them, unless they make a perverse use of it,—not alone all kinds of lawless corruptions, but even in the marriage state itself, whenever husband and wife toil at procreation, not from the desire of natural propagation of their species, but are mere slaves to the gratification of their lust out of very wantonness. As for the permission which the apostle gives to husbands and wives, "not to defraud one another, except with consent for a time, that they may have leisure for prayer," he concedes it by way of indulgent allowance, and not as a command; but this very form of the concession evidently implies some degree of fault. The connubial embrace, however, which marriage-contracts point to as intended for the procreation of children, considered in itself simply, and without any reference to fornication, is good and right; because, although it is by reason of this body of death (which is unrenewed as yet by the resurrection) impracticable without a certain amount of bestial motion, which puts human nature to the blush, yet the embrace is not after all a sin in itself, when reason applies the concupiscence to a good end [that is, for the motive of procreation], and is not overmastered to evil." (St. Augustine, *On the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin*, Book II, Chapter 43.--Human Offspring, Even Previous to Birth, Under Condemnation at the Very Root. Uses of Matrimony Undertaken for Mere Pleasure Not Without Venial Fault, A.D. 418)

Who but an utterly disgraceful and lustful person could deny that concupiscence or sexual desire is an evil product of the fall and of original sin after seeing all this evidence? "Who can deny this is an evil except one unwilling to hear the Apostle's warning: 'But this I say by way of concession, not by way of commandment,' [1 Cor. 7:6]..."

St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 16:30, A.D. 421: "Marriage is by all means good in its own kind, but the reason it is good is that it keeps the faith of the marriage bed; that it unites the two sexes for the purpose of begetting offspring; and that it shrinks from the impiety of separation. ... **After [original] sin, however**, and not happily but from necessity, a combat came to marriage, so that **marriage by means of its own good must now war against the evil of concupiscence, not permitting it to do anything unlawful, though concupiscence itself, acting now slackly, now with great violence, never ceases to urge marriage to the unlawful, even when marriage makes good use of the evil of concupiscence in the propagation of offspring.** Who can deny this is an evil except one unwilling to hear the Apostle's warning: "But this I say by way of concession, not by way of commandment," [1 Cor. 7:6]..."

The Church of course understood from the beginning that all our fleshly lusts and desires (whether inside or outside of marriage), arose as a direct result and evil effect of the sin of Adam and Eve, and that is why the Papal Magisterium, and the Fathers and Saints of the Church unanimously teach this doctrine of the Christian Faith, which makes this doctrine infallible since “*the unanimous consent of the Fathers*” is a dogma, as we have seen.

St. Augustine, *City of God*, Book XIV, Chapter 12 (c. 426 A.D.): “... lust, which only afterwards sprung up as the penal consequence of [the original] sin, the iniquity of violating it was all the greater in proportion to the ease with which it might have been kept.”

St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Genesis* 15:14: “... the consummation of that intercourse occurred after the fall; up till that time they were living like angels in paradise and so were not burning with desire, not assaulted by other passions, not subject to the needs of nature; on the contrary, they were created incorruptible and immortal, and on that account at any rate they had no need to wear clothes.”

St. Jerome: “Eve in paradise was a virgin... understand that virginity is natural and that marriage comes after the Fall.” (Quoted in *Honest to Man*: p. 120 by Margaret Knight)

St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus* 1:16, A.D. 393: “And as regards Adam and Eve we must maintain that before the fall they were virgins in Paradise: but after they sinned, and were cast out of Paradise, they were immediately married.”

St. John Damascene (c. 676-749 A.D.): “Adam and Eve were created sexless; their sin in Eden led to the horrors of sexual reproduction. If only our earliest progenitors had obeyed God, we would be procreating less sinfully now.”

Thus, we see from the testimony of the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Church that sexual desire and concupiscence are evil defects that transmits the original sin to the children and that **both** the heterosexual as well as the homosexual desire are evil defects of the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve, but that only the heterosexual desire is allowed to be indulged in when two married spouses performs the normal and natural procreative sexual act for the motive of procreation.

Indeed, as we have seen, one can even understand from reason alone that concupiscence and sexual desire is evil since according to St. Thomas “there is a loss of reason incidental to the

union of man and woman, both because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time [as in the case of intoxication of drugs], as the Philosopher says (Ethic. vii, 11); and again because of the tribulation of the flesh which such persons have to suffer from solicitude for temporal things (1 Corinthians 7:28).” Only a thoroughly evil and debauched person could deny the fact that the sexual pleasure is evil since “the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time.” Only a fool of the highest degree could dare to claim that being intoxicated so “that it [reason] is unable to understand anything at the same time” is good or a gift from God since even nature itself tells us that this is evil and unlawful unless this act of intoxication is excused by an absolutely necessary motive; and that is also why a Catholic cannot regard those who hold this heresy as Catholics: “Who does not know that conjugal intercourse is never committed without itching of the flesh, and heat and foul concupiscence, whence the conceived seeds [of the children] are befouled and corrupted?” (Pope Innocent III, *On the Seven Penitential Psalms*)

Today, in contradiction of this doctrine, there are very many who, while understanding that the homosexual desire is an evil and ungodly desire, claim that God has created their heterosexual desires, impiously affirming that these desires are “good” or a “gift from God” to be used in marriage, when it in fact is nothing but an evil defect and disease that was inflicted on man as a punishment for his disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Considering all of these facts, people who contradict any of these truths of divine faith concerning original sin and sexual desire, (such as that *the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve is the origin and cause of fleshly lusts and sexual desires* or that *concupiscence and sexual desire is an evil disease that transmits the Original Sin to the offspring according to the Holy Bible and the Church*) must be regarded as heretics, since they deny the definitions of Holy Mother Church and Sacred Tradition, in addition to the infallible teaching of the Church from the councils of Trent and Vatican I, which, as we have already shown, declares that “*the unanimous consent of the Fathers*” in a doctrinal matter must be accepted by a Catholic. It could not be more clear from the testimony of the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Church that sexual desire or concupiscence in all its forms, whether heterosexual or homosexual, is an evil product of the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve, and that is also why a Catholic cannot regard those who hold opinions at variance with the Church’s doctrine to be Christians or Catholics. For more quotations concerning this topic of original sin and the evilness of concupiscence and sexual desire, please consult the chapter “*The Fall and Original Sin of Adam and Eve is the origin and cause of fleshly lusts and sexual desires*” in this book.

Question: How can you teach that sensual touches, kisses and various lustful acts are sinful when the Bible allows it? The biblical books called “*The Song of Songs*” and “*Proverbs*” directly teaches that sensual touches, kisses and acts are allowed, so you are not right in condemning these acts.

Answer: It is not coincidental that in this day and age when almost all are heretics, many people are falsely interpreting King Solomon’s *Song of Songs* and *Proverbs* in a literal way instead of a figurative way (as the Holy Fathers did) that signify the spiritual relationship between God and the soul, Christ and the Church, and Christ and Our Lady. The Fathers never interpreted the *Song of Songs* or any other book of the Bible as a glorification of sex, and they unanimously rejected and condemned those wicked and lustful people who tried to excuse their sensuality by perverting the Holy Scripture for the sake of their own selfishness, as we have shown.

As said already, a Catholic is bound under pain of mortal sin to obey, consent to and follow the unanimous teaching of the Fathers on everything, as the Council of Trent and the First Vatican Council teaches.

A doctrine of faith or morals that is taught by the *unanimous* consent of the Fathers is part of the Ordinary Magisterium. The Catholic Church infallibly teaches that all biblical doctrines that have been held by the *unanimous* consensus of the Church Fathers are true and hence, binds all Catholics to believe them also.

Pope Pius IX, *First Vatican Council*, Session 2, January 6th, 1870, *ex cathedra*: “I, Pius, bishop of the Catholic Church, with firm faith... **accept Sacred Scripture according to that sense which Holy mother Church held and holds**, since it is her right to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; **nor will I ever receive and interpret them except according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.**”

The Council of Trent in the 16th century was the first to infallibly define that a consensus can indeed make a doctrine part of the Ordinary Magisterium. And it was the first to infallibly define that the only kind of consensus that can do this is the *unanimous* consensus of the Church Fathers.

Pope Paul III, *Council of Trent*, Session 4, AD 1546, *ex cathedra*: “Furthermore, in order to restrain petulant spirits, It decrees, that no one, relying on his own skill, shall,

in matters of faith, and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, wresting the sacred Scripture to his own senses, **presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary** to that sense which holy mother Church, whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures, hath held and doth hold; **or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers**; even though such interpretations were never (intended) to be at any time published. Contraveners [that is, those who oppose or contradict this] shall be made known by their Ordinaries, and be punished with the penalties by law established.”

As we will see, the Church Fathers unanimously teaches that King Solomon’s *Song of Songs* and *Proverbs* **must** be interpreted in a figurative way instead of in a literal way, thus making this doctrine infallible according to the Councils of Trent and Vatican I. The Church Fathers, well aware of the seemingly fleshly words and sexuality present in the Song of Songs, generally cautioned against reading it until a ‘mature spirituality’ had been obtained, lest the Song be misunderstood and lead the reader into temptation. Origen says, “I advise and counsel everyone who is not yet rid of the vexations of flesh and blood and has not ceased to feel the passion of his bodily nature, to refrain completely from reading this little book.” (Origen, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, cited in *Anchor Bible Commentary Song of Songs* 117)

When asked for advice about what scriptural books a young girl should read, Jerome recommended the Psalms, Proverbs, Gospels, Acts and the Epistles, followed by the rest of the Old Testament. Of the *Song* however, Jerome counsels caution, saying “... she would fail to perceive that, though it is written in fleshly words, **it is a marriage song of a spiritual bridal**. And not understanding this, she would suffer from it.” (St. Jerome, *Letter cvii, To Laeta*, cited in *Anchor Bible Commentary Song of Songs* 119)

Indeed, “If you wish to understand... for what reason the body was made, then listen: it was made that it should be a temple to the Lord; that the soul, being holy and blessed, should act in it as if it were a priest serving before the Holy Spirit that dwells in you.” (Origen, *Exegesis on 1 Corinthians 7:29*)

Concerning the *Book of Proverbs*, St. Hippolytus of Rome (c. 170-236 A.D.), *From the Commentary of St. Hippolytus on Proverbs*, writes:

““To know wisdom and instruction.” (Prov. 1:2) **He who knows the wisdom of God, receives from Him also instruction, and learns by it the mysteries of**

the Word; and they who know the true heavenly wisdom will easily understand the words of these mysteries. Wherefore he says: “To understand the difficulties of words;” (Prov. 1:3) for things spoken in strange language by the Holy Spirit become intelligible to those who have their hearts right with God.”

St. Hippolytus of Rome goes on to explain that many things mentioned in the *Book of Proverbs* has a symbolical meaning:

“**[On Proverbs 4:25]** He “looks right on” who has thoughts free of passion; and he has true judgments, who is not in a state of excitement about external appearances. When he says, “Let thine eyes look right on,” he means the vision of the soul; and when he gives the exhortation, “Eat honey, my son, that it may be sweet to thy palate,” he uses “honey” figuratively, meaning divine doctrine, which restores the spiritual knowledge of the soul. But wisdom embraces the soul also; for, says he, “love her, that she may embrace thee.” And the soul, by her embrace being made one with wisdom, is filled with holiness and purity. Yea more, the fragrant ointments of Christ are laid hold of by the soul’s sense of smell.”

Hence that the Book of Proverbs is to be interpreted spiritually, with “thoughts free of passion” and “with holiness and purity”, just as with the *Song of Solomon*, and not for the purpose of any licentiousness.

St. Hippolytus of Rome goes on to explain Proverbs 5:19 in a spiritual sense—which, to the contrary, is the very verse lustful people interprets in a fleshly sense—and explains that it refers to spiritual wisdom and understanding; and that the *hind* and following words mentioned in Proverbs 5:19 is to be understood by “the purity of that pleasure”, and in the end he equates all of this with *wisdom*, that, “like a stag, can repel and crush the snaky doctrines of the heterodox [i.e., those holding unorthodox or heretical doctrines or opinions].”

“**[Proverbs 5:19 “Let her be thy dearest hind, and most agreeable fawn: let her breasts [or affection or love] inebriate thee at all times; be thou delighted continually with her love.”]** He shows also, by the mention of the creature (the hind), the purity of that pleasure; and by the roe he intimates the quick responsive affection of the wife. And whereas he knows many things to excite, he secures them against these, and puts upon them the indissoluble bond of affection, setting constancy before them. And as for the rest, wisdom, figuratively speaking, like a stag, can repel and crush the snaky doctrines of the heterodox. ... The heterodox are the

“wicked,” and the transgressors of the law are “evil men,” whose “ways”—that is to say, their deeds—he bids us not enter. ... Let her therefore, says he, be with thee, like a roe, to keep all virtue fresh. (Prov. 5:19) And whereas a wife and wisdom are not in this respect the same, let her [that is, wisdom] rather lead thee; for thus thou shalt conceive good thoughts.” (The Extant Works and Fragments of Hippolytus, "On Proverbs," by St. Hippolytus of Rome, 170-236 A.D., vol. 5, Ante-Nicene Fathers)

Concerning this biblical passage, *Benson Bible Commentary* notes that: “*Let her be as the loving hind* — Hebrew, *as the hind of loves*; as amiable and delightful as the hinds are to princes and great men, who used to make them tame and familiar, and to take great delight in them, as has been observed by many writers. ... *Let her breasts* — Rather, *her loves*, as Houbigant renders חַדַּד, at all times, in all ages and conditions; not only love her when she is young and beautiful, but when she is old, or even deformed; *and be thou always ravished with her love* — Love her fervently. It is a hyperbolical expression.”

The Hebrew noun for “affection” is *dad* and has three other biblical references (the basic meaning of *dad* is breast or pap), all in Ezekiel.

Since affection (*dad*) which is synonymous with *love*, can mean *breast*, and has correctly been translated as breast in other instances in the bible, that is also probably why most Bible translators have rendered it as *breasts* in Proverbs 5:19.

However, even some protestant bible versions do translate “breast” in this Bible verse as “love” or “affection”, which we believe is more accurate.

Proverbs 5:19, *Revised Standard Version* (RSV): “a lovely hind, a graceful doe. Let her affection fill you at all times with delight, be infatuated always with her love.”

Proverbs 5:19, *Young’s Literal Translation* (YLT): “A hind of loves, and a roe of grace! Let her loves satisfy thee at all times, In her love magnify thyself continually.”

Proverbs 5:19, *New Century Version* (NCV): “She is as lovely and graceful as a deer. Let her love always make you happy; let her love always hold you captive.”

Proverbs 5:19, *Good News Translation* (GNT): “pretty and graceful as a deer. Let her charms keep you happy; let her surround you with her love.”

It is of note that the approved *Knox's Catholic Translation of the Vulgate*, Proverbs 5:19, reads:

“Thy own bride, gentle as a hind, graceful as a doe; be it her bosom that steals away thy senses with the delight of a lover that loves still.”

This difference in interpreting the Hebrew or Greek may also explain why we have seen different translations of this passage cited by early Church writers but without them mentioning the word “breasts”. The reason for this may be because they have interpreted this passage differently, and hence translated it in another sense. That may also explain why St. Hippolytus never mentioned the words “breasts” when commenting on this passage, and why he instead spoke of “*affection of the wife.*”

Whatever the case, none of the Fathers has ever interpreted breasts or kisses in a sensual way in scripture. According to St. Ambrose, the *Breast* mentioned in Song of Songs 8:1 is **Baptism**, and the *Kiss* is a **kiss of mystical peace**: “What are the breasts of the church except the sacrament of **baptism**? And well does he say “sucking,” as if the baptized were seeking him as a draught of snowy milk. “Finding you without,” he says, “I shall kiss you,” that is, finding you outside the body, I embrace you with the **kiss of mystical peace**. No one shall despise you; no one shall shut you out. I will introduce you into the inner sanctuary and the hidden places of Mother Church, and into all the secrets of mystery, so that you may drink the cup of spiritual grace.” (*Consolation on the Death of Emperor Valentinian 75*, in *The Fathers Of The Church: A New Translation*, vol. 22, p. 296)

St. Methodius, **On The Abuse of Biblical Passages for the Purpose of Sensual Gratification** (c. 311 A.D.): “Now Paul, when summoning all persons to sanctification and purity... in order to silence the ignorant, now deprived of all excuse... that he might take away occasion for the abuse of these passages from those who taught the sensual gratification of the body, under the pretext of begetting children... For men who are incontinent in consequence of the uncontrolled impulses of sensuality in them, dare to force the Scriptures beyond their true meaning, so as to twist into a defence of their incontinence... and they are not ashamed to run counter to the Spirit, but, as though born for this purpose, they kindle up the smouldering and lurking passion, fanning and provoking it; and therefore he, cutting off very sharply these dishonest follies and invented excuses, and having arrived at the subject of instructing them how men should behave to their wives, showing that it should be as Christ did to the Church, *“who gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of*

water by the Word," (Ephesians 5:25-26)..." (Banquet of the Ten Virgins, Discourse III, Chapter X.--The Doctrine of the Same Apostle Concerning Purity)

The kisses, breasts, hair, lips, neck, belly, navel, etc. has a spiritual meaning according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers

According to Origen, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory the Great and the rest of the Fathers and early Christian writers, the breasts, hair, lips, neck, belly, navel, etc. in *Song of Songs*, *Song of Solomon* or *Canticles of Canticles* and related bible passages are the "powers" or "representations" of the soul or of the Church and Christ, or even wisdom itself. According to St. Ambrose (4th century bishop of Milan), commenting on Song of Songs 8:1, "What are the breasts of the church except the sacrament of baptism?" For St. Gregory the Great, the fawns feeding among the lilies in Song of Songs 4:5 are saints who "are unto God a sweet savor of Christ" (quoting 2 Cor. 2:15). Again from St. Ambrose, on the Song of Songs 7:2: "Small, too, are the navel and belly of the soul that ascends to Christ." (From *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Old Testament*, vol. IX)

Pope St. Gregory the Great, *Father and Doctor of the Church* (died 604): "To create allegories, the divine thoughts are cloaked with what we know; by examining exterior language, we attain an interior understanding. For this reason the Song of Songs employs language characteristic of sensual love to reheat the soul using familiar expressions to revive it from sluggishness and to spur it onto the love that is above using language typical of the love here below. This book mentions kisses and breasts and cheeks and thighs. We must not ridicule the sacred description of these terms but reflect upon the mercy of God. For this book goes so far as to extend the meaning of the language characteristic of our shameful love in such a way that our heart is set on fire with yearning for that sacred love. By discussing the parts of the body, this book summons us to love. Therefore we ought to note how wonderfully and mercifully this book is working within us. However, from where God lowers himself by speaking, he lifts us up there by understanding. We are instructed by the conversations proper to sensual love when their power causes us to enthusiastically burn with love for the Divinity." (*An Exposition on the Songs of Songs*, Section 1 & 2; Translated from *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, vol. CXLIV)

Pope St. Gregory the Great: "The Gentiles who were called did not cease kissing their Redeemer's feet, because they longed for him with uninterrupted love. Hence the bride in the Song of Songs said of this same Redeemer: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his

mouth.” (Song of Songs 1:2) It is fitting that she desire her Creator’s kiss, as she makes herself ready throughout her love to obey him.” (*Forty Gospel Homilies* 33, Quoted in *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon* by J. Robert Wright, Thomas C. Oden, p. 292)

“The song of Songs introduces the bride saying, “Let him kiss me with kisses of his mouth.” (Song of Songs 1:2) Now, by “kiss” we understand not the joining of mouths but the communion of pious soul and divine Word. It is like the bride saying something of this kind, I experienced your words in writing, but I long to hear your very voice as well, I wish to receive the sacred teaching directly from your mouth and to caress it with the lips of my mind.” (*Commentary on the Song of Songs* 1, Quoted in *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon* by J. Robert Wright, Thomas C. Oden, p. 292)

Pope St. Gregory the Great: “Let us set this before our eyes: due to its unceasing desire, a soul of any of the chosen ones is set on fire in love for the sight of the bridegroom. Since such a soul lacks the power to perfectly perceive such a sight in this life, it contemplates his eminence and is deeply pierced because of this love. Now a deep piercing—which is born of charity and set on fire by desire—resembles a kiss, for as often as the soul kisses God, it is deeply pierced with love for him. At the present time there are many who really fear the Lord and have received [the grace of] good works but they still do not kiss God because they are not deeply pierced by a love for him at all.” (*An Exposition on the Songs of Songs*, Section 18; Translated from *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, vol. CXLIV)

Pope St. Gregory the Great: “And of course the kiss of his mouth is the very fullness of interior peace; when we have attained it, there will no longer be anything to seek. This is why it is fittingly added, “FOR YOUR BREASTS ARE BETTER THAN WINE.” (Song of Songs 1:1) Wine is the knowledge of God received by those of us who reside in this life. But we embrace the breasts of the bridegroom when we contemplate him in the eternal fatherland by an embrace of his presence. Therefore let the soul say, “Your breasts are better than wine.” It is as if the soul says, “Great indeed is the knowledge about yourself that you have bestowed on me in this life; great is the wine of your intimate knowledge by which you make me very drunk; but your breasts are better than wine since whatever is presently known about you through faith is transcended by the beauty and loftiness of contemplation.” (*An Exposition on the Songs of Songs*, Section 19; Translated from *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, vol. CXLIV)

St. Ambrose of Milan, *Archbishop, Confessor, Father and Doctor of the Church* (died

397): “But the church does not cease to kiss Christ’s feet, and she demands not one but many kisses in the Song of Solomon, since like blessed Mary, she listens to his every saying, she receives his every word, when the gospel or prophets are read, and she keeps all these words in her heart.” (*Letter 62, To His Sister, in The Fathers Of The Church: A New Translation*, vol. 26, p. 392)

St. Ambrose: “Therefore such a soul also desires many kisses of the Word, so that she may be enlightened with the light of the knowledge of God. For this is the kiss of the Word, I mean the light of holy knowledge. God the Word kisses us, when he enlightens our heart and governing faculty with the spirit of the knowledge of God. The soul that has received this gift exults and rejoices in the pledge of wedded love and says, “I opened my mouth and panted.” (Ps. 119:131; 118:131 in Douay-Rheims Version.) For it is with the kiss that lovers cleave to each other and gain possession of the sweetness of grace that is within, so to speak. Through such a kiss the soul cleaves to God the Word, and through the kiss the spirit of him who kisses is poured into the soul, just as those who kiss are not satisfied to touch lightly with their lips but appear to be pouring their spirit into each other. Showing that she loves not only the appearance of the Word and his face, as it were, but all his inner parts, she adds to the favor of the kisses: “Your breasts are better than wine, and the fragrance of your ointments is above all perfumes.” (Song of Solomon 4:10) She sought the kiss, God the Word poured himself into her wholly and laid bare his breasts to her, that is, his teachings and the laws of the wisdom that is within, and was fragrant with the sweet fragrance of his ointment. Captive to these, the soul is saying that the enjoyment of the knowledge of God is richer than the joy of any bodily pleasure.” (*Isaac, or the Soul 3.8-9, in The Fathers Of The Church: A New Translation*, vol. 65, p. 16-17)

St. Ambrose: “The church beautiful in [those recently baptized]. So that God the Word says to her: “You are all fair, my love, and there is no blemish in you,” for guilt has been washed away. “Come here from Lebanon, from the beginning of faith, you will pass through and pass on,” (Song of Songs 4:7-8) because, renouncing the world, she passed through things temporal and passed on to Christ. And again, God the Word says to her, “How beautiful and sweet are you made, I love, in your delights! Your stature is become like that of a palm tree, and your breasts like bunches of grapes” (Song of Songs 7:6-8).” (*On the Mysteries 7.39, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 2.10:322)

St. Ambrose: ““Your navel is like a round bowl, not wanting tempered wine. Your belly is like a heap of wheat, set about with lilies. Your neck is like a tower of ivory. Your eyes

are a pool in Heshbon.” (cf. Song of Songs 7:2-4) The good navel of the soul, capable of receiving all virtues, is like a bowl, fashioned by the author of faith himself (Heb. 12:2). For in a bowl wisdom has mixed her wine, saying, “Come, eat my bread and drink the wine which I have mingled for you.” (Prov. 9:5) This navel, therefore, fashioned with all the beauty of the virtues, does not lack mixed wine. His belly also was filled not only with the wheaten food of justice, as it were, but also with that of grace, and it bloomed with sweetness like a lily (Isaiah 31:5).” (*Consolation on the Death of Emperor Valentinian* 96, in *The Fathers Of The Church: A New Translation*, vol. 22, pp. 293-94)

Bishop Theodoret of Cyrus (died c. 457): “She is admitted to the inner chamber, the quarters and rooms of the bridegroom, and boastfully says to her own retinue, “The king introduced me into his chamber,” (Song of Solomon 1:4) that is, he revealed to me his hidden purposes, the plan concealed from ages and generations he made known to me, the treasures obscure, hidden, and unseen he opened to me, in keeping with the prophecy of Isaiah.” (*Commentary on the Song of Songs* 1, Quoted in *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon* by J. Robert Wright, Thomas C. Oden, p. 295)

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Archbishop, Confessor, Father and Doctor of the Church* (died 386): “You wish to know the place? He says in the Canticles, “I came down to the nut garden” (Song of Solomon 6:11: A Type of the Passion of Christ); for it was a garden where he was crucified.” (*Catechetical Lectures* 14.5, in *The Fathers Of The Church: A New Translation*, vol. 65, p. 16-17)

St. Caesarius of Arles, Archbishop of Arles (died 542): “It is said concerning the church of the Gentiles, “I am dark and beautiful, O daughter of Jerusalem.” (Song of Solomon 1:5) Why is the church dark and beautiful? She is dark by nature, beautiful by grace. Why dark? “Indeed, in guilt was I born, and in sin my mother conceived me.” (Ps. 51:5; 50:7 in Douay-Rheims Version.) Why beautiful? “Cleanse me of sin with hyssop, that I may be purified; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” (Ps. 51:7; 50:9 in Douay-Rheims Version.)” (*Sermon* 12.4.1, in *The Fathers Of The Church: A New Translation*, vol. 47, p. 209)

St. Jerome, *Hermit, Priest, Confessor, Bible Translator, Theologian, Father and Doctor of the Church* (died 420): “Born, in the first instance, of such parentage we are naturally black, and even when we have repented, so long as we have not scaled the heights of virtue, we may still say: “I am black but comely, O you daughters of

Jerusalem.” (Song of Solomon 1:5) But you will say to me, “I have left the home of my childhood; I have forgotten my father, I am born anew in Christ. What reward do I receive for this?” The context shows—“The king shall desire your beauty.” This, then, is the great mystery. “For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be” not as is there said, “of one flesh,” (Ephesians 5:31-32) but “of one spirit.” Your bridegroom is not haughty or disdainful; He has “married an Ethiopian woman.” (Numbers 12:1) When once you desire the wisdom of the true Solomon and come to Him, He will avow all His knowledge to you; He will lead you into His chamber with His royal hand; (Song of Solomon 1:4) He will miraculously change your complexion so that it shall be said of you, “Who is this that goes up and has been made white?”” (*Letter 22.1, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. 2.6:22-23*)

St. Hippolytus of Rome, Priest and Martyr (died 235): “[**On Song of Solomon 1:4**]“The king introduced me to his treasures.” Who is this king, if not Christ himself? And what are these treasures, if not his chambers? This is the people who say, “We will rejoice and delight in you,” for he calls everyone. First, it tells us about the past, then it reveals a time of penance in the future: “We will rejoice and delight in you.” “I loved your breasts more than wine,” not the wine that was mixed by Christ, surely, but the wine whereby Noah previously languished in drunkenness, the wine that deceived Lot. “We loved your fountains of milk more than this wine” because breasts were the commandments given by Christ [in the law]; they delight but certainly do not inebriate. For this reason, indeed, the apostles said, “Do not drink so much wine that you become drunk.” (Eph. 5:18) Therefore the beloved says, “I loved your breasts more than wine; righteousness loves you,” because those who follow the way of righteousness are those who love you, whereas unbelievers hate you and deserve retribution from the judge.” (*Treatise on the Song of Songs 3.1.4, Quoted in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon by J. Robert Wright, Thomas C. Oden, p. 295*)

Bishop Gregory of Elvira (died c. 392): “For thus is it called the Canticle of Canticles, inasmuch as it is above every canticle that Moses and Mary in Exodus and Isaiah and Habakkuk and others sang. These are better canticles because they give praise to the Lord with joyful mind and soul for the liberation of the people, or for their conversion, or in gratitude for the divine works. Here they are superior also because the voice of the singing church and of God is heard. Because the divine and human are united with one another, therefore, it is called the Canticle of Canticles, that is, the best of the best.” (*Explanation of the Song of Songs 1.2, in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon by J.*

Robert Wright, Thomas C. Oden, p. 289)

St. Augustine of Hippo, *Bishop, Philosopher, Theologian, Father and Doctor of the Church* (died 430): “The Canticle of Canticles sings a sort of spiritual rapture experienced by holy souls contemplating the nuptial relationship between Christ the King and his queen-city, the church. But it is a rapture veiled in allegory to make us yearn for it more ardently and rejoice in the unveiling as the bridegroom comes into view—the bridegroom to whom the canticles sings, “The righteous love you,” and the hearkening bride replies, “There is love in your delights.”” (*City of God* 17.20, in *The Fathers Of The Church: A New Translation*, vol. 24, p. 77)

Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea (died c. 340): “And as we are examining His Name, the seal of all we have said may be found in the oracle of Solomon the wisest of the wise, where he says in the Song of Songs: “Thy name is as ointment poured forth.” (Song of Songs 1:3) Yea, he being supplied with divine wisdom, and thought worthy of more mystic revelations about Christ and His Church, and speaking of Him as Heavenly Bridegroom, and her as Bride...” (*Proof of the Gospel* 4.16, Quoted in *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon* by J. Robert Wright, Thomas C. Oden, p. 293)

Cassiodorus, Roman statesman and writer (died c. 585): “In short, you deserve Christ’s kiss and the continuance of your virginal glory forever, for these words are spoken to you: “Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth, for your breasts are better than wine, smelling sweet of the best ointments,” (Songs of Solomon 1:1) and the other verses which that divine book includes with its mystical proclamation.” (*Exposition of the Psalms, Preface*, in *Ancient Christian Writers: The Works of the Fathers in Translation* 51:42)

Origen, biblical scholar and theologian (died c. 254): “We must not, however, overlook the fact that in certain versions we find written “for your sayings are better than wine,” where we read “for your breasts are better than wine.” (Song of Solomon 1:4) But although it may seem that this gives a plainer meaning in regard to the things about which we have discoursed in the spiritual interpretation, we ourselves keep to what the Seventy interpreters wrote in every case. For we are certain that the Holy Spirit willed that the figures of the mysteries should be roofed over in the Divine Scriptures, and should not be displayed publicly, and in the open air.” (*Commentary on the Song of Songs* 1.3, in *Ancient Christian Writers: The Works of the Fathers in Translation* 26:74)

St. Dionysius the Areopagite, Bishop of Athens (1st century): “And in the Songs there are those passionate longings fit only for prostitutes. There are too those other sacred pictures boldly used to represent God, so that what is hidden may be brought out into the open and multiplied, what is unique and undivided may be divided up, and multiple shapes and forms be given to what has neither shape nor form. All this is to enable the one capable of seeing the beauty hidden within these images to find that they are truly mysterious, appropriate to God, and filled with a great theological light. But let us not suppose that the outward face of these contrived symbols exists for its own sake. Rather, it is the protective garb of the understanding of what is ineffable and invisible to the common multitude. This is so in order that the most sacred things are not easily handled by the profane but are revealed instead to the real lovers of holiness. Only these latter know how to pack away the workings of childish imagination regarding the sacred symbols. They alone have the simplicity of mind and the receptive, contemplative power to cross over to the simple, marvelous, transcendent truth of the symbols.” (*Letter IX*, in *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, pp. 282-83)

As we have seen, the Church Fathers unanimously teaches that King Solomon’s *Song of Songs* and *Proverbs* must be interpreted in a figurative way instead of in a literal way, thus making this doctrine infallible according to the Councils of Trent and Vatican I. Anyone, therefore, who dares to teach contrary to this infallible teaching of the Fathers, must be regarded as an automatically excommunicated heretic, both because he denies the Natural Law concerning sexual pleasure, but also because he denies the infallible teachings of the most Holy Councils of Trent and Vatican I, which explicitly declares that “the *unanimous* consent of the Fathers” in a doctrinal matter is the official teaching of the Church. Indeed, so important is it to regard someone as a heretic who rejects the Church’s teaching on this matter that the Church declared in the *Council of Trent* that “Contraveners [that is, those who oppose or contradict that “the *unanimous* consent of the Fathers” is the official teaching of the Church] shall be made known by their Ordinaries, and be punished with the penalties by law established.”

Question: Can a man or a woman morally perform a medical examination involving the whole naked body, parts of the body, the genital, or the breasts?

Answer: Yes. So long as it is a necessary medical performance, it is permissible. St. Thomas Aquinas refers to this.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 58, Art. 1, Reply to Objection

5: "... if he [a husband] cannot fulfill the carnal act with a virgin, while he can with one who is not a virgin, the hymeneal membrane may be broken by a medical instrument, and thus he may have connection with her. Nor would this be contrary to nature, for it would be done not for pleasure but for a remedy."

A woman, of course, must do everything in her power not to allow a male doctor examine her body undressed or partly undressed (unless it is an area that is not problematic), and she must not let a male doctor examine her breasts or genital area. It is definitely very bad for a woman to expose herself to a man in this way and so put herself to shame and the doctor to possible temptation.

However, this rule may not be expedient in all cases, especially in grave and urgent medical necessities. Grave danger where medical help is needed promptly can excuse a person from showing problematic body parts to a doctor which is not of the same sex, but generally patients must do all in their power to try to get a doctor that is of the same gender if problematic parts of the body must be examined or shown in the doctor's examination.

A man should always choose a male doctor for physical examinations, especially if it involves the private parts. Moreover, it is not fitting that the hands of a woman should be touching and be physically close to a man's body and so expose him to possible temptations — and that is even more true if the woman is young and beautiful.

Question: Is gluttony a sin? And does gluttony affect sexual temptation?

Answer: Yes, gluttony is a sin and on top of this, it is also one of the seven deadly sins. Furthermore, the sin of gluttony indeed increases sexual desire or temptations. The sin of gluttony is special in this regard, which makes it really necessary to resist this temptation.

Many people are completely unaware of the fact that gluttony actually provokes the flesh into sexual sin. They think that they can eat however much they want of good tasting food or candy and snacks all the time without this actually effecting their spiritual welfare. The fact of the matter, however, is that gluttony is a mortal sin just like lust is. And not only that, but gluttony or superfluity in food actually provokes the flesh into sexual temptations and sin.

St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori, *Doctor of the Church* (1696-1787): "It is also necessary to abstain from superfluity of food. St. Jerome asserts that satiety of the stomach provokes incontinence. And St. Bonaventure says: "Impurity is nourished by eating to

excess." But on the other hand, fasting, as the holy Church teaches, represses vice and produces virtue: "O God, who by corporal fasting dost suppress vice, dost elevate the mind, and dost confer virtues and rewards." St. Thomas has written that when the devil is conquered by those whom he tempts to gluttony, he ceases to tempt them to impurity." (*The Dignities and Duties of the Priest*, Instruction III)

Pope St. Gregory the Great, *Father and Doctor of the Church* (540-604): "As long as the vice of gluttony has a hold on a man, all that he has done valiantly is forfeited by him: and as long as the belly is unrestrained, all virtue comes to naught." (Quoted in *Summa Theologica*, by St. Thomas Aquinas)

The Holy Saints, Popes and Doctors of the Church are all clear that it's imperative for one's salvation to not allow the search of pleasing one's palate to gain control over one's soul, and this means that one must fast sometimes in order to chasten one's body and senses. As long as a person really considers how small and trifling this penance is compared to an eternal torment in Hell, they will not refuse to follow the Church's words or prescribed days of fasting and abstinence in this respect.

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #8, March 4, 1679: "Eating and drinking even to satiety for pleasure only, are not sinful, provided this does not stand in the way of health, since any natural appetite can licitly enjoy its own actions." –

Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.

St. Alphonsus Liguori wrote the following when explaining what gluttony is: "Pope Innocent XI Odescalchi has condemned the proposition which asserts that it is not a sin to eat or to drink from the sole motive of satisfying the palate. However, it is not a fault to feel pleasure in eating: for it is, generally speaking, impossible to eat without experiencing the delight which food naturally produces. But it is a defect to eat, like beasts, through the sole motive of sensual gratification, and without any reasonable object. Hence, the most delicious meats may be eaten without sin, if the motive be good and worthy of a rational creature; and, in taking the coarsest food through attachment to pleasure, there may be a fault." (*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, The Mortification of the Appetite, "The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus" (1887), vol. 1, p. 241)

Pope St. Gregory the Great described five ways by which one can commit the sin of gluttony, and showed biblical examples for each of them:

1. Eating before the time of meals in order to satisfy the palate.

Biblical example: Jonathan eating a little honey, when his father Saul commanded no food to be taken before the evening (1 Samuel 14:29).

2. Seeking delicacies and better quality of food to gratify the “vile sense of taste.”

Biblical example: When Israelites escaping from Egypt complained, “Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers and the melons, and the leeks and the onions and the garlic,” God rained fowls for them to eat but punished them later (Numbers 11:4).

3. Seeking after sauces and seasonings for the enjoyment of the palate.

Biblical example: Two sons of Eli the high priest made the sacrificial meat to be cooked in one manner rather than another. They were met with death (1 Samuel 4:11).

4. Exceeding the necessary amount of food.

Biblical example: One of the sins of Sodom was “fullness of bread” (Ezekiel 16:49).

5. Taking food with too much eagerness, even when eating the proper amount, and even if the food is not luxurious.

Biblical example: Esau selling his birthright for ordinary food of bread and pottage of lentils. His punishment was that the “profane person. . . who, for a morsel of meat sold his birthright,” we learn that “he found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully, with tears” (Genesis 25:30).

The fifth way is worse than all others, said St. Gregory, because it shows attachment to pleasure most clearly.

To recapitulate, St. Gregory the Great said that one may succumb to the sin of gluttony by: 1. Time; 2. Quality; 3. Stimulants; 4. Quantity; 5. Eagerness.

In his *Summa Theologica* (Part 2-2, Question 148, Article 4), St. Thomas Aquinas reiterated the list of five ways to commit gluttony:

- *Laute* - eating food that is too luxurious, exotic, or costly
- *Nimis* - eating food that is excessive in quantity
- *Studiose* - eating food that is too daintily or elaborately prepared
- *Praepropere* - eating too soon, or at an inappropriate time
- *Ardenter* - eating too eagerly.

Aquinas notes that the first three ways are related to the nature of the food itself, while the last two have to do with the time or manner in which it is consumed. Thus, one can commit the sin of gluttony by eating too much food, by eating too early and eagerly, or by eating food that tastes very good.

Children must be kept away from gluttony

When we consider the fact that gluttony is a sin and that this sin is especially powerful in inflaming sins of sensuality, it is no wonder that most teenagers fall into sins of impurity almost immediately when they reach the age of puberty. While they cannot be excused for their mortal sins, the parents who allow them to eat all kinds of dainties whenever they desire should of course also be castigated, since they are in a great part responsible for their child's fall into moral ruin.

Young as well as old do not need to eat especially good or luxurious food, and pampering one's child can only lead to moral ruin in the end. For just a few hundred years ago, most children would have been more than satisfied if they received a fruit as a dessert, since almost all were poor, and there is in truth no need for any cookies, coffee, candy, chips, sodas etc., which only harms the child in every possible way, both spiritually and physically. Indeed, so harmful are all of these dainties just mentioned, that the obesity problem in the western countries have reached alarming proportions because almost everyone consumes so much unnecessary desserts or candy etc.

St. Alphonsus: "As regards the food, it must be observed that nothing edifies the people so much as the mortification and the frugality of the missionaries, while on the contrary nothing scandalizes them more than when they see men treating themselves well in regard to eating and drinking. ... Hence in our missions it is an established rule, that at dinner on days on which flesh-meat is allowed there is to be given only soup with boiled meat, and on fasting-days soup with another frugal portion; at supper, salad and other similar food, with a little cheese and fruit. Only on the last day, the day

of the blessing, there may be more food, but never fowl, game, choice fish, pastry, or other sweetmeats.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 293)

If a parent wants his child to be saved, he needs to be firm and teach his child about the necessity of detachment from earthly things and mortification of his senses, keeping unnecessary pleasure and dainties away from him. In addition, he should tell his child the reason for this, that is, that eating all these things very often ends in evil attachments and “gives rise to blindness of mind, which excludes almost entirely the knowledge of spiritual things”, and that for many such a life ends in eternal damnation and torment in hell, as we can read of the rich glutton and Lazarus in the gospel (Luke 16:19-31). If he explains in detail the horrors of hell and how he must avoid it, the child will have an easier time accepting the change.

The Gospel of Barnabas explains Luke 16:19-31 thus:

The Gospel of Barnabas, Chapter 24: “**Notable example how one ought to flee from banqueting and feasting.** Having said this, Jesus wept, saying: “Woe to those who are servants to their flesh, for they are sure not to have any good in the other life, but only torments for their sins. I tell you that there was a rich glutton who paid no heed to aught but gluttony, and so every day held a splendid feast. There stood at his gate a poor man by name Lazarus, who was full of wounds, and was fain to have those crumbs that fell from the glutton’s table. But no one gave them to him; nay, all mocked him. Only the dogs had pity on him, for they licked his wounds. It came to pass that the poor man died, and the angels carried him to the arms of Abraham our father. The rich man also died, and the devils carried him to the arms of Satan; whereupon, undergoing the greatest torment, he lifted up his eyes and from afar saw Lazarus in the arms of Abraham. Then cried the rich man: “O father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, who upon his fingers may bring me a drop of water to cool my tongue, which is tormented in this flame.” Abraham answered: “Son, remember that thou receivedst thy good in the other life and Lazarus his evil: wherefore now thou shalt be in torment, and Lazarus in consolation.” ... “See then whether the poor are blessed,” said Jesus, “who have patience, and only desire that which is necessary, hating the flesh. O wretched they, who bear others to the burial, to give their flesh for food of worms, and do not learn the truth. So far from it that they live here like immortals, for they build great houses and purchase great revenues and live in pride.”

The Gospel of Barnabas, Chapter 25 “**How one ought to despise the flesh, and**

how one ought to live in the world. Then said he who writeth: “O master, true are thy words and therefore have we forsaken all to follow thee. Tell us then, how we ought to hate our flesh: for to kill oneself is not lawful, and living we needs must give it its livelihood.” Jesus answered: “Keep thy flesh like a horse, and thou shalt live securely. For unto a horse food is given by measure and labour without measure, and the bridle is put on him that he may walk at thy will, he is tied up that he may not annoy anyone, he is kept in a poor place, and beaten when he is not obedient: so do thou, then, O Barnabas, and thou shalt live always with God. And be not offended at my words, for David the prophet did the same thing, as he confesseth, saying: “I am as an horse before thee: and am always by thee.” Now tell me, whether is poorer he who is content with little, or he who desireth much? Verily I say unto you, that if the world had but a sound mind no one would amass anything for himself, but all would be in common. But in this is known its madness, that the more it amasseth the more it desireth. And as much as it amasseth, for the fleshly repose of others doth it amass the same. Therefore let one single robe suffice for you, cast away your purse, carry no wallet, no sandals on your feet; and do not think, saying: “What shall happen to us?” but have thought to do the will of God, and he will provide for your need, insomuch that nothing shall be lacking unto you. “Verily I say unto you, that the amassing much in this life giveth sure witness of not having anything to receive in the other. For he that hath Jerusalem for his native country buildeth not houses in Samaria, for that there is enmity between these cities. Understand ye?” “Yea,” answered the disciples.”

Since we know that Our Lady revealed the horrors of Hell in a Revelation to the children of Fatima that were 7, 8, and 9 years old at the time, we can also know that Our Lord and Our Lady wants us to tell our young ones about hell and its horrors. Nothing could be imagined that will help a parent’s education and upbringing of a child more than over and over explaining to one’s child the horrible end in Hell of all disobedient and sinful children. “Tremble, yes, tremble, ye sinners; perhaps this very night, if you do not resolve to amend your life, God may permit death to surprise you, and you may die and be condemned to hell! . . . Continue, O obstinate sinner! continue to offend God. But remember: In the valley of Josaphat I await you; there you will hear the sentence which Jesus Christ will pass upon you: Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire! . . . Who can tell? perhaps, my brother, Death this night will come to thee.” (St. Alphonsus, Exhortations, *The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 100)

St. Alphonsus, On the Manner of Preaching: **“I recommend you for the most part, in your sermons to speak of the last things death, judgment, hell, eternity,**

and the like; because the eternal truths make the deepest impression, and incline the heart to the love of virtue. I beg of you, repeatedly in your discourses to explain to the people the peace enjoyed by the soul that is in favor with God. ... I entreat you also to speak often of the love that Jesus Christ has shown us in his Passion, in the institution of the most Holy Sacrament, and of the love we should bear in turn towards our most blessed Redeemer, by often calling to mind those two great mysteries of love. I say this because few preachers, or at least too few, speak of the love of Jesus Christ; and it is certain that what is done solely through fear of punishment and not through love will be of short duration.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 59)

Mortification of the senses is obviously crucial for one’s spiritual advancement according to the unanimous teaching of the Fathers and the Saints, and subjugating and becoming a master over one’s own palate is certainly one of the most important things to strive for in this regard, in addition to chastity and humility. Hence, “The first thing you are to observe at table, is not to make known what you would like, accepting for the love of God the meats which you do not relish, and depriving yourself of those which would be agreeable to your palate; you will observe besides a great modesty, recalling to your mind incessantly the presence of God, Whose service ought alone to occupy you. If you want anything, you will try to do without it, rejoicing interiorly at this privation; you will never be the first to commence eating; you will add nothing to season the meats which will be presented to you, and eating without eagerness, you will occupy yourself with God.” (St. Alphonsus Rodriguez (1532-1617), *The Life of Blessed Alphonsus Rodriguez, Lay-Brother of the Society of Jesus*, p. 26)

“Gluttony is an inordinate love of eating and drinking. We are not forbidden to feel pleasure in either the one or the other; for it is by a wise foresight that God has seasoned with a feeling of gratification the use of the food necessary for preserving our health and life. But we abuse this blessing when we seek only the pleasure alone; we must eat and drink in order to live, and not to flatter sensuality. Our sole end should be to satisfy the wants of nature, that we may be enabled to fulfill our duties and serve God, according to the words of the Apostle: "Whether you eat, or drink, do all for the glory of God." If we wish to observe this precept of St. Paul, we must, in our repasts, think not of gratifying the body, but of following the order of God, who wills that we should preserve life. To seek only the gratification of the senses is gluttony, a vice unworthy of man: it weighs down the soul, brutalizes the mind, ruins the health and shortens life.” (St. Jean-Baptiste de La Salle (1651-1719), *A new treatise on the duty of a Christian towards God*, Article 5)

The evil of lust makes man blind to spiritual things “while dulness of sense arises from gluttony”

Most men and women of the world do not recognize or know about the fact that sensual lusts (both for the married and the unmarried people alike) actually “**gives rise to blindness of mind, which excludes almost entirely the knowledge of spiritual things, while dulness of sense arises from gluttony, which makes a man weak in regard to the same [spiritual] intelligible things.**” (St. Thomas Aquinas) This fact also requires married people from not indulging too often in the marital act. For all who overindulge in the marital act will always experience a “**blindness of mind**” of spiritual things. So young as well as old must be kept away from impurity and gluttony, since both of these sins are very powerful in getting a person to abandon the faith and the moral life since the “blindness of mind” and “dulness of sense” undoubtedly will effect the minds of both young and old in a very detrimental way.

St. Thomas Aquinas explains: “Different causes produce different effects. **Now Gregory says (Moral. xxxi, 45) that dulness of sense arises from gluttony, and that blindness of mind arises from lust...** Now carnal vices, namely gluttony and lust, are concerned with pleasures of touch in matters of food and sex; and these are the most impetuous of all pleasures of the body. For this reason these vices cause man’s attention to be very firmly fixed on corporeal things, **so that in consequence man’s operation in regard to intelligible things is weakened**, more, however, by lust than by gluttony, forasmuch as sexual pleasures are more vehement than those of the table. **Wherefore lust gives rise to blindness of mind, which excludes almost entirely the knowledge of spiritual things**, while dulness of sense arises from gluttony, which makes a man weak in regard to the same [spiritual] intelligible things.” (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 15, Art. 3, Second and Third Articles)

Thus, we can see how important it is for all to keep a strict control over their food intake, since doing otherwise, as we have seen, leads to “dulness of sense,” and this dulness will undoubtedly effect a person so that he will be tempted to fall into mortal sin or even fall away from the faith. St. Augustine adds that “The reason it [food and drink] should be used sparingly and with restraint is that the concupiscence which is an evil within us and part of us may not rise up more vehemently and invincibly against us when the corruptible body with greater mass exerts heavier pressure on the soul. This evil, which is shown to be evil not only by him who fights against it, but also by him whom it subjugates, is the evil which a parent uses well when he begets a child in chastity, and which God uses well when in His providence

He creates a man.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 20, Section 41)

By fasting often or even all the time, and refusing to eat well tasting food, our chances of reaching heaven is much increased according to the teaching of the Saints. “But hear what is truly relevant to the present subject; what St. Basil says without any ambiguity about that sin of the first man which also pertains to us. ... In a sermon on fasting, he says: “Tasting was established in paradise by law. For Adam received the first commandment: ‘From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you must not eat.’ But, ‘you must not eat’ means fasting, and the beginning of the Law. If Eve had fasted from the tree, we should not need this fast. For it is not the healthy who need a physician, but they who are sick. We have fallen ill through sin; we are healed by penance. But penance without fasting is vain. The accursed earth shall bring forth thorns and thistles for thee. Are you not ordained for sorrow and not for delights?” And a little later in the same sermon he says: ‘Because we did not fast we fell from paradise. Let us fast, therefore, that we may return to it.’” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book I, Chapter 5, Section 18)

The Catholic Encyclopedia wrote the following when explaining what gluttony and spiritual gluttony is:

“The moral deformity discernible in this vice lies in its defiance of the order postulated by reason, which prescribes necessity as the measure of indulgence in eating and drinking. This deordination, according to the teaching of the Angelic Doctor, may happen in five ways which are set forth in the scholastic verse: "Prae-propere, laute, nimis, ardentem, studiosam" or, according to the apt rendering of Father Joseph Rickaby: too soon, too expensively, too much, too eagerly, too daintily. Clearly one who uses food or drink in such a way as to injure his health or impair the mental equipment needed for the discharge of his duties, is guilty of the sin of gluttony... Such a temper of soul is equivalently the direct and positive shutting out of that reference to our last end [God and Salvation] which must be found, at least implicitly, in all our actions... St. John of the Cross, in his work "The Dark Night of the Soul" (I, vi), dissects what he calls spiritual gluttony. He explains that it is the disposition of those who, in prayer and other acts of religion, are always in search of sensible sweetness; they are those who "will feel and taste God, as if he were palpable and accessible to them not only in Communion but in all their other acts of devotion." This he declares is a very great imperfection and productive of great evils.” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Gluttony," vol. 6, 1919)

In the Life of Saint Francis of Assisi, by Julian of Speyer, "His Keeping of Poverty, His Abstinence, and the Admirable Rigor of His Life; And How He Fled People's Praise and Wished To Be Thought Of No Account," it says:

“What shall we say about delicate foods or the drinking of wine, or even the abundance of other cheap foods, since, on the very rare occasions he ate cooked foods, he mixed them with ashes or cold water and did not even drink enough water? For he claimed it was most difficult to satisfy need and not become a slave to pleasure. Quite often, when he was going around preaching penance, he took refreshment at the homes of secular people who invited him. On account of the words of the gospel about *eating and drinking what was set before them*, he would put his hand to his mouth, appearing to be eating the meat, but rarely tasting even a little bit of it, he would unobtrusively put the rest in his lap.

“It once happened that, because of an illness, he ate some chicken, but after his strength returned, he strictly ordered one of the brothers to lead him through the center of the city of Assisi with a rope tied around his neck like a robber, and to cry out like the town crier: "Behold, Look at the glutton who has fattened himself with the flesh of poultry which he has, unknown to you, eaten in secret." It so happened that many, struck by this spectacle of remorse, lamented with tearful voice and proclaimed themselves most worthless for having given themselves to daily pleasures.” (*Saint*, 392-3 – The Life of Saint Francis, reprinted in *Francis of Assisi, Early Documents: The Saint* (New York, New City Press: 1999).

Question: Which are the most dangerous foods, substances or drinks that inflames lust that one should abstain from if one wants to quench sexual temptations or desire?

Answer: Along with the world's change in the last couple of hundred years, the foods and substances that men partake of has also changed drastically. However, there are some specific substances that have been proven to increase lust or sexual desire, and that are therefore more important to abstain from than other things. These substances obviously doesn't work on all people in the same way, but as a general rule, scientific studies have verified that some substances are indeed more powerful to increase lust or sexual desire than others.

Consequently, people who are having a hard time controlling their sexual lusts should try to study about those foods and substances that they partake of, so that they may be able to exclude those foods that may be the cause of their temptations or sexual sins.

1) Caffeine is a commonplace stimulant drug, occurring both in nature as part of the coffee,

tea, cacao and yerba mate plants, and as an additive in many consumer products, most notably beverages advertised as energy drinks (such as Red Bull). However, caffeine is also added to many sodas such as Coca-Cola and Pepsi; on the ingredients listing, it is designated as a flavoring agent.

Researchers say that caffeine is both addictive as well as that it enhances sexual arousal. Scientific studies have concluded that caffeine works by stimulating a person's nerve endings, increasing blood flow, and thus as a result of this, increasing concupiscence and sexual desire. Sexual erection and blood flow is actually the same thing, and thus, it is common that a person who consumes caffeine feels more sexually tempted. A recent study found that female rats that got a shot of caffeine were more motivated to seek out sex than uncaffeinated animals. The researchers concluded caffeine enhances sexual arousal. In addition, we ourselves can also testify to the fact that caffeine is especially effective in bringing about sexual temptations, as we by our own experience have found out when we have consumed things with caffeine. By our own experience, we can say that caffeine is one of the most potent aphrodisiacs, and in most cases, the more caffeine one consumes, the more will also a person be sexually tempted.

As if this was not enough, physical and psychological addiction can also result from caffeine intake. In an interview, Roland Griffiths, a professor in the departments of psychiatry and neuroscience at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, said that the studies had demonstrated that people who take in a minimum of one hundred milligrams of caffeine per day (about the amount in half a cup of coffee) can acquire a physical dependence that would trigger withdrawal symptoms that include headaches, muscle pain and stiffness, lethargy, nausea, vomiting, depressed mood, and marked irritability. Through his research, withdrawals occurred within 12 to 24 hours after stopping caffeine intake, but could last as long as nine days and caffeine consumers are more apt to consume to waive off the withdrawal symptoms instead of to enjoy the product. Although its mechanism of action is somewhat different to that of cocaine or the amphetamines, for example, it nonetheless creates a similar pattern of dependence. When the drug wears off, the brain will release less than the usual level of neurotransmitters, in order to compensate for depletion. Due to this effect, users of caffeine will often be tempted to re-dose in order to avoid the "crash".

With repetitive use, physical dependence or addiction are likely to occur. Also, the stimulatory effects of caffeine are substantially reduced over time, a phenomenon known as a tolerance. Tolerance develops quickly to some (but not all) effects of caffeine, especially among heavy coffee and energy drink consumers. Some coffee drinkers develop tolerance to its sleep-

disrupting effects, but others apparently do not.

Withdrawal symptoms – including headache, irritability, inability to concentrate, drowsiness, insomnia, and pain in the stomach, upper body, and joints – may appear within 12 to 24 hours after discontinuation of caffeine intake, peak at roughly 48 hours, and usually last from 2 to 9 days. In prolonged caffeine drinkers, symptoms such as increased depression and anxiety, nausea, vomiting, physical pains and intense desire for caffeine containing beverages are also reported. Peer knowledge, support and interaction may aid withdrawal; prayer, and especially the [Rosary](#), definitely aid against withdrawal symptoms.

The most common foods or substances that people use to consume caffeine are: coffee, tea, carbonated beverages like Coca-Cola and Power Drinks etc., and chocolate or cacao.

2) Chocolate or Cacao also contains caffeine as an active substance, as well as many other substances that increase sexual arousal. While Cacao contains less caffeine than coffee or tea, the caffeine consumed can still many times be greater than in coffee or tea since the amount that people normally use of cacao is greater. Italian scientists found that women who had a daily chocolate treat reported higher sexual desire than those who did without. Chocolate contains phenylethylamine (PEA), which triggers the release of feel-good dopamine in the brain and is released naturally during sex. **Chocolate or Cacao** also contains the stimulant called Theobromine. Theobromine poisoning may result from the chronic or acute consumption of large quantities, especially in the elderly.

While theobromine and caffeine are similar in that they are related alkaloids, theobromine has a lesser impact on the human central nervous system than caffeine. However, theobromine stimulates the heart to a greater degree. While theobromine is not as addictive as caffeine, it has been cited as possibly causing addiction to chocolate. Theobromine has also been identified as one of the compounds contributing to chocolate's reputed role as an aphrodisiac. As with caffeine, theobromine can cause sleeplessness, tremors, restlessness, anxiety, as well as contribute to increased production of urine, causing dehydration. Additional side effects include loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting **and even problems during pregnancy.**

3) Alcohol or Wine: A recent study in the Journal of Sexual Medicine found that women who drank 1 to 2 glasses of red wine had increased sexual desire and functioning than people who do not drink at all. There was no additional benefit to drinking more than two glasses. Compounds in red wine like flavonoids may improve sexual functioning by increasing blood

flow to key areas of the body.

Speaking on the inherent dangers of a “body heated with drink”, St. Jerome writes: “When the body is heated with drink it soon boils over with lust. Wine drinking means self-indulgence, self-indulgence means sensual gratification, sensual gratification means a breach of chastity. He that lives in pleasure is dead while he lives, [1 Tim. 5:6] and he that drinks himself drunk is not only dead but buried. One hour’s debauch makes Noah uncover his nakedness which through sixty years of sobriety he had kept covered. [Gen. 9:20-21] Lot in a fit of intoxication unwittingly adds incest to incontinence, and wine overcomes the man whom Sodom failed to conquer [Gen. 19:30-38].” (*Letters of St. Jerome*, Letter LXIX, To Oceanus, A.D. 397)

4) Tobacco or Nicotine: While tobacco does not directly increase sexual desire, dependence on or addiction to this drug creates a pleasure seeking mindset in an individual, and this mindset of always seeking after pleasures is the exact cause of why so many people commits sexual sins of various sorts. Smoking in very small amounts once in a while is probably not a sin, but smoking habitually or regularly in such a way that one gets addicted to cigarettes is a sin, and it definitely cuts out graces from people’s lives. We don’t see how those who smoke habitually, for example throughout the day, would be any different from people who eat candy all day and thus try to constantly gratify themselves in that way. The only thing different with smoking compared to candy is that the effect and addictive properties of the cigarette is much stronger than candy, thus making it a very strong drug in comparison to candy. This is not even to get into the issue that we now know it’s horrible for health and leads to death. People who are smokers are giving a horrible example to other people, tempting them to start smoking cigarettes which is highly addictive and lethal. Smoking is so addictive that medical scientists have compared the addiction to heroin addiction. Most people who get addicted to cigarettes will never be able to stop and will be life long slaves under a most filthy, evil and grace diminishing habit.

St. Francis of Assisi was well aware of the truth that seeking pleasure corrupts the soul. St. Francis used to put ashes in his food in order to make it taste bad, since he understood that the five senses and the search to gratify them made the soul weaker. Someone might ask: “Does that mean that eating good things is a sin?” The answer is of course that eating good things in itself is no sin. However, one should definitely try to avoid all things that are tasty and addictive, such as superfluous and tasty foods, meats, beverages, cigarettes, candy, chips, cakes, spices, sauces, dressings, etc. The reason why man should do his utmost to avoid pleasurable things is because the five senses of man, after the fall, was corrupted by self-love and self-gratification. That’s precisely why countless of saints have refused to eat foods that

are superfluous or that tastes good. However, no one should get the idea that it's sinful to eat good foods, but understand that people who always want to eat these foods will fall into sin, for gluttony and lack of moderation is certainly sinful.

Hell is too long and life is too short to pander to your five senses, that's for sure! The fight or battle we humans have to endure in this life is this: either we choose to gratify our senses in this life, and endure an eternal torment in Hell, or we chose to wait in patience for the brief second of this earthly life to end, and then enter into an eternal bliss and joy in Heaven.

In conclusion, there are probably countless kinds of foods, drinks or substances that increases lust and sexual desire that have not been mentioned here. Eating too much food and spicy and fatty food will also many times lead to sexual temptations. So it is imperative to always be thoughtful when eating and resist the inclination to overeat. Thus, if a person suffers from temptations or have fallen into sexual sins and they realize that their lust is increased by consumption of certain foods or drinks, they should then abstain from them. They should also study and research the foods they eat if they suspect that what they eat are contributing to their falls or temptations. This could either be done through trying to abstain from some of the suspected substances, or through reading articles and books about the foods one eat.

As a general rule, abstinence from foods that are not necessary for our survival or fasting by eating simple food like bread, rice or vegetables two times a day along with praying the Rosary and reading spiritual books will many times help to alleviate the temptations of a person.

The practice of fasting is essential to learn to conquer the sin of gluttony as well as other sins, principally the sin of lust. St. Jerome taught that fasting is a tool for preventing the commission of sexual sins:

“When Elijah, in his flight from Jezebel, lay weary and desolate beneath the oak, there came an angel who raised him up and said, "Arise and eat." And he looked, and behold there was a cake and a cruse of water at his head. [1 Kings xix. 4-6] Had God willed it, might He not have sent His prophet spiced wines and dainty dishes and flesh basted into tenderness? When Elisha invited the sons of the prophets to dinner, he only gave them field-herbs to eat; and when all cried out with one voice: "There is death in the pot," the man of God did not storm at the cooks (for he was not used to very sumptuous fare), but caused meal to be brought, and casting it in, sweetened the bitter mess [2 Kings iv. 38-41] with spiritual strength as Moses had once sweetened the waters of Mara. [Exod. xv. 23-25] Again, when men were sent to arrest the prophet, and were

smitten with physical and mental blindness, that he might bring them without their own knowledge to Samaria, notice the food with which Elisha ordered them to be refreshed. "Set bread and water," he said, "before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master." [2 Kings vi. 18-23] And Daniel, who might have had rich food from the king's table, [Dan. i. 8] preferred the mower's breakfast, brought to him by Habakkuk, [Bel. 33-39] which must have been but country fare. He was called "a man of desires," [Dan. ix. 23] because he would not eat the bread of desire or drink the wine of concupiscence.

"There are, in the Scriptures, countless divine answers condemning gluttony and approving simple food. But as fasting is not my present theme and an adequate discussion of it would require a treatise to itself, these few observations must suffice of the many which the subject suggests. By them you will understand why the first man, obeying his belly and not God, was cast down from paradise into this vale of tears; [Ps. lxxxiv. 6] and why Satan used hunger to tempt the Lord Himself in the wilderness; [Matt. iv. 2, 3] and why the apostle cries: "Meats for the belly and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them;" [1 Cor. vi. 13] and why he speaks of the self-indulgent as men "whose God is their belly." [Phil. iii. 19] For men invariably worship what they like best. Care must be taken, therefore, that abstinence may bring back to Paradise those whom satiety once drove out.

"You will tell me, perhaps, that, high-born as you are, reared in luxury and used to lie softly, you cannot do without wine and dainties, and would find a stricter rule of life unendurable. If so, I can only say: "Live, then, by your own rule, since God's rule is too hard for you." Not that the Creator and Lord of all takes pleasure in a rumbling and empty stomach, or in fevered lungs; but that these are indispensable as means to the preservation of chastity. Job was dear to God, perfect and upright before Him; [Job ii. 3] yet hear what he says of the devil: "His strength is in the loins [sexual desire], and his force is in the navel [desire for food]" [Job xl. 16]." (St. Jerome, *Letter XXII, To Eustochium*, Section 9-11, A.D. 384)

St. Jerome further adds: "And yet after the Saviour had fasted forty days, it was through food that the old enemy laid a snare for Him, saying, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." (St. Matt. 4:3) Under the Law, in the seventh month after the blowing of trumpets and on the tenth day of the month, a fast was proclaimed for the whole Jewish people, and that soul was cut off from among his people which on that day preferred self-indulgence to self-denial. (Lev. 23:27-29) In Job it is written of behemoth that "his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly." (Job 40:16) Our foe uses the heat of youthful passion to tempt young men and maidens and "sets on fire the wheel of our

birth.” (James 3:6) He thus fulfills the words of Hosea, “they are all adulterers, their heart is like an oven” (Hosea 7:4); an oven which only God’s mercy and severe fasting can extinguish.” (*The Letters of St. Jerome*, Letter CXXX, Section 10, vol. 6, pp. 266-267, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series)

St. John Climacus calls gluttony “the prince of the passions.” He said that when one sits down to eat, one should think about death and the last judgment: “The fallen Lucifer is the prince of demons, and gluttony is the prince of the passions. So when you sit at a well-laden table, remember death and remember judgment, and even then you will manage to restrain yourself a little.” Like St. Jerome, St. John Climacus encouraged the use of fasting as a tool for overcoming lust: “To fast is to do violence to nature. It is to do away with whatever pleases the palate. Fasting ends lust, roots out bad thoughts, frees one from evil dreams.” (*The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, "Step 14: On Gluttony," by St. John Climacus, p. 169)

Overeating leads to lust which, in turn, leads to other sexual sins, such as fornication and adultery. St. Maximos the Confessor called gluttony “greed. . . because this is the mother and nurse of unchastity.” (*First Century on Love*, Section 84, by St. Maximos the Confessor, *The Philokalia*, vol. 2, p. 63)

St. Augustine also knew very well how food could effect our sensuality, which is why he taught that one should be very careful what or in what measure one eat. “You have taught me to approach the consumption of food as I would medicine.” (St. Augustine, 354-430 A.D., Quoted in *De Malo* by St. Thomas Aquinas) Why should one eat food as though it is medicine? There are two main reasons for this. The first is that one takes the medicine in very well measured portions, thus always being sure that there is not too little or too much of medicine to injure the body. In the same way, we should also carefully measure our portions of food in order to never eat more than what is necessary for our life and well being. Following this first advice is crucial in the war against the devil, for the devil fears resolute souls who adopt rules to chasten their flesh, and he knows that such a person, if he perseveres to the end, will be able to bring many other souls with him to heaven. That is why the devil in a special way wars against beginners in the spiritual life who have chosen to take up the fight against him through self-restraint, penances and mortifications. Since most spiritual practices are harder to perform in the beginning (since one is unaccustomed to performing them and untaught in the way on how to deal with them), the devil also uses this opportunity to try to persuade and talk the soul out of doing this or that penance or mortification, whispering in his or her ear that it is all in vain, that we have no strength to carry it out, and that no amount of penance or mortification will effect our spiritual welfare in the end. But if we wish to be perfect, we must

realize that: “Temperance requires that people should only eat at regular hours, if it be at all possible.” (Blessed Peter Julian Eymard, 1811-1868 A.D.)

The second reason why we should always eat food as though it is medicine, is because one does not eat medicine because of its taste, but only because of its effects in sustaining the health of the body. In the same way, we should never eat food for the purpose of satisfying our palate, but should view every portion of food we partake of as medicine, while ignoring the promptings of the flesh and of the devil who tempts us to indulge ourselves, sharply rebuking our flesh when it tries to allure and tempt us with all the different delicacies that one has now left behind for the perfect and pure love of God.

St. Jean-Baptiste de La Salle (1651-1719): “If it be the duty of a Christian to pray to God before meals, he is not less bound to thank him after having made use of the gifts which came from his bountiful hand. It is, therefore, necessary to make, after every meal, a short but fervent act of thanksgiving.” (*Duty of a Christian towards God*, Chapter 7)

Question: Which are the remedies against unchaste temptations?

Answer: St. Alphonsus, on the Precepts of the Decalogue, Chapter VI, The Sixth and Ninth Commandments: “For those who are unable [or unwilling] to abstain from impurity, or who are in great danger of falling into it, God has instituted a remedy in the marriage state as St. Paul says, “*But if they do not contain themselves, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to be burnt.*” (I Cor. vii. 9.) “But,” some may say, “Father, marriage is a great burden.” Who denies it? But have you heard the words of the Apostle? It is better to marry, and to bear this great burden, than to burn forever in hell.

“But do not imagine that for those who are unwilling or unable to marry there is no other means but marriage by which they may preserve chastity, for those who recommend themselves to God may by his grace conquer all the temptations of hell. What, then, are these means? I will tell you.

“I. The first remedy is to *humble ourselves* constantly before God. The Lord chastises the pride of some by permitting them to fall into a sin against chastity. It is necessary, then, to be humble, and to distrust altogether our own strength. David confessed that he had fallen into sin in consequence of not having been humble, and of having trusted too much in himself. “*Before I was humbled, I offended.*” (Ps. cxviii. 67.) We must then be always afraid of ourselves, and must trust in God only, to preserve us from this sin.

“II. **The second remedy is instantly to have recourse to God for help, without stopping to reason with the temptation. When an impure image is presented to**

the mind we must immediately endeavor to turn our thoughts to God, or to something which is indifferent. **But the best rule is immediately to invoke the names of Jesus and Mary, and continue to invoke them until the temptation ceases**, or at least till the heat of it is over. When the temptation is violent, it is useful to renew our purpose of never consenting to any sin, saying: "My God, I would rather die than offend Thee." And then let us ask aid: "My Jesus, assist me; Mary, pray for me." The names of Jesus and Mary have special power to banish the temptation of the devil.

“III. The third remedy is to frequent the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. It is very useful to disclose unchaste temptations to your confessor. St. Philip Neri says that a temptation disclosed is half conquered. And should a person have the misfortune to fall into sin against purity, let him go to confession immediately. It was so that St. Philip Neri delivered a young man from the chains of sin he ordered him to go to confession immediately whenever he fell into it. The holy Communion has great efficacy in giving strength to conquer temptations against chastity. The most holy sacrament is called “*Wine springing forth virgins.*” (Zach. ix. 17.) That is, the wine that is converted into the blood of Jesus Christ by the words of consecration. Earthly wine is injurious to chastity; but the celestial wine preserves it.

“IV. The fourth remedy is devotion to Mary the Mother of God, who is called the *Virgin of virgins*. How many young men have, by devotion to the Blessed Virgin, preserved themselves pure and chaste as angels! Father Segneri relates that a young man, so polluted with the vice of impurity that his confessor could not absolve him, went one day to confession to a Father of the Society of Jesus. The Father dismissed him, and told him to say every morning three "Hail Marys" in honor of the purity of the Blessed Virgin, in order to obtain through her intercession the grace to be delivered from the bad habit. After several years the young man returned to the same Father, but had scarcely a venial sin to confess; when he had finished his confession he said to the confessor: "Father, do you know me? I am the person whom you could not absolve some years ago, on account of my sins against purity; but by saying the three "Hail Marys" every morning I have, by the grace of God, got rid of the bad habit." He gave leave to the confessor to state the fact in general terms from the pulpit. A soldier who was on terms of criminal intimacy with a woman heard the story told in a sermon. He began to say the three "Hail Marys," and was freed from the habit of sin. One day the devil tempted him to go to the house of the woman in order to convert her. But what happened? When he was on the point of entering he was driven back by some invisible but powerful hand, and carried to a considerable distance. He thus became more and more convinced of the protection of the Blessed Virgin; for had he entered the house, he would probably have relapsed in consequence of being exposed to the proximate occasion of sin. **Let each one practise this little devotion of saying every day three "Hail Marys," in honor of the Blessed Virgin, adding after each "Hail Mary," "Through thy pure and**

immaculate conception, O Mary, obtain for me purity and sanctity of body and soul."

"V. The fifth remedy, which is the most necessary for avoiding sins against chastity, **is to fly from dangerous occasions.** Generally speaking, the first of all the means of preserving yourself always chaste is to avoid the occasions of sin. There are many means, such as to frequent the sacraments, to have recourse to God in temptations, to be devoted to the Blessed Virgin; **but the first of all is to avoid the occasions of sin.** The Scripture says, *Your strength shall be as the ashes of tow, . . . and there shall be none to quench it.* (Isa. i. 31.) Our strength is like the strength of tow thrown into the fire: it is instantly burned and consumed. Would it not be a miracle if tow cast into fire did not burn? It would also be a miracle if we exposed ourselves to the occasion, and did not fall. According to St. Bernardine of Siena, it is a greater miracle not to fall in the occasion of sin, than to raise a dead man to life. St. Philip Neri used to say that in the warfare of the flesh, cowards—that is, they who fly from occasions—are always victorious. You say: *I hope that God will assist me.* But God says: *He that loveth the danger shall perish in it.* (Ecclus. iii. 27.) God does not assist those who, without necessity, expose themselves voluntarily to the occasion of sin. **It is necessary to know that he who puts himself in the proximate occasion of sin is in the state of sin, though he should have no intention of committing the principal sin to which he exposes himself.**

"By proximate occasions even saints have fallen, and persons on the point of expiring have been lost. Father Segneri relates that a woman who had lived in the habit of sin with a young man called for a confessor at the hour of death, and with tears confessed all the wickedness of her life. She afterwards sent for her friend, with the intention of bringing him to God by her example. But what happened? Listen to the consequences of the occasion of sin: when the young man arrived, she fixed her eyes upon him for some time, and at last, with a gush of carnal affection, said to him: "Dearest friend, I always loved you, and I love you now more than ever. I know that on your account I shall go to hell; but no matter: I am willing to be damned for love of you." With these words on her lips she expired.

"We must, then, avoid the occasions of sin if we wish to be saved.

"1. We must carefully abstain from looking at persons, the sight of whom may tempt us to bad thoughts. St. Bernard says: "Through the eyes the arrows of impure love enter, and kill the soul. " And the Holy Ghost says: *Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up.* (Ecclus. ix. 8.) **Is it, then, a sin to look at a woman? Yes, it is at least a venial sin to look at young women; and when the looks are repeated, there is also danger of mortal sin.** St. Francis de Sales says that to look at dangerous objects is bad, but to look a second time is still more injurious. One of the ancient philosophers blinded himself voluntarily in order to be freed from unchaste suggestions. It is not lawful for us Christians to

destroy our sight physically, **but we should destroy it morally by turning the eyes away from objects which may excite temptations.** St. Aloysius Gonzaga never looked at women; even speaking to his mother he kept his eyes cast down upon the ground. It is equally dangerous for women to look at young men.

“2. It is necessary to avoid all bad company, and all assemblies where light bantering and flirting go on between men and women [such as the worldly media]. *With the holy thou wilt be holy . . . and with the perverse thou wilt be perverted.* (Ps. xvii. 26.) **If you keep company with the virtuous, you shall be virtuous; if you associate with the unchaste [or watch worldly media], you too will indulge in impurity.** St. Thomas says that a man will be like the companions with whom he converses. And should you ever find yourself in dangerous society from which you cannot withdraw, follow the advice of the Holy Ghost. *Hedge in thy ears with thorns.* (Ecclus. xxviii. 28.) Place a hedge of thorns about your ears that you may not hear the obscene words which others utter. When very young, St. Bernardine of Siena used to blush as often as he heard an immodest word; hence his companions were careful never to use improper language in his presence. Such was the horror which St. Stanislaus Kostka felt for obscene conversation that on hearing an immodest word he swooned away, and lost the use of his senses. Young girls, whenever you hear anyone speak immodestly, turn your back and go away. It was thus St. Edmund acted, as we read in his life; and one day, after having left his companions because their language was obscene, he met on his way a most beautiful boy who said to him: "God save you, my beloved." The saint asked who he was. The young boy answered: "Look at my forehead: there you may read my name." The saint raised his eyes, and read the words, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Jesus Christ immediately disappeared, but left the saint consolation and joy. Whenever you find yourself in the society of young persons who speak improperly, and cannot leave them, be careful at least not to listen to them: turn away your face, and show that such language is displeasing to you.

“3. I will here mention the chastisement inflicted on two persons for obscene language. Turlot relates that St. Valerius, returning on a winter's day to his monastery, and not being able to reach it before night, took shelter in a private house. On entering, he found the master engaged with another man in obscene conversation; he reproved them, but they persevered in their sin. St. Valerius, though the evening was very cold, fled from the house. As soon as he departed, the owner of the house was struck blind, and his companion was attacked with a loathsome disease. They ran after the saint, and entreated him to return, but he refused. One remained blind, and the other died after being consumed by the disease. Oh! how great is the evil caused by immodest language! An obscene word may be the cause of the perdition of all who hear it. Some excuse themselves, saying that they only use such words in jest. Yet in uttering them you feel complacency! and then the scandal which you give to others! Miserable

man, these jests shall make you weep for all eternity in hell.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 473-480)

Question: Is vanity and sexual desire connected to each other, and what punishment from God, if any, are given to those who are vain and arouse another’s sensual desire by using makeup and lascivious and immodest clothing etc.

Answer: Yes, vanity and sexual desire are two disorders that are directly and heavily connected to one another. This is because vain practices such as the use of makeup and immodest clothing inflame the flesh to sexual desire. Not only the user will be inflamed to sensuality by these vain practices, but also those people who observe them, will be inflamed to sensuality through their immoral and disgusting behavior.

Our Lady of Fatima: “The sins of the world are too great! The sins which lead most souls to hell are sins of the flesh! **Certain fashions are going to be introduced which will offend Our Lord very much. Those who serve God should not follow these fashions. The Church has no fashions; Our Lord is always the same.** Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God.”

According to modern-day “Catholics” who know nothing about the Catholic faith and the teachings of the saints, current modern-day fashion in which women dress like men or with revealing and tight clothing showing off their womanly form (even if modestly) is not offensive to God. Well, they are completely wrong.

St. Clement of Alexandria, *Father of the Church*, On Clothes (c. 198 A.D.): “Luxurious clothing that cannot conceal the shape of the body is no more a covering. For such clothing, falling close to the body, takes its form more easily, and adhering as it were to the flesh, receives its shape, and marks out the woman’s figure. As a result, the whole make of the body is visible to spectators, although they cannot see the body itself.” (*The Instructor or The Paedagogus*, Book II, Chapter XI)

How did most Catholic women, and even pagans and infidels, dress before our time? The answer is that they all dressed more like how nuns are dressed, that is, they were using a long dress **totally** covering their behind, front and legs down to the ankle and up to the waist with no tight fitting, visible parts shown **whatsoever** below the waist. And above the waist were usually worn – not some insignificant, small, thin shirt or “covering” as most women use today, showing of their whole womanly form, even if not revealing any flesh – but rather a

significant, thick, long shirt that covers the womanly figure, the arms down to the wrist, shoulders and neck. Neither did these dresses or shirts end visibly at the waist, thus inviting curious, immodest thoughts or revealing any flesh or worse as modern day shirts, dresses, skirts and pants do, but these skirts or dresses were usually one part of the whole dress, or worn in such a way as to invite no thoughts. Such dresses are totally without guilt. Everything else will at least have some fault. In general, the more the clothing reveals flesh and the bodily form, the more sinful it becomes. Not only did most women dress in such a good way before our modern time, but all women also wore a head covering in the Church, and a large portion of the women also wore it in everyday occasions.

Considering how most western woman dress today, it's safe to say that many of them in fact dress in a mortally sinful fashion. A woman that does not desire to be lusted after by others and who do not want to give others an occasion of falling into sin, will of course never dress in a sensual or immodest way. Indeed, very few people today dress without any guilt at all. But amongst the few who do, most of them are definitely found amongst the pagans, infidels and idolaters, and especially in the poorer countries.

In St. Bridget's Revelations, Jesus Christ gives us a perfect description of how sensual and vain people are handed over to the devil for their sins. The following revelation is very revealing. In it one will see Jesus complaining about the bad will and sinful lifestyle of obstinate, evil sinners that are lustful and vain; and how He threatens them with eternal punishments; and how he lovingly encourages them to repentance. One will notice from the introduction of this Revelation that these things mentioned by Jesus Christ are serious matters and not just some trifling scruples as most peopled indeed look upon these sins today. That is also why Our Lord appears in the revelation as if revealing a "hidden" truth lost to mankind—a truth that was fervently prayed for by God's servants to be shown to the sinful people for their amendment.

To a person who was wide awake at prayer and absorbed in contemplation – and while she was in a rapture of mental elevation – Jesus Christ appeared; and He said to her this: "Hear, O you to whom it has been given to hear and see spiritual things; and be diligently attentive; and in your mind beware in regard to those things that you now will hear and that in my behalf you will announce to the nations... for these things that you are now going to hear are being shown to you not only for your own sake, but also because of the prayers of my friends.

"For some of my chosen friends in the Neapolitan citizenry have for many years asked me with their whole heart – in their prayers and in their labors on behalf of my

enemies living in the same city – to show them some grace through which they could be withdrawn and savingly recalled from their sins and abuses. Swayed by their prayers, I give to you now these words of mine; and therefore diligently hear the things that I speak.

“I am the Creator of all and Lord over the devils as well as over the angels, and no one will escape my judgment. ... But what are those human beings who are my enemies doing to me now? In truth, they have contempt for my precepts; they cast me out of their hearts like a loathsome poison; indeed, they spit me out of their mouths like something rotten; and they abhor the sight of me as if I were a leper with the worst of stench. But the devil and his works they embrace in their every affection and deed. For they bring him into their hearts, doing his will with delight and gladness and following his evil suggestions. Therefore, by my just judgment they shall have their reward in hell with the devil eternally without end. And for the lust with which they burn like senseless animals, they will never be admitted to the sight of my face but will be separated from me and deprived of their inordinate will.

“Moreover, know that just as all mortal sins are very serious, so too a venial sin is made mortal if a human being delights in it with the intention of persevering. Wherefore, know that two sins, which I now name to you, are being practiced and that they draw after them other sins that all seem as if venial. **But because the people delight in them with the intention of persevering, they are therefore made mortal.**

“... The first of the two sins is that the faces of rational human creatures are being painted with the various colors with which insensible images and statues of idols are colored so that to others, these faces may seem more beautiful than I made them. The second sin is that the bodies of men and women are being deformed from their natural state by the unseemly forms of clothing that the people are using. And the people are doing this because of pride and so that in their bodies they may seem more beautiful and more lascivious than I, God, created them. And indeed they do this so that those who thus see them may be more quickly provoked and inflamed toward carnal desire.

“Therefore, know for very certain that as often as they daub their faces with antimony and other extraneous coloring [makeup], some of the infusion of the Holy Spirit is diminished in them and the devil draws nearer to them. In fact, as often as they adorn themselves in disorderly and indecent clothing and so deform their bodies, the adornment of their souls is diminished and the devil’s power is increased.

“O my enemies, who do such things and with effrontery commit other sins contrary to my will, why have you neglected my passion; and why do you not attend in your hearts to how I stood naked at the pillar, bound and cruelly scourged with hard whips, and to how I stood naked on the cross and cried out, full of wounds and clothed in blood? And when you paint and anoint your faces, why do you not look at my face and see how it was full of blood? You are not even attentive to my eyes and how they grew dark and were covered with blood and tears, and how my eyelids turned blue.

“Why too do you, not look at my mouth or gaze at my ears and my beard and see how they were aggrieved and were stained with blood? You do not look at the rest of my limbs, monstrously wounded by various punishments, and see how I hung black and blue on the cross and dead for your sake. And there, derided and rejected, I was despised by all in order that, by recalling these things and attentively remembering them, you might love me, your God, and thus escape the devil’s snares, in which you have been horribly bound.

“However, in your eyes and hearts, all these things have been forgotten and neglected. And so you behave like prostitutes, who love the pleasure and delight of the flesh, but not its offspring... so that without losing their fleshly pleasure and further wicked delight [by bearing children and living chastely], they may thus be always absorbed in their lust and their foul carnal intercourse. This is how you behave.

“... But when you feel, in your hearts, any knock of an inpouring – namely of my Spirit – or any compunction; or when, through hearing my words, you conceive any good intention, at once you procure spiritually, as it were, an abortion, namely, by excusing your sins and by delighting in them and even by damnably willing to persevere in them. For that reason, you do the devil’s will, enclosing him in your hearts and expelling me in this contemptible way. Therefore, you are without me, and I am not with you. And you are not in me but in the devil, for it is his will and his suggestions that you obey.

“And so, because I have just spoken my judgment, I shall also now speak my mercy. My mercy, however, is this: namely, that none of my very enemies is so thorough or so great a sinner that my mercy would be denied him if he were to ask for it humbly and wholeheartedly. Wherefore, my enemies must do three things if they wish reconcile themselves to my grace and friendship. The first is that with all their heart they repent and have contrition because they have offended me, their Creator and Redeemer. The second thing is confession – clean, frequent, and humble – which they must make before their confessor.

“And thus let them amend all their sins by doing penance and making satisfaction in accord with that same confessor’s council and discretion. For then I shall draw close

to them, and the devil will be kept far away from them. The third thing is that after they have thus performed these things with devotion and perfect charity, they are to go to communion and receive and consume my Body with the intention of never falling back into former sins but of persevering in good even to the end.

“If anyone, therefore, amends his life in this manner, at once I will run out to meet him as a loving father runs to meet his wayward son; and I will receive him into my grace more gladly than he himself could have asked or thought. And then I will be in him, and he in me; and he shall live with me and rejoice forever. But upon him who perseveres in his sins and malice my justice shall indubitably come. For when the fisherman sees the fish in the water playing in their delight and merriment, even then he drops his hook into the sea and draws it out, catching the fish in turn and then putting them to death – not all at once, but a few at a time – until he has taken them all.

“This is indeed what I shall do to my enemies who persevere in sin. For I shall bring them a few at a time to the consummation of the worldly life of this age in which they take temporal and carnal delight. And at an hour that they do not believe and are living in even greater delight, I shall then snatch them away from earthly life and put them to eternal death in a place where they will nevermore see my face because they loved to do and accomplish their inordinate and corrupted will rather than perform my will and my commandments.” (St. Bridget’s Revelations, Book 7, Chapter 27)

The Holy Bible, of course, confirms that all vanity such as the use of makeup and extravagant adornment must be avoided.

1 Peter 3:1-5 “In like manner also let wives be subject to their husbands: that if any believe not the word, they may be won without the word, by the conversation of the wives. Considering your chaste conversation with fear. **Whose adorning let it not be the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel:** But the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptibility of a quiet and a meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God. For after this manner heretofore the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands.”

1 Timothy 2:9-10 “In like manner women also in decent apparel: adorning themselves with modesty and sobriety, not with plaited hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly attire, But as it becometh women professing godliness, with good works.”

Haydock Commentary explains 1 Peter 3:1-5: “Ver. 1. *Let wives, &c.* In the first six verses he gives instructions to married women. 1. By their modest and submissive dispositions to endeavour to gain and convert their husbands, shewing them such a respect as Sara did, (whose daughters they ought to esteem themselves) who called Abraham her lord, or master; (Gen. xviii. 12.) 2. To be modest in their dress, without vanity; 3. That women take the greatest care of the *hidden man*, i.e. of the interior disposition of their heart, which he calls *the incorruptibility of a quiet and a meek spirit*; 4. *Not fearing any trouble*, when God’s service or the duty to their husbands require it (Witham).”

Haydock Commentary explains 1 Timothy 2:8-10: “How beautifully does St. Paul teach that modesty and chastity are the greatest ornaments of the female sex, not only in the sight of God and of Angels, but also of men, who although by their own neglect they have not always grace and courage sufficient to be virtuous themselves, cannot help admiring virtue wherever they see it in others. Even the pagan fully acknowledges the native attractions of virtue. *Virtus per se placet: Virtue pleases with unborrowed charms.*”

Most couples who sin in the marital act undoubtedly also fall for the sins of vanity, immodest clothing and use of makeup condemned by Jesus Christ, the Saints and the Holy Bible shown above because these people are really lovers of the flesh, and not of God. Furthermore, we could also clearly see in the above Revelation how those people who commit sins of vanity in fact are diminishing in their love of God, and beauty of soul, and that they in fact are handed over to the devil for their sins: “*some of the infusion of the Holy Spirit is diminished in them and the devil draws nearer to them.*” This is important to consider, for as often as people commit any sin, such as when married spouses go further than what is permitted (non-sinful) in the procreative act, they always commit sin, and will thus, as a consequence, always be drawing closer to the Devil.

Our Lord Jesus Christ further teaches us that all people who vainly use makeup or immodest, vain and tight clothing will be especially tormented for every single person that have seen them or followed their example in their entire life, unless they amend before the moment of their death, which is, sad to say, impossible to know when it will be. That can be thousands and thousands of people executing vengeance on you in Hell for all eternity!

St. Bridget of Sweden (1303-1373), **on a revelation of a soul suffering in purgatory**: “Happily, before death I confessed my sins in such dispositions as to escape Hell, but now I suffer here [in purgatory] to expiate the worldly life that my

mother did not prevent me from leading! ...this head, which loved to be adorned, and which sought to draw the attention of others, is now devoured with flames within and without, and these flames are so violent that every moment it seems to me that I must die. These shoulders, these arms, which I loved to see admired, are cruelly bound in chains of red-hot iron. These feet, formerly trained for the dance, are now surrounded with vipers that tear them with their fangs and soil them with their filthy slime; **all these members which I have adorned with jewels, flowers, and diverse of other ornaments, are now a prey to the most terrible torture.**” (*Immodesty Satan’s Virtue*, p.78 quoting Purgatory, Thomas W. Petrisko)

And in another frightful revelation of a vain soul in *St. Bridget’s Revelations*, we read that Lady Bridget:

“... saw a soul being led to the Judge [Jesus Christ]... and she [the soul] said: ‘I had almost no love for God: That is why I did so little good.’ An immediate reply was made to her from the book: ‘That is why it is just for you to approach closer to the devil than to God, because the devil lured and enticed you to himself with his temptations.’

“The soul replied: ‘I understand now that everything I did was done on the promptings of the devil.’ A reply was made from the book: ‘Justice dictates that it is the devil’s right to repay your accomplishments with pain and punishment.’ The soul said: ‘From head to heel there was nothing I did not dress with pride. Some of my vain and proud manners I invented myself, others I just followed according to the custom of my native land. I washed my hands and face not only in order to be clean but also to be called beautiful by men.’ A reply was made from the book: ‘Justice says that it is the devil’s right to repay you for what you have earned, since you dressed and adorned yourself as he inspired and told you to do.’

“... **The soul said: ‘I enjoyed it immensely when many people took after my example and noticed what I did and copied my manners.’ A reply was made from the book: ‘Hence, it is just that everyone caught in the sin for which you are about to be punished should also suffer the same punishment and be brought to you. Then your pain will be increased each time someone comes who copied your fashions.’**”

“After these words, it seemed to me as though a chain was wound about her head like a crown and then tightened so hard that the front and back of her head were joined together. Her eyes fell out of their sockets and dangled by their roots at her cheeks. Her hair looked like it had been scorched by flames, and her brains were shattered and flowed out through her nostrils and ears.

“Her tongue was stretched out and her teeth pressed in. Her arms were twisted like ropes and their bones broke. Her hands, with their skin peeled off, were fastened to her throat. Her breast and belly were bound so hard with her back that her ribs were broken and her heart spilled out together with all her entrails; her thighs dangled at her flanks, and their broken bones were being pulled out just like a thin thread is used to thread a needle.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden*, Book 4, Chapter 51)

What a horror! People need to let this fact sink through their heads before they put on makeup and lascivious clothing the next time, for it might in fact be the last time they are allowed to deceive and tempt others through their vanity before their vain and ungodly life ends in an accident or some other horrible event. Similarly, in another Revelation given to the Queen of Naples that confirms that it is unlawful to use makeup, Christ tells her that “she should be content with the colors and beauty by which God has adorned her face; for extraneous color is very displeasing to God” thus showing us very clearly that God intensely dislikes all kinds of makeup. (cf. *The Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden*, Book 7, Chapter 11)

St. Cyprian in speaking about the subject of makeup and vanity in general also remarks that the introduction of makeup as well as other vain practices were done by fallen angels, that is demons, thus showing us that those who put on makeup are controlled by the devil:

“Has God willed that wounds should be made in the ears, wherewith infancy, as yet innocent, and unconscious of worldly evil, may be put to pain, that subsequently from the scars and holes of the ears precious beads may hang, heavy, if not by their weight, still by the amount of their cost? All which things sinning and apostate angels put forth by their arts, when, lowered to the contagious of earth, they forsook their heavenly vigour. They taught them also to paint the eyes with blackness drawn round them in a circle, and to stain the cheeks with a deceitful red, and to change the hair with false colours, and to drive out all truth, both of face and head, by the assault of their own corruption.

“And indeed in that very matter, for the sake of the fear which faith suggests to me, for the sake of the love which brotherhood requires, I think that not virgins only and widows, but married women also, and all of the sex alike, should be admonished, that the work of God and His fashioning and formation ought in no manner to be adulterated, either with the application of yellow colour, or with black dust or rouge, or with any kind of medicament which can corrupt the native lineaments. God says, "Let us make man in our image and likeness;" [Genesis 1:26] and does any one dare to alter

and to change what God has made? They are laying hands on God when they try to reform that which He formed, and to transfigure it, not knowing that everything which comes into being is God's work, everything that is changed is the devil's. If any artist, in painting, were to delineate in envious colouring the countenance and likeness and bodily appearance of any one; and the likeness being now painted and completed, another person were to lay hands on it, as if, when it was already formed and already painted, he, being more skilled, could amend it, a serious wrong and a just cause of indignation would seem natural to the former artist. And do you think yourself likely with impunity to commit a boldness of such wicked temerity, an offence to God the artificer? For although you may not be immodest among men, and are not unchaste with your seducing dyes, yet when those things which belong to God are corrupted and violated, you are engaged in a worse adultery. That you think yourself to be adorned, that you think your hair to be dressed, is an assault upon the divine work, is a prevarication of the truth." (St. Cyprian of Carthage, *Treatises 2*, Section 14.--On the Dress of Virgins.)

It is imperative for all to understand and recognize that vanity is a sin and that God will judge all who are vain—like people who use makeup or revealing or tight clothing. "Either we must speak as we dress, or dress as we speak. Why do we profess one thing and display another? The tongue talks of chastity, but the whole body reveals impurity." (St. Jerome, *Father and Doctor of the Church*)

St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, *Father of the Church* (De Habit. Virg.): "I hold that not only virgins and widows, but also wives and all women without exception, should be admonished that nowise should they deface God's work and fabric, the clay that He has fashioned, with the aid of yellow pigments, black powders or rouge, or by applying any dye that alters the natural features. . . They lay hands on God, when they strive to reform what He has formed. This is an assault on the Divine handiwork, a distortion of the truth. Thou shalt not be able to see God, having no longer the eyes that God made, but those the devil has unmade; with him shalt thou burn on whose account thou art bedecked." (Quoted by St. Thomas Aquinas, *Doctor of the Church*, in the *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 169, Art. 2)

St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan, *Father and Doctor of the Church*: "Is anything so conducive to lust as with unseemly movements thus to expose in nakedness those parts of the body which either nature has hidden or custom has veiled, to sport with the looks, to turn the neck, to loosen the hair? Fitly was the next step an offense against

God. For what modesty can there be?” (*Concerning Virgins*, Book III, CHAPTER VI.)

Other people being consumed by and spurred to vanity by the Devil also color their hair or their nails, but this is a lying counterfeit and is always unlawful to do. “*Whose adorning let it not be the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel...*” (1 Peter 3:3)

St. Anthony Mary Claret, Archbishop of Santiago and Missionary: “Now, observe, my daughter, the contrast between the luxurious dress of many women, and the raiment and adornments of Jesus... Tell me: what relation do their fine shoes bear to the spikes in Jesus’ Feet? The rings on their hands to the nails which perforated His? The fashionable coiffure to the Crown of Thorns? The painted face to That covered with bruises? Shoulders exposed by the low-cut gown to His, all striped with Blood? Ah, but there is a marked likeness between these worldly women and the Jews who, incited by the Devil, scourged Our Lord! At the hour of such a woman’s death, I think Jesus will be heard saying: ‘*Cujus est imago haec...* of whom is she the image?’ And the reply will be: ‘*Demonii...* of the Devil!’ Then He will say: ‘Let her who has followed the Devil’s fashions be handed over to him; and to God, those who have imitated the modesty of Jesus and Mary.’”

St. Anthony Mary Claret relates in his own autobiography that Our Lord told him he is the Eagle of Apocalypse 8:13, flying in mid-heaven, crying in a loud voice of the chastisements to come; he mentioned the scourge and spread of three things 1.) Protestantism and Communism, 2.) the four archdemons that will make fearful inroads – love of pleasure, love of money, independence of mind, independence of the will, 3.) the great wars and their consequences. He died at the First Vatican Council of a heart attack because of the heresies people tried to introduce.

The divine authority of God’s word demands that you always dress humbly by not wearing tight clothes that show your breasts or your behind or by showing too much skin that leads to temptation; and that you also abstain from using any kind of makeup, jewelry, and accessories (except for Rosaries or Brown Scapulars and the like which is a very great way to protect oneself against the Devil) in order not to give a bad example or tempt your neighbor into carnal lust and sin: “If you desire to be one of the faithful and to please the Lord, O wife, do not add adornments to your beauty, in order to please other men. Do not wear fine embroidery, garments, or shoes, to entice those who are allured by such things. It may be that you do not do these wicked things for the purpose of sinning yourself – but only for the sake

of adornment and beauty. Nevertheless, you still will not escape future punishment for having compelled another to look so close at you as to lust after you." (*Apostolic Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, 375 A.D.)

Again, as we saw above, every single person you have ever deceived and tempted with your immodest appearance, will demand that God executes his righteous vengeance on you, since you tempted them into vanity and lustful thoughts.

That of course means you cannot go and bathe in public since that would be even more immodest and immoral! The world has indeed changed very much the last 100-200 years; yet, no one should think that he could do these things just because they are universally accepted. Do you want to go with the majority? Then, sadly, Hell awaits you for all eternity!

St. Clement of Alexandria, *Father of the Church*, On Public Modesty: "But by no manner of means are women to be allotted to uncover and exhibit any part of their person, lest both fall -- the men by being excited to look, the women by drawing on themselves the eyes of the men. But always must we conduct ourselves as in the Lord's presence... [Again] On no account must a woman be permitted to show a man **any** portion of her body naked, for fear lest both fall: the one by gazing eagerly, the other by delighting to attract those eager glances." (*The Paedagogus* or *The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter II)

St. Cyprian of Carthage, *Father of the Church*, On Public Bathing: "But what of those who frequent promiscuous baths; who prostitute to eyes that are curious to lust, bodies that are dedicated to chastity and modesty? They who disgracefully behold naked men, and are seen naked by men, do they not themselves afford enticement to vice, do they not solicit and invite the desires of those present to their own corruption and wrong? "Let every one," say you, "look to the disposition with which he comes thither: my care is only that of refreshing and washing my poor body." That is the kind of defense that does not clear you, nor does it excuse the crime of lasciviousness and wantonness.

"Such a washing defiles; it does not purify nor cleanse the limbs, but stains them. You behold no one immodestly, but you yourself are gazed upon immodestly. You do not pollute your eyes with disgraceful delight, but in delighting others you yourself are polluted. You make a show of the bathing-place; the places where you assemble are fouler than a theater. There all modesty is put off together with the clothing of garments, the honor and modesty of the body is laid aside; virginity is exposed, to be pointed at and to be handled. And now then consider whether when you are clothed

you are modest among men, when the boldness of nakedness has conduced to immodesty.

“... Be such as God the Creator made you; be such as the hand of your Father ordained you. Let your countenance remain in you incorrupt, your neck unadorned, your figure simple; let not wounds be made in your ears, nor let the precious chain of bracelets and necklaces circle your arms or your neck; let your feet be free from golden bands, your hair stained with no dye, your eyes worthy of beholding God.

“Let your baths be performed with women, among whom your bathing is modest.”
(*Treatise II, On the Dress of Virgins, Section 19, 21*)

St. Clement of Alexandria, *Father of the Church*, On Bathhouse Manners: “Women will scarce strip naked before their own husbands, affecting a plausible pretense of modesty but any others who wish may see them at home, shut up in their own baths, for they are not ashamed to strip before spectators, as if exposing their persons for sale. The baths are opened promiscuously to men and women; and there they strip for licentious indulgence (for from looking, men get to loving), as if their modesty had been washed away in the bath. Those who have not become utterly destitute of modesty shut out strangers, but bathe with their own servants, and strip naked before their slaves... but these women, divesting themselves of their modesty along with their chemise, wish to appear beautiful, but, contrary to their wish, are simply proved to be wicked...

“Men, therefore, affording to women a noble example of truth, ought to be ashamed at their stripping before them, and guard against these dangerous sights; “for he who has looked curiously,” it is said, “hath sinned already.” [Matt. 5:28] At home, therefore, they ought to regard with modesty parents and domestics; in the ways, those they meet; in the baths, women; in solitude, themselves; and everywhere the Word, who is everywhere, “and without Him was not anything.” [John 1:3] For so only shall one remain without falling, if he regard God as ever present with him.” (*The Paedagogus or The Instructor, Book III, Chapter V*)

St. Thomas Aquinas also describes how “among the ancients... it was not deemed right for a son to bathe with his father” and this teaches us that it is best to never show ourselves naked to anyone: “because man naturally owes a certain respect to his parents and therefore to his other blood relations, who are descended in near degree from the same parents: so much so indeed that among the ancients, as Valerius Maximus relates [Dict. Fact. Memor. ii, 1], it was not deemed right for a son to bathe with his father, lest they should see one another naked.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 9)

The immodest have in truth a special place in Hell waiting for them since they are the source of the most abominable sins of the flesh, as St. Paul teaches us in First Corinthians: “*Fly fornication. Every sin that a man doth, is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body!*” (1 Corinthians 6:18)

This should of course be understood in the sense of literal fornication as well as fornication in the mind which also is a mortal and damnable sin! You will be held accountable for every eye that have seen you if you use makeup or immodest clothing. That can account for thousands and thousands of people executing vengeance on you in Hell for all eternity! Even if you don't use any makeup or dress vainly, God will still judge you to Hell if you encourage others to become vain or take delight in vain thoughts or have vain opinions of yourself. If a single thought can damn a person, how much more should tempters with immodest clothing and makeup be damned! How abominable to want to be accepted for your appearance rather than for your opinions! Oh vanity, you shall soon wither away and die like grass in the fall season and be forgotten. “*In the morning man shall grow up like grass; in the morning he shall flourish and pass away: in the evening he shall fall, grow dry, and wither.*” (Psalms 89:6) In truth, o vain one, you shall soon rot in the grave, but your soul shall burn for ever more in Hell since you thought to make your exterior beautiful, and, in so doing, perverted your interior:

“But there is perhaps nothing more striking than what is reported by St. Jerome, one of the four great Doctors of Holy Church, and which took place during his lifetime, in a house which he knew perfectly and in regard to a Roman lady of high condition, named Praetextate. She was sister-in-law of St. Paula, the spiritual daughter of this great Saint. St. Paula wishing to quit the city of Rome, to visit the holy places in Judea which the Savior had hallowed by His presence, left her daughter Eustochium, who also wished to consecrate herself to God, in the care of her aunt, Praetextate. This latter wished to frustrate the designs of the pious Paula upon her daughter, and by the advice of her husband, obliged the young girl to lay aside her simple, modest dress and assume a more sumptuous one, at the same time compelling her to wear her hair according to the latest fashion and to paint her cheeks. A fearful chastisement overtook the worldly woman; for, on the night following, an Angel sent by God spoke to her thus: "Thou hast dared to prefer the command of thy husband to that of Jesus Christ, and with sacrilegious hands to adorn after a worldly fashion the head of this virgin of God. Behold the punishment of thy crime! Thy hands which have done this deed shall become withered, so that they will never more serve thee, and in five months from now thou shalt be cast into hell. And if thou shalt continue in thy wickedness, thy husband and all thy children shall likewise die." All of which, says St. Jerome, was accomplished

to the letter, and, at the end of five months, the unhappy woman died suddenly, without giving any sign of repentance.” (Related by St. Jean Eudes, Priest and Missionary and Founder of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary)

“One day Don Bosco noticed that two ladies were dressed immodestly but he did not wish to insult them, so he began to speak to the young girl that was with them. “I should like you to explain something to me” he began. He asked her why she had so much contempt for her arms. She answered to him that she did not and when he insisted the mother said, “On the contrary, often I must scold her for her vanity. Besides washing them she even perfumes them with eau de Cologne.” He continued to talk to the girl saying this is exactly why he said that she had contempt for her arms. “Because when you die, your arms shall be burned in the fires of Hell.” She became alarmed and he went on to say that she would probably end up in purgatory and only the Lord knew for what length of time. He told her the flames would creep up her arms and burn her neck. After this the mother understood her duty to instruct her daughter better and when Don Bosco saw them on other visits they were always modestly dressed.” (Quoted in "Smiling Don Bosco. Anecdotes and Episodes of St John Bosco", Publisher: Society Of St Paul (1946))

“We read also in Father Nieremberg that a noble lady, who was exceedingly pious, asked God to make known to her what displeased His Divine Majesty most in persons of her sex. The Lord vouchsafed in a miraculous manner to hear her. He opened under her eyes the Eternal Abyss. There she saw a woman a prey to cruel torments and in her recognized one of her friends, a short time before deceased. This sight caused her as much astonishment as grief: the person whom she saw damned did not seem to her to have lived badly. Then that unhappy soul said to her: **“It is true that I practiced religion, but I was a slave of vanity. Ruled by the passion to please, I was *not* afraid to adopt indecent fashions to attract attention, and I kindled the fire of impurity in more than one heart. Ah! If Christian women knew how much immodesty in dress displeases God!”** At the same moment, this unhappy soul was pierced by two fiery lances, and plunged into a caldron of liquid lead.” (Rev. F.X. Schouppe, S.J., *The Dogma of Hell*, Chapter VIII)

“Now look at those little doors all round the walls of hell. They are little rooms or dungeons where sinners are shut up. We will go and look at some of them. The First Dungeon - A Dress of Fire. Job xxxvii. Are not thy garments hot? Come into this room. You see it is very small. But see, in the midst of it there is a girl, perhaps about eighteen years old. What a terrible dress she has on -- her dress is made of fire. On her head she wears a bonnet of fire. It is pressed down close all over her head; it burns her head; it burns into the skin; it scorches the

bone of the skull and makes it smoke. The red hot fiery heat goes into the brain and melts it. Ezech. xxii. I will burn you in the fire of my wrath; you shall be melted in the midst thereof as silver is melted in the fire. You do not, perhaps, like a headache. Think what a headache that girl must have. But see more. She is wrapped up in flames, for her frock is fire. If she were on earth she would be burnt to a cinder in a moment. But she is in hell, where fire burns everything, but burns nothing away. There she stands burning and scorched; there she will stand for ever burning and scorched! She counts with her fingers the moments as they pass away slowly, for each moment seems to her like a hundred years. As she counts the moments she remembers that she will have to count them for ever and ever.” (*The Sight of Hell* by Rev. John Furniss, C.S.S.R., Chapter XXIV)

St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop, Father and Doctor of the Church instructed women of all times about dress when in the fourth century he declared: “You carry your snare everywhere and spread your nets in all places. You allege that you never invited others to sin. You did not, indeed, by your words, but you have done so by your dress and your deportment. ... When you have made another sin in his heart, how can you be innocent? **Tell me, whom does this world condemn? Whom do judges punish? Those who drink poison or those who prepare it and administer the fatal potion? You have prepared the abominable cup, you have given the death dealing drink, and you are more criminal than are those who poison the body; you murder not the body but the soul. And it is not to enemies you do this, nor are you urged on by any imaginary necessity, nor provoked by injury, but out of foolish vanity and pride.**” (Quoted in *Immodesty: Satan’s Virtue*, by Rita Davidson, p.12)

Most people in the world do not understand or know about the fact that their vanity actually murders people’s souls in this world, but there is also another little known evil – that is an even greater evil than this – and that is the fact that vain people also are guilty of the murder and crucifixion of Our Lord Jesus Christ by their acts of vanity and lasciviousness. Blessed Angela of Foligno (1248-1309) was revealed this sad and horrifying truth in a spiritual revelation which is documented in her work “*The Book of Divine Consolations*”, and Our Lord showed her how all her acts of vanity and lasciviousness were instrumental in tormenting him in his suffering for our sins an especial manner:

“Then were all my sins shown unto my soul, and I perceived that each member had its special spiritual infirmity. Wherefore, hearing what had been said, the soul did instantly endeavour to show forth all the sins which it had committed with the different members of the body and with all its own strength and powers, saying: "Oh Lord,

Master and Physician of eternal health! Oh my God, forasmuch as by only showing forth unto Thee my infirmities and diseases Thou hast consented to heal me, and because, oh Lord, I am very sick and have no part in me that is not corrupt and defiled, I, wretched that I am, will show Thee, oh Lord, all mine infirmities and all the sins of all my members and of all the parts of my soul and body!"

"Then did I begin and point them all out, saying, "Oh Lord, most merciful Physician, **look upon mine head and see how oftentimes I have adorned it with the emblems of pride, how I have many times deformed it by curling and braiding my hair, and have committed numerous other sins. Look, Oh Lord, upon my wretched eyes, full of uncleanness and envy!" In like manner I strove to number and show forth all the sins of mine other members.**

"And when He had hearkened thereunto with great patience, the Lord Jesus Christ did gladly and joyfully make answer that He had healed these things one after another and then, taking pity upon my soul, He said: "Fear not, My daughter, neither do thou despair; for even wert thou tainted with a thousand deadly diseases, wert thou dead a thousand times, yet could I give thee a medicine whereby thou mightest be healed of everything if thou wouldst only apply it unto thy heart and soul. For the infirmities of thine head which thou hast told and shown unto Me, and for which thou art displeasing unto God and grievous unto thyself, **which infirmities thou hast incurred by washing, combing, anointing, colouring, adorning, and braiding thy hair, by setting thyself up in pride and seeking vainglory, for which things thou dost deserve to be cast into the uttermost parts of hell,** to be humbled in all eternity and reputed as one most vile, for these infirmities have I given satisfaction [through the crucifixion] and done penance. I suffered the most grievous pain [for your sins] inasmuch as My hair was plucked out and my head pierced by sharp thorns; with a rod was it smitten and covered with blood, it endured all manner of mockery and scorn, and with the vilest of crowns was it crowned.

"For the infirmity of thy face, which thou hast contracted likewise by washing and anointing it, by showing it unto miserable men and seeking their favour, I have made and ordained a medicine. For these sins have I also given satisfaction, for wicked men did spit in My Face, making it all filthy and stained; it was swollen and deformed by rude and heavy blows and a vile cloth was hung before it.

"Moreover, for thine eyes, with which thou hast looked at vain and hurtful things and hast delighted in gazing at many things which were opposed unto God, have I given satisfaction, shedding copious and bitter tears from My eyes which were veiled and filled with blood.

“For the ears wherewith thou hast offended God by hearkening unto vain and hurtful things and taking delight therein, I have done great penance, hearkening unto many grievous things, such as false accusations, slanders, insults, curses, mockings, lies and blasphemies, and finally the wicked judgment spoken against Myself but above all I did penance in hearkening unto the weeping of My most loving and lowly mother, who grieved for Me with exceeding great grief.

“Because of the sins of thy mouth and throat, where with thou didst take delight in feasting and drunkenness and in the sweetness of delicate meats, My mouth hath been dry and empty, hungry and thirsty, it hath fasted and been made bitter with vinegar mingled with gall.

“For the sins of thy tongue, which thou hast let loose in slanders, calumnies, derisions, blasphemies, lies, perjuries, and other sins, I did shut My mouth in the presence of judges and false witnesses, no excuses issued from My mouth, and with all Mine heart did I pray unto God for those who did Me evil, and I always preached the truth.

“Because of the sins of thy power of smell, whereby thou didst delight in flowers, I did smell the abominable spittle which I endured upon My face and eyes and nostrils.

“For the sins committed with thy neck, by shaking it in anger, pride, and lasciviousness, and against the Supreme God, I suffered many and divers blows upon My neck.

“For the sins of thy shoulders and back, whereby thou hast offended in bearing many things which were opposed unto God, I did penance by bearing upon My shoulders the Cross whereon I was to hang.

“For the sins of thy hands and arms, with which thou hast done much wickedness, in embraces, touches, and other evil deeds, My hands were driven into the wood of the Cross by large nails and torn through bearing the weight of My body in Mine agony.

“For the sins of thy heart, with which thou hast sinned through anger, envy, sadness, evil love, and base covetousness, My side and heart were pierced with a sharp spear, and from the wound issued there forth a most potent medicine, sufficient to heal all the passions and sins of the heart that is to say, water to cool evil desires and loves, and blood for the remission of anger, sadness, and enmity.

“For the sins of thy feet, wherewith thou hast sinned through vain running and dancing and loose walking about for thy pleasure, My feet were not only twisted and bound, but were nailed upon the wood of the Cross; in place of shoes laced and adorned with cut leather, I had feet all bleeding and covered with the

blood which flowed from My whole body.

“For the sins of thy whole body, wherewith thou hast sinned by giving it up to delights, repose, and dreams, taking pleasure therein in divers ways, My body was fastened upon the Cross, terribly scourged, and stretched out thereon after the manner of a skin; I was closely fastened upon the hard wood until I was bathed in a bloody sweat which ran down even upon the ground; and finally I suffered here the most dreadful torments, crying aloud, sighing, weeping and lamenting **until I died, slain by cruel men for the sins of thine ornaments and thy needless, vain, and curious raiment.** I was hung naked upon the Cross, and vile men stripped off My tunic and My vest and cast dice for them before Mine eyes. And, naked as when I was born of the Virgin, in the cold, the wind, and the air, I was exposed and stretched out on high in the sight of all men and women, in order that I might be the more easily seen and mocked at and might suffer the greater shame.”
(The book of divine consolation of the Blessed Angela of Foligno, Sixth Consolation Of The Passion Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, pp. 214-218)

“O goodness of God, how great art thou! O justice of God, how terrible art thou! O cursed sin, how cruel art thou! Raise your eyes, my Brethren; see the image of the man hanging on the cross, after having been scourged, crowned with thorns, and all covered with wounds from head to foot. Could you tell me who is this man, and what he has done? It is the august Son of God, innocent and holy. Why did his eternal Father condemn him to so painful a death? Hear what his Father answers: “For the wickedness of My people have I struck him.” (Isaiah 53:8) It was for the crimes of my people that I have struck him. **Consider then the humiliation and the pain inflicted by your sins upon this innocent Lamb: it was because of your impurities that his flesh was torn; it was because of your bad thoughts that he was crowned with thorns; his feet and his hands were nailed to the cross because of your sinful steps and impure touches; his heart was pierced on account of your obstinacy.** But, O my Jesus! be consoled; for these poor sinners are no longer obstinate; Thou already knowest that during these days of the mission they have tried to repair the evil that they have done: Thy painful wounds they have tried to heal by the scourges that they inflicted upon themselves; the spittle that covered Thy eyes they have tried to wipe off by tears; the pain of Thy feet pierced with nails they have tried to alleviate by coming to the church; the wounds made by the thorns they have tried to lessen by holy resolutions. Yes my Brethren, all this is true; but this divine mouth of Jesus Christ I see still tormented by the gall of your blasphemies, of your lies, of your immodest language. Well, this evening you should sweeten all the bitterness that you have caused our Lord in the past. And what must you do to accomplish this? At first, you should weep over the displeasure that you

have given to so good a God, who died for you; and then you should chastise yourselves by trailing a little on the ground that tongue that has put so much gall into the mouth of Jesus Christ. Come, then, let us this evening offer him this consolation. My Fathers, be ye the first to give the example; and you, my Brethren, follow the priests. Weep, then, etc.” (St. Alphonsus, Exhortations, *The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 122)

In truth, the prideful sin of vanity is the cause of so much sin in this world that it is almost impossible to recount it all. Sadly, as we have seen, all those women and men who seek to please the world and its lust and vanity, will be damned. In regard to the sin of vanity, women are much more vain than men, and that is why more women will also be damned for this sin, while on the other hand, more men are damned for the sin of lust. In truth, and strangely enough, these two sins of vanity and lust are working together as if in a relationship from hell, both being the cause of the other person’s damnation—vanity being the cause of the lust, and the lust of the man being the cause and reason why the woman is vain and want to please the man.

Tertullian, *To His Wife*, Book II, Chapter 3 (c. 207 A.D.): “Let us now recount the other dangers or wounds (as I have said) to faith, foreseen by the apostle; most grievous not to the flesh merely, but likewise to the spirit too. For who would doubt that faith undergoes a daily process of obliteration by unbelieving intercourse? "Evil confabulations corrupt good morals;" how much more fellowship of life, and indivisible intimacy! **Any and every believing woman must of necessity obey God. And how can she serve two lords—the Lord, and her husband—a Gentile to boot? For in obeying a Gentile she will carry out Gentile practices—personal attractiveness, dressing of the head, worldly elegancies, baser blandishments, the very secrets even of matrimony tainted:** not, as among the saints, where the duties of the sex are discharged with honour (shown) to the very necessity (which makes them incumbent), with modesty and temperance, as beneath the eyes of God.”

Thus, St. Cyprian of Carthage, (c. 200-258) in his book *“Of the Discipline and Advantage of Chastity”* rightly condemns those “who strives to stir up the fancy of another, [through vanity] even though her bodily chastity be preserved. Away with such as do not adorn, but prostitute their beauty.” This shows us that we commit sin if we are vain even though we do not sin sexually ourselves:

“For what is chastity but a virtuous mind added to watchfulness over the body; so that

modesty observed in respect of the sexual relations, attested by strictness (of demeanour), should maintain honourable faith by an uncorrupted offspring? Moreover, to chastity, brethren, are suited and are known first of all divine modesty, and the sacred meditation of the divine precepts, and a soul inclined to faith, and a mind attuned to the sacredness of religion: then carefulness that nothing in itself should be elaborated beyond measure, or extended beyond propriety; that nothing should be made a show of, nothing artfully coloured; that there should be nothing to pander to the excitement or the renewal of wiles. She is not a modest woman who strives to stir up the fancy of another, even though her bodily chastity be preserved. Away with such as do not adorn, but prostitute their beauty. For anxiety about beauty is not only the wisdom of an evil mind, but belongs to deformity. Let the bodily nature be free, nor let any sort of force be intruded upon God's works. She is always wretched who is not satisfied to be such as she is. Wherefore is the colour of hair changed? Why are the edges of the eyes darkened? Why is the face moulded by art into a different form? Finally, why is the looking-glass [mirror] consulted, unless from fear lest a woman should be herself? Moreover, the dress of a modest woman should be modest; a believer should not be conscious of adultery even in the mixture of colours. To wear gold in one's garments is as if it were desirable to corrupt one's garments. What do rigid metals do among the delicate threads of the woven textures, except to press upon the enervated shoulders, and unhappily to show the extravagance of a boastful soul? Why are the necks oppressed and hidden by outlandish stones, the prices of which, without workmanship, exceed the entire fortune of many a one? It is not the woman that is adorned, but the woman's vices that are manifested. What, when the fingers laden with so much gold can neither close nor open, is there any advantage sought for, or is it merely to show the empty parade of one's estate? It is a marvellous thing that women, tender in all things else, in bearing the burden of their vices are stronger than men." (St. Cyprian of Carthage, *Of the Discipline and Advantage of Chastity*, Section 12)

The Apostolic Constitutions (Didascalia Apostolorum) echoes the teaching of the Holy Bible and the Saints in the chapter "*Concerning the adornment of ourselves, and the sin which arises from thence*" and explains very clearly that we will be guilty of sin if we tempt other people by using makeup, or lascivious and revealing clothing that very easily tempt people:

"Let the husband not be insolent nor arrogant towards his wife; but compassionate, bountiful, willing to please his own wife alone, and treat her honourably and obligingly, endeavouring to be agreeable to her; **not adorning thyself in such a manner as**

may entice another woman to thee. For if thou art overcome by her, and sinnest with her, eternal death will overtake thee from God; and thou wilt be punished with sensible and bitter torments. Or if thou dost not perpetrate such a wicked act, but shakest her off, and refusest her, in this case thou art not wholly innocent, even though thou art not guilty of the crime itself, but only in so far as **through thy adorning thou didst entice the woman to desire thee.** For thou art the cause that the woman was so affected, and by her lusting after thee was guilty of adultery with thee: yet art thou not so guilty, because thou didst not send to her, who was ensnared by thee; nor didst thou desire her. Since, therefore, thou didst not deliver up thyself to her, thou shalt find mercy with the Lord thy God, who hath said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and, "Thou shalt not covet." (Ex. 22:14, 17) For if such a woman, upon sight of thee, or unseasonable meeting with thee, was smitten in her mind, and sent to thee, but thou as a religious person didst refuse her, if she was wounded in her heart by thy beauty, and youth, and adorning, and fell in love with thee, thou wilt be found guilty of her transgressions, as having been the occasion of scandal to her, (Matt. 18:7) and shalt inherit a woe. Wherefore pray thou to the Lord God that no mischief may befall thee upon this account: for thou art not to please men, so as to commit sin; but God, so as to attain holiness of life, and be partaker of everlasting rest. **That beauty which God and nature has bestowed on thee, do not further beautify; but modestly diminish it before men.**"

The Apostolic Constitutions also explains in the next chapter, "Concerning the subjection of a wife to her husband, and that she must be loving and modest" that all women need to adopt a modest and humble way of dressing in order to not tempt others into sinful thoughts: "**And when thou art in the streets, cover thy head; for by such a covering thou wilt avoid being viewed of idle persons. Do not paint thy face, which is God's workmanship; for there is no part of thee which wants ornament, inasmuch as all things which God has made are very good. But the lascivious additional adorning of what is already good is an affront to the bounty of the Creator. Look downward when thou walkest abroad, veiling thyself as becomes women.**"

In truth, it is a fact of common sense that vain people "**prostitute their modesty in nakedness, as if they were ready to sacrifice that modesty... so wanton eyes are excited, and lust after those naked limbs, which were they not made bare they would not desire. ... Lasciviousness of mind is often hidden under sad clothing, and the unseemly rudeness of dress is used as a covering to hide the secrets of wanton spirits.**" (St. Ambrose of Milan, *On Immodest Clothing, On the Death of His*

Brother Satyrus, Book 2, Section 12, A.D. 379)

So important is the Church's view on how a person must be modest in public, that even the icons – who are far less able to incite lascivious thoughts than real and physical human beings – are required to also be modest, pure and chaste.

*The Council of Trent, On Immodest Images: “Moreover, in the invocation of saints, the veneration of relics, and the sacred use of images, every superstition shall be removed, all filthy lucre be abolished; **finally, all lasciviousness be avoided; in such wise that figures shall not be painted or adorned with a beauty exciting to lust;** nor the celebration of the saints, and the visitation of relics be by any perverted into revellings and drunkenness; as if festivals are celebrated to the honour of the saints by luxury and wantonness.” (Session XXV, December 3rd and 4th, 1563)*

Since the Church infallibly teaches that modesty must be upheld, it is a mortal sin to dress in an immodest fashion.

In another revelation of Christ to St. Bridget, Our Lord gives her instructions on how the queen of Cyprus must ban and “**put down the shameful custom of women involving tight clothing, display of the breasts, unguents, and many other vanities; for these are things entirely hateful to God.**” (*The Revelations of Saint Bridget, Book 7, Chapter 16*) This shows us that immodest clothing must be punished and repressed by the state, and that those who act against the law of modesty must be punished in order to hinder them from deceiving, hurting and killing souls by their lasciviousness and vanity.

While the world and her citizens love the emptiness and so called beauty of the world, God Himself revealed to St. Bridget that a human need to despise the pleasures and so called beauty of the world, and “pursue the ugliness of the world rather than its beauty” in order to be saved.

The Revelations of Saint Bridget, Book 5, Interrogation 7: “First question. Again the monk appeared on his ladder as before saying: “O Judge, I ask you: Why are the words ugly and beautiful used in the world?” Answer to the first question. The Judge [Our Lord Jesus Christ] answered: “Friend, ugly and beautiful in the world are like bitter and sweet. Ugliness of the world, which is adversity and contempt of the world, is like a kind of bitterness conducive to the health of the righteous. Beautiful to the world is its prosperity, which is like a kind of ingratiating sweetness, false and seductive.

Whoever, therefore, flees the beauty of the world and spits out its sweetness will not come to the ugliness of hell or taste its bitterness but will instead ascend to my joy. Thus, in order to escape the ugliness of hell and attain the sweetness of heaven, it is necessary to pursue the ugliness of the world rather than its beauty. Although I made all things well, and all created things are very good, great caution should be used toward the things that could present an occasion of damage to the soul for those who make irrational use of my gifts.”

PADRE PIO ON MODERN-DAY FASHIONS

1 Timothy 2:9: “In like manner I wish women also in decent apparel: adorning themselves with modesty and sobriety...”

Galatians 5:19: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty...”

Padre Pio had strong views on female fashions in dress. When the mini-skirt craze started, no one dared to come to Padre Pio’s monastery dressed in such an inappropriate fashion. Other women came not in mini skirts, but in skirts that were shortish. Padre Pio got very upset about this as well.

Padre Pio tolerated neither tight skirts nor short or low-necked dresses. He also forbade his spiritual daughters to wear transparent stockings. He would dismiss women from the confessional, even before they got inside, if he discerned their dress to be inappropriate. Many mornings he drove one out after another – ending up hearing only very few confessions. He also had a sign fastened to the church door, declaring: “By Padre Pio’s explicit wish, women must enter his confessional wearing skirts at least eight inches (20 cm) below the knees. It is forbidden to borrow longer dresses in church and to wear them for the confessional.”

Padre Pio would rebuke some women with the words, “Go and get dressed.” He would at times add: “Clowns!” He wouldn’t give anyone a pass, whether they were people he met or saw the first time, or long-time spiritual daughters. In many cases, the skirts were many inches below the knees, but still weren’t long enough for Padre Pio! Boys and men also had to wear long trousers, if they didn’t want to be kicked out of the church.

Padre Pio also confirms the point the Bible makes concerning idolatry and its many facets: **“A woman who is frivolous as regards dress can never be clothed in the life of Jesus**

Christ and she loses adornment of soul once this idol enters into her heart. Let these women adorn themselves, as St. Paul would have it (1 Tim. 2:9), modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel...” (*Letter to Padre Agostino*, 8/2/1913)

Padre Pio used to refuse to hear the confession of women who were wearing pants or an immodest dress because women are not allowed to dress or act like men, for this is an abomination in God’s eyes according to God’s Holy Word.

Question: Is it sinful for women to use pants?

Answer: The Holy Bible in Deuteronomy is very clear on this point: “A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.” (Deuteronomy 22:5). With this base, the Church consistently and constantly condemned the use of trousers by women. Only in the last 100 years, and chiefly in the last 50 years has the abomination of women wearing trousers started to be considered as lawful in society.

An example of this teaching is St. Thomas Aquinas’ doctrine:

“Outward apparel should be consistent with the state of the person according to general custom. **Hence it is in itself sinful for a woman to wear man’s clothes, or vice-versa; especially since this may be the cause of sensuous pleasure; and it is expressly forbidden in the Law** (Deut 22) Nevertheless this may be done at times on account of some necessity, either in order to hide oneself from enemies, or through lack of other clothes, or for some other such reason” (*Summa Theologica* II, II, question 169, article 2, reply to objection 3).

Here we clearly see that women only can use pants if they have some grave necessity, and that women who wear pants can tempt men, “**since this may be the cause of sensuous pleasure**”, and **this proves that it is utterly unlawful for women to wear pants.** In order to stem the flow of women’s diabolical immodesty that had started to rear its ugly head in the beginning of the 20th century, Pope Benedict XV made this strong critique of women who appeared in public in the kind of immodest clothing many women wear today and even going to “Mass” in:

“One cannot deplore sufficiently the blindness of so many women of every age and station.... Made foolish by a desire to please, they do not see to what degree the

indecenty of their clothing shocks every honest man and offends God. Most of them would formerly have blushed at such apparel as a grave fault against Christian modesty. Now it does not suffice to exhibit themselves on public thoroughfares, but they do not fear to cross the threshold of churches to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and even to bear the seducing food of shameful passions to the Eucharistic Table where one receives the heavenly Author of purity. And We speak not of those exotic and barbarous dances recently imported into fashionable circles, one more shocking than the other; one cannot imagine anything more suitable for banishing all the remains of modesty.” (Pope Benedict XV, encyclical *Sacra Propediem*, Jan. 6, 1921)

There is a mistaken idea of charity that has gained ground in our times, that is, to never criticize immodest clothing or make corrections about bad customs for fear of hurting feelings or damaging self-esteem, or other similar reasons. This is not the attitude of the Popes and the great Saints and Doctors of the Church.

A Catholic must always be aware of being a Catholic and represent himself as such everywhere and on all occasions, and especially when he is in public. On this point I could quote innumerable Saints, Doctors of the Church and even simple manuals on Catholic etiquette and behavior. Let me close with only three quotes. *The first* is a line from Scriptures that makes no exceptions of time or place: “In like manner I wish women to be decently dressed, adorning themselves with modesty and dignity.” (1 Tim 2:9)

The second are the words of Pope Pius XII in his allocution on fashion (1957) which clearly shows that a person should always be aware that her clothing reflects her being and way of thinking:

“One cannot minimize the importance of style’s influence for good or for evil. The language of clothing, as we have already said, is the more effective when it is more ordinary and is understood by everyone. It might be said that society speaks through the clothing it wears. Through its clothing it reveals its secret aspirations and uses it, at least in part, to build or destroy its future.” (Pope Pius XII, *Allocution on Fashion*, Nov. 8, 1957)

The third is from St. Francis de Sales’ famous book of counsels for a laywoman, *Introduction to the Devout Life*. In his chapter on attire, he instructs devout women to follow the advice of St. Paul, that is, to always be “attired in decent apparel, adorning themselves with modesty and sobriety (1 Tim 2:9).” The shorts and form-fitting clothes worn today in public offend

both modesty and sobriety. I imagine that St. Frances de Sales would speak even stronger to the young women of our days, given the bad customs and styles that are popular today. But even then he had this to say about how a Catholic should appear in public: “I would have devout people, whether men or women, the best dressed of the company, but the least pompous and affected. I would have them adorned with gracefulness, decency and dignity.” (*Introduction to the Devout Life*, Chapter XXV, Of Decency In Attire)

Studying the virtue of modesty, St. Thomas analyzes whether moral problems can arise from the outward movements of the body. He answers that “it is evident that a moral virtue is concerned with the direction of these movements” (II, II, q. 168, a. 1). The general rule regarding this topic is given by St. Augustine who says: “In all your movements let nothing be done to offend the eye of another, but only that which is becoming to the holiness of your state” (*ibid.*, ad 3). Then, St. Thomas concludes: “If they [the outward movements] be in any way inordinate, this should be corrected” (*ibid.*, ad 4). Both Saints are giving orientation to lay people. How much more rigorous would they be, should a Cardinal or a Pope manifest such behavior!

In truth, Society Becomes Corrupted When Women Wear Masculine Clothes.

God’s infallible Word teaches that women are not allowed wear pants and masculine apparel. This position has constantly raised opposition, even among “conservative” and traditionalist “Catholics”. In order to strengthen this truth, we offer the traditional teaching of the Church through the pen of “Cardinal” Giuseppe Siri. We hope it will be of assistance to our readers who truly want to follow Catholic Morals.

“The first signs of our late arriving Spring indicate a certain increase this year in the use of men’s clothing by women and girls, even mothers of families. Up until 1959, in Genoa such dress usually meant that the person was a tourist, but now there seems to be a significant number of girls and women from Genoa itself who are choosing, at least on pleasure trips, to wear men’s clothing (trousers). The spreading of this behavior obliges us to seriously address this subject and we ask those to whom this Notification is directed to give this problem all the attention it deserves, as is proper for persons who are conscious that they must stand responsible before God. ... for clothing to be modest, however, it must not only cover the body but also should not cling too tightly to the body. It is certain that some women’s clothing today fits more closely to the body than trousers, but the latter can also be tight fitting – and in fact generally are so. Therefore, wearing such tight fitting clothing causes us no less concern than exposing the body. Thus it is that the immodesty of men’s trousers

on women is one aspect of the problem that must not be left out of a general judgment on the topic...

“II. There is, however, another aspect of women wearing trousers that seems much graver to us.

“The wearing of men’s dress by women primarily affects the woman herself, *first* by changing the feminine psychology proper to women. *Second*, it affects the woman as the wife of her husband by tending to corrupt the relations between the sexes. *Third*, the woman as the mother of her children loses dignity in the children’s eyes. Each of these points should be carefully considered.

“1. Masculine clothing changes the psychology of women.

“In truth, the motive that impels women to wear the clothing of men is not always to imitate him, but rather to compete with the man who is considered stronger, less encumbered and more independent. This motivation shows clearly that masculine dress is a visible support to bring about a mental attitude of being ‘like a man.’ Further, since the existence of man, the clothing a person wears conditions, determines and modifies the gestures, attitudes and conduct of a person. Thus, just by its wearing, the clothing comes to impose a particular state of spirit in the person.

Permit us to add that a woman who always wears the clothing of men more or less indicates that she is reacting to her femininity as if it were inferior, when in fact it is only different. The perversion of her psychology is clearly evident.

“These reasons, added to many others, are sufficient to warn us of how mistaken is the thinking of women who wear men’s dress.

“2. Women wearing men’s clothing tends to corrupt the relations between the two sexes.

“In fact, as relations between the two sexes unfold with time’s passing, an instinct of mutual attraction becomes predominant. The essential base of this attraction is a difference between the two sexes that is made possible only by the fact that one complements the other. If, then, this difference becomes less marked because one of its major external signs is eliminated, and because the normal psychological structure is weakened, then a fundamental factor in the relation changes.

“The problem goes even further. Chronologically, the mutual attraction between the sexes is naturally preceded by that sense of shame that restrains the rising of the primary instincts, imposes respect for one another, and tends to elevate the mutual esteem and a salutary fear to a higher level regarding those instincts, which otherwise would push forward to uncontrolled acts. To change the clothing – which by its difference reveals and maintains the limits of nature and its natural defenses – levels such distinctions and helps to diminish the vital defenses of the sense of shame. At the

very least it obstructs that sense. And when this sense of shame is absent because of some obstacle or impediment, then the relations between men and women degrade into pure sensuality, devoid of all mutual respect or esteem. Experience teaches us that when the woman is de-feminized, then defenses are undermined and weakness increases.

“3. Masculine clothing harms the dignity of the mother in the eyes of her children.

“A child has an instinct for the sense of dignity and decorum of his mother. Studies on the first internal crisis of children when they awake to the life around them, even before they reach adolescence, show how important their mothers are to them. Children are very sensitive at this age. Adults normally leave all this behind them and no longer think about it. But we should remember the strict demands that children instinctively make on their mothers, and the profound and even terrible reactions roused in them by observing bad behavior on the part of their mothers. At this age and by these first dramas of infancy and youth many of the later roads they will take in life are marked, not always for the good.

The child may not know the definition of immodesty, frivolity and infidelity, but he possesses an instinctive sense to recognize them when they occur. Further, he suffers from them and is bitterly wounded of soul because of them.

“III. We should think seriously about the importance of everything said so far, even if the appearance of the woman wearing masculine clothing does not immediately produce the same harm as that caused by a grave immodesty.

“The change in the feminine psychology causes a fundamental and – in the long run – irreparable damage to the family, to conjugal fidelity, to human affections and to human society. True, the effects of wearing unsuitable clothing are not seen in the short term. But one must think of what is being slowly and insidiously lowered and perverted.

“If the feminine psychology is changed, is there some change in the reciprocity between husband and wife? Or is a true education of the children imaginable, which is so delicate in its procedure, so interwoven with imponderable factors in which the mother’s intuition and instinct play the decisive part in those first years? What can these women give their children when they have worn trousers for so long that their self-esteem is determined more by their competition with men than by their function as women?

“We ask ourselves why it is that since the beginning of man’s existence – or rather, since he became civilized – has mankind in all epochs and places been

irresistibly led to differentiate and divide the functions of the sexes? Do we not have here a strict testimony to the recognition by all mankind of a truth and a law higher than man?

In summary, wherever women wear men's clothing, this should be considered a long-term factor of a disintegration of the human order.

“... History has clearly taught – with impressive proofs of the life and death of nations – that the response to all these violators of this ‘structure of man’ always ends – sooner or later – in a catastrophe. ... The consequences of such violations are not a new ‘structure of man,’ but disorders, a harmful instability of every kind, the frightening dryness of human souls, a devastating increase in the number of human beings abandoned by society, left to live their declining years in boredom, sadness and rejection. In this shipwreck of eternal moral norms one finds destroyed families, cold homes, lives cut short before their time, the old persons cast aside, our youth choosing to be degenerate and – at the end of the line – souls in despair and even taking their own lives. All this human wreckage is testimony to the fact that the ‘line of God’ does not cede way nor admit of any adaptation to the delirious dreams of the so-called philosophers!

“V. We have said that those to whom this Notification is addressed are asked to become seriously alarmed at the problem before them.

“They know what they should say, starting with the little girls on their mother's lap. They know that without exaggerating the matter or becoming fanatical, they will need to place strict limits on how far they can tolerate women dressing like men as a general rule. They know that they must not be so weak as to reach the point of turning a blind eye to a custom that is slipping downhill and undermining morality in all the institutions. Priests know that they should take a strong and decisive line in the confessional... Everyone should be thinking of the need to have a united line of action, reinforced on all sides by the cooperation of all men of good will and all enlightened minds, in order to create a true dam that will hold back the flood.” (“Cardinal” Giuseppe Siri, Genoa, June 12, 1960)

Indeed, in our times, we can see the devastating effects of this upturning of society and modesty and the woman trying to be like a man, competing with him about authority. The woman is the greatest cause of why marriages are split up nowadays in USA, as 2/3 of all marriages are ended by the woman, who now have gotten it into her head that she is like a man and that she does not need to be subordinate a man. This mindset causes arguments in the family when the woman does not know her place, and in the end, it also causes separation or “divorce”. It cannot be doubted that one of the greatest evils that can befall a child is to be

bereft a parent, but Satan who knew this fact, planned for this all along. At former times, there was only a few separations of families, but now this is the norm in society, and the resultant crime spree and debauchery that we all see is a great testament to all the predictions that Siri said will follow if the evil custom of women wearing trousers becomes normal.

A person who changed from wearing pants to a skirt, tells us her positive experience: “Not being raised Catholic, I was never taught not to wear pants. What made me stop was praying the rosary. Over time, I became convinced to give up dressing like a man, and I did this out of devotion to Our Lady. While I did not think about its effect on men, I was both surprised and touched by their reaction to the change. Quite frankly, it never occurred to me that they would notice. They do. Almost all of them like modesty; some were vocal in their approval of it. Modesty seems to bring out the best in them, inspiring respect, charity, protectiveness, and chivalry. The fact that so few women dress modestly seems to make women like me stand out more.”

To defend the use of trousers for women in light of the Biblical and the Catholic Church’s teaching is an absolute abomination, and all who refuse to change their views concerning this matter, will in the end go to hell for their novelties and immodesty. In human memory, only our own wicked times have come to such a bad state that the moral compass of what is immodest or not, has been almost totally removed. Even societies totally independent of each other and totally separated from each other with no communication whatsoever, such as societies from Europe and America in the 15th century, realized automatically and by an inborn sense of modesty and decency that women must wear a skirt. If even pagans automatically recognized by an inborn instinct the necessity for a woman to wear a skirt, the only logical conclusion is that those who do not follow this law of God have a lesser sense of decency and modesty than the pagans of former times.

Furthermore, if someone should object that there is nothing inherently different between men and women, and by this argument argue that both sexes could wear the same clothes, the answer to this argument is found in the natural constitution of the fallen man, who have a much greater sexual desire than the woman, since he must climax in the marital act in order for a child to be begotten, while in contrast the woman’s climax is utterly unnecessary for procreation, which is the reason for why her lust is substantially less, and she is less tempted by seeing other people. So the sexual desire of men and women is substantially different, which in turn shows us why God’s Law prescribes for the woman to always wear a skirt and dress modestly.

God created the human race with two genders, intending each to have his and her proper place in Creation. Men and women are not meant to behave or dress in the same manner. Part of the beauty of the human race is found in the differences between men and women. We each live within a larger society. We are each influenced by the culture around us. Yet society and culture often teach us false things, which lead us away from God. Most women (at least in Western society and culture) dress and act very much like men. They seek the same roles in society, the family, and the church. They are following a popular teaching of our culture today, that women and men are meant to have the same roles, and especially that women are meant to take up roles formerly held only or mainly by men. They are displaying their adherence to this teaching by dressing like men. This teaching of our culture is contrary to the teaching of Christ.

1 Timothy 2:11-15 “Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to use authority over the man: but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed; then Eve. And Adam was not seduced; but the woman being seduced, was in the transgression. Yet she shall be saved through childbearing; if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification, with sobriety.”

God wants men and women to act and dress according to their gender and the place God has given each one in Creation. Clothing and hairstyles are expressions of one’s thoughts, behavior, and attitude. Women are not meant to behave like men, nor to have the same roles as men, therefore they should not dress or groom themselves like men. And vice versa. “Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:17-19)

A clear sign that most women today are rebelling against God’s commandment that women must be subject to men is that almost all women who claim to be Christians refuse to follow Our Lord’s commandment in the Holy Bible which teaches that all women must cover their hair when they worship or pray to Our Lord in the Church.

1 Corinthians 11:1-16 “Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that in all things you are mindful of me: and keep my ordinances as I have delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ;

and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying with his head covered, disgraceth his head. **But every woman praying or prophesying with her head not covered, disgraceth her head: for it is all one as if she were shaven. For if a woman be not covered, let her be shorn.** But if it be a shame to a woman to be shorn or made bald, let her cover her head. The man indeed ought not to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. For the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man. Therefore ought the woman to have a power over her head, because of the angels. But yet neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so also is the man by the woman: but all things of God. **You yourselves judge: doth it become a woman, to pray unto God uncovered?** Doth not even nature itself teach you, that a man indeed, if he nourish his hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman nourish her hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. **But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the church of God.**”

Douay Rheims Bible Commentary on 1 Corinthians 11:10 explains the words “A power: that is, a veil or covering, as a sign that she is under the power of her husband: and this, the apostle adds, because of the angels, who are present in the assemblies of the faithful.” *Haydock Bible Commentary* on 1 Corinthians 11:16 adds: “*If any man seem to be contentious* about this matter, or any other, *we have no such custom, nor hath the Church*; that is... we have no such custom for women to be in the Church uncovered. (Witham)”

The Magisterium of the Church – and thus Church teaching about the role of women in society that all must accept and adhere to – includes the teaching of Pope Leo XIII in his 1880 encyclical *Arcanum*, which teaches that: “The husband is the chief of the family and the head of the wife. The woman, because she is flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, must be subject to her husband and obey him; not, indeed, as a servant, but as a companion, so that her obedience shall be wanting in neither honor nor dignity. Since the husband represents Christ, and since the wife represents the Church, let there always be, both in him who commands and in her who obeys, a heaven-born love guiding both in their respective duties.” (*Arcanum*, #11) This truth of the Natural Order of the Hierarchy established by God was also affirmed by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Casti Connubii*, which invokes Ephesians 5:22, saying: “Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ is the head of the Church.” (*Casti Connubii*, #26)

The Constitutions of the Holy Apostles: “How wives ought to be subject to their own husbands, and husbands ought to love their own wives. Ye wives, be subject to your own husbands, and have them in esteem, and serve them with fear and love, as holy Sarah honoured Abraham. For she could not endure to call him by his name, but called him lord, when she said, "My lord is old." (1 Pet. 3:6) In like manner, ye husbands, love your own wives as your own members, as partners in life, and fellow-helpers for the procreation of children. For says He, "Rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her conversation be to thee as a loving hind, and a pleasant foal; let her alone guide thee, and be with thee at all times: for if thou beest every way encompassed with her friendship, thou wilt be happy in her society." (Prov. 5:18 etc) Love them therefore as your own members, as your very bodies; for so it is written, "The Lord has testified between thee and between the wife of thy youth; and she is thy partner, and another has not made her: and she is the remains of thy spirit;" and, "Take heed to your spirit, and do not forsake the wife of thy youth." (Mal. 2:14, 15, 16)”

The duty of the man is to love the woman, and the duty of the woman is to love and obey the man: “For nothing is more bitter than the battle that occurs between people that love one another, and this shows that when one is estranged from his own member, as it is said, this must be caused by a severe bitterness. The role of the husband is to love and the role of the wife is to give way. If each one plays their part, everything will be firm. And the wife will become amicable and loving.” (St. Chrysostom, *On the Letter to the Colossians*, Homily 10, PG 62, 365-366)

Few people understand that the devil through his evil servants has tried to directly change and corrupt this divine commandment for all women to be subject to men. In December 1917, Pope Benedict XV exposed the fact that: “*since the French Revolution* men have worked hard to confine within ever narrower limits the Church’s influence for good, in the hope that finally this influence would no longer make itself felt in society. And from the very first, everything possible was done [by these revolutionaries] to snatch the woman from the maternal solicitude and vigilance of the Church. It is in fact amazing what the woman can do for the *good* of the human race, or for its *ruin*; if she should leave the common [that is, the traditional Catholic] road, both the civil and domestic orders are *easily* upset. With the decline in religion, cultured women have lost their piety, also their sense of shame; many, in order to take up occupations ill-befitting their sex, took to imitating men; others *abandoned the duties* of the house-wife, for which they were fashioned, to cast themselves recklessly into the current of life. And this is the source of that deplorable perversion of morals, which the disorder *bred of the war* [World War I] has multiplied and propagated beyond all belief.” (Pope Benedict

XV, Letter *Natalis trecentesimi*, 27 December 1917, *Woman in the Modern World*) Pope Pius XII similarly indicted the Second World War. In 1947 he referred to “the devastating work done during the war, and after the war, toward the ruin of woman and of the family.” (*Allocution*, 11 September 1947)

The so-called “women’s liberation movement” is an abomination in the eyes of God. Rather than liberate, it is a debasing of the womanly character and the dignity of motherhood, and indeed of the whole family. This false liberty and unnatural equality with the husband is to the detriment of the woman herself, for if the woman descends from her truly regal throne to which she has been raised by means of the Gospel, she will soon be reduced to the old state of slavery and become as she was among the pagans, the mere instrument of man.

Now, for feminists, the bottom line is **power**. Jobs, careers or even “ordination” are not satisfactory enough. They want to *control the world*, making it the sinful matriarchal utopia that allegedly once existed. Recall that the *Communist Manifesto* called for the proletariat to become the ruling class. Ironically, seeking power has made feminists the useful idiots of Communist *men*!

Communism is particularly characterized by the rejection of any link that binds the woman to the family and the home, and her emancipation, her “liberation,” is proclaimed as a basic principle. She is withdrawn from the family and the care of her children, to be thrust, instead, into public life and collective production under the same conditions as man. The care of home and children is relegated to the collectivity. The right of education is denied to the parents, for it is conceived as the exclusive prerogative of the community.

It is easy to see the disastrous results the feminist movement has caused in society very thoroughly. Frederic Engels, who was Karl Marx’ partner in crime, is considered by many to be the founder of feminism. Feminism is not only a major cause of the breakdown of the traditional family, but it is a burden on the nation’s economy as well. Women who work unnecessarily take jobs away from men who would otherwise have them. Many of them have husbands who make enough money to support the family. But in spite of this they continue to work because they have been brainwashed by the lie that being a housewife is slavery and women have been oppressed by a male-dominated society for thousands of years. In many cases it does not even make sense for them to work and put their children in daycare centers. They spend hundreds of dollars per week in child care. With this huge expense they might as well quit working and care for their children themselves because the cost of daycare nearly equals their salary.

Feminism is also the reason why women don't wear dresses or skirts anymore. It was Engels' idea to do away with any differences between the sexes. One way was to have women dress like men and to hold jobs that are traditionally held by men.

Feminism is also the cause of the dying populations of Western nations. The birth rate is lower than the death rate which is why the native population is slowly diminishing.

Feminism plays a major role in abortion. Feminist ideas causes women to have an abortion (and use contraception) because their minds are conditioned to be in the workforce with men. So when a pregnancy occurs they opt to abort because they don't want to care for a baby and work at the same time.

The mass murder of millions and millions of unborn infants in the womb, in the name of "women's liberation" or "choice" is an unspeakable crime crying out to Heaven for divine vengeance! It is a sorrow and a tragedy and a shame that is inexpressible in words. Let it suffice to say that there is only one true liberation and that is the liberation from sin brought about through the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ (see Rom. VI, 18).

Can women use pants in cold weather?

The problem with today's so called Catholics is that they think that a moral principle can change with the times. Catholic Morals do not change. However, this "New Morals," as it was also called by Pius XII, was expressly condemned. Many "Catholics" today do not realize that this heretical mindset and system was and is condemned. It is abundantly clear that the use of trousers by women in cold weather is not a necessity or allowed. If it were really necessary, women would have adopted this style of dress centuries ago in Catholic countries, especially where it is very cold.

An old picture of men and women skiing that we have seen illustrates, for example, how trousers were not necessary in a cold weather. In the photo, one can see a sports scene in northern Sweden that the women in the past adapted to cold weather, and even practiced a sport like snow skiing, without the need to don trousers. Further, the ladies in the picture do not seem inconvenienced and appear to be enjoying themselves. A writer also described how her grandmother, "who came to Kansas from Croatia, worked almost every day (except in wintertime) in her large garden -- always, always in a dress. The winters in Kansas can be bitterly cold, and the upper two stories of her house did not have heat until after World War

II, but she did not find this a reason to change to trousers.” As for religious women, I have never heard of nuns in very cold countries or missionary sisters in difficult practical situations exchanging their habits for trousers because it would be more convenient.

In addition, if women are searching to get more warmth, they can always use pants under their long skirt, so the cold is no excuse whatsoever for women to use pants, but there must be some grave necessity, such as those that St. Thomas Aquinas teaches: “Nevertheless this may be done at times on account of some necessity, either in order to hide oneself from enemies, or through lack of other clothes, or for some other such reason”.

The evil trend of wearing more tempting clothes by both men and women started much earlier

Sad to say, the downward trend of humans wearing more lascivious and tempting clothes started already in the 14th century. Wikipedia explains that “Fashion in fourteenth-century Europe was marked by the beginning of a period of experimentation with different forms of clothing. Costume historian James Laver suggests that the mid-14th century marks the emergence of recognizable "fashion" in clothing, in which Fernand Braudel concurs. The draped garments and straight seams of previous centuries were replaced by curved seams and the beginnings of tailoring, which allowed clothing to more closely fit the human form. Also, the use of lacing and buttons allowed a more snug fit to clothing. In the course of the century the length of female hem-lines progressively reduced, and by the end of the century it was fashionable for men to omit the long loose over-garment of previous centuries (whether called tunic, kirtle, or other names) [that is, a loose garment, typically sleeveless and reaching to the wearer’s knees, as worn in ancient Greece and Rome] altogether, putting the emphasis on a tailored top that fell a little below the waist—a silhouette that is still reflected in men’s costume today.”

Regrettably, “However the trend during the century was for hem-lengths to shorten for all classes. ... However, in the second half of the century, courtiers are often shown, if they have the figure for it, wearing nothing over their closely tailored cotehardie. A French chronicle records: "Around that year (1350), men, in particular noblemen and their squires, took to wearing tunics so short and tight that they revealed what modesty bids us hide. This was a most astonishing thing for the people". This fashion may well have derived from military clothing, where long loose overgowns were naturally not worn in action. At this period, the most dignified figures, like King Charles in the illustration, continue to wear long overgowns—although as the Royal Chamberlain, de Vaudetar was himself a person of very high rank. This

abandonment of the gown to emphasise a tight top over the torso, with breeches or trousers below, was to become the distinctive feature of European men's fashion for centuries to come. Men had carried purses up to this time because tunics did not provide pockets."

So, in the 14th century men changed their clothing from having a "a loose garment, typically sleeveless and reaching to the wearer's knees, as worn in ancient Greece and Rome" to "a tailored top that fell a little below the waist" which shows much more of the figure and the private parts, which undoubtedly infuriates Our Lord, as His will is that men should cover their private parts if they have pants, with a loose garment that reaches to the knees, in order to not tempt our sisters, who also can be tempted by seeing too much of the manly figure.

A description of the evolution of clothes tells us that "In the 14th century clothing moved away from simple variants of the tunic towards sleek, elegant lines that emphasized the human form. The basic woman's gown of this era is elegant simplicity, naturally following the contours of the body, with a wide neckline - the height of 1300s daring!" Thus, by the 14th century both men and women started to wear clothes that showed more of the figure, which undoubtedly produces much more lascivious and tempting thoughts in the opposite sex. Interestingly, the great plague of the 14th century seems to have started right at the same time that this kind of vanity started to be accepted in society. Wikipedia explains that "The Black Death was one of the most devastating pandemics in human history, resulting in the deaths of an estimated 75 to 200 million people and peaking in Europe in the years 1346–53. ... Spreading throughout the Mediterranean and Europe, the Black Death is estimated to have killed 30–60% of Europe's total population. In total, the plague reduced the world population from an estimated 450 million down to 350–375 million in the 14th century."

We see also the fact that humans started to rebel against the standard of clothing that God requires of men and women described in *St. Bridget's Revelations*, which were given to Lady Bridget in the 14th century. That is also why Our Lord appears in the revelation as if revealing a "hidden" truth lost to mankind—a truth that was fervently prayed for by God's servants to be shown to the sinful people for their amendment. *Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke, saying:* "The first of the two sins is that the faces of rational human creatures are being painted with the various colors with which insensible images and statues of idols are colored so that to others, these faces may seem more beautiful than I made them. The second sin is that the bodies of men and women are being deformed from their natural state by the unseemly forms of clothing that the people are using. And the people are doing this because of pride and so that in their bodies they may seem more beautiful and more lascivious than I, God, created them. And indeed they do this so that those who thus see them may be more quickly provoked and

inflamed toward carnal desire. Therefore, know for very certain that as often as they daub their faces with antimony and other extraneous coloring [makeup], some of the infusion of the Holy Spirit is diminished in them and the devil draws nearer to them. In fact, as often as they adorn themselves in disorderly and indecent clothing and so deform their bodies, the adornment of their souls is diminished and the devil's power is increased."

Catholic morals and teaching on dress do not change. The teaching of Pope Pius XII "On Style," of November 8, 1957 explains to us the importance of decorum and modesty in clothing, and especially for women. He clearly protests against "the frequent attempts of many contemporaries to separate the exterior activities of man from the moral realm as if the two belonged to different universes." He reminds the Catholic of the "consistency that must exist between what one professes and one's external practices." If we consider that our clothing is one of the things that most effects other people's lascivious thoughts, we will have no problem changing our clothes to God's standard of clothing.

We know that the bearing and the thinking of a person should harmonize from the clear words of Scriptures: "The attire of the body, and the laughter of the teeth, and the gait of the man, show what he is." (Eccles. 19:27) Indeed, "A man is known by his look, and a wise man, when thou meetest him, is known by his countenance." (Eccles. 19:26) We are told that we can know a man just from his look and countenance! The modern notion that a man should not be judged by his appearance contradicts the Gospel, common usage, and good sense.

St. Thomas, the great Universal Doctor of the Church, comments on these words of Scripture in his teaching on outward demeanor: "Outward movements are signs of the inward disposition, according to Eccl. 19:27 'The attire of the body, and the laughter of the teeth, and the gait of the man show what he is,' and St. Ambrose says (De Offic. I, 18) that 'the habits of mind are seen in the gestures of the body,' and that 'the body's movement is an index of the soul'" (*Summa Theologiae*, II, II, question 168, article 1, reply to objection 1).

Therefore analyzing the gestures and postures of the body, as well as one's way of dressing, we can know the interior of the person.

Following the words of Scripture and the wise counsels and teachings of the Saints, our aim is to point out the strides made by the Cultural Revolution, and how unwittingly we can go along with postures, attitudes and styles that oppose Catholic culture and Morals. Is it a lack of charity to instruct and correct? In fact, Scriptures and the example of Our Lord Jesus Christ tell us the opposite. You can find many verses in the Old and New Testament that speak of the importance of instruction and correction of the young. For "charity is this: to walk according

to the commandments of God.” (2 John 1:6)

Women who wear lascivious clothing or unlawful attire, such as pants, will not escape the punishing hand of God, since they know in their hearts that they tempt men by their actions. Indeed, even scientific tests prove that immodest women are harming men: “A 2009 study conducted by Princeton psychologist Susan Fiske that asked 21 undergraduate heterosexual men to look at photos of fully clothed women, then look at photos of bikini-clad women. Fiske noted that the bikini images activated the men’s brain regions associated with tools, or “things you manipulate with your hands.” While some commenters noted that the images in the Princeton study were headless (thus already depersonalized), to Rey the study proved that the effects of the bikini are dire in a hypersexualized culture: “Wearing a bikini...shut[s] down a man’s ability to see her as a person.” In order to preserve their personhood, Rey said, women should dress more modestly. “Modesty isn’t about covering up our bodies because they’re bad. Modesty isn’t about hiding ourselves. It’s about revealing our dignity.” ... When modesty appears in mainstream Western media today, it follows the standard dictionary definition: a humble attitude. ... When even kids’ board games get “sexy” makeovers and lingerie brands spin off teen lines and feminist scholars see advertising’s treatment of women only getting worse” we know that humanity have fallen a long way down from God’s definition of modesty.

An article by a Muslim called “Study: Men objectify scantily clad women. Scientific Proof for the Hijab” proves that the less a person is covered, the less will also other persons view them as humans and instead view them as objects to be lusted after. While Islam certainly have some great problems, such as its teaching that pedophilia is ok, or that having sex slaves and having sex with married women is allowed if you take them captive (Sura 4:24), the pagan Muslims have retained some form of modesty that was expected in the time of Our Lord and by Our Lord, and which all men and women should follow. Jewish men expected Jewish women to wear head coverings to prevent lust, and Our Lord would obviously have expected women to wear a veil in public when he lived on earth, for the clothing instructions of the Old Law are meant as a template for the Church of the New Law, and when Christians who have received much more grace than the Jews of the Old Law did, refuse to follow these rules of modesty, this is really a blemish on the whole Christian Church, as it is obvious that the Christian should be much more virtuous and modest than the people of the Old Law.

“Brain Memory tests performed on the men showed that most of them best remembered photographs of headless women in bikinis despite viewing each image for only a fraction of a second. Anecdotally, Muslim women often speak of feeling “protected,” “safe,” and “respected” when they wear the hijab (religiously mandated modest dress that covers the

shape of the body and includes the headscarf or veil). Now there may also be evidence to show that their feelings are rooted in scientific fact. When psychologist Susan Fiske and a team of researchers at Princeton University performed MRI brain scans on heterosexual men who viewed a series of images showing both scantily clad and fully clothed men and women, they found that the men had an unmistakable response to women wearing less clothing. The less they wore, the more likely it was for the premotor cortex and the posterior middle temporal gyrus to light up. These are the areas of the brain associated with tool use, hand manipulation, and the urge to take action. (Cikara, Dell'Amore)

“It was as if they immediately thought about how they might act on these bodies,” Fiske explained during the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science which was held in Chicago, February 12-16. “They are reacting to these photographs as people react to objects,” she said. (Nicholson) Memory tests performed on the men showed that most of them best remembered photographs of headless women in bikinis despite viewing each image for only a fraction of a second. (Landau) Fiske and her team further examined the men for hostile sexist attitudes. They found that those rated as more hostile had little activity in areas of the brain that are associated with considering another person's thoughts and feelings (a phenomenon called mentalizing) when looking at sexualized photos of women in bikinis. “They are not thinking about their minds,” said Fiske. (Cikara, Dell'Amore, Landau)

“Sexualized Women Viewed as Less Human

“Several studies further demonstrate the link between viewing pornography and committing violence against women, including rape and sexual assault. According to a lay summary of Fiske's study... when a man's mentalizing network shuts down, this means he views sexualized women as “less human.” (Cikara) This type of dehumanization is something Fiske says has rarely been observed in the laboratory setting-only “once before,” according to a recent National Geographic article, which cited a study in which people were shown “off-putting photographs of homeless people and drug addicts.” (Dell'Amore)

“In the case of scantily clad women, however, men do not demonstrate the same feelings of avoidance as they do with populations like the homeless, which are often shunned by society. Instead, they wish to act on them as one would “push,” “handle,” or “grab” an object-first-person action verbs that men associated with the images of women in swimsuits. (Dell'Amore, Landau)

“Mina Cikara, a Princeton University graduate student who was involved in conducting the study, added that men do not view their wives or sisters in the same manner they view sexualized images of women. In addition, men associated the images of women who were more fully clothed with third-person verbs, such as “she pushes,” “she handles,” and “she grabs,” which, according to Fiske, implies that men view fully-clothed women as having more

command over their own actions and not as objects to be manipulated. (Eshleman, Landau)

“More Clothing, More Respect

“One of the main objectives of hijab is to safeguard women from the gazes of people of weak morals.” According to Fiske, the results of the study have important implications for women, especially in the workplace as it has previously been shown that viewing sexualized images of women can affect how men perceive women and interact with them afterwards. (Landau, Sample) A sexism study conducted by Lawrence University professor, Peter Glick, also found that professional women who wear provocative attire in the workplace are perceived by their co-workers as being less competent and less intelligent, especially when they are in positions of power. ... Glick’s study suggests that “women in higher level and high power jobs may need to dress more modestly and conservatively to win the respect of their colleagues.” ... Several studies further demonstrate the link between viewing pornography and committing violence against women, including rape and sexual assault. In the wars of Bosnia and Iraq, soldiers who committed atrocious crimes and dehumanized the other side were often found to be regular consumers of pornography, even viewing pornography on purpose to “psyche themselves up” for the work of killing. (Chew, Rejali) Fiske compared the results of her study to studies showing that viewing television can desensitize one to the effects of violence. “You have to be aware of the effect of these images on people,” Fiske told *The Daily Princetonian*. “They’re not neutral. They do have an effect on how people think about other women.” (Eshleman, Alleyne)

“Dignity and Confidence

“There were times where I wish I was covered up more so that I could just get home without worrying about who might be following me.” Despite mounting evidence showing the benefits of modest and conservative dress, media portrayals of the hijab frequently depict Muslim women as victims of oppression, mind-control, and abuse. ...

“Hijab and Safety

“The message that the woman gives when she wears Islamic dress is as follows: ‘Respect me for who I am. I am not a sex object.’” “I definitely feel safer wearing hijab and dressing modestly in general,” ... Finnigan, who is from London, contrasts wearing the hijab, which she describes as “an act of obedience to the Creator” that “makes women safer in both the literal sense and the spiritual sense,” with the feelings of vulnerability she used to experience... “There were times where I wish I was covered up more so that I could just get home without worrying about who might be following me,” said Finnigan. “Every night I would venture out and return home always looking over my shoulder, afraid I would be attacked or raped.”

“There will always be those who will or may attack women regardless of their manners or style of dress,” acknowledges Mohammed. However, she sees the Muslim hijab as “an added help to ward off possible physical approaches.”

“One of the main objectives of hijab is to safeguard women from the gazes of people of weak morals and from those seeking to indulge in unlawful worldly pleasures,” ... some Western observers have assumed that the head covering of a woman is meant to show her inferiority to men. “This could not be further from the truth. ... the reason for her dressing this way is so that she will be respected. The message that the woman gives when she wears Islamic dress is as follows: ‘Respect me for who I am. I am not a sex object.’”

Modesty is an attitude

St. Paul calls all women to be modest and to have self control. The New Testament church, hearing this for the first time, would not have been confused on what Paul meant by modest dress. Many in the places that Paul wrote to were copying the fashion of the Roman ladies, which was provocative and extravagant. They dressed to seduce. In contrast, the woman of the church were expected to wear modest clothing that did not draw sexual attention to themselves. Essentially, modesty is putting on an attitude of humility. Humility in dress, in speech and in life. A humble woman does not draw unnecessary attention to herself, but rather serves her brothers and sisters in humility. Part of our modest and humble heart is serving those around us. The Bible commands us to not be stumblingblocks to one another. You may feel comfortable wearing a mini skirt or pants, but chances are, it is causing a brother around you to stumble.

“But take heed lest perhaps this your liberty become a stumblingblock to the weak. For if a man see him that hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not his conscience, being weak, be emboldened to eat those things which are sacrificed to idols? And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ hath died? Now when you sin thus against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat scandalize my brother, I will never eat flesh, lest I should scandalize my brother.” (1 Corinthians 8:9-13)

Douay Rheims Bible Commentary explains verse: “[13] If meat scandalize: That is, if my eating cause my brother to sin. This verse is talking about eating food that was previously forbidden under the old law, but is now acceptable under the New Testament covenant.” But, even in this context, where eating the food is acceptable by God, if it makes your brother stumble to eat it, then don’t. God clearly commands this, if it is causing your brother to stumble then it’s not okay. We need to be careful to not take this to the extreme. Some men have such a problem with lust that looking at any woman in any condition will cause them to lust. We obviously cannot base modesty on them. But we should be concerned about the

teenage boys in our youth groups, and the men across the pew, and the pastors in charge of our congregation. Are we making it difficult for them to stay pure at Church and at Bible study?

And unfortunately, our modern fashion and clothing are designed for just that. Sex appeal. We must be careful to not buy into this fashion crazed culture. Modesty means propriety. It means avoiding clothes and adornment that are extravagant or sexually enticing. Modesty is humility expressed in dress. It's a desire to serve others, particularly men, by not promoting or provoking sensuality. Immodesty, then, is much more than wearing a short skirt or low-cut top; it's the act of drawing undue attention to yourself. It's pride, on display by what you wear. Scripture commands that we dress modestly. God wants women to learn to be modest, self-controlled, and humble in how they dress and act. We are also commanded to not be stumblingblocks to our brothers and sisters. This means wearing clothing that will not cause them to lust. Clothing that emphasizes cleavage, is too tight, too short, shows too much skin, too much leg, etc. is of course utterly unlawful.

All people that dress immodestly or tempt others into lasciviousness, whether by their dress, paintings, or by providing or recommending to others bad movies with unacceptable, bad scenes in them, or by linking to websites (such as news articles) that contains immoral and lascivious images, or worse, by posting such images on their own website or forum posts, even if they are posted for a so-called religious motive, are guilty of the mortal sin of scandal

The Catholic Church based on Sacred Scripture and the Natural Law infallibly condemns all immorality and the exposing of it to both young and old alike.

Matthew 18:6 “But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea.”

Luke 17:1-2 “And he said to his disciples: It is impossible that scandals [that is, temptations or encouragements to sin] should not come: **but woe to him through whom they come. It were better for him, that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should scandalize one of these little ones.**”

As we can see here, Jesus says that it's better to be drowned in the depths of the sea than to

give “scandal” to anyone. Yet many people do the exact opposite to this infallible precept of the Gospel and gives to all people visiting their website or forum post a direct cause for “scandal” and an occasion of falling into sin through the immoral, evil and sensual images or videos that they promote or link too (such as those frequently contained in news articles).

St. Alphonsus, On the Sin of Scandal: “A mortal sin of scandal is committed by women who go about with their bosom immodestly exposed, or who expose their limbs improperly. Also by actors in immodest comedies, and still more by the persons who compose such comedies; also by painters who paint obscene pictures [or who posts such pictures on the internet for others to behold], and by the heads of families who keep such pictures in their houses. The father who speaks obscenely, or blasphemes the saints, in presence of his children, and the mother who brings into her house to live among her daughters young men who are in love with them, or betrothed to them, or other suspected persons, are guilty of a still more grievous sin of scandal. Some mothers say: “I do not suspect any evil.” I answer, that it is their duty to suspect; otherwise they will have to render to God an account of all the sins which may follow.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 399-400)

Therefore, it is clearly a mortal sin and against God’s law to knowingly post and lead others to lascivious images; and this is true even if these images are posted for a so-called religious motive or for exposing “corruption”, for who in his right mind would knowingly put himself or others into possible mortal sin (or even venial sin) of impurity and adultery against their own soul and the all good God for any reason?

The Council of Trent, On Immodest Images: “**Moreover, in the... use of images... all lasciviousness be avoided; in such wise that figures shall not be painted or adorned with a beauty exciting to lust...**” (Session XXV, December 3rd and 4th, 1563)

St. Alphonsus, On the Sin of Scandal: “When speaking of the sixth commandment [against sexual immorality], we should avoid scandalizing the innocent by awakening their curiosity [such as by exposing them to lascivious or immoral images]... it is sufficient, on this point, to condemn in general what offends chastity, without explaining the species or the circumstances [or by posting the immoral image itself]...” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 176)

A person who *obstinately* posts such images, links to them or search for them definitely

commits a mortal sin, **not only for putting himself in totally unnecessary temptations and for beholding what is not lawful for him to behold, but also for tempting his neighbor and for exposing him to behold what is not lawful for him to behold.** “It is not lawful,’ says [Pope] St. Gregory, ‘to behold what it is not lawful to covet.’ The evil thought which proceeds from looks, though it should be rejected, never fails to leave a stain upon the soul.” (St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, Mortification of the Eyes, p. 221)

St. Alphonsus: **“With regard to removing evil.** 1. A father must prevent his children from associating with bad company, or with ill-conducted servants, or with a master who does not give a good example. 2. He must remove from his house any male or female servant that may be a source of temptation to his daughters or sons. Virtuous parents do not admit into their house young female servants when their sons are grown up. 3. He should banish from his house all books that treat on obscene subjects, or on profane love, romances, and all similar works; such books are the ruin of innocent young persons. Videumaun tells us of a young man who was an example to all his fellow-citizens. He accidentally read an obscene book, and fell into such horrid crimes that he became the scandal of the entire people. His conduct was so scandalous that the magistrates were obliged to banish him from the city. Another young man, who had failed in his efforts to seduce a woman, put a book in her way that treated on love, and thus he made her lose her honor and her soul. A parent is still more strictly bound to remove the class of books that has now become so common, which, besides the other poison, contains also errors against faith or against the Church. **4. He is bound to remove from his house immodest pictures, particularly if they are obscene. Father Rho tells us that Cardinal Bellarmine went into a private gentleman’s house, where he happened to see some immodest pictures; so he said to him: “My friend, I am come to entreat you for God’s sake to do a work of charity in clothing the naked.” The gentleman promised to do so; so the Cardinal pointed to the picture, saying: “There are the naked people I mean.” Oh, how delighted is the devil when he sees in any house an immodest picture! It is related in the life of Father John Baptist Vitelli that a troop of devils was once seen in the hall of a certain nobleman offering incense to an immodest picture that hung there, in return for the souls which they gained by it.** 5. A parent should forbid his children to frequent masquerades or public dancing-houses, or to act a part in comedies. He should not allow his daughters to be taught by any strange man. Oh, how dangerous is it for young women to receive instructions from men! Instead of learning to read, they learn to

commit mortal sins. A parent should get his daughters instructed by a woman, or by a little brother; I say *little*, for even in a brother, when he is grown up, there is some danger. Parents must be very particular never to allow their sons and daughters to sleep in the same bed [or in the same room], and much less in the same bed with their father and mother. They should also take care not to permit their daughters to converse alone and familiarly with any man, though he be the first saint in the world. The saints in heaven only are incapable of falling; but the saints on earth are flesh like others, and if they do not avoid the occasions of sin, may become devils. Hence, a father will do well to recommend the most virtuous and steady of his daughters to let him know secretly whenever she sees any of her sisters keep up such familiarity, or when she sees any other disorder in the family. ” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 451-453)

While many people would never post the more outrageous images or videos on their own website or forum posts themselves, they nevertheless would have no scruple about linking to those images or videos if they are contained on other peoples websites (such as news websites or youtube), just as if they thought that they will be without guilt in leading people to behold those images or videos because someone else has posted them. Well, they will not!

Many of them would also have no problem or scruple about posting “less” immodest forms of pictures or videos of both women and men immodestly dressed after the world’s fashion on their own website or forum posts, or even link to such articles where such images or videos are contained. This is not acceptable behavior.

Pope Leo XIII, *Exeunte iam anno* (# 10), Dec. 25, 1888: “**Now the whole essence of a Christian life is to reject the corruption of the world and to oppose constantly any indulgence in it...**”

In truth, if anyone obstinately posts any kind of immodesty at their website or forum posts or links to them – such as by posting or linking to pictures or videos that shows the so-called modern day women’s fashion that reveals the womanly figure by the wearing of pants and tight clothing in a revealing, sensual or immodest way – this would not only be immodest and immoral, but also completely evil and a mortal sin since such clothing has the direct and potential cause to incite a man’s lust and hence cause him, and all the visitors or viewers of that page, to commit the mortal sin of lust and adultery in their hearts (Matthew 5:28).

This means that it is absolutely forbidden to post links to many news

website/articles by default since they contain totally immoral and immodest pictures all over the place. Yet many evil people—and not infrequently so—even traditional so-called Catholics, on various forums and websites, links to such websites containing such immodesty all the time, *even though they are perfectly aware of that they contain such immodesty*, to the destruction of their own soul (since they must not put themselves in temptations or enter such websites with images on, if they have images on) and the souls of others (whom gets scandalized and led into sin by their example) and the offense of God (whom they grieve by their bad life and example)—whom they claim to worship.

St. Alphonsus: **“4. But let us return to the necessity of avoiding the occasions of sin. It is necessary, also, to abstain from looking at immodest pictures. St. Charles Borromeo forbids all fathers of families to keep such pictures in their houses.** It is necessary, also, to abstain from reading bad books, and not only from those that are positively obscene, but also from those that treat of profane love, such as Ariosto’s poems, the "Pastor Fido," and all such works. Fathers should not allow their children to read romances. These sometimes do more harm than even obscene books; they put fantastical notions and affections into young persons heads, which destroy all devotion, and afterwards impel them to give themselves up to sin. "Vain reading," says St. Bonaventure, "begets vain thoughts and extinguishes devotion." Make your children read spiritual books, ecclesiastical histories, and the lives of the saints. And here I repeat: Do not allow your daughters to be taught their lessons by a man, though he be a St. Paul or a St. Francis of Assisi. The saints are in heaven.

“5. Be careful, also, not to permit your sons to act plays, nor even to be present at an immodest comedy. St. Cyprian says: "Who went chaste to the play, returned unchaste." A young man or woman goes to the play full of modesty and in the grace of God, and returns home without modesty and at enmity with God. Do not allow your children to go to those feasts of the devil where there is dancing, courting, immodest singing, and sinful amusements. "Where there is dancing," says St. Ephrem, "there a feast of the devil is celebrated." But you will say: "What harm is there in a little relaxation and amusement?" St. Peter Chrysologus says: "They are not amusements, but grievous offences against God." A certain companion of the servant of God, Father John Baptist Vitelli, wished, against the will of the father, to go to a festivity of this kind which was celebrated at Norcia; the consequence was, first, he lost the grace of God, then he abandoned himself to a wicked life, and in the end was killed by the hand of his own brother.

“6. Finally, some one may ask whether it is a mortal sin to make love [he is referring to courtship]. What can I say? Ordinarily speaking, I say that persons who give themselves up to lovemaking [or courtship] are scarcely free from the proximate occasion of sinning mortally. Experience shows that few of them are exempt from grievous sins. If they do not commit mortal sin in the beginning of their courtship, they will in the course of time very easily fall into it: for at first they speak together through a predilection for each other’s conversation; this predilection afterwards grows into a passion; when the passion has taken root, it blinds the mind, and precipitates the soul into a thousand sins of bad thoughts, of immodest words, and, in the end of sinful acts. Cardinal Pico de la Mirandola, bishop of Albano, forbade the confessors of his diocese to absolve those lovers who, after being duly admonished, continued to hold long conversations together, particularly if they should be alone, or if the conversations should be of great length, or clandestine, or by night. "But, Father," some of them will say, "I have no bad intention. I have not even bad thoughts." Young men and young girls, avoid these amatory conversations with persons of a different sex. In the beginning the devil does not suggest bad thoughts, but when the affection has taken root it will not allow you to see the evil you do; and almost without knowing how, you will find that you have lost your soul, your God, and your honor. Oh! how many innocent young persons does the devil gain in this way!" (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 480-482)

Also, since immodest website or forum posts frequently appears on the internet and search engines and any one at any site can link to these articles, pictures or videos that a website owner or forum user were responsible for uploading: this means that many people unknowingly can be exposed to these pictures or articles without knowing their graphic content. And that is another reason why it is forbidden to post immodest images or videos for any reason.

Rev. F.X. Schouppe, S.J., *The Dogma of Purgatory*, Chapter XXXI: “A painter of great skill and otherwise exemplary life had once made a painting not at all conformable to the strict rules of Christian modesty. It was one of those paintings which, under the pretext of being works of art, are found in the best families, and the sight of which causes the loss of so many souls. True art is an inspiration from Heaven, which elevates the soul to God; profane art, which appeals to the senses only, which presents to the eye nothing but the beauties of flesh and blood, is but an inspiration of the evil spirit; his works, brilliant though they may be, are not works of art, and the name is falsely attributed to them. They are the infamous productions of a corrupt imagination. The

artist of whom we speak had allowed himself to be misled in this point by bad example. Soon, however, renouncing this pernicious style, he confined himself to the production of religious pictures, or at least of those which were perfectly irreproachable. Finally, he was painting a large picture in the convent of the discalced Carmelites, when he was attacked by a mortal malady, Feeling that he was about to die, he asked the Prior to allow him to be interred in the church of the monastery, and bequeathed to the community his earnings, which amounted to a considerable sum of money, charging them to have Masses said for the repose of his soul. He died in pious sentiments, and a few days passed, when a Religious who had stayed in the choir after Matins **saw him appear in the midst of flames and sighing piteously. "What!" said the Religious, "have you to endure such pain, after leading so good a life and dying so holy a death?" "Alas!" replied he, "it is on account of the immodest picture that I painted some years ago. When I appeared before the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge, a crowd of accusers came to give evidence against me. They declared that they had been excited to improper thoughts and evil desires by a picture, the work of my hand. In consequence of those bad thoughts some were in Purgatory, others in Hell. The latter cried for vengeance, saying that, having been the cause of their eternal perdition, I deserved, at least, the same punishment. Then the Blessed Virgin and the saints whom I had glorified by my pictures took up my defence. They represented to the Judge that that unfortunate painting had been the work of youth, and of which I had repented; that I had repaired it afterwards by religious objects which had been a source of edification to souls." In consideration of these and other reasons, the Sovereign Judge declared that, on account of my repentance and my good works, I should be exempt from damnation; but at the same time, He condemned me to these flames until that picture should be burned, so that it could no longer scandalise any one."** Then the poor sufferer implored the Religious to take measures to have the painting destroyed. "I beg of you," he added, "go in my name to such a person, proprietor of the picture; tell him in what a condition I am for having yielded to his entreaties to paint it, and conjure him to make a sacrifice of it. If he refuses, woe to him! To prove that this is not an illusion, and to punish him for his own fault, tell him that before long he will lose his two children. Should he refuse to obey Him who has created us both, he will pay for it by a premature death." The Religious delayed not to do what the poor soul asked of him, and went to the owner of the picture. The latter, on hearing these things, seized the painting and cast it into the fire. Nevertheless, according to the words of the deceased, he lost his two children

in less than a month. The remainder of his days he passed in penance, for having ordered and kept that immodest picture in his house. **If such are the consequences of an immodest picture, what, then, will be the punishment of the still more disastrous scandals resulting from bad books, bad papers, bad schools, and bad conversations?**

This shows us, once again, that if we allow a single picture, video, article, book or song to tempt either ourselves or others, we will be damned not only on account of the sins in others we are responsible for, but also on account of our own sins – unless we repent. Concerning the great evil of giving to others a cause of “scandal”, St. Alphonsus Liguori preached the following terrifying words in a sermon to his congregation:

St. Alphonsus Liguori, **On the Sin of Scandal**: “The wolf catches and scatters the sheep.” (John 10.12) The wolves that catch and scatter the sheep of Jesus Christ are the authors of scandal, who, not content with their own destruction, labor to destroy others. But the Lord says: “Woe to that man by whom the scandal comes.” (Matt. 18.7) Woe to him who gives scandal, and causes others to lose the grace of God. Origen says that **“a person who impels another to sin, sins more grievously than the other.”** If, brethren, there be any among you who has given scandal, I will endeavor this day to convince him of the evil he has done, that he may bewail it and guard against it for the future. **I will show, in the first point, the great displeasure which the sin of scandal gives to God; and, in the second, the great punishment which God threatens to inflict on the authors of scandal.**

“First Point. On the great displeasure which the sin of scandal gives to God.

“1. It is, in the first place, necessary to explain what is meant by scandal. Behold how St. Thomas defines it: “Scandal is a word or act which gives occasion to the ruin of one’s neighbor.” (S. Theol. 2-2, q. 45, art. 1) **Scandal, then, is a word or act by which you are to your neighbor the cause or occasion of losing his soul [such as by posting or linking to soul slaying material that will induce others to sin]. It may be direct or indirect. It is direct when you directly tempt or induce another to commit sin. It is indirect when, although you foresee that sinful words or actions will be the cause of sin to another, you do not abstain from them. But scandal, whether it be direct or indirect, if it be in a matter of great importance, is always a mortal sin.**

“2. Let us now see the great displeasure which the destruction of a neighbor’s soul gives to God. To understand it, we must consider how dear every soul is to God. He has created the souls of all men in his own image. “Let us make man in our image and

likeness." (Gen. 1.26) Other creatures God has made by a fiat -- by an act of his will; but the soul of man he has created by his own breath. "And the Lord breathed into his face the breath of life." (Gen. 2.7) The soul of your neighbor God has loved for eternity. "I have loved you with an everlasting love." (Jer. 31.3) He has, moreover, created every soul to be crowned in Paradise, and to be a partner in his glory. "That by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter 2.4) In heaven he will make the souls of the saints partakers of his own joy. "Enter into the joy of your Lord." (Matt. 25.21) To them he shall give himself as their reward. "I am your reward exceedingly great." (Gen. 15.1)

"3. But nothing can show the value which God sets on the souls of men more clearly than what the Incarnate Word has done for their redemption from sin and hell. "If," says St. Eucharius, "you do not believe your Creator, ask your Redeemer, how precious you are." Speaking of the care which we ought to have of our brethren, St. Ambrose says: "The great value of the salvation of a brother is known from the death of Christ." We judge of the value of everything by the price paid for it by an intelligent purchaser. Now, Jesus Christ has, according to the Apostle, purchased the souls of men with his own blood. "You are bought with a great price." (1 Cor. 6.20). . . **Hence, the Savior tells us that whatever good or evil we do to the least of his brethren, we do to himself. "So long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me." (Matt. 25.40)**

"4. **From all this we may infer how great is the displeasure given to God by scandalizing a brother, and destroying his soul. It is enough to say that they who give scandal rob God of a child, and murder a soul, for whose salvation he has spent his blood and his life. Hence, St. Leo calls the authors of scandals murderers.** "Quisquis scandalizat, mortem infert animae proximi." They are the most impious of murderers; because they kill not the body, but the soul of a brother, and rob Jesus Christ of all his tears, of his sorrows, and of all that he has done and suffered to gain that soul. Hence the Apostle says: "Now, when you sin thus against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ." (1 Cor. 8.12) **They who scandalize a brother, sin against Christ; because, as St. Ambrose says, they deprive him of a soul for which he has spent so many years, and submitted to so many toils and labors.** It is related that St. Albert the Great spent thirty years in making a head, which resembled the human head, and uttered words: and that St. Thomas, fearing that it was done by the agency of the devil, took the head and broke it. St. Albert complained of the act of St. Thomas, saying: "You have broken of mine the work of thirty years." I do not assert that this is true; but it is certain that, when Jesus Christ sees a soul destroyed by scandal, he can reprove the

author of it, and say to him: Wicked wretch, what have you done? You have deprived me of this soul, for which I have labored thirty-three years.

“5. We read in the Scriptures that the sons of Jacob, after having sold their brother Joseph to certain merchants, told his father that wild beasts had devoured him. "Fera pessima devoravit eum." (Gen. 37.20) To convince their father of the truth of what they said, they dipped the coat of Joseph in the blood of a goat, and presented it to him, saying: "See whether this be your son's coat or not" (v. 32). In reply, the afflicted father said with tears: "It is my son's coat: an evil wild beast has eaten him" (v. 33). Thus, we may imagine that, when a soul is brought into sin by scandal, the devils present to God the garment of that soul dipped in the blood of the Immaculate Lamb, Jesus Christ -- that is, the grace lost by that scandalized soul, which Jesus Christ had purchased with his blood and that they say to the Lord: "See whether this be your son's coat or not." If God were capable of shedding tears, he would weep more bitterly than Jacob did, at the sight of that lost soul -- his murdered child -- and would say: "It is my son's coat: an evil wild beast has eaten him." **The Lord will go in search of this wild beast, saying: "Where is the beast? where is the beast that has devoured my child?" When he finds the wild beast, what shall he do with him?**

“6. "I will," says the Lord by his prophet Hosea, "meet them as a bear that is robbed of her whelps." (Hosea 13.8) When the bear comes to her den, and finds not her whelps, she goes about the wood in search of the person who took them away. When she discovers the person, oh! with what fury does she rush upon him! It is thus the Lord shall rush upon the authors of scandal, who have robbed him of his children. Those who have given scandal will say: My neighbor is already damned; how can I repair the evil that has been done? **The Lord shall answer: Since you have been the cause of his perdition, you must pay me for the loss of his soul. "I will require his blood at your hands." (Ezek. 3.20)** It is written in Deuteronomy, "You shall not pity him, but shall require life for life" (19.21). You have destroyed a soul; you must suffer the loss of your own. Let us pass to the second point.

“Second Point. The great punishment which God threatens to those who give scandal.

“7. "Woe to that man by whom the scandal comes." (Matt. 18.7) **If the displeasure given to God by scandal be great, the chastisement which awaits the authors of it must be frightful.** Behold how Jesus Christ speaks of this chastisement: "But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matt. 18.6) If a malefactor dies on the

scaffold, he excites the compassion of the spectators, who at least pray for him, if they cannot deliver him from death. But, were he cast into the depths of the sea, there would be no one present to pity his fate. **A certain author says that Jesus Christ threatens the person who scandalizes a brother with this sort of punishment, to signify that he is so hateful to the angels and saints, that they do not wish to recommend to God the man who has brought a soul to perdition. "He is declared unworthy not only to be assisted, but even to be seen." (Mansi. ch. 3, no. 4)**

"8. St. John Chrysostom says that scandal is so abominable in the eyes of God, that though he overlooks very grievous sins, he cannot allow the sin of scandal to pass without adequate punishment. "Tam Deo horribile est scandalum, ut peccata graviora dissimulet non autem peccata ubi frater scandalizatur." God himself says the same by the prophet Ezekiel: "Every man of the house of Israel, if he... set up the stumbling block of his iniquity... I will make him an example and a proverb, and will cut him off from the midst of my people." (Ezek. 14.7, 8) And, in reality, **scandal is one of the sins which we find in the sacred Scriptures punished by God with the greatest rigor.** Of Eli, because he did not correct his sons, who gave scandal by stealing the flesh offered in sacrifice (for parents give scandal, not only by giving bad example, but also by not correcting their children as they ought), the Lord said: "Behold, I do a thing in Israel: and whosoever shall hear it, both his ears shall tingle." (1 Sam. 3.11) And speaking of the scandal given by the sons of Eli, the inspired writer says: "Wherefore the sin of the young men was exceedingly great before the Lord." (Ibid. 2.17) **What was this exceedingly great sin? It was, says St. Gregory, in explaining this passage, drawing others to sin.** "Quia ad pecandum alios pertrahebant." Why was Jeroboam chastised? Because he scandalized the people: he "has sinned, and made Israel sin." (1 Kings 14.16) In the family of Ahab, all the members of which were the enemies of God, Jezebel was the most severely chastised. She was thrown down from a window, and devoured by dogs, so that nothing remained but her "skull, and the feet, and the extremities of her hands." And why was she so severely punished? Because "she set Ahab on to every evil."

"9. For the sin of scandal hell was created. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." (Gen. 1.1) But, when did he create hell? It was when Lucifer began to seduce the angels into rebellion against God. Lest he should continue to pervert those who remained faithful to God, he was banished from heaven immediately after his sin. Hence Jesus Christ said to the Pharisees, **who by their bad example scandalized the people, that they were children of the devil, who was from the beginning a murderer of souls.** "You are of your father, the devil: he was a

murderer from the beginning." (John 8.44) And when St. Peter gave scandal to Jesus Christ, by suggesting to him not to allow his life to be taken away by the Jews, and thus endeavoring to prevent the accomplishment of redemption, the Redeemer called him a devil. "Go behind me, Satan; you are a scandal to me." (Matt. 16.23) **And, in reality, what other office do the authors of scandal perform, than that of a minister of the devil? If he were not assisted by such impious ministers, he certainly would not succeed in gaining so many souls. A scandalous companion does more injury than a hundred devils.**

"10. On the words of Hezekiah, "Behold, in peace is my bitterness most bitter" (Isa. 38.17), St. Bernard, in the name of the Church, says: "Peace from pagans, peace from heretics, but no peace from children." At present the Church is not persecuted by idolaters, or by heretics, **but she is persecuted by scandalous Christians**, who are her own children. In catching birds, we employ decoys, that is, certain birds that are blinded, and tied in such manner that they cannot fly away. It is thus the devil acts. "When," says St. Ephrem, "a soul has been taken, it becomes a snare to deceive others." **After having made a young man fall into sin, the enemy first blinds him as his own slave, and then makes him his decoy to deceive others; and to draw them into the net of sin, he not only impels, but even forces him to deceive others.** "The enemy," says St. Leo, "has many whom he compels to deceive others." (Serm. de Nativ.)

"11. Miserable wretches! **the authors of scandal must suffer in hell the punishment of all the sins they have made others commit.** Cesarius relates (Bk. 2, ch. 6) that, after the death of a certain person who had given scandal, a holy man witnessed his judgment and condemnation, and saw that, at his arrival at the gate of hell, **all the souls whom he had scandalized came to meet him, and said to him: Come, accursed wretch, and atone for all the sins which you have made us commit [by your deeds and actions, such as by immodest forum posts, images and links that contains such images etc]. They then rushed in upon him, and like so many wild beasts, began to tear him in pieces.** St. Bernard says that, in speaking of other sinners, the Scriptures hold out hopes of amendment and pardon; **but they speak of those who give scandal as persons separated from God, of whose salvation there is very little hope.** "Loquitur tanquam a Deo separati, unde hisce nulla spes vitae esse poterit."

"12. **Behold, then, the miserable state of those who give scandal by their bad example, who utter immodest words before their companions [or post immodest images or videos, or promotes them, or links to them], in the presence of young females, and even of innocent children, who, in**

consequence of hearing those words [or seeing those images in the news article or video clip], commit a thousand sins. Considering how the angel-guardians of those little ones weep at seeing them in the state of sin, **and how they call for vengeance from God against the sacrilegious tongues [and actions] that have scandalized them.** A great chastisement awaits all who ridicule those who practice virtue. **For many, through fear of the contempt and ridicule of others, abandon virtue, and give themselves up to a wicked life. What shall be the punishment of those who send messages to induce others to sin? or of those who boast of their own wicked actions? God! instead of weeping and repenting for having offended the Lord, they rejoice and glory in their iniquities! Some advise others to commit sin; others induce them to it; and some, worse than the devils, teach others how to sin. What shall we say of fathers and mothers, who, though it is in their power to prevent the sins of their children, allow them to associate with bad companions, or to frequent certain dangerous houses [or internet sites, or allow them watching the television or listening to secular sinful music], and permit their daughters to hold conversations with young men? Oh! with what scourges shall we see such persons chastised on the day of judgment!**

“13. Perhaps some father of a family among you will say: Then, I am lost because I have given scandal? Is there no hope of salvation for me? No: I will not say that you are past hope -- the mercy of God is great. **He has promised pardon to all who repent. But, if you wish to save your soul, you must repair the scandal you have given.** "Let him," says Eusebius Emmissenus, "who has destroyed himself by the destruction of many, redeem himself by the edification of many." (Hom. 10 ad Mon.) You have lost your soul, and have destroyed the souls of many by your scandals. You are now bound to repair the evil. **As you have until now drawn others to sin, so you are bound to draw them to virtue by words of edification, by good example, by avoiding sinful occasions, by frequenting the sacraments, by going often to the church to pray, and by attending sermons. And from this day forward avoid, as you would death, every act and word which could scandalize others.** "Let their own ruin," says St. Cyprian, "suffice for those who have fallen." (Bk. 1, L. 3) And St. Thomas of Villanova says: "Let your own sins be sufficient for you." **What evil has Jesus Christ done to you that it is not enough for you to have offended him yourselves, but you wish to make others offend him? This is an excess of cruelty.**

“14. **Be careful, then, never again to give the smallest scandal. And if you wish to save your soul, avoid as much as possible those who give**

scandal. These incarnate devils shall be damned; but, if you do not avoid them, you will bring yourself to perdition. "Woe to the world because of scandals," says the Lord (Matt. 18.7), that is, many are lost because they do not fly from occasions of scandal. But you may say: Such a person is my friend; I am under obligations to him; I expect many favors from him. But Jesus Christ says: "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you, having one eye, to enter into life, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire." (Matt. 18.9) **Although a certain person was your right eye, you must withdraw for ever from her; it is better for you to lose an eye and save your soul, than to preserve it and be cast into hell.**" (St. Alphonsus Liguori, Sermons (nn. 2-4) taken from *Ascetical Works, Volume XVI: Sermons for all Sundays in the Year* (1882) pp. 152-173)

Question: Is it a sin to willfully look at persons or things that one are sexually attracted to and that arouse one's sexual desire? Is it permitted to seek directly the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor?

Answer: Yes, it is a sin to willfully look at, and to continue to look at, things that arouse one's sexual desire. In addition, the Church also condemns even putting oneself in "the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor" (Pope Innocent XI) which shows us that one is not even allowed to watch or listen to things like dangerous and worldly media or remain in situations where one can become tempted to commit a sin. This, of course, proves that the Church abhors every act of the will where we unnecessarily allow ourselves to be tempted, or to be in a place or situation where we know that there is a great chance that something will tempt us, or be against God.

Custody of the eyes is always necessary for obtaining salvation, and so it is clearly sinful to fix one's eyes on a person or an object that one knows will arouse sinful thoughts and desires. "Brother Roger, a Franciscan of singular purity, being once asked why he was so reserved in his intercourse with women, replied, that **when men avoid the occasions of sin, God preserves them; but when they expose themselves to danger, they are justly abandoned by the Lord**, and easily fall into some grievous transgressions." (St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, Mortification of the Eyes, p. 221)

Our enemy, the Devil, first and foremost comes to us and enter our hearts through our eyes. No other sense is more potent in tempting man. Learning to control what you look at is absolutely crucial in order to be saved, for every time you look willfully with lust in your heart

at an unchaste, enticing or unsuitable object, or any object at all for that matter, even if modest, you have most assuredly committed a mortal sin! Therefore, whenever you come across something sinful with your eyes (or even something licit but which is very beautiful) you must make a habit to look down or away – for the sin of lust will not be far away – making the sign of the cross and saying 1 or 3 Hail Mary's, which is highly recommended since it helps against impurities.

Countless of Saints have rebuked people for the great error of failing to control their eyes. St. Ignatius of Loyola for example rebuked a brother for looking at his face for more than a brief moment. St. Bridget made a specific confession for every single face she saw during each day! This is true wisdom, but the world and current custom and habit tells you to always watch the person you are with, or looking at, in the face, **even if they are on the Television!** This is a bad custom or habit to say the least. This will many times lead to sins and impure thoughts and temptations of the Devil. Modesty and purity requires us to not stare people in the face, and especially the eyes, even at all, or only for a very short moment, even when we talk to them directly. In former times, this was common knowledge.

St. Alphonsus Liguori writes the following concerning this: **“But I do not see how looks at young persons of a different sex can be excused from the guilt of a venial fault, or even from mortal sin, when there is proximate danger of criminal consent. "It is not lawful," says [Pope] St. Gregory, "to behold what it is not lawful to covet." The evil thought which proceeds from looks, though it should be rejected, never fails to leave a stain upon the soul.”** (*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ, Mortification of the Eyes*, p. 221)

This virtue may indeed be hard to put into practice for many in the beginning, but overtime and with practice, it will become easier.

The above quote from St. Alphonsus also shows why most of the things broadcasted on the media are totally unsuitable to watch or read. News in itself isn't evil or contrary to God or morals but most newspapers or news-channels today have totally unacceptable pictures or immodestly dressed or very beautiful tv-hosts, which make them extremely unsuitable to read or watch, or at least to fix one's eye on. Remember, "It is not lawful," says St. Gregory, "to behold what it is not lawful to covet." To read newspapers which you know will contain many unchaste, immodest and sexual pictures and useless stories about sex, etc., is complete idiocy and will lead to sins of the flesh if you cannot guard yourself. Therefore, if you care for your salvation, you must not read any newspaper or magazine or watch any show or film that

contains immodesty of people tempting you.

St. Alphonsus, On Avoiding the Occasion of Sin: “**Now, no one can receive absolution unless he purpose firmly to avoid the occasion of sin; because to expose himself to such occasions, though sometimes he should not fall into sin, is for him a grievous sin.** And when the occasion is voluntary and is actually existing at the present time, the penitent cannot be absolved until he has actually removed the occasion of sin. For penitents find it very difficult to remove the occasion; and if they do not take it away before they receive absolution they will scarcely remove it after they have been absolved.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 543)

For example, in the past I have gone to numerous mainstream news websites just to read news, and it has become so bad that I never go to them unless I first have all the images blocked (on my web-browser). In fact, I have even made a habit of surfing the web without any images or JavaScript enabled at all, or at least without images on depending on the browser and the work I do. Almost all sites works perfectly fine without images and JavaScript enabled anyway. And on the few sites that don't work without JavaScript or images enabled, one can always allow an exception for that site.

It is highly important for one's salvation to block and not allow images to be shown when surfing the internet because without a doubt, almost all sites without exception will have some form or another of immodestly dressed women displayed; and, in the cases they are not immodest, they are still very beautiful or sensual looking. It's unavoidable, even if the article may seem sound. In truth, I have seen and learned that from personal experience too many times.

Adblock or Adblock Plus extension for Firefox or Google Chrome web-browsers are also good tools to **get rid of all internet ads, immoral or otherwise.** And so if people don't use a web-browser that can use extensions (or if they don't have an Adblock installed) they must change internet browser and install an Adblock by virtue of obedience to God's law that demands modesty and the avoidance of occasions of falling into sin when it is possible to do so.

That one must avoid the proximate occasion of sin in order to be *Saved* and receive *Forgiveness of one's sins* from God is a certain fact of the Natural and Divine law that has always been taught by the Church and Her Saints. For instance, Blessed Pope Innocent XI

during his papacy, condemned three propositions that denied this truth:

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #61, March 4, 1679: “**He can sometimes be absolved**, who remains in a proximate occasion of sinning, which he can and does not wish to omit, but rather directly and professedly seeks or enters into.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.**

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #62, March 4, 1679: “The proximate occasion for sinning is not to be shunned when some useful and honorable cause for not shunning it occurs.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.**

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #63, March 4, 1679: “It is permitted to seek directly the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.**

Here we see that the Church confirms that the opinion that “It is permitted to seek directly the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor” **is directly condemned**. And this condemnation is about those who “seek directly the proximate occasion for sinning” for a good cause, rather than for a selfish cause. But most people in this world do not even watch or listen to evil and ungodly media for a good cause but rather for the sake of pleasure or for other unnecessary reasons, and it is certainly *not* necessary “for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor.” This shows us that the Church and the Natural Law absolutely abhors and condemns the opinion that one can watch or listen to media that can tempt a person to sin. Indeed, not only the occasions of sin, like evil, worldly and ungodly media, but also the “the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor” must be totally rejected and shunned if one wants to attain salvation.

People who reject this advice and continue to put themselves in a proximate or near occasion of sin will undoubtedly lose their souls, since God will allow the devil to fool them in some way since they rejected the Word of God, and chose to put themselves in the way of temptation. Many there are, indeed, who presumptuously claim that they won’t get tempted by watching or listening to worldly media, or that they will be able to control it, but here we see in the condemnations of Blessed Pope Innocent XI that one may not even put oneself in “the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor”. God will undoubtedly leave a person who is presumptuous and prideful, and the Church and

Her Saints have always condemned such individuals that trusts in their own strength.

As a matter of fact, one can even understand from the light of natural reason that one is not allowed to put oneself in the occasion of sin, so those who do this act will have no excuse whatsoever on the day of judgment. In addition, a person who watches bad, worldly or ungodly media, tempts his fellow man to watch these evil things also, and thus, by his bad example, puts both himself and others in the way of damnation by his selfishness and presumption. So in addition to damning himself *if he obstinately continues in such a course of life*, such a person also actually tries to damn others by his bad example, trying to drag others with him into the eternal darkness and fire of hell. This is a kind of evil that is breathtaking to behold! It is thus a fact “that **when men avoid the occasions of sin, God preserves them; but when they expose themselves to danger, they are justly abandoned by the Lord, and easily fall into some grievous transgressions.**” (St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, Mortification of the Eyes, p. 221)

The pitiful and unreasonable addiction to media by so many “Catholics” or “Christians” today is something new, and almost no one before the 20th century was so miserably addicted to it as the weak and bad willed population of our own times! The amount of pitiful and pathetic excuses that we have had to hear from bad willed people who try to excuse their act of putting themselves in the proximate or near occasion of sin is, simply said, almost endless. Even though they understand that they are not allowed to endanger their souls, they just couldn’t care since they are hooked on the media, just like a drug addict, who need his daily “fix” to endure the day. For about a hundred years ago, almost no media existed as compared to today, and people thrived and the crime rates was as nothing when compared to today. So the unreasonable addiction to media cannot be excused, for man does not need media at all to survive, and putting oneself in the near or “the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor” is directly condemned by the Church.

If the priests as well as the laypeople that lived in a more virtuous time when the Catholic Church’s Law was followed by people in Europe would have seen any of the things we human today see through either media or even walking outside and seeing billboards or lasciviously clothed men or women walking in the street, they would have been outraged and would have fled from every such thing, for their conscience had not been perverted through the media so that their sense of modesty was totally crushed as is the case with us modern humans. God’s standard of modesty never changes, and the Church’s teaching that “the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor” must always be avoided is not allowed to be flouted in the 21st century however much modern man thinks

that God allows their novelties and abominations.

Concerning music, it is just a fact that all kinds of popular music are mortally sinful trash that is made by the Devil for the sole reason to drag your soul to an eternal hell fire. There will be countless of impure suggestions toward sin along with a rejection of any kind of morality and decency. Popular music praises sin, and oftentimes speak against God and morality. In short, it contains the same errors and sins that worldly media have, such as: immodest clothing, adultery, blasphemy, foul language and cursing, greed, fornication, make-up, vanity, gloating, magic, occultism, acceptance of false religions, idol-making of mortal humans etc... and are many times even worse. Popular songs that doesn't praise the idolatry and worship of man is hard to find today, and it's even harder today to find popular songs which does not praise or worship sin and worldliness as norm. But worse still are the music-videos. A person cannot even listen to these songs without grave sin, but how much more then does a person sin when watching these sinful music-videos with half naked women/men worshipping sin and the occult by deed and example? This is sadly what many of your children are watching daily on the TV you have given them! You must reject this evil music entirely and not accept this to be played in your home.

Not all music are bad or sinful; you can, for example, listen to religious music, instrumental music, classical music or other music in line with decency and morals. But the highest good is of course not to listen to music at all. Giving up one's own will is always the highest good.

The best music which one may listen to is of course religious music, since it draws your mind and heart toward our Lord Jesus Christ, Mary, the joy of Heaven, etc.

The next best music which one may listen to is classical music and instrumental music where no singing is involved, for this will not affect your mind toward worldly things as worldly songs always otherwise do.

The worst kind of music one could listen to is music which sings about worldly affairs. A person that listens much to music should avoid listening to worldly songs, otherwise he or she will be drawn toward these worldly things and affairs which are sung about. It is also very necessary to test yourself if you are addicted to music in any way, even totally acceptable music. This is easily done by going a few days without music so that you can test if some withdrawal symptoms effect you. All addictions of earthly things are evil and effect the soul in a harmful way. Just because you don't see or understand the effect doesn't mean that it isn't happening. Spiritual sloth and depression among other things are common attributes of an

addiction to media or music.

The effects from the wrong kind of music, and secular songs are very dangerous. There are numerous quotes from the secular world that can be brought forth to prove this point.

"Music directly represents the passions of states of the soul-gentleness, anger, courage, temperance... if one listens to the wrong kind of music he will become the wrong kind of person..." (Quote from Aristotle)

Brain specialists, Dr. Richard Pellegrino declared that music has the uncanny power to "...trigger a flood of human emotions and images that have the ability to instantaneously produce very powerful changes in emotional states." He went on to say: "Take it from a brain guy. In 25 years of working with the brain, I still cannot affect a person's state of mind the way that one simple song can."

Dr. Allan Bloom is quite correct when he asserts that "popular music has one appeal only, a barbaric appeal, to sexual desire... but sexual desire undeveloped and untutored... popular music gives children, on a silver plate, with all the public authority of the entertainment industry, everything their parents always used to tell them they had to wait for until they grew up... Young people know that rock and popular music has the beat of sexual intercourse... Never was there such an art form directed so exclusively to children... [Every Catholic must of course understand that masturbation is a clear mortal sin!] The words implicitly and explicitly describe bodily acts that satisfy sexual desire and treat them as its only natural and routine culmination for children who do not yet have the slightest imagination of marriage or family." (Dr. Allan Bloom, *Closing of the American Mind*, pp. 73-74).

Dr. Allan Bloom: "Today, a very large proportion of young people between the ages of 10 and 20 live for music. It is their passion; nothing else excites them as it does; they cannot take seriously anything alien to music. When they are in school and with their families, they are longing to plug themselves back into their music. Nothing surrounding them - school, family, church - has anything to do with their musical world. At best that ordinary life is neutral, but mostly it is an impediment, drained of vital..."

Dr. Paul King, medical director of the adolescent program at Charter Lakeside Hospital, in Memphis, TN, says more than 80% of his teen patients are there because of rock music. Dr. King says, "the lyrics become a philosophy of life, a religion."

To allow yourself or your children to have any kind of evil or ungodly music like rock, pop, rap, techno, trance, or any kind of music that is even remotely similar to this is mortally sinful and really idiotic when presented with these facts. Billions of souls are burning now as we speak in the excruciating fire of hell since they refused to stop listening to bad and sinful music! You will have your children eating your heart out for all eternity in hell because of the violent hatred they will have against you, since you could have hindered them in their sin, but refused to do so. In short, just like with all bad or worldly media, God will abandon a person who listens to such worldly music since they chose to put themselves in the proximate occasion for sinning.

In conclusion: We advise all people to use the internet in this safe way as described above, and always have images blocked. And we want to warn people not be deceived by the Devil or their **evil attachment to images on this point**. Again, remember what St. Alphonsus says: “when men avoid the occasions of sin, God preserves them; but when they expose themselves to danger, they are justly abandoned by the Lord, and easily fall into some grievous transgressions.”

Attachment to images made me delay using the internet in this safe way for way too long. If there are images you want to view, then you can always open another web-browser (with an ad-block installed!) where images are enabled, or enable them quickly on the web-browser you're currently on. (Or you can just right click on the image and click with the scroll mouse button on “view image” in Firefox so that the image can be seen in a new tab; in Chrome just right click and press “Open image in new tab” and it will show the image.) Most of the time there are no real reasons or necessity to see any images anyway. Only curiosity makes us want to see them. Of course, when images are necessary or needed, then it is lawful to surf with them on for as long as it is necessary, provided it is not a danger to one's soul and the site is not bad. But how often do we need to see images at all times? Never. Therefore, if we have no reason or necessity to have them on, they must be off.

The best and easiest user experience in using the internet in this safe way is using a web-browser with add-ons or extensions installed that manually blocks and unblocks all images easily with just one click of a button, which means that you will not have to enter settings all the time to do this. By using extensions to block images, you can just click on the icon visible on the top-right side of the web-browser, thus manually blocking and unblocking all images, or just press on the image itself as explained in the [Google Chrome](#) section.

We generally recommend no one to use any other webbrowser than [Google Chrome](#), since it is

so much better when it comes to the extensions available, as is explained in the above article. The [image blocker extension for Google Chrome](#) is just superior to all other webbrowsers, which means that more people will continue using an image blocker when surfing the internet and not give up.

If you want recommendations for other webbrowsers such as [Firefox](#), [Opera](#), [Safari](#), [Edge](#), [Internet Explorer](#) etc. you need to consult the links.

For the best ad-blocker for Google Chrome web-browser, visit this link:

uBlock Origin:

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/ublock-origin/cjpalhdlnbpafiamejdnhcphjbkeiagm>

This adblocker is the perhaps the best of them all but more advanced and comes with the additional plus that it has no “acceptable” advertising built into the program, which means there is no need to disable anything as with the other adblockers. It also helps you keep your Ad-Blocker active and the webpage working, when you visit a website and it asks you to disable.

In order to understand how to use and configure uBlock Origin in order to remove as much ads as possible, you need to read [this](#) and the following section.

If you want to use other adblockers and other webbrowsers and configure them correctly, you need to consult these links:

[uBlock Origin for Google Chrome, Firefox, Opera and Microsoft Edge](#)

[AdBlock for Google Chrome, Opera, Safari and Microsoft Edge](#)

[Adblock Plus for Google Chrome, Opera, Safari and Microsoft Edge](#)

[Adblock Plus for Firefox](#)

For best image blockers for Google Chrome web-browser, visit these links:

Wizmage Image Blocker:

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/wizmage-image-blocker/ifoggbfaoakkojipahnplnbfhhhhnmlp>

This image blocker is the most convenient and user friendly image blocker that I know of. With one click, you can display the image or hide it again. It is only available for Chrome, sadly. If you want to learn how to use this image blocker and everything it can do you will need to read the more [detailed instruction](#) on how to use it.

But in order for the above image blocker to work more effectively, it will be necessary to also install Fast Image Blocker for Google Chrome and have it activated at the same time with Wizmage Image Blocker. The reason for this is that the Wizmage extension does not always block all images on certain sites nor does the programs always block all images immediately. You also have the additional benefit that the Wizmage's image feature (of easily showing the images) still works in most cases with Fast Image Blocker activated at the same time.

Here is the direct download link to Fast Image Blocker for Google Chrome:

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/fast-image-blocker/khgndhdnkpmlflndgobodbhgheaegon>

If you need more detailed instructions with images explaining how to use and configure the extensions, see the section on [Fast Image Blocker for Chrome](#), and [Wizmage Image Blocker for Chrome](#).

After installing Fast Image Blocker, click on the camera icon and remove every single site already put into the "exceptions list". Press the X icon in order to remove a website from the list. There are a lot of websites put into this list as exceptions as you will see after having installed the program (not a smart move, since it makes people think the program doesn't work!).

Only add exceptions (the + icon with the address already inserted) that are absolutely necessary or needed, since it won't block images on that site if you have it added.

Also, when clicking the camera icon, if the camera icon in the menu is colored, this means the image blocker is activated; if it is grey, it means it is disabled for all websites.

Since there are some known problems when using both of these image blockers at the same time, it is advisable that you read the section "[Solutions to some known problems when using the extensions](#)". It is important that you use both image blockers at the same time.

If you want to use other image blockers and other webbrowsers and configure them correctly,

you need to consult these links:

[The best and safest image blockers for Firefox](#)

[Best and safest Image Blocker for Opera](#)

[Why you should completely disable images in Internet Explorer even if you never use it
Microsoft Edge, Safari, and others](#)

For best flash and html5 blockers for Google Chrome web-browser, visit these links:

(A flash blocker helps you have more control of flash content by preventing it from loading in webpages until you allow it, such as videos and other flash related content, which means that you cannot see videos or things that are flash related playing or showing their content automatically without you first having given your authorization.)

Flashcontrol:

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/flashcontrol/mfidmkgngfnkihnjeklbekckimkipmoe>

This flash blocker is the only one we currently recommend for Chrome since it blocks more flash content than any other flash blocker we know of.

But in order for the this flash blocker to work properly, you need also to download and install an extension that blocks html5 content from automatically playing on youtube and on other websites that you are browsing, such as this one:

Disable HTML5 Autoplay:

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/disable-html5-autoplay/efdhoaajjgckpbkoglidkeendpkolai>

Since html5 is becoming the new standard online, is not enough with just a flash blocker anymore; and most youtube videos are also automatically played with the new html5 format when available.

In order to learn all the information you need to know about these flash and html5 blockers and how to use and configure them in the best possible way for your own convenience, please see the [Flashcontrol](#) section, and the [Disable HTML5 Autoplay](#) section for Google Chrome.

If you want to use other flash blockers and other webbrowsers and configure them correctly, you need to consult these links:

[The best and safest flash and html5 blockers for Firefox](#)

[Best and safest Flash and HTML5 Blocker for Opera](#)

[Internet Explorer](#)

[Microsoft Edge, Safari, and others](#)

If you don't use an add-on (which you should be doing) the best browser to use is the Google Chrome web-browser since it allows you the option to disable both images and JavaScript on all specific internet sites (Firefox doesn't allow this option with Java or Images at all unless one first download extensions); and it is best since it allows you (after you have disabled images or Java in settings) an option to enable the images or java on the site you're currently on—without having to enter settings all the time to do this. The bad thing with this option, however, is that it perpetually enables and allows all images to be shown on that domain and not just temporarily. So do not allow images to be shown in this way on all sites or bad sites but only on trustworthy sites you go to often. **It is idiocy to perpetually allow images on various websites just because you are curious of the pictures in one article.** (You can also remove sites manually from “allow images” exceptions in settings afterwards if you made a mistake. It is also possible to right click on a blocked image and press “Open image in new tab” and then it will show the image. But it is preferable to just install in image block extension instead since it is so much more easier and convenient.)

Also, in Firefox, the images displayed by Google is not blocked by all image blockers. That is why we recommend users to use [Google Chrome](#) instead of Firefox. So when you search for something on this browser, you will not risk seeing something bad being displayed by Google against your will. Please see the [best image blockers for Firefox](#) for all the information on how to safely block all images in this web-browser.

Always surf without images on. Don't be a fool by rejecting this advice of the Popes and Saints of the Church concerning the unlawfulness of putting oneself in the proximate occasion for sinning and of looking on things that are unlawful to covet or behold and that are a danger to one's salvation. If you want to see images on some site, then allow the images only temporarily and afterwards block it again so that you do not continue surfing the internet with images on.

And yes, it is a sin to refuse to follow this advice since it's virtually impossible to escape bad and immodest images and commercials of men or women tempting you every day when surfing the internet (and the same of course applies to watching most media too, which is why we recommend people never to watch movable images and that they only listen to the audio). Only a *condemned person* not fearing God or sin at all would refuse to follow this good advice that helps him avoid falling into sexual temptations and sins everyday.

St. Alphonus, **On Avoiding the Occasions of Sin**: "We find in this day's gospel that after his resurrection Jesus Christ entered, though the doors were closed, into the house in which the apostles were assembled, and stood in the midst of them. St. Thomas says that the mystical meaning of this miracle is that the Lord does not enter into our souls unless we keep the door of the senses shut. (On John, 20, 4) If, then, we wish Jesus Christ to dwell within us, we must keep the doors of our senses closed against dangerous occasions, otherwise the devil will make us his slaves. I will show today the great danger of perdition to which they who do not avoid the occasions of sin expose themselves.

"1. We read in the Scriptures that Christ and Lazarus arose from the dead. Christ rose to die no more: "Christ rising from the dead, dies no more." (Rom. 6. 9); but Lazarus arose and died again. The Abbot Gueric remarks that Christ arose free and unbound; "but Lazarus came forth bound feet and hands." (John 11.44) Miserable the man, adds this author, who rises from sin bound by any dangerous occasion: he will die again by losing the divine grace. He, then, who wishes to save his soul, must not only abandon sin, but also the occasions of sin: that is, he must renounce such an intimacy, such a house; he must renounce those wicked companions, and all similar occasions that incite him to sin.

"2. In consequence of original sin, we all have an inclination to do what is forbidden. Hence St. Paul complained that he experienced in himself a law opposed to reason: "But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin." (Rom. 7.23) Now, when a dangerous occasion is present, it violently excites our corrupt desires, **so that it is then very difficult to resist them: because God withholds efficacious helps from those who voluntarily expose themselves to the occasion of sin.** "He that loves danger shall perish in it." (Ecclus. 3.27) "When," says St. Thomas, in his comment on this passage, "we expose ourselves to danger, God abandons us in it." St. Bernardine of

Siena teaches that the counsel of avoiding the occasions of sin is the best of all counsel, and as it were the foundation of religion.

“3. St. Peter says that "the devil goes about seeking whom he may devour." (1 Pet. 5.8) He is constantly going about our souls, endeavoring to enter and take possession of them. Hence, he seeks to place before us the occasions of sin, by which he enters the soul. "Explorat," says St. Cyprian, "an sit pars cujus aditu penetret." When the soul yields to the suggestions of the devil, and exposes itself to the occasions of sin, he easily enters and devours it. The ruin of our first parents arose from their not flying from the occasions of sin. God had prohibited them not only to eat, but even to touch the forbidden apple. In answer to the serpent tempting her, Eve said: "God has commanded us that we should not eat, and that we should not touch it." (Gen. 3.3) But "she saw, took, and ate" the forbidden fruit: she first looked at it, she then took it into her hands, and afterwards ate it. This is what ordinarily happens to all who expose themselves to the occasions of sin. **Hence, being once compelled by exorcisms to tell the sermon which displeased him most, the devil confessed that it was the sermon on avoiding the occasions of sin.** As long as we expose ourselves to the occasions of sin, the devil laughs at all our good purposes and promises made to God. **The greatest care of the enemy is to induce us not to avoid evil occasions; for these occasions, like a veil placed before the eyes, prevent us from seeing either the lights received from God, or the eternal truths, or the resolutions we have made: in a word, they make us forget all, and as it were force us into sin.**

“4. "Know it to be a communication with death; for you are going in the midst of snares." (Ecclus. 9.20) Everyone born in this world enters into the midst of snares. Hence, the Wise Man advises those who wish to be secure to guard themselves against the snares of the world, and to withdraw from them. "He that is aware of the snares shall be secure." (Prov. 11.15) But if, instead of withdrawing from them, a Christian approaches them, how can he avoid being caught by them? Hence, after having with so much loss learned the danger of exposing himself to the danger of sin, David said that, to continue faithful to God, he kept at a distance from every occasion which could lead him to relapse. "I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep your words." (Ps. 118.101) He does not say from every sin, but from every evil way which conducts to sin. The devil is careful to find pretexts to make us believe that certain occasions to which we expose ourselves are not voluntary, but necessary. When the occasion in which we are placed is really necessary, the Lord always helps us to avoid

sin; but we sometimes imagine certain necessities which are not sufficient to excuse us. "A treasure is never safe," says St. Cyprian, "as long as a robber is harbored within; nor is a lamb secure while it dwells in the same den with a wolf." (Lib. de Sing. Cler.) The saint speaks against those who do not wish to remove the occasions of sin, and still say: "I am not afraid that I shall fall." As no one can be secure of his treasure if he keeps a thief in his house, and as a lamb cannot be sure of its life if it remain in the den of a wolf, so likewise no one can be secure of the treasure of divine grace if he is resolved to continue in the occasion of sin. St. James teaches that every man has within himself a powerful enemy, that is, his own evil inclinations, which tempt him to sin. "Every man is tempted by his own concupiscence, drawn away, and allured." (James 1.14) **If, then, we do not fly from the external occasions, how can we resist temptation and avoid sin?** Let us, therefore, place before our eyes the general remedy which Jesus has prescribed for conquering temptations and saving our souls. "If your right eye scandalize you, pluck it out and cast it from you." (Matt. 5.29) If you find that your right eye is to you a cause of damnation, you must pull it out and cast it far from you; that is, when there is danger of losing your soul, you must fly from all evil occasions. St. Francis of Assisi used to say, as I have stated in another sermon, that the devil does not seek, in the beginning, to bind timorous souls with the chain of mortal sin; because they would be alarmed at the thought of committing mortal sin, and would fly from it with horror: **he endeavors to bind them by a single hair, which does not excite much fear; because by this means he will succeed more easily in strengthening their bonds, till he makes them his slaves. Hence he who wishes to be free from the danger of being the slave of hell must break all the hairs by which the enemy attempts to bind him; that is, he must avoid all occasions of sin,** such as certain manners of speech, places, little presents, and words of affection. With regard to those who have had a habit of impurity, it will not be sufficient to avoid proximate (near) occasions; if they do not fly from remote occasions, they will very easily relapse into their former sins.

"5. Impurity, says St. Augustine, is a vice which makes war on all, and which few conquer. "The fight is common, but the victory rare." How many miserable souls have entered the contest with this vice, and have been defeated! But to induce you to expose yourselves to occasions of this sin, the devil will tell you not to be afraid of being overcome by the temptation. "I do not wish," says St. Jerome, "to fight with the hope of victory, lest I should sometimes lose the victory." I will not expose myself to the combat with the hope of conquering; because, by voluntarily engaging in the fight, I shall lose my soul and my God. **To escape defeat in this struggle, a great grace of God is**

necessary; and to render ourselves worthy of this grace, we must, on our part, avoid the occasions of sin. To practice the virtue of chastity, it is necessary to recommend ourselves continually to God: we have not strength to preserve it; that strength must be the gift of God. "And as I knew," says the Wise Man, "that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, ... I went to the Lord, and besought him." (Wis. 8.21) But if we expose ourselves to the occasions of sin, we ourselves shall provide our rebellious flesh with arms to make war against the soul. "Neither," says the Apostle, "yield your members as instruments of sin unto iniquity." (Rom. 6.13) In explaining this passage, St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "You stimulate the flesh; you arm it, and make it powerful against the spirit." St. Philip Neri used to say that in the war against the vice of impurity, the victory is gained by cowards -- that is, by those who fly from the occasions of this sin. But the man who exposes himself to it, arms his flesh, and renders it so powerful, that it will be morally impossible for him to resist its attacks.

"6. "Cry out," says the Lord to Isaiah, "all flesh is grass." (Isa. 40.6) Now, says St. John Chrysostom, **if all flesh is grass, it is as foolish for a man who exposes himself to the occasion of sin to hope to preserve the virtue of purity, as to expect that hay, into which a torch has been thrown, will not catch fire.** "Put a torch into hay, and then dare to deny that the hay will burn." No, says St. Cyprian; it is impossible to stand in the midst of flames, and not to burn. "Impossibile est flammis circumdari et non ardere." (De Sing. Cler.) "Can a man," says the Holy Spirit, "hide fire in his bosom, and his garments not burn? or can he walk upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?" (Prov. 6.27, 28) Not to be burnt in such circumstances would be a miracle. St. Bernard teaches that **to preserve chastity, and, at the same time, to expose oneself to the proximate occasion of sin, "is a greater miracle than to raise a dead man to life."**

"7. In explaining the fifth Psalm, **St. Augustine says that "he who is unwilling to fly from danger, wishes to perish in it."** Hence, in another place, he exhorts those who wish to conquer, and not to perish, to avoid dangerous occasions. "In the occasion of falling into sin, take flight, if you desire to gain the victory." (Serm. 250 de temp.) Some foolishly trust in their own strength, and do not see that their strength is like that of flax placed in the fire. "And your strength shall be as the ashes of tow." (Isa. 1.31) Others, trusting in the change which has taken place in their life, in their confessions, and in the promises they have made to God, say: Through the grace of the Lord, I have now no bad motive in seeking the company of such a person; her presence is not even an occasion of temptations: Listen, all you who speak in this manner. In Mauritania

there are bears that go in quest of the apes, to feed upon them: as soon as a bear appears, the apes run up the trees, and thus save themselves. But what does the bear do? He stretches himself on the ground as if dead, and waits till the apes descend from the trees. The moment he sees that they have descended, he springs up, seizes on them, and devours them. **It is thus the devil acts: he makes the temptation appear to be dead; but when a soul descends, and exposes itself to the occasion of sin, he stirs up temptation, and devours it. Oh! how many miserable souls, devoted to spiritual things, to mental prayer, to frequent communion, and to a life of holiness have, by exposing themselves to the occasion of sin, become the slaves of the devil!** We find in ecclesiastical history that a holy woman, who employed herself in the pious office of burying the martyrs, once found among them one who was not as yet dead. She brought him into her own house, and procured a physician and medicine for him, till he recovered. But, what happened? These two saints (as they might be called -- one of them on the point of being a martyr, the other devoting her time to works of mercy with so much risk of being persecuted by the tyrants) first fell into sin and lost the grace of God, and, becoming weaker by sin, afterwards denied the faith. St. Macarius relates a similar fact regarding an old man who suffered to be half-burned in defense of the faith; but, being brought back into prison he, unfortunately for himself, formed an intimacy with a devout woman who served the martyrs, and fell into sin.

"8. The Holy Spirit tells us that we must fly from sin as from a serpent. "Flee from sin as from the face of a serpent." (Ecclus. 21.2) Hence, as we not only avoid the bite of a serpent, but are careful neither to touch nor approach it, **so we must fly not only from sin, but also from the occasion of sin -- that is, from the house, the conversation, the person that would lead us to sin.** St. Isidore says that he who wishes to remain near a serpent, will not remain long unhurt. "Juxta serpentem positus non erit sin illaesus." (Solit., Bk. 2) Hence, if any person is likely to prove an occasion of your ruin, the admonition of the Wise Man is, "Remove your way far from her, and come not near the doors of her house." (Prov. 5.8) He not only tells you not to enter the house which has been to you a road to hell ("Her house is the way to hell." Prov. 7.27); but he also cautions you not to approach it, and even to keep at a distance from it. "Remove your way far from her." But, you will say, if I abandon that house, my temporal affairs shall suffer. It is better that you should suffer a temporal loss, than that you should lose your soul and your God. **You must be persuaded that, in whatever regards chastity, there cannot be too great caution. If we wish to save our souls from sin and hell, we must always fear and tremble. "With**

fear and trembling work out your salvation." (Phil. 2.12) He who is not fearful, but exposes himself to occasions of sin, shall scarcely be saved.

Hence, in our prayers we ought to say every day, and several times in the day, that petition of the Our Father, "and lead us not into temptation." Lord, do not permit me to be attacked by those temptations which would deprive me of your grace. We cannot merit the grace of perseverance; but, according to St. Augustine, God grants it to every one that asks it, because he has promised to hear all who pray to him. Hence, the holy doctor says that the Lord, "by his promises has made himself a debtor" (cf. Romans 4:25)." (*Hell's Widest Gate: Impurity*, by St. Alphonsus Liguori, Sermons (nn. 2-4) taken from *Ascetical Works, Volume XVI: Sermons for all Sundays in the Year* (1882) pp. 152-173)

We also advice you to never watch news on television or the like since it is so filled with sins that it's almost impossible to watch without seeing things that will injure your virtue like immodesty, make-up, sensuality, blasphemy, gloating, useless and unnecessary stories, lust, adultery, fornication... continuing in infinity. However, to watch news daily is hardly necessary and St. Alphonsus clearly rebukes people for this in his most excellent work, *The True Spouse of Christ*.

"St. Dorotheus says: "Beware of too much speaking, for it banishes from the soul holy thoughts and recollection with God." **Speaking of religious that cannot abstain from inquiring after worldly news, St. Joseph Calasanctius said: "The curious religious shows that he has forgotten himself." It is certain that he who speaks too much with men converses but little with God, for the Lord says: "I will lead her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart." (Osee, ii. 14.) If, then, the soul wishes that God speak to its heart, it must seek after solitude; but this solitude will never be found by religious who do not love silence.** "If," said the Venerable Margaret of the Cross, "we remain silent, we shall find solitude." And how will the Lord ever condescend to speak to the religious, who, by seeking after the conversation of creatures, shows that the conversation of God is not sufficient to make her happy? Hence, for a nun that delights in receiving visits and letters, in reading the newspapers, and in speaking frequently of the things of the world, it is impossible to be a good religious. Every time that she unnecessarily holds intercourse with seculars, she will suffer a diminution of fervor." (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, Volume X, pp. 468-469)

We ourselves do not watch any videos anymore except exclusively when for the sake of

making videos. We also try to avoid reading any secular news or other worldly websites. Now we only listen to audio, having all the movable images blocked. On YouTube, when we watch something on YouTube, we do not watch the videos but only listen to them by downloading them as audio (or video) and listened to them only in audio, or at least, by avoiding watching at the screen if we were watching it on youtube by scrolling down so that the player is not seen, or on other video sites. Anyone who cares about virtue and about their eternal salvation and for those who fear not to offend God by viewing or seeing bad scenes or images, will of course do the same thing, since it's almost impossible to watch anything today that does not contain immodesty or that will harm one's virtue. Even purely Christian films, whether on tv or youtube, have many bad and unacceptable scenes, statues or images in them. What then could be said about more secular media, documentaries, or series?

Question: In what way can I perform acts that might be an occasion of sinning? I like to watch different TV-programs and films, but now and then, there comes immodest and ungodly things. Is this sinful to watch?

Answer: It is almost impossible to not see bad and sensual pictures on youtube or in normal films, even so called Christian films, and this means that one must abstain from watching the film screen, and that one can only listen to the audio of the film or video. The examples of lascivious and bad things even in the most "religious" films or videos are very many as we have experienced ourselves, sad to say. Only in the case when one knows there is nothing objectionable in the film is it allowed to watch it, but since this is practically impossible to know about, one must abstain from watching the film.

Thus, those who rebel against the Church's teaching that one may not even put oneself in "the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor" will undoubtedly lose their souls because of their carelessness in following Our Lord's words. Many may think that this teaching of the Church is too harsh, but no one ever needed to watch a film screen to be saved, and in the first 5500 years of the world, all who were saved, were saved without watching any films. When we now have the direct knowledge that almost all media is suffused by lascivious pictures or acts, it is utterly unlawful to continue to put oneself in this occasion of sin.

If there were 100 doors, and only behind 1 door, there was a man eating tiger, would it be allowed for you to advice others to go into these doors just because of pleasure or curiosity or other unnecessary motives. Of course not! This is a perfect example of those who watch films.

They do not know exactly what the film or video contains, and in so doing, they are risking their souls and placing themselves in the occasion of sin. Indeed, we see that the Church goes further than that by teaching that one may not even put oneself in “the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor”. (Blessed Pope Innocent XI) The fact that society and the media in general have lost all sense of modesty and decency does not excuse a person who views videos or films which he does not know with certainty that there is nothing immodest in the film. In the beginning of the film industry, the films was much more modest, but even in the beginning stages, there were many lascivious acts and deeds which made it even unlawful at that time to watch films in general, since one risks one’s soul by chancing to watch a film or video. Since one now has the knowledge that the world’s media is filled with lasciviousness, it is utterly unlawful to continue to watch different films or videos unless one knows with certainty that the film or video does not contain lascivious pictures or acts.

Lamentably, even so called Catholics nowadays have no clue about the Church’s teaching about abstaining from all occasions of sin, and the blindness concerning purity and modesty is almost total even among those who call themselves traditional Catholic, which we have sadly experienced over and over again, until we understood that we would be forced to not watch any motion picture at all, even by so called traditionalists. Sad to say, many times it seems that the more “traditional” an organization or group claims to be, the less they have any clue about what true modesty and purity is. Indeed, even an organization like “Most Holy Family Monastery” which is viewed by most so called Catholics as an ultra-traditional and ultra-strict organization, has no clue about even normal decency, and posted a picture of a totally nude statue of a man which showed the genitals or private sexual parts. In the video called “*Fr. Z’s...*”, which no one is allowed to watch on the screen as it is indecent, (but it can be lawfully listened to without seeing the video, motion picture or screen) MHFM was critiquing another man who had posted the picture of a statue of a muscular and totally naked man that was very life like, and thus could tempt many women. MHFM were of course right in criticizing him for tempting women by this naked picture, but then, in a fit of diabolical stupidity, MHFM themselves reposted this indecent image in the video for the whole world to see.

A so called traditional writer of the website traditioninaction.org who defended himself in publicly posting nude, half nude or totally immodestly posing or dressed women, such as in bikini’s, on his website for the purpose of “exposing” the Vatican II corruption, also dared to compare himself when publicly posting mortally sinful inducing images for the whole world to see with “*When a lawyer in a courtroom describes details of the sexual humiliation suffered by a victim of a pedophile priest, he is not doing so to promote immorality or induce the*

members of the jury to sin.” But this is a false argument since what is occurring behind closed doors (and that is not for the public) and for a legal purpose has no comparison with his own action of **publicly posting immodest and mortally sinful inducing images for not only the whole world to see, but also for minors, youths, the married, the weak and even the old alike!**

This devil also said recently in defending himself when being accused for posting pictures that could only be described as pornographic: “If we would have completely covered with black stripes the provocative parts [of the nude model] of those photos, many would say that they do not prove anything; perhaps you would be among those. Since we let our readers know who that woman the Pope embraced actually is – distorting as much as possible those photos without destroying the evidence – you jumped against us claiming that you are scandalized and accusing us of promoting sin.”

The article the reader was exposed to said this: “We reproduce some of the [nude] model’s poses below to brief our readers and allow them to evaluate the inconceivable moral abyss into which Francis is dragging present day Rome [by having embraced this woman]”. **It goes without saying, but no one may enter this website with images on or watch their evil image section “exposing” corruption since it is a mortal sin to behold such things and an occasion of sin; the same applies to novusordowatch.org and similar evil websites posting lascivious and nude images, but novusordowatch.org is worse since they have a function that pops up their other articles and related images to that article at the bottom of their website, which means that any image may be displayed there according to their perverted standard, which means that even if you read a religious article with images on that you deemed safe, something immodest may be forced in your face against your will when scrolling down. This is why we stress that one must avoid having pictures on when surfing nowadays, for even the most so called traditional websites, are totally clueless about what modesty and occasion of sin is.**

Many might think that these “excuses” by this “traditional” writer excuses their film watching, but the Church, as we have seen, teaches that one may not even put oneself in “the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor” and those who watch most of the videos, does not do so for any necessity but only for fun or pleasure. Thus, it is obvious from the light of natural reason that one may not risk one’s soul, even in the case when one intends to do it for a spiritual good, according to the teaching of the Church.

No one ever needed to see such pictures to be able to understand truths of the Christian Faith, or in order to be saved. This is just a sinful excuse. Indeed, in a courtroom, when a criminal is being judged, for example, for possessing or selling drugs, the jury or judge does not try the drugs to see whether it is really drugs or not, but a single lab confirms this through a test, and the reason why not all in the courtroom does try it, is in part because all understand that drugs are harmful. This is a perfect example to sensual pictures. Since these pictures act like a drug on the man or woman who look at them: one must do all in one's power to restrict access to these and similar things so that the weak may not fall and enter hell. So those who watch films or videos which they do not know with certainty has nothing lascivious in it, are committing the exact same act as a person who would say to another person: "Look, this pill may kill my soul, and place myself in the occasion of sinning, but I will have a taste and see whether it is evil or not!" Who but a madman would act in this way, and yet, this is exactly what most people do right now, when they tempt themselves or others by placing themselves in the occasion of sin.

Until our death, we are obligated under pain of mortal sin to avoid all occasions of sin. St. Alphonsus tells us in *On Avoiding the Occasion of Sin*: "**Now, no one can receive absolution unless he purpose firmly to avoid the occasion of sin; because to expose himself to such occasions, though sometimes he should not fall into sin, is for him a grievous sin.**" Indeed, "**The catechist must explain that those who do not abstain from voluntary proximate occasions of grievous sin are guilty of a mortal sin**, even though they have the intention of not committing the bad act, to the danger of which they expose themselves". St Augustine's *Confessions* reiterates this point: "I resist seductions of the eyes, lest my feet with which I advance on Your way be entangled; and I raise my invisible eyes to You, that You would be pleased to pluck my feet out of the net."

When sensual pictures exist that shows us something we need to explain or expose to others, they must be described in text rather than in a picture, as the picture works in the same way as drugs on a drug addict. There can be no doubt that countless billions of souls have been damned because of lascivious acts in films as well as sensual pictures, and yet so called Christians are totally clueless to this truth that one can even understand from the light of natural reason. Thus, the only logical solution to our evil times, is to totally cut off watching all motion picture media.

This is truly the great challenge of our evil times: to be able to resist to watch media even though it is so delightful and fun to do so. Most people do not even try to cut off watching media, but are totally hooked on it like a drug addict, and this is undoubtedly a great reason, if

not the greatest reason, why they will be damned. Since people nowadays do not resist their evil inclination to place themselves in the occasion of sinning, it is easy to see why so few nowadays possess any virtues, and why almost all are non-Catholic heretics. Simply said, one must choose whether one values one's soul above the pleasure of watching a screen for a little and brief moment in this short life. A person who is God-fearing and who fears hell and often meditates on death and the eternal punishment of the damned, will of course not hesitate one moment to cut off all occasions of sinning. Those, however, who presumptuously scorn to listen to these facts of both the Natural Law as well as the teaching of the Church and Her Saints, refusing to meditate on hell and the punishment of going against God's Eternal Law, will experience eternal hell at the moment of death, but then it will be too late to amend.

Catholics must understand that **few are saved**. Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed that the road to Heaven is straight and narrow and few find it, while the road to Hell is wide and taken by most (Mt. 7:13).

Matthew 7:13 **“Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it!”**

Luke 13:24 **“Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able.”**

Scripture also teaches that almost the entire world lies in darkness, so much so that Satan is even called the “prince” (John 12:31) and “god” (2 Cor. 4:3) of this world. “We know that we are of God, **and the whole world is seated in wickedness.**” (1 John 5:19)

Nowadays, however, the fear of Hell has vanished completely, and that is why no one cares anything about avoiding the occasion of sin. But the time will come when they shall lift up their voices in lamentation and weeping and curse themselves for refusing to avoid the occasion of sin, but then, it is sadly too late for them. *“And the smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever: neither have they rest day nor night...”* (Apocalypse 14:11)

St. Leonard of Port Maurice (A.D. 1676-1751), when speaking **on the fewness of the saved, shows us how the Church and Her Fathers and Saints is unanimous in teaching this biblical doctrine:** “After consulting all the theologians and making a diligent study of the matter, he [Suarez] wrote, **“The most common sentiment which is held is that,**

among Christians [Catholics], there are more damned souls than predestined souls. Add the authority of the Greek and Latin Fathers to that of the theologians, and you will find that almost all of them say the same thing. This is the sentiment of Saint Theodore, Saint Basil, Saint Ephrem, Saint John Chrysostom. What is more, according to Baronius it was a common opinion among the Greek Fathers that this truth was expressly revealed to Saint Simeon Stylites and that after this revelation, it was to secure his salvation that he decided to live standing on top of a pillar for forty years, exposed to the weather, a model of penance and holiness for everyone. Now let us consult the Latin Fathers. You will hear Saint Gregory saying clearly, *‘Many attain to faith, but few to the heavenly kingdom.’* Saint Anselm declares, *‘There are few who are saved.’* Saint Augustine states even more clearly, *‘Therefore, few are saved in comparison to those who are damned.’* The most terrifying, however, is Saint Jerome. At the end of his life, in the presence of his disciples, he spoke these dreadful words: *‘Out of one hundred thousand people whose lives have always been bad, you will find barely one who is worthy of indulgence.’* (On *The Little Number of Those Who Are Saved*, by St. Leonard of Port Maurice)

What would not the billions of suffering souls in Hell do, who fell into the most horrifying torments imaginable for the sake of carnal impurities and temptations of the flesh, if they had a second chance to escape their eternal torment? In truth, they would gladly walk on the surface of the Sun, which is millions of degrees hot for a billion times billion years if God enabled them to do so. To choose a single second of sinful pleasure (which is how short this life is compared to eternity) for an **infinite time of excruciating torments and tortures in hell** is unfathomable, and yet, literally the whole world consents to this devilish trap!

Take heed that you, the reader, do not reject this admonishment, for it might be the last time you will hear such words before death suddenly strikes you and the Devil takes you and devours you for all eternity to come! “... Take all states, both sexes, every condition: husbands, wives, widows, young women, young men, soldiers, merchants, craftsmen, rich and poor, noble and plebian. What are we to say about all these people who are living so badly? The following narrative from Saint Vincent Ferrer will show you what you may think about it. He relates that an archdeacon in Lyons gave up his charge and retreated into a desert place to do penance, and that he died the same day and hour as Saint Bernard. After his death, he appeared to his bishop and said to him, *‘Know, Monsignor, that at the very hour I passed away, **thirty-three thousand** people also died. Out of this number, **Bernard and myself** went up to Heaven without delay, **three** went to purgatory, and **all the others fell into Hell.**’* Our chronicles relate an even more dreadful happening. One of our brothers, well-known for his doctrine and holiness, was preaching in Germany. He represented the

ugliness of the sin of impurity so forceful that a woman fell dead of sorrow in front of everyone. Then, coming back to life, she said, ‘*When I was presented before the Tribunal of God, **sixty thousand** people arrived at the same time from all parts of the world; out of that number, **three** were saved by going to Purgatory, and **all the rest were damned.***’ O abyss of the judgments of God! Out of thirty thousand, only five were saved! And out of sixty thousand, only three went to Heaven! **You sinners who are listening to me, in what category will you be numbered?... What do you say?... What do you think?...**” (On *The Little Number of Those Who Are Saved*, by St. Leonard of Port Maurice)

Fr. Martin Von Cochem’s masterpiece book “*The Four Last Things*” (that deals specifically with the topics of Hell, the fear of God, death and judgment), explains the frightful truth of Our Lord’s words in the Gospel **of how few people there actually are on this earth that even find the path to Heaven even once while living on this earth**, and much less persevere on it until their death:

“Let me ask thee, O reader, what proportion thinkest thou of all who live upon this earth will be saved? Half? or a third part? or perhaps a quarter? Alas, I fear, and not without good reason, that the number will not be nearly so large. Jesus Christ, who is eternal Truth, His holy apostles, and the Fathers of the Church, all tell us that so it will be.

“What does Christ say about the number of the elect? His words are these: “Many are called, but few are chosen.” He repeats these words when He speaks of the guest who had not on a wedding garment: “Bind his hands and his feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness. For many are called, but few chosen.” Were nothing more to be found to this intent in the whole of the Scriptures, this passage could not fail to alarm us. But there are many other similar ones, of which I will quote one or two. In the Gospel of St. Matthew we read that Our Lord said: “Enter ye in at the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction, and many there are that go in thereat. How narrow is the gate and strait is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there are that find it.” (Matt. 7:13) Are not these words calculated to inspire us with anxiety and apprehension? May not we be amongst those who go in at the wide gate, who walk on the broad road that ends in everlasting perdition? In order that thou mayst better appreciate the meaning of Our Lord’s words, and perceive more clearly how few are the elect, observe that Christ did not say that those were few in number who walked in the path to heaven, but that there were but few who found that narrow way. “How strait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there are that find it.” It is as

if the Savior intended to say: The path leading to heaven is so narrow and so rough, it is so overgrown, so dark and difficult to discern, that there are many who, their whole life long, never find it. And those who do find it are exposed constantly to the danger of deviating from it, of mistaking their way and unwittingly wandering away from it, because it is so irregular and overgrown. This St. Jerome says, in his commentary on the passage in question. Again, there are some who when they are on the right road, hasten to leave it, because it is so steep and toilsome. There are also many who are enticed to leave the narrow way by the wiles and deceits of the devil, and thus, almost imperceptibly to themselves, are led downwards to hell.” (Fr. Martin Von Cochem, *The Four Last Things*, pp. 212-213)

If people could only open their fleshly eyes and start seeing with their spiritual eyes how short this life and the lust of the flesh is, everyone would immediately start avoiding the occasions of sin, but no one today wants to contemplate or meditate on the end of all flesh, which is death and decay in the grave. They behave as mentally ill people who willfully forgets that they must die and be judged by our Lord Jesus Christ. The thought of death is indeed powerful to conquer every sin and sinful occasion, but while people know that they must die, they willfully choose to forget this fact, since the very thought of death and change is repugnant to their fleshly beings, and directly associated with the thought of being judged by God for their sins. And so, they choose to forget that they must die and be judged by God in order to not have to feel any distress, fear or remorse from their evil conscience every time they sin.

But the time will come when they – standing in shame and ignominy in front of the whole world at the day of judgment – will be forced against their will to remember and confess every single sinful and lustful act that they have ever committed from the moment they reached the age of reason to their very last breath, and then, after their just condemnation, their eternal punishment will begin. Their soul shall be separated from their sinful and fleshly rotting body for the sake of their vile and shameful affections and lusts and be cast into the eternal fire “*in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*” (Apocalypse 21:8)

And those who claim they are not troubled by the sensual pictures in videos or films still cannot excuse their film watching since they not only tempt themselves, but also others by their film watching, and no one can be so prideful to think that he cannot fall into sin at any moment. There is no way to know one has ever achieved such a state of purity that looking at an attractive woman would not cause concupiscence to flare up and overtake him. In addition, according to one story found in the *Life of the Holy Fathers*, it is explained how those people who, being already owned by the devil in other ways, **may not even be tempted much by**

him with sexual temptations or imaginations, since, being already his own, he leaves them alone. Also, according to the same text, **“those who are freed from [impure] thoughts are those who have moved into [sinful] deeds”**. But if this is true with only thoughts, how much more true when actually viewing impure images? Hence if these people were more troubled with sexual temptations, one should think that they would be more on their guard and be more careful about themselves and of falling and exposing themselves (and others) to this sin. But since the devil don't want evil people to be on their guard and that they should continue giving others a bad example, he sometimes leaves off tempting them.

Life of the Holy Fathers, Book 5, On Sexual Temptation: **“There was a certain brother who was most zealous in ordering his life. And when he was grievously troubled by the demon of sex he went to a certain old man and told him his thoughts. When this “expert” heard, he was indignant and called the brother a miserable wretch unworthy of the monk’s habit to entertain such thoughts. The brother, hearing this, despaired of himself, left his cell and began to go back to the world.** But by the mercy of God, abba Apollo met him, and seeing that he was upset and unhappy he asked him, "Brother, why so sad?" In great confusion of mind he was at first unwilling to answer, but in the face of much questioning by the old man as to what the matter was he at last confessed, saying, **"I am bothered by thoughts of sex, and I confessed to that old man and according to him there is no hope of salvation for me, so in despair I'm going back to the world."** When father Apollo heard this he talked and reasoned with him like a wise physician, saying, **"Don't be too dumbfounded, or despairing of yourself. Even at my age and state of life I can be greatly troubled by thoughts such as these.** Don't collapse in this time of testing; it can be cured not so much by human advice as by the mercy of God. But just for today grant me one request: go back to your cell." This the brother did. Abba Apollo however hastened to the cell of that old man who had sown despair and standing outside prayed the Lord, **"Lord, who allows us to be tempted for our good, [temptations often leads us to avoid putting ourselves in the proximate danger of falling] turn the battle which this brother has suffered against this old man, that in his old age he may learn from experience what he didn't learn long since, that you must have compassion on those who are troubled by this sort of temptation."**

“Having completed his prayer he saw an Ethiopian standing by the cell casting arrows against this old man, who, severely wounded, began to stagger about here and there as if drunk with wine. Unable to bear it any longer he rushed out of the cell and began to return to the world by the same road as the young brother had taken. But abba Apollo, knowing what was

happening, met him, and running up to him asked, "Where are you going? And what is the reason for the agitated state you are in?" But he, sensing that the holy man knew all about what was happening, could say nothing for very shame. "Go back to your cell," said abba Apollo, "**and acknowledge your own weakness**, recognise it as part of yourself. **For either you have been overlooked by the devil up till now, or else despised as being so lacking in virtue as to be unworthy of striving against him.** Did I say 'strife'? You weren't even able to put up with his attacks for a single day! But all this happened to you because when that young man was attacked by our common adversary, instead of giving him helpful advice against the devil as you ought, you drove him into despair, **forgetful of that wise precept by which we are bidden to save those on a pathway towards death and neglect not to redeem the condemned (Proverbs 14).** Nor have you heeded the sayings of our Saviour, 'A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoking flax he shall not quench' (Matthew 12.20). **No one can withstand the attacks of the enemy, or quench and contain the fire of rebellious nature, unless the grace of God comes to the aid of our natural infirmity, which in all our prayer we beg God in his mercy to heal in us, and that he may turn away from us the attacks launched against us, for it is of him that we are cast down and again restored to the way of salvation, it is he who strikes and then heals us with his hands, he humbles and exalts, he kills and makes alive, he leads us down to the depths and raises us up again"** (1 Kings 2).

"Having said this he prayed, and at once the old man was freed from that battle. And abba Apollo urged him to seek from the Lord a tongue of discretion, so that he might know when the time was right for giving a sermon.

"V.v.5. Syrus Alexandrinus, when asked about sexual thoughts replied thus, "**If you didn't have thoughts you would be a hopeless case, since those who are freed from thoughts are those who have moved into deeds, that is, those who have sinned in the body are the ones who have not fought against thoughts of sin, or turned them down. The one who sins in the body has gone beyond being troubled by thoughts.**" "

St. Alphonsus Liguori speaks further of avoiding even the remote occasion of sin such as looking in the face, saluting with affection etc.

St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*: "4. The Flight

from Dangerous Occasions.

“This fourth point should often be recommended in the mission; for an innumerable multitude of souls are lost by not wishing to avoid the occasions of sin. Oh, how many souls are now in hell who cry out, weeping: Unhappy me, if I had kept from this occasion I should never have damned my soul for all eternity!

“The Holy Ghost reminds us that he who loves the danger will fall into sin, will perish; *‘He that loveth danger shall perish in it.’* [Eccl. 3:26] St. Thomas explains to us the reason; commenting on this text, he says that when we voluntarily expose ourselves to danger, or when we neglect to keep from it, God abandons us in it. And St. Bernardine of Sienna assures us that among the counsels of Jesus Christ the counsel of fleeing from the occasion of sin is the most important, is, as it were, the foundation of religion.

“The preacher should then take care to remind the people that when they are tempted, especially if the occasion presents itself, they should avoid reasoning with the temptation. What the devil desires is precisely that we should parley with it; for thereby he will easily conquer us. We must in this case flee from the occasion at once, and invoke the names of Jesus and Mary without listening to the enemy who tempts us.

“St. Peter assures us that the devil prowls around every soul to devour it. [1 Pet. 5:8] On this text St. Cyprian says that the devil goes about without ceasing, and examines by what door he may enter. When a dangerous occasion presents itself, the devil at once says to himself: Here is the door by which I can enter this soul. And immediately he begins to tempt the soul. If we then neglect to flee from the occasion, we shall certainly yield to it, especially when the object of the temptation is a carnal sin. Hence the devil is not so much afraid of our good resolutions and our promises not to offend God as to see us flee from the occasion; for, if we do not flee from it, it becomes a bandage which is put over our eyes, and makes us forget all the eternal truths, all the lights received, and all the promises made to God. And if any one finds himself sunken in impure sins, he should avoid as much as possible the occasions, not only the proximate, but also the remote occasions, for he is less capable of resisting. We should not, then, labor under the illusion by pretending that it is a necessary occasion which we need not avoid; for Jesus Christ has said: ‘If thy right eye scandalize thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee.’ [Matt. 5:29] Even if it were your right eye, to escape damnation it would be necessary to pluck it out and cast it from you, that is, by fleeing from this occasion, however remote it may be; for on account of your weakness it is proximate for you.

“St. Francis of Assisi, speaking of persons who have the fear of God, gives an excellent advice concerning remote occasions: he says that for persons who fear to lose God, the devil, in the occasions, does not at first excite them to grave faults; he begins by attaching them with a hair, which afterwards, in time, may through his suggestions become a chain, and he thus succeeds in dragging them into mortal sin. Hence in our relations with persons of the other sex, we should take care to break off from the beginning every kind of attachment, however feeble it may be, by avoiding even the remote occasions, such as looking them in the face, saluting them with affection, receiving notes or presents from them, and much more, saying tender words to them.

“We should, above all, be convinced that we who are by nature sensual have not the strength to preserve the virtue of chastity; God only in his goodness can grant us this strength. Now it is true that the Lord hears him who prays to him; but if any one exposes himself to the occasion, and knowing it, does not remove from it, his prayers are not heard, according to the words of the Holy Ghost already quoted: ‘He that loveth danger shall perish in it.’ Alas! how many are there who, for not having fled from the occasions of this kind, although they led holy lives, ended by falling into sin and becoming hardened in it? With fear and trembling, says the Apostle, work out your salvation: He that does not tremble, and dares to expose himself to dangerous occasions, above all to occasions of carnal sins, will be saved with difficulty.

“Since these counsels about the flight of dangerous occasions is so important, it is not sufficient, if the preacher speaks about it once to his people, or even devotes an entire sermon to it, as some do, and do well; but as these occasions are numerous, and men are careless about avoiding them, the world becoming thereby so corrupt, we must come back to this point and insist upon it several times during the mission. On this depends the salvation of those persons who, although they come to the mission, yet are not present at the sermon on the flight from dangerous occasions.

“I add another remark, which it would be well to make all understand, and especially confessors. When a penitent has never avoided the occasion in which he has been accustomed to sin, it will be necessary for him to make a general confession, because one should judge that all the confessions that he has made in this state are null. One should also presume the same thing in the case of those who, although they have always confessed their sins, yet never gave any sign of amendment, and fell back a little while after into sin; only a general confession can induce these people to amend their lives.”

From the very beginning, the movies often presented sensual or illicit acts, although the incidence of such occurrences have increased much more in our times. It is very sad, but our generation are born totally blind to God's standard of modesty, and this blindness is also the reason why we do not avoid the occasion of sin. Although we can understand the truth from natural reason alone that one must avoid all occasions of sin if we examine the inner recesses of our soul, as we have shown here, so little is done nowadays to educate the young, which results in that their own bad will smothers every inspiration that their soul and conscience gives to them that their way of life is displeasing to Our Lord.

If Jesus today would have come to visit most of the people who deludes themselves into thinking that they are traditional Catholics or Christians, he would be outraged how little that person strove to avoid the occasions of sinning in media; and just because the media have evolved to such a state of degradation that almost all is evil does not minimize the guilt of all people who refuse to avoid things which they know can have things that will tempt their eyes and sensuality. "Everyone knows what damage is done to the soul by bad motion pictures. They are occasions of sin; they seduce young people along the ways of evil by glorifying the passions; they show life under a false light; they cloud ideals; they destroy pure love, respect for marriage, affection for the family. They are capable also of creating prejudices among individuals and misunderstandings among nations, among social classes, among entire races." (Pope Pius XI, *Vigilanti Cura*, June 29, 1936)

"Concerning this matter We make a father's appeal to Our dear young, trusting that -- since We speak of entertainment in which their innocence can be exposed to danger -- they will be outstanding for their Christian restraint and prudence. They have **a grave obligation** to check and control that natural and unrestrained eagerness to see and hear everything, and they must keep their minds free from immodest and earthly pleasures and direct them to higher things." (Pius XII, *Miranda Prorsus*, June 29, 1936)

If it would be something else evil, such as visiting a brothel for some good reason, such as eating there, we would be attuned to the fact that this may be a great occasion of sin, and so rightly conclude that it would be a sin to go there, but now when we sit comfortably at home, we falsely think that God somehow requires less vigilance in keeping away from all occasions of sin. Regrettably, the comfort and ease of media coming directly to us at home, have undoubtedly helped bring untold of evils to so called Christians and their children, with the result of billions being damned, and the statistics of sins that have skyrocketed after Vatican II is a great testament to the fact that media have been the greatest cause in why people are so

perverted and evil nowadays.

“It is unfortunate that, in the present state of affairs, this influence [of motion pictures] is frequently exerted for evil. So much so that when one thinks of the havoc wrought in the souls of youth and of childhood, of the loss of innocence so often suffered in the motion picture theatres, there comes to mind the terrible condemnation pronounced by Our Lord upon the corrupters of little ones: *“whosoever shall scandalize one of these little ones who believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone be hanged about his neck and that he be drowned in the depths of the sea” [Matthew 18:5-6].*” (Pope Pius XI, *Vigilanti Cura*) Indeed, knowing the danger of today’s media makes it seem idiotic to keep a TV, since it will undoubtedly be a great source of temptation to watch all kinds of TV-programs that can tempt a person or put them in the occasion of sin.

That so much naked religious images have been made, spread and depicted even in churches! during the last 700 years or so is undoubtedly a sign of the gradual falling away from God and the corruption of morals within and without the Church by the people, and indicates why God ultimately abandoned the Church to what it is has become today. Our duty as Catholics, however, is to continue to reject the world and its vanities, however much the world may fall away from God and the Faith: “There must be no weariness in combating whatever contributes to the lessening of the people’s sense of decency and of honour. This is an obligation which binds not only the Bishops but also the faithful and all decent men who are solicitous for the decorum and moral health of the family, of the nation, and of human society in general.” (Pope Pius XI, *Vigilanti Cura*, June 29, 1936)

Also consider that it is very easy to sin in one’s thought. In fact, **one consent to an evil thought is enough to damn a person to burn in Hell for all eternity!** and all the bad scenes one sees in all the films, television, movies, series etc. tempts one to commit exactly this sin against God.

St. Alphonsus: “**Listen to this example:** A boy used often to go to confession; and every one took him to be a saint. One night he had a hemorrhage, and he was found dead. His parents went at once to his confessor, and crying begged him to recommend him to God; and he said to them: “Rejoice; your son, I know, was a little angel; God wished to take him from this world, and he must now be in heaven; should he, however, be still in purgatory, I will go to say Mass for him.” He put on his vestments to go to the altar; but before leaving the sacristy, he saw himself in the presence of a frightful spectre, whom he asked in the name of God who he was. The phantom

answered that he was the soul of him that had just died. Oh! is it you? exclaimed the priest; if you are in need of prayers, I am just going to say Mass for you. Alas! Mass! I am damned, I am in hell! And why? "Hear," said the soul: "***I had never yet committed a mortal sin; but last night a bad thought came to my mind; I gave consent to it, and God made me die at once, and condemned me to hell as I have deserved to be. Do not say Mass for me; it would only increase my sufferings.***" Having spoken thus, the phantom disappeared." (The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus, vol. 15, p. 167)

"O eternity, eternity! The saints tremble at the mere thought of eternity; and ye sinners, who are in disgrace with God, you do not fear? You do not tremble? It is of faith that he who dies in the state of sin goes to burn in the fire of hell for all eternity!" (Ibid, p. 108)

Scripture teaches that few are saved (Mt. 7:13) and that almost the entire world lies in darkness, so much so that Satan is even called the "prince" (John 12:31) and "god" (2 Cor. 4:3) of this world. "We know that we are of God, and the whole world is seated in wickedness." (1 John 5:19)

Why are most people damned? Most people are damned because they don't care enough about God nor fear Him enough **to avoid all sin and the occasions of falling into obvious sin**, nor do they love Him more than they love their own perverse will or self-love—*which is the direct reason for their indifferent lifestyle*; neither do they care enough about God so as to avoid even what they obviously know will lead them into possible sin. The great St. Ambrose said concerning this: "**True repentance [and thus love of God] is to cease to sin [all sin, however small].**"

That of course means that one must do all in one's power to avoid not only mortal sin, but also venial sin. It also means to in fact never even have a will to commit even the slightest sin that one knows to be a sin culpably or with full consent against the all good God — **and now we may deduce already why most people in fact are damned.**

Hence that most people are damned and always have been. So the only reason it would be hard for someone to be forgiven his sins and be saved is if he don't love God enough, fear God enough, nor trust God enough with his whole heart—trust and love, such as believing in Him and that He will forgive you if you do what you must—and that He hears all your prayers and grants all your prayers that are good for you, such as all prayers for the grace of attaining forgiveness and salvation. Therefore, it is only hard to be saved for the bad — and not for the

good souls.

Also see: [About the sacrament of penance and contrition and about receiving forgiveness without an absolution](#)

Generally, one of course cannot know whether a film, documentary or show that one watches or desires to watch will have any bad images or scenes in them—*before having already watched it*. (There are some sites that offers warnings of immodesty, bad language, nudity etc., but their warnings probably are not enough, nor will they, in all likelihood, include a warning against the so-called modern day women’s fashion in which women show of their womanly figure by pants or revealing and tight clothing since this is how every one dress today (which in itself would be bad enough to forbid watching these shows entirely), and of course, the modern day “Catholic” or “Christian” standard of modesty is not enough and is even evil in many cases.) Therefore, it is playing with fire to watch movable images and risk one’s soul; and as we have seen, God will ultimately abandon a person that willfully put himself in danger of falling. Again, remember what St. Alphonsus said: “WHEN MEN AVOID THE OCCASIONS OF SIN, GOD PRESERVES THEM; BUT WHEN THEY EXPOSE THEMSELVES TO DANGER, THEY ARE JUSTLY ABANDONED BY THE LORD, AND EASILY FALL INTO SOME GRIEVOUS TRANSGRESSIONS.” And the Seraphic Father, St. Francis, in one of his favorite sayings confirms that “These are the weapons by which the chaste soul is overcome: looks, speeches, touches, embraces.” (St. Francis of Assisi, *Works of the Seraphic Father St. Francis of Assisi*, p. 146)

We recommend that no one watch videos or even listen to audios at all (unless perhaps you wish to only listen to strictly religious things), but if you want to watch more secular things (such as news clips, documentaries or whatever else, even religious films) then listen to audio only. This means that you should turn the television around or put something over the screen. If on the internet, it means that you should avoid watching the video that is playing; or download vlc player and disable video in preferences, and download the videos instead of watching them on the internet, and listen to them only as audio through vlc player or some other video player. You can also download videos and convert them to mp3 or download an extension or program that does it automatically for you. This is a good youtube to mp3 website that we recommend (**enter it without images on, of course, since I have no idea of what it may show!**):

<http://convert2mp3.net/en/>

If you enter youtube videos, you should disable auto play so that videos do not play automatically for the same reason (the flashblock addons linked to above does the trick). You can also disable youtube comments in channel settings. Many of them are pure evil, filthy and spiritually distracting anyway. But the comments vary in badness depending on the video you are watching or entering. But just so you know, it is possible to disable seeing them.

Images must also be blocked when surfing on youtube! The number of bad, immodest and mortally sinful inducing images I myself have seen on youtube, and especially in the related videos while watching a video, or after it ended, is almost innumerable! (and no, I don't watch sensual material and anyone who has spent any time on youtube will know from experience that related thumbnails can be pure evil and filthy regardless of what videos you are watching, be it a news clip or a religious video, and the latter example is especially true if it concerns a moral subject). Having images blocked goes for all websites that have any bad images in them, even wikipedia, unless the article is deemed safe. (For the same reason, it is evil and a sin to link to articles that one knows contains any bad images. Yet many people, even traditional so-called Catholics, as we have seen, frequently, and without any scruple, link to such articles and posts such materials all the time just as if they thought they will not receive a judgment for every person that has becomes affected or aroused sensually by what they posted, linked to or were personally responsible for.) Also, on Firefox, **never watch a youtube video to the end**, or, if you do, scroll down before the film ends, **since the related video images on Firefox—that are shown in the video screen—sadly doesn't get blocked by having images disabled**. I have seen not a few evil images because of that, sadly. Now I know better, and that one must avoid seeing this and falling into this devilish trap (but happily, we don't even watch videos anymore and we encourage all to follow this same advice).

St. Alphonsus, **On avoiding the occasions of sin**: “Some also believe that it is only a venial sin to expose themselves to the proximate occasion of sin. **The catechist must explain that those who do not abstain from voluntary proximate occasions of grievous sin are guilty of a mortal sin**, even though they have the intention of not committing the bad act, to the danger of which they expose themselves. ... It is necessary to inculcate frequently the necessity of avoiding dangerous occasions; for, if proximate occasions, especially of carnal sins, are not avoided, all other means will be useless for our salvation.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 351-355)

Considering the quotes of St. Alphonsus on avoiding occasions of sin and about how God

demands more of certain souls that He has given more graces: it is highly important for one's salvation to not watch media or expose oneself to dangerous occasions (such as by surfing the internet with images on).

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #61, March 4, 1679: "**He can sometimes be absolved**, who remains in a proximate occasion of sinning, which he can and does not wish to omit, but rather directly and professedly seeks or enters into." – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.**

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #62, March 4, 1679: "The proximate occasion for sinning is not to be shunned when some useful and honorable cause for not shunning it occurs." – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.**

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* #63, March 4, 1679: "It is permitted to seek directly the proximate occasion for sinning for a spiritual or temporal good of our own or of a neighbor." – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.**

St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori describes in his masterpiece book "*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*" how *Modesty of the Eyes* is absolutely crucial for all people to have in order to save their souls:

St. Alphonsus: "**On the mortification of the eyes, and on modesty in general.** Almost all our rebellious passions spring from unguarded looks; for, generally speaking, it is by the sight that all inordinate affections and desires are excited. Hence, holy Job "made a covenant with his eyes, that he would not so much as think upon a virgin." (Job xxxi. 1) Why did he say that he would not so much as think upon a virgin? Should he not have said that he made a covenant with his eyes not to look at a virgin? **No; he very properly said that he would not think upon a virgin; because thoughts are so connected with looks, that the former cannot be separated from the latter, and therefore, to escape the molestation of evil imaginations, he resolved never to fix his eyes on a woman.**

"St. Augustine says: "The thought follows the look; delight comes after the thought; and consent after delight." From the look proceeds the thought; from the thought the desire; for, as St. Francis de Sales says, what is not seen is not desired, and to the desire succeeds the consent.

“If Eve had not looked at the forbidden apple, she should not have fallen; but because "she saw that it was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and beautiful to behold, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." (Gen. iii. 6) The devil first tempts us to look, then to desire, and afterwards to consent.

“St. Jerome says that Satan requires "only a beginning on our part." If we begin, he will complete our destruction. **A deliberate glance at a person of a different sex often enkindles an infernal spark, which consumes the soul.** "Through the eyes," says St. Bernard, "the deadly arrows of love enters." The first dart that wounds and frequently robs chaste souls of life finds admission through the eyes. By them David, the beloved of God, fell. By them was Solomon, once the inspired of the Holy Ghost, drawn into the greatest abominations. Oh! how many are lost by indulging their sight!

“The eyes must be carefully guarded by all who expect not to be obliged to join in the lamentation of Jeremiah: "My eye hath wasted my soul." (Jer. iii. 51) By the introduction of sinful affections my eyes have destroyed my soul. Hence St. Gregory says, that **"the eyes, because they draw us to sin, must be depressed." If not restrained, they will become instruments of hell, to force the soul to sin almost against its will. "He that looks at a dangerous object," continues the saint, "begins to will what he wills not."** It was this the inspired writer intended to express when he said of Holofernes, that "the beauty of Judith made his soul captive." (Jud. xvi 11)

“Seneca says that "blindness is a part of innocence;" and Tertullian relates that a certain pagan philosopher, to free himself from impurity, plucked out his eyes. Such an act would be unlawful in us: but he that desires to preserve chastity must avoid the sight of objects that are apt to excite unchaste thoughts. "Gaze not about," says the Holy Ghost, "upon another's beauty; . . . hereby lust is enkindled as a fire." (Ecc. ix. 8, 9) Gaze not upon another's beauty; for from looks arise evil imaginations, by which an impure fire is lighted up. Hence St. Francis de Sales used to say, that "they who wish to exclude an enemy from the city must keep the gates locked."

“Hence, to avoid the sight of dangerous objects, the saints were accustomed to keep their eyes almost continually fixed on the earth, and to abstain even from looking at innocent objects. After being a novice for a year, St. Bernard could not tell whether his cell was vaulted. In consequence of never raising

his eyes from the ground, he never knew that there were but three windows to the church of the monastery, in which he spent his novitiate. He once, without perceiving a lake, walked along its banks for nearly an entire day; and hearing his companions speak about it, he asked when they had seen it. St. Peter of Alcantara kept his eyes constantly cast down, so that he did not know the brothers with whom he conversed. It was by the voice, and not by the countenance, that he was able to recognize them.

“The saints were particularly cautious not to look at persons of a different sex. St. Hugh, bishop, when compelled to speak with women, never looked at them in the face. St. Clare would never fix her eyes on the face of a man. She was greatly afflicted because, when raising her eyes at the elevation to see the consecrated host, she once involuntarily saw the countenance of the priest. St. Aloysius never looked at his own mother in the face. It is related of St. Arsenius, that a noble lady went to visit him in the desert, to beg of him to recommend her to God. When the saint perceived that his visitor was a woman, he turned away from her. She then said to him: "Arsenius, since you will neither see nor hear me, at least remember me in your prayers." "No," replied the saint, "but I will beg of God to make me forget you, and never more to think of you."

“From these examples may be seen the folly and temerity of some religious who, though they have not the sanctity of a St. Clare, still gaze around from the terrace, in the parlour, and in the church, upon every object that presents itself, even on persons of a different sex. And notwithstanding their unguarded looks, they expect to be free from temptations and from the danger of sin. For having once looked deliberately at a woman who was gathering ears of corn, the Abbot Pastor was tormented for forty years by temptations against chastity. St. Gregory states that the temptation, to conquer which St. Benedict rolled himself in thorns, arose from one incautious glance at a woman. St. Jerome, though living in a cave at Bethlehem, in continual prayer and macerations of the flesh, was terribly molested by the remembrance of ladies whom he had long before seen in Rome. Why should not similar molestations be the lot of the religious who willfully and without reserve fixes her eyes on persons of a different sex? "It is not," says St. Francis de Sales, "the seeing of objects so much as the fixing of our eyes upon them that proves most pernicious."

““If," says St. Augustine, "our eyes should by chance fall upon others, let us take care never to fix them upon any one." Father Manareo, when taking leave of St. Ignatius for

a distant place, looked steadfastly in his face: for this look he was corrected by the saint. **From the conduct of St. Ignatius on this occasion, we learn that it was not becoming in religious to fix their eyes on the countenance of a person even of the same sex, particularly if the person is young. But I do not see how looks at young persons of a different sex can be excused from the guilt of a venial fault, or even from mortal sin, when there is proximate danger of criminal consent. "It is not lawful," says St. Gregory, "to behold what it is not lawful to covet." The evil thought that proceeds from looks, though it should be rejected, never fails to leave a stain upon the soul. Brother Roger, a Franciscan of singular purity, being once asked why he was so reserved in his intercourse with women, replied, that when men avoid the occasions of sin, God preserves them; but when they expose themselves to danger, they are justly abandoned by the Lord, and easily fall into some grievous transgressions.**

“The indulgence of the eyes, if not productive of any other evil, at least destroys recollection during the time of prayer. For, the images and impressions caused by the objects seen before, or by the wandering of the eyes, during prayer, will occasion a thousand distractions, and banish all recollection from the soul. It is certain that without recollection a religious can pay but little attention to the practice of humility, patience, mortification, or of the other virtues. Hence it is her duty to abstain from all looks of curiosity, which distract her mind from holy thoughts. Let her eyes be directed only to objects which raise the soul to God.

“St. Bernard used to say, that to fix the eyes upon the earth contributes to keep the heart in heaven. "Where," says St. Gregory, "Christ is, there modesty is found." Wherever Jesus Christ dwells by love, there modesty is practiced. However, I do not mean to say that the eyes should never be raised or never fixed on any object. No; but they ought to be directed only to what inspires devotion, to sacred images, and to the beauty of creation, which elevate the soul to the contemplation of the divinity. Except in looking at such objects, a religious should in general keep the eyes cast down, and particularly in places where they may fall upon dangerous objects. In conversing with men, she should never roll the eyes about to look at them, and much less to look at them a second time.

“To practice modesty of the eyes is the duty of a religious, not only because it is necessary for her own improvement in virtue, but also because it is

necessary for the edification of others. God only knows the human heart: man sees only the exterior actions, and by them he is edified or scandalized. "A man," says the Holy Ghost, "is known by his look." (Ecc. xix. 26) By the countenance the interior is known. Hence, like St. John the Baptist, a religious should be "a burning and shining light." (John, v. 35) She ought to be a torch burning with charity, and shining resplendent by her modesty, to all who behold her. To religious the following words of the Apostle are particularly applicable: "We are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men." (1 Cor. iv. 9) And again: "Let your modesty be known to all men: the Lord is nigh." (Phil. iv. 5)

“Religious are attentively observed by the angels and by men; and therefore their modesty should be made manifest before all; **if they do not practice modesty, terrible shall be the account which they must render to God on the day of judgment. Oh! what devotion does a modest religious inspire, what edification does she give, by keeping her eyes always cast down!** St. Francis of Assisi once said to his companion, that he was going out to preach. After walking through the town, with his eyes fixed on the ground, he returned to the convent. His companion asked him when he would preach the sermon. We have, replied the saint, by the modesty of our looks, given an excellent instruction to all who saw us. It is related of St. Aloysius, that when he walked through Rome the students would stand in the streets to observe and admire his great modesty.

“St. Ambrose says, that to men of the world the modesty of the saints is a powerful exhortation to amendment of life. "The look of a just man is an admonition to many." The saint adds: "How delightful it is to do good to others by your appearance!" It is related of St. Bernardine of Sienna, that even when a secular, his presence was sufficient to restrain the licentiousness of his young companions, who, as soon as they saw him, were accustomed to give to one another notice that he was coming. On his arrival they became silent or changed the subject of their conversation. It is also related of St. Gregory of Nyssa, and of St. Ephrem, that their very appearance inspired piety, and that the sanctity and modesty of their exterior edified and improved all that beheld them. When Innocent II visited St. Bernard at Clairvaux, such was the exterior modesty of the saint and of his monks, that the Pope and his cardinals were moved to tears of devotion. Surius relates a very extraordinary fact of St. Lucian, a monk and martyr. By his modesty he induced so many pagans to embrace the faith, that the Emperor Maximian, fearing that he should be converted to Christianity by the appearance of the saint, would not allow the holy man to be brought within his view, but spoke to him

from behind a screen.

“That our Redeemer was the first who taught, by his example, modesty of the eyes, may, as a learned author remarks, be inferred from the holy evangelists, who say that on some occasion he raised his eyes. "And he, lifting up his eyes on his disciples." (Luke, vi. 20) "When Jesus therefore had lifted up his eyes." (John, vi. 5.) From these passages we may conclude that the Redeemer ordinarily kept his eyes cast down. Hence the Apostle, praising the modesty of the Saviour, says: "I beseech you, by the mildness and modesty of Christ." (2 Cor. x. 1)

“I shall conclude this subject with what St. Basil said to his monks: "If, my children, we desire to raise the soul towards heaven, let us direct the eyes towards the earth." From the moment we awake in the morning, let us pray continually in the words of holy David: "Turn away my eyes, that they may not behold vanity" (Ps. cxviii. 37).” (St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, Modesty of the Eyes, pp. 252-261)

St. Francis of Assisi used to exhort his brethren frequently to guard and mortify their senses with the utmost care. He especially insisted on the custody of the eyes, and he used this parable of a King’s two messengers to demonstrate how the purity of the eyes reveals the chastity of the soul:

“A certain pious King sent two messengers successively to the Queen with a communication from himself. The first messenger returned and brought an answer from the Queen, which he delivered exactly. But of the Queen herself he said nothing because he had always kept his eyes modestly cast down and had not raised them to look at her.

The second messenger also returned. But after delivering in a few words the answer of the Queen, he began to speak warmly of her beauty. “Truly, my lord,” he said, “the Queen is the most fair and lovely woman I have ever seen, and thou art indeed happy and blessed to have her for thy spouse.”

At this the King was angry and said: “Wicked servant, how did you dare to cast your eyes upon my royal spouse? I believe that you may covet what you have so curiously gazed upon.”

Then he commanded the other messenger to be recalled, and said to him: “What do you think

of the Queen?”

He replied, “She listened very willingly and humbly to the message of the King and replied most prudently.”

But the Monarch again asked him, “But what do you think of her countenance? Did she not seem to you very fair and beautiful, more so than any other woman?”

The servant replied, “My lord, I know nothing of the Queen’s beauty. Whether she be fair or not, it is for thee alone to know and judge. My duty was only to convey thy message to her.”

The King rejoined, “You have answered well and wisely. You who have such chaste and modest eyes shall be my chamberlain. From the purity of your eyes I see the chastity of your soul. You are worthy to have the care of the royal apartments confided to you.”

Then, turning to the other messenger, he said: “But you, who have such unmortified eyes, depart from the palace. You shall not remain in my house, for I have no confidence in your virtue.” (*The Works of the Seraphic Father St. Francis of Assisi*, London: R. Washbourne, 1882, pp. 254-255)

Concerning modesty of the eyes and related virtues, St. Hippolytus of Rome (c. 170-236 A.D.) explains how Holy Scripture in the *Book of Proverbs* commands us to stay away from all occasions of sin:

“[Proverbs 4:25 “Let thy eyes look straight on, and let thy eyelids go before thy steps.”] He “looks right on” who has thoughts free of passion; and he has true judgments, who is not in a state of excitement about external appearances.

“[Proverbs 6:27 “Can a man hide fire in his bosom, and his garments not burn?”] That thou mayest not say, What harm is there in the eyes, when there is no necessity that he should be perverted who looks? he shows thee that desire is a fire, and the flesh is like a garment. The latter is an easy prey, and the former is a tyrant. And when anything harmful is not only taken within, but also held fast, it will not go forth again until it has made an exit for itself. For he who looks upon a woman, even though he escape the temptation, does not come away pure of all lust. And why should one have trouble, if he can be chaste and free of trouble? ... And, figuratively speaking, he keeps a fire in his breast who permits an impure thought to dwell in his heart. And he

walks upon coals who, by sinning in act, destroys his own soul.

“[Proverbs 7:21-25 “[21] She entangled him with many words, and drew him away with the flattery of her lips. [22] Immediately he followeth her as an ox led to be a victim, and as a lamb playing the wanton, and not knowing that he is drawn like a fool to bonds, [23] Till the arrow pierce his liver: as if a bird should make haste to the snare, and knoweth not that his life is in danger. [24] Now therefore, my son, hear me, and attend to the words of my mouth. [25] Let not thy mind be drawn away in her ways: neither be thou deceived with her paths.”] The “cemphus” [the fool] is a kind of wild sea-bird, which has so immoderate an impulse to sexual enjoyment, that its eyes seem to fill with blood in coition; and it often blindly falls into snares, or into the hands of men [Footnote: “The cemphus is said to be a sea-bird “driven about by every wind,” so that it is equal to a fool.” [Proverbs 7:22]]. To this, therefore, he [Solomon] compares the man who gives himself up to the harlot on account of his immoderate lust; or else on account of the insensate folly of the creature, for he, too, pursues his object like one senseless. And they say that this bird is so much pleased with foam, that if one should hold foam in his hand as he sails, it will sit upon his hand. And it also brings forth with pain.

“[Proverbs 7:26 “For she hath cast down many wounded, and the strongest have been slain by her.”] You have seen her mischief. Wait not to admit the rising of lust; for her death is everlasting. And for the rest, by her words, her arguments in sooth, she wounds, and by her sins she kills those who yield to her. For many are the forms of wickedness that lead the foolish down to hell. And the chambers of death mean either its depths or its treasure. How, then, is escape possible?” (The Extant Works and Fragments of Hippolytus, "On Proverbs," by St. Hippolytus of Rome, 170-236 A.D., vol. 5, Ante-Nicene Fathers)

Then we have the temptation of curiosity “Which is Stimulated by the Lust of the Eyes” according to St. Augustine’s famous work “*The Confessions*”. There can be no doubt that the temptation of curiosity is one of the most common reasons why people place themselves in the occasion of sin, and thus commit mortal sin by this act. In Chapter 35 that deals with the topic of “*Another Kind of Temptation is Curiosity, Which is Stimulated by the Lust of the Eyes*” we see very clearly how evil and dangerous this curiosity is:

“In addition to this there is another form of temptation, more complex in its peril. For

besides that concupiscence of the flesh which lies in the gratification of all senses and pleasures, wherein its slaves who are far from You [God] perish, there pertains to the soul, through the same senses of the body, a certain vain and curious longing, cloaked under the name of knowledge and learning, not of having pleasure in the flesh, but of making experiments through the flesh. This longing, since it originates in an appetite for knowledge, and the sight being the chief among the senses in the acquisition of knowledge, is called in divine language, the lust of the eyes. (1 John 2:16) For seeing belongs properly to the eyes; yet we apply this word to the other senses also, when we exercise them in the search after knowledge. For we do not say, Listen how it glows, smell how it glistens, taste how it shines, or feel how it flashes, since all these are said to be seen. And yet we say not only, See how it shines, which the eyes alone can perceive; but also, See how it sounds, see how it smells, see how it tastes, see how hard it is. And thus the general experience of the senses, as was said before, is termed the lust of the eyes, because the function of seeing, wherein the eyes hold the pre-eminence, the other senses by way of similitude take possession of, whenever they seek out any knowledge.

“But by this is it more clearly discerned, when pleasure and when curiosity is pursued by the senses; for pleasure follows after objects that are beautiful, melodious, fragrant, savoury, soft; but curiosity, for experiment’s sake, seeks the contrary of these—not with a view of undergoing uneasiness, but from the passion of experimenting upon and knowing them. For what pleasure is there to see, in a lacerated corpse, that which makes you shudder? And yet if it lie near, we flock there, to be made sad, and to turn pale. Even in sleep they fear lest they should see it. Just as if when awake any one compelled them to go and see it, or any report of its beauty had attracted them! Thus also is it with the other senses, which it were tedious to pursue. From this malady of curiosity are all those strange sights exhibited in the theatre [the evil media of their days]. Hence do we proceed to search out the secret powers of nature (which is beside our end), which to know profits not, and wherein men desire nothing but to know. Hence, too, with that same end of perverted knowledge we consult magical arts. Hence, again, even in religion itself, is God tempted, when signs and wonders are eagerly asked of Him—not desired for any saving end, but to make trial only.

“In this so vast a wilderness, replete with snares and dangers, lo, many of them have I lopped off, and expelled from my heart, as Thou, O God of my salvation, hast enabled me to do. And yet when dare I say, since so many things of this kind buzz around our daily life—when dare I say that no such thing makes me intent to see it, or creates in me

vain solicitude? It is true that the theatres never now carry me away, nor do I now care to know the courses of the stars, nor has my soul at any time consulted departed spirits; all sacrilegious oaths I abhor. O Lord my God, to whom I owe all humble and single-hearted service, with what subtlety of suggestion does the enemy influence me to require some sign from You! But by our King, and by our pure land chaste country Jerusalem, I beseech You, that as any consenting unto such thoughts is far from me, so may it always be farther and farther. But when I entreat You for the salvation of any, the end I aim at is far otherwise, and Thou who doest what You will, givest and wilt give me willingly to follow You. (John 21:22)

“Nevertheless, in how many most minute and contemptible things is our curiosity daily tempted, and who can number how often we succumb? How often, when people are narrating idle tales, do we begin by tolerating them, lest we should give offense unto the weak; and then gradually we listen willingly! I do not nowadays go to the circus to see a dog chasing a hare; but if by chance I pass such a coursing in the fields, it possibly distracts me even from some serious thought, and draws me after it—not that I turn the body of my beast aside, but the inclination of my mind. And except Thou, by demonstrating to me my weakness, dost speedily warn me, either through the sight itself, by some reflection to rise to You, or wholly to despise and pass it by, I, vain one, am absorbed by it. How is it, when sitting at home, a lizard catching flies, or a spider entangling them as they rush into her nets, oftentimes arrests me? Is the feeling of curiosity not the same because these are such tiny creatures? From them I proceed to praise You, the wonderful Creator and Disposer of all things; but it is not this that first attracts my attention. It is one thing to get up quickly, and another not to fall, and of such things is my life full; and my only hope is in Your exceeding great mercy. For when this heart of ours is made the receptacle of such things, and bears crowds of this abounding vanity, then are our prayers often interrupted and disturbed thereby; and while in Your presence we direct the voice of our heart to Your ears, this so great a matter is broken off by the influx of I know not what idle thoughts.” (St. Augustine, *The Confessions*, Book X, Chapter XXXV.--Another Kind of Temptation is Curiosity, Which is Stimulated by the Lust of the Eyes.)

Question: Isn't it true that when we grow enough in chastity, we should dispense with practicing custody of the eyes, which is merely an initial negative step for those in the purgative stage of purity, and should instead look upon women and their God-given beauty with the pure gaze of love?

Answer: The Catholic Tradition considers “custody of the eyes” indispensable regardless of how much one grows in chastity – and in fact, growth in the virtue of chastity is marked, not by a decreased need for custody of the eyes, but *by increased ease in the habit of custody of the eyes*. The reason for the need to practice custody of the eyes is because men are naturally hard-wired to act on certain stimuli, which makes it absolutely necessary to never allow oneself to be in a situation where one may be tempted. This is corroborated by St. Alphonsus Liguori – one of the greatest moral theologians in Church history, who wrote that “a deliberate glance at a person of a different sex often enkindles an infernal spark, which consumes the soul”. There is no way to know one has ever achieved such a state of “mature purity” that looking at an attractive woman would not cause concupiscence to flare up and overtake him. Once again, St. Alphonsus agrees: “Brother Roger, a Franciscan of singular purity, being once asked why he was so reserved in his intercourse with women, replied, that when men avoid the occasions of sin, God preserves them; but when they expose themselves to danger, they are justly abandoned by the Lord, and easily fall into some grievous transgressions”.

Our Lord and God in the infallible Holy Bible also teaches us this truth about the necessity to practice custody of our eyes. Indeed, one can even understand this truth from reason alone: “Look not round about thee in the ways of the city, nor wander up and down in the streets thereof. Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not about upon another’s beauty. For many have perished by the beauty of a woman, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire.” (Ecclesiasticus or Sirach 9:7-9) “You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you, that **whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.**” (Matthew 5:27-28)

To further solidify and prove the Catholic position concerning custody of the eyes, the Magisterial teaching by Pope Pius XII in the encyclical *Sacra Virginitas* clearly tells us that we must fly from all occasions of sin:

*“It should be noted, as indeed the Fathers and Doctors of the Church teach, that we can more easily struggle against and repress the wiles of evil and the enticements of the passions if we do not struggle directly against them, but rather **flee from them** as best we may. For the preserving of chastity, according to the teaching of Jerome, **flight is more effective than open warfare**: ‘Therefore I flee, lest I be overcome.’ Flight must be understood in this sense, that not only do we **diligently avoid***

occasion of sin, but especially that in struggles of this kind we lift our minds and hearts to God... Flight and alert vigilance, by which we carefully avoid the occasions of sin, have always been considered by holy men and women as the most effective method of combat in this matter". (Pope Pius XII, *Sacra Virginitas* # 54-55, March 25, 1954)

Pius XII goes on to directly contradict, almost prophetically, the position held by many heretics of our own times:

*"Today however it does not seem that everybody holds the same opinion. Some indeed claim that all Christians, and the clergy in particular, should not be 'separated from the world' as in the past, but should be 'close to the world;' therefore they should 'take the risk' and put their chastity to the test in order to show whether or not they have the strength to resist; therefore, they say, let young clerics see everything so that they may accustom themselves to gaze at everything with equanimity, and thus render themselves immune to all temptations. For this reason they readily grant young clerics the liberty to **turn their eyes in any direction without the slightest concern for modesty**; they may attend motion pictures, even those forbidden by ecclesiastical censorship; they may peruse even obscene periodicals; they may read novels which are listed in the Index of forbidden books or prohibited by the Natural Law. ... But it is easily seen that this method of educating and training the clergy to acquire the sanctity proper to their calling is wrong and harmful. For **'he that loveth danger shall perish in it;**' [Ecclus 3:27] most appropriate in this connection is the admonition of Augustine: 'Do not say that you have a chaste mind if your eyes are unchaste, because an unchaste eye betrays an unchaste heart.'" (Pope Pius XII, *Sacra Virginitas* # 56, March 25, 1954)*

St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Art of Dying Well*, Chapter II, The Second Precept, Which Is, To Die To The World: "Since, then, such is the truth, if we wish to learn the Art of dying well, it is our bounden and serious duty to go forth from the world, not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth: yea, to die to the world, and to exclaim with the Apostle, "The world is crucified to me, and I to the world." This business is no trifling matter, but one of the utmost difficulty and importance: for our Lord being asked, "Are they few that are saved?" replied, "Strive to enter by the narrow gate;" and more clearly in St. Matthew doth He speak: "Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life: and few there are that find it!" (chap. vii.) To live in the world, and to despise the

pleasures of the world, is very difficult: to see beautiful objects, and not to love them; to taste sweet things, and not to be delighted with them; to despise honours, to court labours, willingly to occupy the lowest place, to yield the highest to all others in fine, to live in the flesh as if not having flesh, this seems rather to belong to angels than to men; and yet the apostle, writing to the Church of the Corinthians, in which nearly all lived with their wives, and who were therefore neither clerics, nor monks, nor anchorets, but, according to the expression now used, were seculars still, he thus addresses them: "This therefore I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth, that they also who have wives be as if they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as if they used it not, for the fashion of this world passeth away." (1 Corinth, vii. 29. & c.)

“By these words the apostle exhorts the faithful that, being encouraged by the hope of eternal happiness, they should be as little affected by earthly things as if they did not belong to them; that they should love their wives only with a moderated love, as if they had them not; that if they wept for the loss of children or of their goods, they should weep but little, as if they were not sorrowful; that if they rejoiced at their worldly honours or success, they should rejoice as if they had no occasion to rejoice that is, as if joy did not belong to them; that if they bought a house or field, they should be as little affected by it as if they did not possess it. In fine, the apostle orders us so to live in the world, as if we were strangers and pilgrims, not citizens. And this St. Peter more clearly teaches where he says: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the soul." (1 Epist. ii.) Thus the most glorious prince of the apostles wishes us, so to live in our own house and city as if we dwelt in another's, being little solicitous whether there is abundance or scarcity of provisions. But he commands us, that we so abstain "from carnal desires which war against the soul;" ... This, therefore, is the way to be in the world, and not of the world, which those do who, being dead to the world, live to God alone; and, therefore, such do not fear the death of the body, which brings them not harm but gain, according to the saying of the Apostle Paul, "For to me, to live is Christ: and to die is gain."”

As long as we are in the fallen world, we have every reason to fear that the next moment we live may be the one that brings us down to an eternal hell. *The Life of St. Paul of the Cross* tells us: “There is no doubt of St. Paul [of the Cross] being always spotless in purity. His maxims on the point of treating with the opposite sex deserves attention. "As long as our bones are covered with skin, there is reason to be afraid." He states that many persons, advanced in years, even though meritorious in most walks of life, have fallen into sins for want of caution. Beautiful and practical were the rules laid down for the custody of this virtue. His advise to priests and religious was: Let your conversation with ladies be brief and stiff. One

fruit seen everywhere the saint had been was that his penitents could be distinguished from their companions by their modesty in dress and deportment. He performed miracles more than once to save female modesty from the surgeon's knife and many were deprived of his friendship because they would not come up to his standards of decorum." St. Francis de Sales said: "Believe me that the mortification of the senses in seeing, hearing, and speaking, is worth much more than wearing chains or hair-cloth."

Even when we must do some deed which we cannot avoid, Our Lord will always aid us if we try to avoid sinful occasions as much as we can. St. Anthony Mary Claret writes: "What is more, I shall relate another instance which could not have been so, had I not received very special graces from heaven. While I was in the island of Cuba, for six years and two months to be exact, I confirmed more than 300,000 persons, the majority of whom were women, and young ones at that. If any one were to ask me what are the characteristics of the Cuban women's features, I would say that I do not know, despite the fact that I have confirmed so many of them. In order to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation, I had to look where their foreheads were, and this I did in a **rapid glance, after which I shut my eyes and kept them shut** all during the administration of the Sacrament." (From the Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret)

Parish priests do have a responsibility to ensure that reverence and modesty are kept during the Eucharistic celebration, not only because of the the reasons already mentioned, but also because Pope Pius XII advised as such: "The parish priest, and especially the preacher, when occasion arises, should according the the words of the Apostle Paul (2Tim 4:2), insist argue, exhort and command that feminine garb be based on modesty and that womanly ornament be a defense of virtue. Let them likewise admonish parents to cause their daughter to cease wearing indecorous dress..." (Decree of the Congregation of the Council by mandate of Pope Pius XII, 1930)

Some have asserted that there is nothing written how one should dress for mass or any standard, but it is obvious that the whole Church is unanimous in teaching that women must wear a long skirt and clothes that do not expose much flesh.

Fr. Hieremias Drexelius S.J., *Nicetas or the Triumph over Incontinency*, 1633: "There are some that pull out their eye, when it is somewhat wanton, but do not cast it from them [that is, they do not eliminate the occasions of sin]. Now and then they shun luxury, but avoid not the occasions thereof. That chaste Joseph did not so, who not content with pulling out his eye did also cast it from him. Did not only contemn as well

favors as threats of his mistress, but deceived he likewise: for she going about to attract him with most flattering importunities, he cast off his garment and fled away. How many chaste men have not only pulled out, but also cast from them their over curious and betraying eyes, so that they would not so much as abide the sight of their own mothers or sisters. ... St. Bernadine... was so modest from his very childhood, that as often as he heard any such like unseemly word, he would change his color as if one had given him a blow on the face. ... it is better to have the hatred than the company of evil men. There is no vicious man but either will commend his vice unto us, make an impression of it in us, or before we are aware, infect us therewith. There are some vices commended by example, others imprinted by speech, and very many by conversation inserted in our hearts. It is the safest course to beware of all those companions and to break with them as speedily as you can. He that continues near danger cannot long be safe; and who loves danger shall perish therein.

“Certain little creatures (as says Phedeon) are not perceived when they bite, so weak are they and unable to effect what they intended: the swelling only discovers the malignity of their sting. The same for the most part happens to all men in their conversation with wicked persons; they find the mischief, but apprehend not how or when they were damnified. Therefore St. Paul severely forbidding us, says: Keep not company with fornicators. I write unto you that you should not so much as take meat with these kind of people. Therefore you must be circumspect beforehand with whom you eat or drink before you eat or drink anything. "Know you not (saith he) that a little leaven corrupts the whole batch." It has been so in all Ages; with him that is perverse thou shalt be perverted. Salomon in the person of a father wisely admonishes us: "My son if sinners shall entice thee, condescend not unto them: if they shall say come with us etc., cast in thy lot with us; let there be but one purse to us all; my son walk not with them, stay thy food from their paths; for their feet run to evil." ... Thou must of necessity either imitate or reprove a dissolute companion. It is best for thee to avoid both, lest thou shalt find great store of wicked men everywhere. Converse therefore with them that will make thee better than thou art; admit them whom thou may benefit, or be benefited by. ... St. Basil condemns familiarity with women; not because they are evil, but because their familiarity is dangerous. "We must endeavor (saith he) to avoid all communication with women." ... It is much better to renounce familiarity with our friend than with Christ, and rather make shipwreck of friendship than our soul.

Oftentimes by a light touch no small dishonesty hath ensued. St. Augustine being asked why he would not dwell with his sister, replied "because they are not my sisters that live with my sister." Without doubt it is evil to behold a woman, worse to speak to her,

worst of all to touch her. Therefore Nicetius a very holy priest... very mindful of himself, was afraid to handle so much as the naked bodies of infants. For none he thought could be too wary in this respect, since pleasure is wont to insinuate itself so deceitfully.”

Question: Is it sinful to attend dances, or allow one’s children to attend such events? Is it true that one puts oneself in the occasion of sin if one attends dances?

Answer: In truth, dances are among the greatest inducements to the mortal sin of impurity, and all must stay away from them according to the Church’s teaching.

St. John Vianney: “**There is not a commandment of God which dancing does not cause men to break! Mothers may indeed say: ‘Oh, I keep an eye on their dress; you cannot keep guard over their heart.’** Go, you wicked parents, go down to Hell where the wrath of God awaits you, because of your conduct when you gave free scope to your children; GO! It will not be long before they join you, seeing that you have shown them the way so well! **Then you will see whether your pastor was right in forbidding those Hellish amusements.**” (*The Curé D’Ars, St. Jean-Marie-Baptiste Vianney*, p. 146)

St. Alphonsus (c. 1755): “In the year 1611, in the celebrated sanctuary of Mary in Montevergine, **it happened that on the vigil of Pentecost the people who thronged there profaned that feast with balls, excesses, and immodest conduct, when a fire was suddenly discovered bursting forth from the house of entertainment** where they were feasting, so that in less than an hour and a half it was consumed, and **more than one thousand five hundred persons were killed. Five persons who remained alive affirmed upon oath, that they had seen the Mother of God herself, with two lighted torches set fire to the inn.**” (*The Glories of Mary*, p. 659.)

From these quotes, everyone can see how evil dances are. Dancing causes thousands of tempting and lascivious thoughts that leads countless of lost souls to hell. To obstinately defend dances between boys and girls or between men and women is absolutely despicable, and those parents who allow their children to go to such events or those who even at times force their children to such events, will experience the most excruciating torment in hell unless they amend immediately. To go to pubs which propagate gambling or other mortal sins is absolutely unacceptable and sinful. These places were fervently preached against by St.

John Vianney, and he called them real hell holes and the cause of countless of mortal sins!

Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio* “lament, too, the destruction of purity among women and young girls as is evidenced by the increasing immodesty of their dress and conversation and by their participation in shameful dances”. Parents or people who think that such dances are lawful, are sadly totally clueless about the danger of falling into sins of impurity: “Just as the smallest part of the body feels the effect of an illness which is ravaging the whole body or one of its vital organs, so the evils now besetting society and the family afflict even individuals. In particular, We cannot but lament the morbid restlessness which has spread among people of every age and condition in life, the general spirit of insubordination and the refusal to live up to one’s obligations which has become so widespread as almost to appear the customary mode of living. We lament, too, the destruction of purity among women and young girls as is evidenced by the increasing immodesty of their dress and conversation and by their participation in shameful dances, which sins are made the more heinous by the vaunting in the faces of people less fortunate than themselves their luxurious mode of life. Finally, We cannot but grieve over the great increase in the number of what might be called social misfits who almost inevitably end by joining the ranks of those malcontents who continually agitate against all order, be it public or private.” (Pope Pius XI, *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio* #14, December 23, 1922)

Thus, parents have a duty and an obligation before God to never allow their child to be in a situation alone with a person who intends to marry their child or with other people who may be a source of temptation, as this is a great cause of damnation for young people nowadays. There must always be a person who watches so that no sensual acts can be perpetrated, and before our evil times, people understood this obvious fact that unmarried people who intended to marry frequently fell into mortal sin; they also frequently used chaperones for such purposes.

“It is useless for them [young people who intend to get married] to say that they neither had a bad motive nor bad thoughts. This is an illusion of the devil; in the beginning he does not suggest bad thoughts; but when, by frequent conversations together, and by frequently speaking of love, the affection of these lovers has become strong, the devil will make them blind to the danger and sinfulness of their conduct, and they shall find that, without knowing how, they have lost their souls and God by many sins of impurity and scandal. Oh! how many young persons of both sexes does the devil gain in this way! And of all those sins of scandal God will demand an account of fathers and mothers, who are bound, but neglect, to prevent these dangerous conversations. Hence,

they are the cause of all these evils, and shall be severely chastised by God for them.

“Above all, in order to avoid bad thoughts, men must abstain from looking at women, and females must be careful not to look at men. I repeat the words of Job which I have frequently quoted: “I made a covenant with my eyes that I should not so much as think upon a virgin.” he says that he made a covenant with his eyes that he would not *think*. What have the eyes to do with thinking? The eyes do not think; the mind alone thinks. But he had just reason to say that he made a covenant with his eyes that he would not think on women; for St. Bernard says that through the eyes the darts of impure love, which kills the soul, enter into the mind. Hence the Holy Ghost says: “Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up.” It is always dangerous to look at young persons elegantly dressed; and to look at them purposely, and without a just cause, is, at least, a venial sin.” (St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Sermons of St. Alphonsus de Liguori: "On Bad Thoughts"*)

Question: Is it lawful to wear more immodest clothing when one plays sports, since this is good for the health of the body or more easy to move around in?

Answer: Pope Pius XI issued a letter to the Cardinal Vicar of Rome expressing his disapproval of the impending national gymnastic and athletic competitions for women. The means employed to give health to the body, “the noble instrument of the soul,” he stated, should take into account suitability of time and place. They should not excite vanity or promote immodesty. And they must not lessen a young woman’s “reserve and self-possession which are both the ornament and guarantee of virtue” (Letter *A Lei, Vicario Nostro*, May 2, 1928). It must also be remarked that the way men nowadays dress when they are competing in gymnastics, is utterly unlawful, since one may not show the body with so tight-fitting pants or shorts that show the private parts clearly so that all can see them through the pants. There must always be a great modesty concerning the private parts, and all who refuse to follow this law of normal decency, will in the end go to hell for their willful immodesty.

Pope Pius XII, who watched the modern advance of immodest styles for women with concern, often reminded young girls to be vigilant against dangers of threatening purity. He offered the exquisite delicacy of conscience of the martyr St. Perpetua as an example:

“When she was thrown into the air by a savage bull in the amphitheatre at Carthage, her first thought and action when she fell to the ground was to rearrange her dress to cover her thigh, because she was more concerned for modesty than pain” (*Allocution to the girls of Catholic Action*, October 6, 1940).

Mode and modesty should go hand in hand like two sisters, he continued, because both words derive from the Latin *modus*, meaning a right measure. He warned:

“Many women have forgotten Christian modesty because of vanity and ambition: they rush wretchedly into dangers that can spell death to their purity. They give in to the tyranny of fashion, be it even immodest, in such a way as to appear not even to suspect that it is unbecoming... They have lost the very concept of danger; **they have lost the instinct of modesty**” (*ibid.*).

One year later, congratulating the Catholic Action girls for beginning the “crusade for purity,” he encouraged a militant spirit against impurity. The life of man on earth remains always one of warfare, he said, and young women have a special fight against the dangers of immorality in the field of fashion and dress, and of health and sports. The weapons they must take up for the fight, Pius XII told them, are words, clothing and behavior that display a high standard.

It is truly a war, the Sovereign Pontiff warned. The purity of souls living in the state of supernatural grace is not preserved without a struggle. A special heroism is needed to counter public opinion, to stand apart from popular styles, amusements, and sports. This is even more difficult because of the **“indulgent attitude, or better said, the negative attitude of an ever greater part of public opinion,** which renders it blind to the gravest moral disorders” (*Allocution of May 22, 1941*).

He was quite specific on the things young women must shun at all costs:

- “Dresses which hardly suffice to cover the person;
- “Others that seem designed to emphasize what they should rather conceal;
- “Sports that are performed with such clothing;
- “The kind of exhibitionism that is irreconcilable with even the least demanding standard of modesty” (*ibid.*).

Some objections

* Pope Pius XII addressed the objection that was already being raised about the convenience of the new sports fashions. Some young women, he noted, offer practical objections, saying that “a certain form of dress is more convenient or even more hygienic.” This kind of protest is commonly heard today: “How can I do acrobatics in a dress? You can’t play soccer in a skirt,”

and so on.

How did Pope Pius XII respond? Quite simply but firmly, he stated, “If a form of dress becomes a grave and proximate danger for the soul, it is certainly not hygienic for the spirit, and you must reject it” (*ibid.*).

Again, he turned to the example of martyrs to make his point. He challenged young girls to follow the example of girls like St. Agnes and St. Cecilia, who suffered tortures of body to preserve their virginal innocence and save their souls:

“Will you, then, for the love of Christ, in the esteem for virtue, not find at the bottom of your hearts the courage and strength to sacrifice a little well-being – a physical advantage, if you will – to conserve safe and pure the life of your souls?” (*ibid.*).

What is more, he added, if one does not have the right to endanger the physical health of others simply for one’s own pleasure, then it is certainly even less licit to compromise the health of their souls.

* With this, the Pontiff turned to another objection, also commonly heard today: that the immodest popular fashions do not cause young women any moral harm or lead them to make any personal compromises with purity. He answered:

“But how can you know anything of the impression made on others? Who can assure you that others do not draw therefrom incentives to evil? You do not know the depths of human frailty... Oh, how truly was it said that **if some Christian women could only suspect the temptations and falls they cause in others with modes of dress and familiarity in behavior**, which they unthinkingly consider as of no importance, **they would be shocked by the responsibility which is theirs**” (*ibid.*).

* Pius XII added a strong word of warning to Catholic mothers who imprudently allow their sons and daughters to become accustomed “to live barely attired.” The relevance of his words make them well worth repeating for the benefit of both mothers and fathers today, many of whom are totally ignorant of the dangers of the immodest clothing that has become commonplace today. He affirmed forcefully:

“O Christian mothers, **if you only knew what a future of worries, dangers, and shame... you lay up for your sons and your daughters by imprudently accustoming them to live barely attired, making them lose the natural**

sense of modesty. You would blush and take fright were you to know the shame you inflict upon yourselves and the harm which you occasion to your children, entrusted to you by Heaven to be brought up in a Christian manner” (*ibid.*)

Health of soul takes precedence over health of body

Catholic Morals are not like styles, they do not change with the times. What was immodest or indecent yesterday has not miraculously become acceptable today because of the omission or the complacency of the heretics and apostates of our own times. The words of Pope Pius XII to girls and women continue to be appropriate today:

“Beyond fashion and its demands, **there are higher and more pressing laws, principles superior to fashion, and unchangeable, which under no circumstances can be sacrificed to the whim of pleasure or fancy,** and before which must bow the fleeting omnipotence of fashion. These principles have been proclaimed by God, by the Church, by the Saints, by reason, by Christian morality... As St. Thomas of Aquinas teaches, the good of our soul must take precedence over that of our body, and to the good of our body we must prefer the good of the soul of our neighbor” (*Allocution to the girls of Catholic Action of May 22, 1941*).

There is only one way, today, as yesterday and tomorrow, for the Catholic girl and woman to counter immodesty in immoral fashions, bad language, and masculine attitudes: an absolute rejection of them. For the good of the soul, certain gymnastic exercises and sports are simply not suitable for Catholic women or young ladies.

Question: Is masturbation a sin?

Answer: There are four reasons why everyone automatically knows by instinct and by nature that masturbation is a mortal sin against both nature and God. The first reason is that all people know in their conscience that masturbation is **a kind of rape of another person.** The second reason is that it is **a kind of drug abuse,** since the **sexual pleasure is an intoxicating pleasure** that affects the person in a way similar to a strong drug. People who masturbate “look on a woman to lust after her” in order to become sensually aroused and thus, they commit “adultery with her” in their hearts (Matthew 5:28) and a kind of drug abuse that makes them guilty of a mortal sin against nature and God that will cause them to be damned forever in Hell by having their “whole body be cast into hell” and eternal

torments, according to Our Lord Jesus Christ's words in The Holy Bible (cf. Matthew 5:29). The third reason is that all people know that the **sexual pleasure is a shameful pleasure**, which is why all people who masturbate hide in shame when they are committing this vile and shameful deed. And the fourth reason is that **masturbation is non-procreative and unnatural**, and the Church's teaching is clear that "**the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children**" (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* #54) and that is why the procreation of children is the only primary end or purpose that God allows the sexual act to be used for, which makes all other sexual acts (like masturbation) unnatural and mortally sinful.

Thus, these four reasons absolutely prove why masturbation is always inherently evil and mortally sinful since this vile act is totally unreasonable, unnatural and selfish; **and that is why everyone without exception who commit this act can never be excused from sin through claiming ignorance of the fact that masturbation is a sin, and why they will be damned to burn forever in Hell** since they all know by instinct and by nature that it is a sin just like they know that getting drunk or intoxicated is a sin against the Natural Law, God and reason.

First, masturbation is rape. Women are not toys, playthings, or "bunnies" from which to derive sexual stimulation. When women are used in sexual fantasies, they are sexually abused, even if they are untouched. Many men rape many women each day and commit adultery and fornication without laying a hand on them. Women also rape men and commit adultery and fornication in this way. These rapes, fornications and adulteries are not marked by physical violence but by psychological warfare. Because a person is often unaware of being used and abused, and because the abuser often does not fathom the real extent of the severity of his crime, this makes these mental and visual rapes/abuses seem less devastating. Nevertheless, grave sin with all its degradation and death is being committed.

Second, masturbation is a kind of drug abuse. The vehemence of the sexual pleasure is extremely strong and similar to a strong drug. All people of course knows that getting intoxicated or drunk for pleasure only is against the Natural Law. When a person uses a drug to get intoxicated, he or she knows that they commit a sin. Similarly, when a person is abusing sexual pleasure, and since his intention for the sexual act is purely selfish, he knows that he is committing a kind of drug abuse. In fact, the pleasure that is derived from the sexual pleasure is many times stronger than many drugs, and as such, are of course more sinful to abuse than these drugs. For "**the sin of lust consists in seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with right reason...**" and "**lust there signifies any kind of excess.**" (St.

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II:II, Q. 154, Art. 1)

This can be proven by an example. Consider how a man that is sick and who suffers much pain is allowed by divine permission and justice to take morphine or other strong painkillers since he is in need of them. His reason when taking these drugs is not self-gratification but the alleviation of the pain that he experiences. This example could be likened with normal, natural, lawful and procreative marital relations between two married spouses, which is permitted and non-sinful as long as the spouses have “intercourse so that it [the seed] might germinate at the right place and in the right way and bear fruit [that is, bear children] for a just and rational cause.” (Jesus Christ speaking to St. Bridget, in *St. Bridget’s Revelations*, Book 5, Interrogation 5)

However, whenever the sick person mentioned above would become well and yet continued to use morphine or other painkillers without any need to do so – and for the mere sake of getting high and for pleasure – **he would have committed the sin of drug abuse**. His just reason for using the painkiller became unjust the very moment he became well and did not need to use it anymore.

The sexual pleasure is always an evil pleasure to experience in itself since it is a **shameful and intoxicating pleasure** that is very similar to the evil pleasure people experience when they abuse alcohol or drugs, and this pleasure is evil to experience also for married couples, even though married spouses do not sin during their lawful and normal procreative marital acts. St. Augustine in his book *On Marriage and Concupiscence* explains this evil thus: “Wherefore the devil holds infants guilty [through original sin] who are born, not of the good by which marriage is good, but of the **evil of concupiscence [lust]**, which, indeed, marriage uses aright, but at which even marriage has occasion to feel shame.” (Book 1, Chapter 27.--Through Lust Original Sin is Transmitted; Concupiscence of the Flesh, the Daughter and Mother of [Original] Sin)

Third, masturbation is shameful. Consider the fact that a person would be very ashamed if their parent, child or friend walked in on them when they were committing this shameful, selfish and evil act of masturbation. **It is thus clear that their conscience tells them that it is an inherently shameful and evil act.** Everyone (but complete perverts who have willfully destroyed their conscience over a period of time) knows that masturbation is a selfish, shameful, intoxicating and evil pleasure and that is why they are ashamed of it and why they hide themselves when committing this shameful deed.

For instance, consider how utterly stupid and unreasonable it is for a person to be ashamed of committing acts of sensuality and masturbation in front of other people while at the same time he refuses to feel this very same shame when masturbating in the presence of God and Mary and all the trillions of angels in Heaven... all the while hoping to not get noticed by anyone! The whole spiritual world sees his disgusting behavior – yet he doesn't care. This person knows in his conscience that he justly deserves to be punished by God who sees him commit this evil and shameful act, and he also knows that he is committing an inherently evil, shameful and selfish act since he would be ashamed to commit it before other people. Yet his perverse lust quenches his perverse conscience in this case in order to satisfy his unnatural lusts.

Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres Complètes*: **“What a young boy [or anyone who have sinned through sensual touches or masturbation] should tell in confession:** “I sometimes stroked myself or others, urged by disorderly pleasure; I fondled myself, in my bed and elsewhere, something I would not have dared to do if people had been there.” Sometimes the priest cannot absolve such fondling. If they are not confessed and the details given, whatever the shame, one cannot be absolved, and the confession is worthless: one is destined to be damned for ever in Hell. The action and the way it has been done must be told.”

Some people may object that there are many other events that are shameful and that are not yet inherently sinful such as soiling one's pants or being forced to show oneself naked to other people against one's own will. This objection, however, fails to notice the obvious difference between people committing acts of lust and events which are shameful but that are not desired or longed for by a person in a sensual way. Acts of lust are acts performed for the sake of a pleasure and are therefore performed with the will and purpose of satisfying a sensual desire while the events or acts of soiling one's pants or being forced to show oneself naked to other people is not a desire or lust that is sought after. Thus, these people do not desire that these events should happen. If those people who endured the events of soiling their clothes or naked exhibition against their own will would sensually desire or lust for that these shameful events would happen in the same way that a man or a woman lust for and desire that sexual acts or acts of lust happen, they would indeed be declared the most disgusting perverts. Who but a complete and satanic pervert would sensually desire or lust after soiling their pants or being exhibited naked?

Someone might say that it is the sexual member that is shameful or evil to expose to others, and not concupiscence or the sexual lust. But this argument is false and easily refuted since no

one who is not a complete pervert would have sex or masturbate in front of other people even though their whole body was covered by sheets or blankets. This proves to us that it is the sexual pleasure that is shameful and evil, and not only the exhibition of the sexual organ. For “man is ashamed not only of this sexual union but also of all the signs thereof,” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II:II, Q. 151, Art. 4) and this proves to us that not only the sensual desire is a shameful desire, but also the very sexual act and “also of all the signs thereof.”

Who would like to have their children or parents be a part of a porn movie? No one but a complete and satanic pervert. Who would want their child to be lusted at by other people? Only a son of Satan. This shows us that people know instinctively and by nature that the sexual pleasure is a shameful, evil and inherently disordered pleasure, since it plucks the innocence of people.

All people thus know in their hearts that masturbation is inherently evil and shameful. But since they have allowed their lust to reach such a level in their hearts that they do not want to resist it, they try to forget the obvious fact that this act is against their conscience and nature. They can only try to forget it, however, for they all know that it is an evil act since they are ashamed to do it in front of other people. Thus, their conscience convicts them and testifies against them on this point.

Matthew 5:27-30, *Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke, saying*: “You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. **But I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.** And if thy right eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. For it is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than that thy whole body be cast into hell. And if thy right hand scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than that thy whole body be cast into hell.”

Mark 9:42-47 “And if thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life, maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into unquenchable fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished. And if thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off. It is better for thee to enter lame into life everlasting, than having two feet, to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished. And if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out. It is better for thee with one eye to enter into the kingdom of God, than having two eyes to be cast into the hell

of fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished.”

People who masturbate “look on a woman to lust after her” in order to become sensually aroused, and thus, they commit “adultery with her” in their hearts and a mortal sin against nature and God. **But masturbation is also a mortal sin and against the Natural Law even without thinking about women, which means that no one can be excused who commits this sin.**

These verses from Our Lord Jesus Christ above also proves to us that the mere consent to lustful thoughts (without any physical activity) is enough to damn a person for ever in Hell — and that is why we must always control our eyes and keep them away from persons or objects that may arouse sensual or sinful thoughts.

Fourth, masturbation is non-procreative. The Church and the Natural Law teaches that ***“the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children”*** (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* #54) and that even the normal, natural and procreative ***“act of marriage exercised for pleasure only”*** is condemned as a sin for both the **married and unmarried people alike** (Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Subjects Condemned in Decree* (# 9), March 4, 1679).

The Natural Law is rooted in design. God, the Supreme Designer, has imprinted a design on all created things – including the human person, both in his spiritual and physical being – a purpose for which each has been created. Thus, with regard to the human person, the Creator has designed speech for communicating the truth and the mouth to swallow food etc. Likewise, the Creator has designed the sexual organs for something noble, namely, for procreating children. Thus, the Church’s teaching is clear that **“the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children”** (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* #54)

Any action of the sexual organisms (the private parts) or other acts that are intended to arouse sensuality that is lacking the procreative function, is thus always mortally sinful and against the Natural Law. An action of the sexual faculties outside of the normal and natural marital act are lacking the procreative dimension and consequently, it would be sexual pleasure sought for itself, isolated from its procreative function – and that is an unreasonable, unlawful and unnatural lust.

What does the Bible Say about Masturbation?

“Is masturbation a sin?” Many have found it difficult to answer this question according to the Bible because the Bible never mentions the word “masturbation” specifically. To understand how God feels about this topic, we only need to examine other verses that deal with issues such as lust, self-control, and purity.

It has been the constant and clear teaching of the Church from principles found in Holy Scripture that masturbation is a serious mortal sin that will keep one from Heaven (e.g., 1 Cor. 6:10). This is also clear from the teaching of the Church as well as from natural reason. In assigning a reason for such a serious prohibition, the Church teaches that the sexual function is meant by God to serve primarily for the begetting of children. Therefore, any deliberate activation of it is seriously inordinate and sinful.

The Lord has said: “Look not round about thee in the ways of the city, nor wander up and down in the streets thereof. Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not about upon another’s beauty. For many have perished by the beauty of a woman, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire.” (Ecclesiasticus or Sirach 9:7-9) “Young men, in like manner, exhort that they be sober.” (Titus 2:6) “You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you, that **whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.**” (Matthew 5:27-28)

Jesus feels the best thing to do about sexual sins is to gouge out our eyes (Matthew 5:29) and cut off our hands (Matthew 5:30). This is a very serious and extreme remedy. He does not literally mean for us to mutilate ourselves, but that we must cut off all occasions of sin. However, it is clear that sexual sins, and also the sexual fantasies that are so easily overlooked and neglected by so many people, are serious enough to be a part of the highway to Hell. If we let ourselves commit sin with the hand or be hit in the eye by the Devil, we are sure to lose our souls. Let us therefore guard our eyes, the lamps of our bodies, the way to our hearts and mind, and protect our other members from committing or falling into sin.

So we are to control our actions with others and also our actions when alone. We are not to let sin take root in our hearts. Romans 6:12-14 tells us, “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof. **Neither yield ye your members as instruments of iniquity unto sin; but present yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.** For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” Your “members” in this verse is referring to the different parts of your body: your hands, feet,

fingers, etc. Are you using your body in masturbation in a way that you think would make God proud?

Many times we have the attitude of “If God gave me this body, shouldn’t I be able to enjoy it?” First of all, we have to remember that sex is God’s invention. He is the mastermind behind it. God Himself has declared that it is only in marriage that any form of sexual stimulation, that is, natural sexual intercourse open to procreation of children, is lawful.

Masturbation is a selfish act where we take advantage of and abuse our procreative power. God cares about what we do with our bodies, in public or in private, and He doesn’t want us to abuse ourselves in any way. Did you know that in older dictionaries the definition of the word masturbation is “self-abuse”? And if you were to look in a current dictionary under the word self-abuse, the word “masturbation” would be the second definition given. To this day, the two words of “masturbation” and “self-abuse” are linked together, masturbation/self-abuse.

You might be thinking, “How am I abusing myself by doing this?” You are abusing yourself by masturbating because you are improperly handling something that God entrusted to your care. You are taking something that God gave us (our bodies and minds) and using it in a perverse manner. When masturbating, you are defiling your mind with obscene thoughts and then defiling your body by using it to act out those thoughts. To “defile” something means “to make unclean, to make impure.” Matthew 15:19-20 reads, “For out of the heart proceed **evil thoughts**, murders, **adulteries**, **fornications**... these are the things which defile a man.”

And it is of faith that we all already know in our hearts that masturbating is wrong. When you engage in this activity, you know that you are committing a shameful and evil act.

This activity does not lift you up spiritually. It brings you down. God did not create our sexual organs so that we could fantasize and have sex by ourselves. Now, you might be thinking, “Well, isn’t it still better to masturbate than to commit fornication?” The only answer to this question is no, for you are still committing a mortal sin and it doesn’t really matter what form of mortal sin you are committing. You will still be sent Hell for it, whether it be by fornication or self-abuse. Maybe in your mind you feel that it is better to masturbate because at least you are the only one involved. Maybe you believe that it is the “lesser” of two evils.

In reality, masturbation is a mortal sin just like fornication **and is considered as even a worse sin than fornication according to St. Thomas Aquinas.**

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art. 12: “**Whether the unnatural vice is the greatest sin among the species of lust?** I answer that, In every genus, worst of all is the corruption of the principle on which the rest depend. Now the principles of reason are those things that are according to nature, because reason presupposes things as determined by nature, before disposing of other things according as it is fitting. ... Therefore, since by the unnatural vices [masturbation, homosexuality, sodomy, bestiality, etc.] man transgresses that [purpose] which has been determined by nature [for the procreation of children] with regard to the use of venereal actions, it follows that in this matter [species of lust] this sin [the unnatural vice] is gravest of all.”

First of all, and we mentioned this before, when women are used in sexual fantasies, they are sexually abused, even if they are untouched. **So many men rape many women each day and commit adultery and fornication without laying a hand on them. Women also rape men and commit adultery and fornication in this way.** Second, masturbation will not truly relieve the sexual pressure that you may feel. It may for a short moment, but in the long run it only creates a deeper desire and capacity for sex, which will lead to more masturbation and, ultimately, the desire for sexual intercourse and pornography. Third, everyone must also be absolutely aware of that even if a person doesn't think of women or men while masturbating, this sin is still one of those unnatural vices **that are amongst the worst sins that one can commit against God and nature.**

St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *The Four Principal Gates of Hell*, On Impurity: “Some will say that it is a trifling sin. Is it a trifling sin? **It is a mortal sin.** St. Antoninus writes that such is the nauseousness of this sin that the devils themselves cannot endure it. Moreover, the Doctors of the Church say that certain demons, who have been superior to the rest, remembering their ancient dignity, disdain tempting to so loathsome a sin. Consider then how disgusting he must be to God, who, like a dog, is ever returning to his vomit, or wallowing like a pig in the stinking mire of this accursed vice (2 Pet. 2:22). The impure say, moreover, “God has compassion on us who are subject to this vice, because He knows that we are flesh.” What do you say? God has compassion on this vice? But you must know that the most horrible chastisements with which God has ever visited the earth have been drawn down by this vice. St. Jerome says that this is the only sin of which we read that it caused God to repent of having made man, for all flesh had become corrupted (Gen. 6:6-12). And so it is, St. Jerome says, that there is no sin which God punishes so rigorously, even upon earth, as this. ... Principally on account of this sin did God destroy mankind, with the exception of eight persons, by the flood. It is

a sin which God punishes, not only in the other life, but in this also. “Because,” says God, “you have forgotten Me and turned your back upon Me, for a miserable pleasure of the flesh, I am resolved that even in this life you shall pay the price of your wickedness” (Ezek. 23:35).”

St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *The Four Principal Gates of Hell*, On Impurity: “You say, “God has compassion upon men subject to this sin.” But it is this sin that sends most men to Hell. St. Remigius says that the greater number of the damned are in Hell through this vice [of impurity]. Father Segneri writes that as this vice fills the world with sinners, so it fills Hell with damned souls; and before him St. Bernardine of Siena wrote: “This sin draws the whole world, as it were, into sin.” And before him St. Bernard and St. Isidore said that “the human race is brought under the power of the devil more by lust than by all the other vices.” The reason is because this vice proceeds from the natural inclination of the flesh. Hence St. Thomas Aquinas says that the devil does not take such complacency in securing the commission of any other sin as of this, because the person who is plunged in this infernal mire remains lodged therein, and almost wholly unable to free himself again.”

James 1:14-15 tells us that “every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” This verse is telling us that all sin begins with a thought, but that when we give in to the thought and act out the sin in deed or thought, we will sink deeper and deeper into sin. Sin always takes you farther than you wanted to go and keeps you longer than you wanted to stay. And with masturbation, there is a vicious circle. You are only temporarily satisfied. And the more you indulge in this activity, the more addicted you become to it. Then if you let yourself become enslaved to a sexual high, you will find that you need to go to increasingly extreme acts to maintain the same degree of excitement. I think the many daily perversions committed by sex and masturbation addicts proves this case quite clearly. In John 8:34, Jesus warns us, “Verily, verily I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.”

So, again, masturbation is a dangerous activity to engage in for this reason: All sexual immorality, including masturbation, begins with a thought. Then a lustful thought not taken captive will eventually lead to other perversions, including deviant sexual practices, demonic obsession or possession and homosexuality, and other perversions like pedophilia, because sin reproduces itself if left unchecked. All sexual perverts proves that this is the case. For they all started out as masturbators just like ordinary people at some point in time. When we

fantasize and masturbate, we open our hearts and minds up to demonic forces and strange and perverse thoughts and possibilities. We are giving the Devil an open invitation to take residence in our beings. If we do not deal with our evil thoughts, they will take root in our heart. It is for this reason that God is so concerned with our thought life. Jesus came not only to deliver us from our “outward” sins, but also from wickedness that begins in the heart.

Now, you may be thinking “It is unfair for God to demand sexual purity from us after giving us sexual drives that seem to overwhelm us.” First of all, and this is important to remember, Adam and Eve was not created by God with sexual temptations or desires. In other words, God did not create the human race with any of the sexual temptations or desires that we are now plagued with. These temptations are only the tragic and evil effect of the Fall and Original sin of Adam and Eve, and is something which God permits us to be tempted with as a punishment for the original sin.

Had Adam and Eve chosen not to sin, we would not now have had any sexual temptations tempting us. St. Augustine explains it thus: “...lust, which only afterwards sprung up as the penal consequence of [original] sin, the iniquity of violating it was all the greater in proportion to the ease with which it might have been kept.” (*City of God*, Book XIV, Chapter 12; also see [The Origin of Fleshly Lust](#).)

Second, God never demands from us something that would be impossible for us to do. And even if it’s hard for us, “nothing is impossible with God” (Luke 1:37). True, you may feel weak within yourself, but He will equip you with His holy power to overcome any sin if only you ask in faith.

Hence St. Augustine wisely observes, “The presumption of stability renders many unstable; no one will be so strong as he who feels his own weakness.” St. Alphonsus commenting on these words wisely adds, “Whosoever says that he entertains no fear of being lost, betrays a pernicious self-confidence and security by which he deceives himself. For, confiding in his own strength, he ceases to tremble, and being free from fear [of falling into sin], he neglects to recommend himself to God, and left to his own weakness, he infallibly falls.” (*Treatise on Prayer*, Chapter IV)

Some of you are probably saying, “Well, I agree with all of this in my head, but living it out on a day-to-day basis is another story.” Perhaps you sometimes feel overwhelmed by the temptations that you face. But never underestimate the power that you have over sin. On your own you are not that strong, but with God’s power, you can overcome. Second Corinthians

10:3-5 reads, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

These verses are telling us that we are not helpless. We can fight and be victorious against our sexual thoughts and desires—with the help of God. If you want to stop masturbating and you realize that this is what your Heavenly Father desires of you, you can. Confess this sin to a Catholic priest and to God and ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen you so that you can have control over your lustful thoughts and actions, and remember always to recommend yourself to Jesus and Mary in time of temptations, and you will never fall. And if you have a Catholic friend whom you trust, ask that person to pray for you in this area, also. And if you slip occasionally or even a lot, don’t give up. Self-control takes effort. If you truly want to stop masturbating, one thing that you must consider doing is to flee from and reject those things that will cause you to stumble, whether it be the internet or sexually-themed movies, music, books, videos, in other words, anything that fills your mind with images and words that will make you weak and vulnerable.

What you need to do, first of all, is avoid the occasions of sin that are causing you to fall into mortal sin. Take drastic action in that regard, if it is necessary. For example, if someone commits mortal sins on a computer, he or she should get rid of the computer. If people are stuck in such a state, Jesus says they must “cut off” the occasion lest they perish forever (Matthew 5:30).

Second, you need to pray the Rosary each day, and pray it well. Cultivate the habit of praying the Hail Mary as much as you can. There are many ways one can go about doing so. For example, each time you leave your room, you could go to your knees and pray one to three Hail Mary’s. Praying the Rosary and the Hail Mary is actually the most important point, for without those graces you will not come out of mortal sin or begin to avoid the occasions that are causing you to fall into sin. (See [How to Pray the Rosary](#); See also [The Revelations of St. Bridget](#) which is a MUST READ book that is especially effective in helping a person to conquer his or her sensual temptations and faults.)

Sister Lucy of Fatima, regarding the Holy Rosary, said the following words to Fr. Augustin Fuentes on December 26, 1957:

“Look, Father, the Most Holy Virgin, in these last times in which we live, has given a

new efficacy to the recitation of the Rosary. She has given this efficacy to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or above all spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families, of the families of the world or of the religious communities, or even of the life of peoples and nations, that cannot be solved by the Rosary. **There is no problem I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the Holy Rosary.**”

Third, we would recommend these videos on Hell: <http://www.doomsdaytube.com/scary-hell.php>

Finally, the first degree of humility is to fear God enough to avoid clear mortal sins. Mortal sinners don't respect that God will cast them into Hell for their actions. If they did, they would alter their conduct. Thus, people who commit mortal sins lack humility. In their pride, they don't fear or respect God; and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 110:10). A person who commits mortal sins needs to begin to respect and fear God for who He is and what He will do to them.

As far as confession goes, you may make it to a non-heretical and fully Catholic priest ordained in the traditional Catholic rite, as described in this article: “[About Sacraments From Heretics and Prayer in Communion with Heretics](#)”. You should focus on ceasing to commit the mortal sins that you are doing, acquiring a firm resolve not to commit them anymore, and making a proper confession. (See [this file for help with ceasing to commit mortal and venial sins](#)). (Also see [The Steps to convert to the traditional Catholic faith and for those leaving the New Mass - Baptism and Conditional Baptism - the Council of Trent's Profession of Faith for Converts](#)).

St. Augustine of Hippo in his “*Confessions*” (written 397-398 A.D.) relates to us his own struggle with the evil of lust and how he was bound down by his own perverse iron will.

St. Augustine, *The Confessions of Augustine*, Book VIII, Chapter V, Of the Causes Which Alienate Us from God: “... thus [I was] bound, not with the irons of another, but my own iron will [chaining me in lust]. My will was the enemy master of, and thence had made a chain for me and bound me. Because of a perverse will was lust made; and lust indulged in became custom; and custom not resisted became necessity. By which links, as it were, joined together (whence I term it a chain), did a hard bondage hold me enthralled. But that new will which had begun to develop in me, freely to worship You, and to wish to enjoy You, O God, the only sure enjoyment, was not able as yet to overcome my former wilfulness, made strong by long indulgence. Thus did my two

wills, one old and the other new, one carnal, the other spiritual, contend within me; and by their discord they unstrung my soul. Thus came I to understand, from my own experience, what I had read, how that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. (Galatians 5:17) I verily lusted both ways; yet more in that which I approved in myself, than in that which I disapproved in myself. For in this last it was now rather not I, (Romans 7:20) because in much I rather suffered against my will than did it willingly. And yet it was through me that custom became more combative against me, because I had come willingly whither I willed not. And who, then, can with any justice speak against it, when just punishment follows the sinner? Nor had I now any longer my wonted excuse, that as yet I hesitated to be above the world and serve You, because my perception of the truth was uncertain; for now it was certain. But I, still bound to the earth, refused to be Your soldier; and was as much afraid of being freed from all embarrassments, as we ought to fear to be embarrassed.”

“I’ve broken every commandment. I’m trying to stay away from sin but I still find myself suffering with the same sins”

Tragically, many persons deluded by the Devil falsely claim that sexual sins and masturbation is no sin at all, while some try to minimize the wickedness of their actions; others still try to blame God for their failings. Here follows an email exchange with a certain person that probably many people can associate directly with.

“I watched... [the] video on "[death and the journey into hell](#)". Based on the video it almost seems like one little false move by whomever and you will be damned. We’ll never be perfect. We are all sinners until death. Based on how this world is now, I can see the thought of more going to hell than heaven. I’ve broken every commandment. I’m trying to stay away from sin but I still find myself suffering with the same sins. I pray to Jesus and Mary all the time. I pray the rosary and many other prayers. I try to make a point of doing goods acts in the name of Jesus whether great or small. This video made me feel as though no matter what I do I will be damned. Jesus be with you and your family.

Ace...”

Answer: You say that it’s as if one little false move will send you to Hell. A mortal sin is not a false move, neither is it “little”; it’s a willful commission of an act that’s gravely offensive to God. It is a huge thing, **a mortal sin**. You clearly have a desire to downplay mortally sinful

activity, and your problem is that you won't exercise your will and resist sin, by doing the necessary sacrifices that is required of you in order to be saved and avoid sin. You claim that you pray; yet you persist in grave sins.

There are seven main reasons for why you persist in grave sin: First, you don't pray with true faith and sincerity, or you pray too little of the Rosary and other mental and vocal prayers. Second, you spend too little time on reading God's Word and other good, spiritual Catholic writings. Third, you don't recommend yourself to God nor seek after God's protection in time of temptation, for if you did recommend yourself to God and if you did ask for His help when assailed by the enemy, you would infallibly not have fallen into sin. Fourth, you have not cut off all the occasions of sin like evil and worldly friends, media, music, magazines, video games and the like that are opposed to Our Lord Jesus Christ's words and a holy life. Fifth, you have not made enough penance for your sins by fasting, mortification and self-denial of your own will.

The Canons of John the Faster teaches that "Anyone having committed masturbation is penanced forty days, during which he must keep himself alive by xerophagy and must do one hundred metanies every day." (Canon 8) The Interpretation of this canon explains that: "The present Canon decrees that anyone who is guilty of masturbating at any time is obliged to refrain from communing for forty days straight, passing these with xerophagy, [the practice of eating dry food, especially food cooked without oil] or, more explicitly speaking, with only bread and water, and doing every day metanies to the number of one hundred each time. As concerning masturbators and fornicators, St. Meletius the Confessor asserts that they are making a sacrifice of their semen to the Devil, which semen is the most precious part of their body."

The word *Metanie* means "A reverent physical movement indicating repentance (Greek: metanoia), made by making the sign of the cross with the right hand and either bowing at the waist and knees until the hand on its downward final stroke touches the ground (small metanie), or lowering the whole body onto the knees and bowing down fully until the forehead touches the ground (great metanie). Metanies are prescribed at specific liturgical times, particularly during the Lenten prayer of Ephrem the Syrian, but are proscribed from Pascha through Pentecost. They are a part of personal prayer and are an integral element of monastic training. Metanies are distinct from the still kneeling position, and also from the bowing of clergy to one another known as the schema."

Sixth, (as to the question why one falls back into sin), you do not use your time, money and

effort to save other people from the eternal fire of hell or care enough for their spiritual welfare to lead them to a better lifestyle, and because of this, you are lacking in or are devoid of charity and love for your fellow human beings. You refuse to speak about God with your family and friends, refusing to help or convert them from sin and infidelity and you refuse to take an active part in trying to help souls in general by whatever means are necessary to you, and in so doing, choose to become God's enemy according to Our Lord Jesus Christ's words in the Holy Bible, which states that: "He that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth" (Matthew 12:30). All who can help their family or friends or themselves but refuse to do so will be damned for their lack of charity. Thus, "Those words of our Lord, *He that is not with Me is against Me*, will make you understand how destitute we here are of any friends to aid us in bringing this people to Jesus Christ. But we must not despond, for God at the end will render unto each one according to his deserts... **And how severe are the punishments which God at last inflicts on His enemies, we see well enough, as often as we turn our mind's eye to the inextinguishable furnace of hell, whose fires are to rage throughout all eternity for so many miserable sinners.**" (St. Francis Xavier, A.D. 1544, In *The Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, p. 223)

Our Lord Jesus Christ in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* shows us that a person who does not use his possessions for His sake "will incur a judgment" and "that every person who does not hearken to others will himself cry out and not be heard", which means that he who does not have charity with others, using his time, money and effort to help and save them from hell "will himself cry out [to God] and not be heard" both in this life when he seeks to be relieved from his sins and sinful desires, and in the eternal fire of hell, which is the eternal abode of all who lack charity and love for their fellow human beings. Our Lord said to St. Bridget: "Reply firmly to him with the four things I tell you now. The first is that many people lay up treasure but do not know for whom. The second is that every person entrusted with the Lord's talent who does not spend it cheerfully will incur a judgment. The third is that a person who loves land and flesh more than God will not join the company of those who hunger and thirst for justice. The fourth is that every person who does not hearken to others will himself cry out and not be heard." (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 4, Chapter 81)

In truth, Catholic teaching teaches that a person is bound to give a tenth of his earnings to God, (usually to one's local priest) and this teaching comes directly from the Old Testament which commands all God's servants to give a tenth of their profits as a sacrifice to God. Today, however, there are no Catholic priests available to give one's money to, and so, one must instead find a completely Catholic cause to give a tenth of one's earnings to, such as donating

to a Catholic organization or group in order to help them save souls, or printing Catholic material oneself and handing it out to people. When one understands that this is a law of charity that God requires all to follow, one can understand why so many are allowed to fall into sin and be unable to extricate themselves out of their sins. Their own greed and lack of charity for other souls who labor in darkness and infidelity directly causes them to be unable to defend themselves against the attacks of the devil. Thus, **Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke rightly saying “that every person who does not hearken to others will himself cry out and not be heard.”** In truth, those who wish to please God in all but who have not fulfilled this Law of God of tithing, should find a good and perfectly Catholic cause and then donate a tenth of all they own to it, asking God to forgive them for their many years of forgetfulness and disobedience. However, donating to heretics, schismatics or other non-Catholic religious organizations is condemned by the Church as a mortal sin, and so, this makes it necessary to find out thoroughly whether a person or an organization that one wants to donate to is affiliated in anyway with the propagation of a false, non-Catholic belief. If a person is unsure about whether a person or an organization is acceptable or not to donate to, you can always send us an email and ask us for help.

Pope Innocent III, *Fourth Lateran Council*, 1215: **“Moreover, we determine to subject to excommunication believers who receive, defend, or support heretics.”**

The Catholic Encyclopedia states concerning tithing that: “The payment of tithes was adopted from the Old Law, and early writers speak of it as a divine ordinance and an obligation of conscience. The earliest positive legislation on the subject seems to be contained in the letter of the bishops assembled at Tours in 567 and the canons of the Council of Maçon in 585. In course of time, we find the payment of tithes made obligatory by ecclesiastical enactments in all the countries of christendom. The Church looked on this payment as “*of divine law, since tithes were instituted not by man but by the Lord Himself*” (C. 14, X de decim. III, 30).”

The following example on the importance of charity can be seen clearer from St. Bridget’s revelations, in the book rightly entitled the “Book of Questions.” It is composed of questions which Our Lord and Judge gives wonderful answers to:

“Third question. Again the monk appeared on his ladder as before saying: “Why should I not exalt myself over others, seeing that I am rich?”

“Answer to the third question. The Judge answered: “As to why you must not take pride in riches, I answer: The riches of the world only belong to you insofar as you need

them for food and clothing. The world was made for this: that man, having sustenance for his body, might through work and humility return to me, his God, whom he scorned in his disobedience and neglected in his pride. However, if you claim that the temporal goods belong to you, I assure you that you are in effect forcibly usurping for yourself all that you possess beyond your needs. All temporal goods ought to belong to the community and be equally accessible to the needy out of charity.

“You usurp for your own superfluous possession things that should be given to others out of compassion. However, many people do own much more than others but in a rational way, and they distribute it in discreet fashion. Therefore, in order not to be accused more severely at the judgment because you received more than others, it is advisable for you not to put yourself ahead of others by acting haughtily and hoarding possessions. As pleasant as it is in the world to have more temporal goods than others and to have them in abundance, it will likewise be terrible and painful beyond measure at the judgment not to have administered in reasonable fashion even licitly held goods.”
(*St. Bridget's Revelations*, Book 5, Interrogation 7)

Thus, we can see why Our Lord in the Holy Bible teaches us to help our fellow men when they are starving either physically or spiritually. “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,” (Matthew 25:35) “If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.” (Isaiah 58:10)

It cannot be doubted that one of the main reasons why the first generation of Christians were so much more virtuous than following generations, was that they all gave up all of their possessions to God and the Christian community, and spent their life much in the same way as monks and nuns nowadays live. Holy Scripture is very clear on the great spiritual benefits that those who do this will have and that they will receive “a treasure in heaven” for their good deeds instead of something that “moth corrupteth” on this earth: “Sell what you possess and give alms. Make to yourselves bags which grow not old, a treasure in heaven which faileth not: where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth.” (Luke 12:33) The Bible also makes clear that we will be punished unless we follow this law of charity. “To him therefore who knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17) “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted: and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered: and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days.” (James 5:1-3)

Seventh (as to the question why one falls back into sin), you don't have the first degree of humility: a fear of God that compels one to avoid mortal sin. Hence, your problem is pride. You think God's law is a joke – not serious enough to warrant a change in your lifestyle – and you are mistaken.

St. Benedict (c. 520): “The first degree of humility, then, is that a man always have the fear of God before his eyes, shunning all forgetfulness and that he be ever mindful of all that God hath commanded, that he always considereth in his mind how those who despise God will burn in hell for their sins, and that life everlasting is prepared for those who fear God.” (*The Holy Rule of St. Benedict*, Chapter VII, Of Humility)

St. Alphonsus: “Hear, my Brethren: the Lord pardons the sins of him who repents of them; but he does not pardon him who has the will to commit sin. See for how many years God has borne with you, and is saying to your heart: Cease, my child; amend your life; offend me no more! And what have you done? Always the same thing: you have confessed, you have promised; yet you have always begun again to sin, you always continue to offend God! For what are you waiting? That God may take you from this world and cast you into hell? Do you not see that God cannot bear with you any longer?” (Exhortations, *The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 101)

Rev. Francis Spirago, *The Catechism Explained*, Chapter VI, On Temptation (1899): “When we are tempted we ought to betake ourselves immediately to prayer, or think of our last end, or of the evil consequences of sin. If the enemy dares to attack the fortress in spite of the ramparts raised about it, it behooves us to defend it manfully. When assailed we must instantly assume the defensive; for of all things it is most important to repulse the first onslaught. The greater our determination, the sooner will our adversary be discouraged. If we falter, he will force an entrance, and gain the mastery over our imagination. He acts like soldiers, who when they have taken the enemy's guns, instantly turn them upon him. St. Jerome says that he who does not resist immediately is already half conquered. A conflagration can be extinguished at the outset, but not later on. A young tree is easily bent, not an old one. But since we can do nothing in our own strength, we must strive to obtain divine grace. Wherefore let him who is tempted have recourse to prayer; let him imitate the apostles when a storm arose on the sea of Genesareth; or the child who, when he sees a large dog coming, runs to his mother. He who neglects prayer in the time of temptation is like a general, who, when surrounded by the enemy, does not ask for reinforcements from his monarch. Adam fell into sin because when he was tempted he did not look to God for help. We

should say a Hail Mary, or at least devoutly utter the holy names of Jesus and Mary. “These holy names,” St. John Chrysostom declares, “have an intrinsic power over the devil, and are a terror to hell.” At the name of Mary the devils tremble with fear; when she is invoked their power forsakes them as wax melts before the fire. Prayer is the weapon wherewith to ward off the assaults of our spiritual foe; it is more potent than all the efforts of the demons because by prayer we procure the assistance of God, and nothing can withstand His might. Prayer is exactly opposed to temptation for it enlightens the understanding and fortifies the will. The sign of the cross and holy water have also great efficacy against the spirit of evil. He flies from the cross as a dog flies at the sight of the whip. Holy water derives its efficacy from the prayers of the Church. St. Thomas Aquinas and many other saints frequently made use of the sign of the cross with excellent results. St. Teresa on the other hand constantly employed holy water. It is well to sprinkle the sick and dying with holy water, and we should never omit to take it on entering a church.”

St. Alphonsus, *Prayer: The Great Means of Salvation and of Perfection*, Chapter 1, The Necessity Of Prayer: “Without prayer it is impossible to resist temptations and to keep the commandments. Moreover, prayer is the most necessary weapon of defense against our enemies; he who does not avail himself of it, says St. Thomas, is lost. He does not doubt that Adam fell because he did not recommend himself to God when he was tempted: ‘He sinned because he had not recourse to the divine assistance.’ St. Gelasius says the same of the rebel angels: ‘Receiving the grace of God in vain, they could not persevere, because they did not pray.’ St. Charles Borromeo, in a pastoral letter, observes, that among all the means of salvation recommended by Jesus Christ in the Gospel, the first place is given to prayer; and he has determined that this should distinguish his Church from all false religions, when he calls her ‘the house of prayer.’ *My house is a house of prayer* (Mt. 21,13). St. Charles concludes that prayer is ‘the beginning and progress and the completion of all virtues.’ So that in darkness, distress, and danger; we have no other hope than to raise our eyes to God, and with fervent prayers to beseech his mercy to save us: ‘As we know not,’ said king Josaphat, ‘what to do, we can only turn our eyes to you’ (2 Par. 20,12). This also was David’s practice, who could find no other means of safety from his enemies, than continual prayer to God to deliver him from their snares: ‘My eyes are ever towards the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the snare’ (Ps. 24,15). So he did nothing but pray: ‘Look upon me, and have mercy on me; for I am alone and poor’ (Ibid. 16). ‘I cried to you, O Lord; save me that I may keep your commandments’ (Ps. 118,146). Lord, turn your eyes to me, have pity on me, and save me; for I can do nothing, and beside you there is none that can help me.

“... St. Bernard’s teaching is the same: ‘What are we, or what is our strength, that we should be able to resist so many temptations? This certainly it was that God intended; that we, seeing our deficiencies, and that we have no other help, should with all humility have recourse to his mercy.’ God knows how useful it is to us to be obliged to pray, in order to keep us humble, and to exercise our confidence; and he therefore permits us to be assaulted by enemies too mighty to be overcome by our own strength, that by prayer we may obtain from his mercy aid to resist them; **and it is especially to be remarked that no one can resist the impure temptations of the flesh without recommending himself to God when he is tempted.** This foe is so terrible that, when he fights with us, he, as it were, takes away all light; he makes us forget all our meditations, all our good resolutions; he makes us also disregard the truths of faith, and even almost lose the fear of the divine punishments. For he conspires with our natural inclinations, which drive us with the greatest violence to the indulgence of sensual pleasures. He who in such a moment does not have recourse to God is lost. The only defense against this temptation is prayer, as St. Gregory of Nyssa says: ‘Prayer is the bulwark of chastity’; and before him Solomon: ‘And as I knew that I could not otherwise be continent except God gave it, I went to the Lord and besought him’ (Wis. 8,21). **Chastity is a virtue which we have no strength to practice, unless God gives us; and God does not give this strength except to him who asks for it. But whoever prays for it will certainly obtain it.**

“... Wrongly, therefore, do those sinners excuse themselves who say that they have no strength to resist temptation. But if you have not this strength, why do you not ask for it? is the reproof which St. James gives them: ‘You have it not, because you ask it not’ (James 4:2). There is no doubt that we are too weak to resist the attacks of our enemies. But, on the other hand, it is certain that God is faithful, as the Apostle says, and will not permit us to be tempted beyond our strength: ‘God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able; but will make also with the temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it’ (1 Cor. 10,13). ‘He will provide an issue for it,’ says Primasius, ‘by the protection of his grace, that you may be able to withstand the temptation.’ We are weak, but God is strong; when we ask him for aid, he communicates his strength to us, and we shall be able to do all things, as the Apostle reasonably assured himself: ‘I can do all things in him who strengthens me’ (Phil. 4, 13). He, therefore, who falls has no excuse (says St. Chrysostom), because he has neglected to pray; for if he had prayed, he would not have been overcome by his enemies: ‘Nor can anyone be excused who, by ceasing to pray, has shown that he did not wish to overcome his enemy.’”

Masturbation is definitely a mortal sin

Since so many are coming out of mortal sin and are convincing themselves that certain things are not sins, **we must preach against those sins with some specificity lest people perish in their ignorance.**

Masturbation is definitely a mortal sin. There are about three places where St. Paul gives a list of some of the main mortal sins which exclude people from Heaven. These lists do not comprise every mortal sin, of course, but some of the main ones. Well, it always puzzled many people exactly what is being referred to in the following passages by the sin of “uncleanness” and “effeminacy.” St. Paul says that these sins exclude people from Heaven. Does “effeminacy” refer to acting like and being a homosexual? What does “uncleanness” refer to?

Galatians 5:19-21 “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, **uncleanness**, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that **they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**”

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, **nor effeminate**, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, **shall inherit the kingdom of God.** And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

Ephesians 5:5-8 “For this ye know, that no fornicator, **nor unclean person**, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, **hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.** Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of unbelief. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:”

St. Thomas Aquinas identifies masturbation as the biblical “uncleanness” and “effeminacy.”

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 154, Art.

11: "I answer that, As stated above (A6,9) wherever there occurs a special kind of deformity whereby the venereal act is rendered unbecoming, there is a determinate species of lust. This may occur in two ways: First, through being contrary to right reason, and this is common to all lustful vices; secondly, because, in addition, it is contrary to the natural order of the venereal act as becoming to the human race: and this is called "the unnatural vice." This may happen in several ways. **First, by procuring pollution, without any copulation, for the sake of venereal pleasure: this pertains to the sin of "uncleanness" which some call "effeminacy."** Secondly, by copulation with a thing of undue species, and this is called "bestiality." Thirdly, by copulation with an undue sex, male with male, or female with female, as the Apostle states (Romans 1:27): and this is called the "vice of sodomy." Fourthly, by not observing the natural manner of copulation, either as to undue means, or as to other monstrous and bestial manners of copulation."

Thus, not only is masturbation a mortal sin, but it's a mortal sin which is identified in three different places in Holy Scripture as one which excludes people from the Kingdom of God. It's also classified by St. Thomas as one of the sins against nature, for it corrupts the order intended by God. That's probably why it's called "effeminacy." Though it's not the same as the abomination of Sodomy (Homosexuality), it's still inherently disordered and unnatural. We believe that this sin – since it's contrary to nature and is classified as "effeminacy" and "the unnatural vice" – is the cause of some people being given over to unnatural lusts such as homosexuality, as well as acts of pedophilia and bestiality and other perverse and evil lusts.

The truth of the fact that all homosexuals are spiritually possessed by a demonic spirit is also corroborated by the fact that society has recently seen an incredible increase in the number of people who consider themselves homosexuals. This is easily explained by the fact that, with the advent and explosion of the internet and other technological means which make access to pornography and impurity easy, millions more people are committing sins of impurity, millions more people are becoming possessed, and countless more are becoming homosexuals. (And, of course, not all who commit mortal sins of impurity become homosexuals, so those who somehow think they are okay because they are not homosexuals, even though they are committing sins of impurity, are sorely deceived and are also on the road to Hell and in bondage to the Devil.)

St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 43:6 (c. 470-543 A.D.): "If they had faith and believed in God they would dread the coming judgment with fear and trembling. It is evident that they trust men but not God, for publicly where men see them they shun adultery, but in

secret where God sees they are entirely without fear. If they had just a spark of faith they would not dare to commit adultery in the sight of their Lord, just as they do not allow their servants to offend in their presence. Of such men the Holy Spirit exclaims though the Prophet: ‘The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God.’ [Ps. 13.1] **It is certain that a man does not believe in God if he fears to do publicly in the presence of men what he does secretly in darkness before the face of God.**”

Therefore, people who are committing this sin need to cease the evil immediately and, when prepared, make a good confession. If people are really struggling in this area, then they are not near the spiritual level where they need to be. God’s grace is there for them; but they need to pray more, pray better, avoid the occasions of sin ([bad media](#) being one of them) and exercise their wills. They need to consistently pray the 15-decade [Rosary](#) (i.e. daily). They need to put out more effort spiritually and then it shouldn’t be a problem.

“What do you say? What do you resolve to do? Yes or no; do you desire no more to offend God? Who knows whether it is not the last appeal that the Lord addresses to you? Hasten to take a resolution. Do you wish to wait until God puts an end to your disorders by casting you into hell without the least hope of ever remedying your misfortune? Go, my dear Brethren, enter your homes, and reflect on what you have heard this evening; recommend yourselves to the Blessed Virgin, and ask her to enlighten you.

“Sinner, thou art foe of heaven, And thou tremblest not with fear? Cease those sins, my child, ah! leave them, Death advances, hell is near. ... Listen to me this evening: you are now the enemies of God, it is true, since you have offended him much; but he is ready to pardon you if you wish to amend your life. Courage, then, my dear Christians come to the mission, go to confession, and renounce sin; hasten to give yourselves to God, who is still waiting for you, who is still calling for you; do not anger him any more.

“... O sinners! what more do you wish God to do? Do not, therefore, lose confidence, hope; but hope and tremble: if you wish to amend your life, hope; if you wish to continue to have God as your enemy, tremble yes, tremble that the present appeal may not be the last one for you; if you do not resolve to give yourselves to God, perhaps this very evening God will abandon you, and you will be damned!

“... The Lord could make you die and send you to hell the moment that you offend him; yet, see the great mercy which he now shows you: instead of punishing you, you see him coming to you with this holy mission, in order to pardon you; he comes himself to seek you, to make peace with you; it will suffice if you repent of having offended him,

and if you promise not to offend him any more.

“He saith: “Poor child, from sin depart; Rest thee within thy Father’s heart; Turn to thy Shepherd, wandering sheep.” Now what do you say? how do you respond to the appeal that the Lord addresses to you? Ah! do not delay any longer, cast yourselves at his feet; come to the church, and make a good confession.” (St. Alphonsus, Exhortations, *The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 102-105)

Masturbation is not made moral or lawful within marriage or the marriage act

Masturbation, in fact, has always been considered as a grave mortal sin in the Catholic Church and even by most protestant so-called churches until very recently, and this sin, obviously, doesn’t cease to be a mortal sin just because the spouses are married! Yet, many married “Catholic” and other so-called “Christian” couples actually believe that this sin is right to do within a marriage and the marriage act; and although most of them know or even admit that it’s wrong or a mortal sin to masturbate outside of marriage or the marriage act, they nevertheless believe that it’s right to do it within a marriage or marriage act; and that it is an exception. But what **Church teaching, Bible passage or Saint** can they cite to support this demonic teaching? None! Only evil, perverted, ignorant and heretical modern “theologians” or other heretical modern-day “Catholic” or “Christian” laymen’s private opinions during the last 100 years or so, can they cite to support this teaching! This fact, then, is quite telling, for it proves that this teaching was totally unheard of in the Christian world before the beginning stages of the [Great Apostasy](#) and the modern world. Their heretical and modernistic opinions or teachings are utterly worthless! All masturbatory touching of the genitals of oneself or one’s spouse in the same or similar manner as would be done in masturbation (i.e. manipulative sexual acts), is immoral and a mortal sin. Any type of masturbatory touching is immoral (regardless of whether or when climax occurs) because it is an act that is non-procreative, unnatural and shameful.

Also see [Foreplay is intrinsically evil and a mortal sin against the natural law](#)

Additional quotes on the vice of impurity; and how to overcome it

St. Alphonsus Liguori, *Sermons for all the Sundays in the Year*, Sermon 45, On Impurity: ““And behold, there was a certain man before him, who had the dropsy.” (Luke 14:2) The man who indulges in impurity is like a person laboring under the dropsy. The latter is so much tormented by thirst, that the more he drinks the more thirsty he becomes. Such, too, is the nature of the accursed vice of impurity; it is never

satiated. “As,” says St. Thomas of Villanova, “the more the dropsical man abounds in moisture, the more he thirsts; so, too, is it with the waves of carnal pleasures.”

“I will speak today of the vice of impurity, and will show, in the first point, the delusion of those who say that this vice is but a small evil: and, in the second, the delusion of those who say that God takes pity on this sin, and that he does not punish it.

“1. Delusion of those who say that sins against purity are not a great evil.

“The unchaste, then, say that sins contrary to purity are but a small evil. “Like the sow wallowing in the mire,” (2 Peter 2:22) they are immersed in their own filth, so that they do not see the malice of their actions; and therefore they neither feel nor abhor the stench of their impurities, which excite disgust and horror in all others. Can you, who say that the vice of impurity is but a small evil—can you, I ask, deny that it is a mortal sin? If you deny it, you are a heretic; for as St. Paul says: “Do not err. Neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, etc., shall possess the kingdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9) It is a mortal sin; it cannot be a small evil. It is more sinful than theft, or detraction, or the violation of the fast. How then can you say that it is not a great evil? Perhaps mortal sin appears to you to be a small evil? Is it a small evil to despise the grace of God, to turn your back upon Him, and to lose His friendship, for a transitory, beastly pleasure?

“St. Thomas teaches, that mortal sin, because it is an insult offered to an infinite God, contains a certain infinitude of malice. “A sin committed against God has a certain infinitude, on account of the infinitude of the Divine Majesty.” Is mortal sin a small evil? It is so great an evil, that if all the angels and all the saints, the apostles, martyrs, and even the Mother of God, offered all their merits to atone for a single mortal sin, the oblation would not be sufficient. No; for that atonement or satisfaction would be finite; but the debt contracted by mortal sin is infinite, on account of the infinite Majesty of God which has been offended. The hatred which God bears to sins against purity is great beyond measure. If a lady find her plate soiled she is disgusted, and cannot eat. Now, with what disgust and indignation must God, who is purity itself, behold the filthy impurities by which his law is violated? He loves purity with an infinite love; and consequently he has an infinite hatred for the sensuality which the lewd, voluptuous man calls a small evil. Even the devils who held a high rank in heaven before their fall disdain to tempt men to sins of the flesh.

“St. Thomas says that Lucifer, who is supposed to have been the devil that tempted Jesus Christ in the desert, tempted him to commit other sins, but scorned to tempt Him to offend against chastity. Is this sin a small evil? Is it, then, a small evil to see a man endowed with a rational soul, and enriched with so many divine graces, bring himself by the sin of impurity to the level of a brute? “Fornication and pleasure,”

says St. Jerome, “pervert the understanding, and change men into beasts.” In the voluptuous and unchaste are literally verified the words of David: “And man, when he was in honor, did not understand: he is compared to senseless beasts, and is become like to them.” (Psalm 48:13) St. Jerome says, that there is nothing more vile or degrading than to allow one’s self to be conquered by the flesh. Is it a small evil to forget God, and to banish him from the soul, for the sake of giving the body a vile satisfaction, of which, when it is over, you feel ashamed? Of this the Lord complains by the Prophet Ezechiel: “Thus saith the Lord God: Because thou hast forgotten Me, and hast cast Me off behind thy back.” (Ezechiel 23:35) St. Thomas says, that by every vice, but particularly by the vice of impurity, men are removed far from God.

“Moreover, sins of impurity on account of their great number, are an immense evil. A blasphemer does not always blaspheme, but only when he is drunk or provoked to anger. The assassin, whose trade is to murder others, does not, at the most, commit more than eight or ten homicides. But the unchaste are guilty of an unceasing torrent of sins, by thoughts, by words, by looks, by complacencies, and by touches; so that when they go to confession they find it impossible to tell the number of the sins they have committed against purity. Even in their sleep the devil represents to them obscene objects, that, on awakening, they may take delight in them; and because they are made the slaves of the enemy, they obey and consent to his suggestions; for it is easy to contract a habit of this sin. To other sins, such as blasphemy, detraction, and murder, men are not prone; but to this vice nature inclines them. Hence St. Thomas says, that there is no sinner so ready to offend God as the votary of lust is, on every occasion that occurs to him. The sin of impurity brings in its train the sins of defamation, of theft, hatred, and of boasting of its own filthy abominations. Besides, it ordinarily involves the malice of scandal. Other sins, such as blasphemy, perjury, and murder, excite horror in those who witness them; but this sin excites and draws others, who are flesh, to commit, it, or, at least, to commit it with less horror.

“St. Cyprian says that the devil through impurity triumphs over the whole of man. By lust the evil triumphs over the entire man, over his body and over his soul; over his memory, filling it with the remembrance of unchaste delights, in order to make him take complacency in them; over his intellect, to make him desire occasions of committing sin; over the will, by making it love its impurities as his last end, and as if there were no God. “I made,” said Job, “a covenant with my eyes, that I would not so much as think upon a virgin. For what part should God from above have in me?” (Job 31:1-2) Job was afraid to look at a virgin, because he knew that if he consented to a bad thought God should have no part in him. According to St. Gregory, from impurity arises blindness of understanding, destruction, hatred of God, and despair of eternal life. St.

Augustine says, though the unchaste may grow old, the vice of impurity does not grow old in them. Hence St. Thomas says, that there is no sin in which the devil delights so much as in this sin; because there is no other sin to which nature clings with so much tenacity. To the vice of impurity it adheres so firmly, that the appetite for carnal pleasures becomes insatiable. Go now, and say that the sin of impurity is but a small evil. At the hour of death you shall not say so; every sin of that kind shall then appear to you a monster of hell. Much less shall you say so before the judgment-seat of Jesus Christ, who will tell you what the Apostle has already told you: "No fornicator, or unclean, hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and God." (Ephesians 5:5) The man who has lived like a brute does not deserve to sit with the angels.

"Most beloved brethren, let us continue to pray to God to deliver us from this vice; if we do not, we shall lose our souls. The sin of impurity brings with it blindness and obstinacy. Every vice produces darkness of understanding; but impurity produces it in a greater decree than all other sins. "Fornication, and wine, and drunkenness take away the understanding." (Osee 4:2) Wine deprives us of understanding and reason; so does impurity. Hence St. Thomas says, that the man who indulges in unchaste pleasures, does not live according to reason. Now, if the unchaste are deprived of light, and no longer see the evil which they do, how can they abhor it and amend their lives? The Prophet Osee says, that blinded by their own mire, they do not even think of returning to God; because their impurities take away from them all knowledge of God. "They will not set their thought to return to their God: for the spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, and they have not known the Lord." (Osee 5:4) Hence St. Laurence Justinian writes, that this sin makes men forget God. "Delights of the flesh induced forgetfulness of God." And St. John Damascene teaches that "the carnal man cannot look at the light of truth." Thus, the lewd and voluptuous no longer understand what is meant by the grace of God, by judgment, hell, and eternity. "Fire hath fallen upon them, and they shall not see the sun." (Psalm 57:9) Some of these blind miscreants go so far as to say, that fornication is not in itself sinful. They say, that it was not forbidden in the Old Law; and in support of this execrable doctrine they adduce the words of the Lord to Osee: "Go, take thee a wife of fornication, and have of her children of fornication." (Osee 1:2) In answer I say, that God did not permit Osee to commit fornication; but wished him to take for his wife a woman who had been guilty of fornication: and the children of this marriage were called children of fornication, because the mother had been guilty of that crime. This is, according to St. Jerome, the meaning of the words of the Lord to Osee. "Therefore," says the holy Doctor, "they are to be called children of fornication, because born of a harlot." But fornication was always forbidden, under pain of mortal sin, in the Old, as well as in the New Law. St. Paul says: "No fornicator or

unclean hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” (Ephesians 5:5) Behold the impiety to which the blindness of such sinners carry them! From this blindness it arises, that though they go to the sacraments, their confessions are null for want of true contrition; for how is it possible for them to have true sorrow, when they neither know nor abhor their sins?

“The vice of impurity also brings with it obstinacy. To conquer temptations, particularly against chastity, continual prayer is necessary. “Watch ye, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” (Mark 14:38) But how will the unchaste, who are always seeking to be tempted, pray to God to deliver them from temptation? They sometimes, as St. Augustine confessed of himself, even abstain from prayer, through fear of being heard and cured of the disease, which they wish to continue. “I feared,” said the saint, “that Thou wouldst soon hear and heal the disease of concupiscence, which I wished to be satiated, rather than extinguished.” St. Peter calls this vice an unceasing sin. “Having eyes full of adultery and sin that ceasest not.” (2 Peter 2:14) Impurity is called an unceasing sin on account of the obstinacy which it induces.

“Some person addicted to this vice says: “I always confess the sin.” So much the worse; for since you always relapse into sin, these confessions serve to make you persevere in the sin. The fear of punishment is diminished by saying: “I always confess the sin.” If you felt that this sin certainly merits hell, you would scarcely say: “I will not give it up; I do not care if I am damned.” But the devil deceives you. “Commit this sin,” he says, “for you afterwards confess it.” But, to make a good confession of your sins, you must have true sorrow of the heart, and a firm purpose to sin no more. Where are this sorrow and this firm purpose of amendment, when you always return to the vomit? If you had had these dispositions, and had received sanctifying grace at your confessions, you should not have relapsed, or at least you should have abstained for a considerable time from relapsing. You have always fallen back into sin in eight or ten days, and perhaps in a shorter time, after confession. What sign is this? It is a sign that you were always at enmity with God. If a sick man instantly vomits the medicine which he takes, it is a sign that his disease is incurable.

“St. Jerome says that the vice of impurity, when habitual, will cease when the unhappy man who indulges in it is cast into the fire of hell. “O infernal fire, lust, whose fuel is gluttony, whose sparks are brief conversations, whose end is hell.” The unchaste become like the vulture that waits to be killed by the fowler, rather than abandon the rottenness of the dead bodies on which it feeds. This is what happened to a young woman, who, after having lived in the habit of sin with a young man, fell sick, and appeared to be converted. At the hour of death she asked leave of her confessor to send for the young man, in order to exhort him to change his life at the sight of her death.

The confessor very imprudently gave the permission, and taught her what she should say to her accomplice in sin. But listen to what happened. As soon as she saw him, she forgot her promise to the confessor and the exhortation she was to give to the young man. And what did she do? She raised herself up, sat in bed, stretched her arms to him, and said: "Friend, I have always loved you, and even now, at the end of my life, I love you: I see that, on your account, I shall go to hell: but I do not care: I am willing, for the love of you, to be damned." After these words she fell back on the bed and expired. These facts are related by Father Segneri. Oh! how difficult is it for a person who has contracted a habit of this vice, to amend his life and return sincerely to God! how difficult is it for him not to terminate this habit in hell, like the unfortunate young woman of whom I have just spoken.

"2. Illusion of those who say that God takes pity on this sin.

"The votaries of lust say that God takes pity on this sin; but such is not the language of St. Thomas of Villanova. He says, that in the sacred Scriptures we do not read of any sin so severely chastised as the sin of impurity. We find in the Scriptures, that in punishment of this sin a deluge of fire descended from heaven on four cities, and in an instant, consumed not only the inhabitants, but even the very stones. "And the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And He destroyed these cities, and all things that spring from the earth." (Genesis 19:24) St. Peter Damian relates, that a man and a woman who had sinned against purity were found burnt and black as a cinder.

"Salvian writes that it was in punishment of the sin of impurity that God sent on the earth the universal deluge, which was caused by continued rain for forty days and forty nights. In this deluge the waters rose fifteen cubits above the tops of the highest mountains; and only eight persons along with Noah were saved in the ark. The rest of the inhabitants of the earth, who were more numerous then that at present, were punished with death in chastisement of the vice of impurity. Mark the words of the Lord in speaking of this chastisement which he inflicted on that sin: "My spirit shall not remain in man forever: because he is flesh." (Genesis 6:3) "That is," says Liranus, "too deeply involved in carnal sins." The Lord added: "For it repenteth Me that I made man." (Genesis 6:7) The indignation of God is not like ours, which clouds the mind, and drives us into excesses: his wrath is a judgment perfectly just and tranquil, by which God punishes and repairs the disorder of sin. But to make us understand the intensity of his hatred for the sin of impurity, he represents himself as if sorry for having created man, who offended him so grievously by this vice. We, at the present day, see more severe temporal punishment inflicted on this than on any other sin.

"Go into the hospitals, and listen to the shrieks of so many young men, who, in

punishment of their impurities, are obliged to submit to the severest treatment and to the most painful operations, and who, if they escape death, are, according to the divine threat, feeble, and subject to the most excruciating pain for the remainder of their lives. “Thou hast cast Me off behind thy back; bear thou also thy wickedness and thy fornications.” (Ezechiel 23:35)

“St. Remigius writes that, if children be excepted, the number of adults that are saved is few on account of the sins of the flesh. In conformity with this doctrine, it was revealed to a holy soul that as pride has filled hell with devils, so impurity fills it with men. St. Isidore assigns the reason. He says that there is no vice which so much enslaves men to the devil as impurity. Hence St. Augustine says that with regard to this sin, “the combat is common and the victory rare.” Hence it is that on account of this sin hell is filled with souls.

“All that I have said on this subject has been said, not that any one present, who has been addicted to the vice of impurity, may be driven to despair, but that such persons may be cured. Let us, then, come to the remedies. These are two great remedies—prayer, and the flight of dangerous occasions.

“1. Prayer, says St. Gregory of Nyssa, is the safeguard of chastity. And before him, Solomon, speaking of himself, said the same. “And as I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave, it . . . I went to the Lord, and besought Him.” (Wisdom 8:21) Thus it is impossible for us to conquer this vice without God’s assistance. Hence as soon as temptation against chastity presents itself, the remedy is to turn instantly to God for help, and to repeat several times the most holy names of Jesus and Mary, which have a special virtue to banish bad thoughts of that kind. **I have said *immediately* [to turn instantly to God for help, and to repeat several times the most holy names of Jesus and Mary], without listening to, or beginning to argue with, the temptation. When a bad thought occurs to the mind, it is necessary to shake it off *instantly*, as you would a spark that flies from the fire, and *instantly* to invoke aid from Jesus and Mary.**

“2. As to the flight of dangerous occasions, St. Philip Neri used to say that cowards that is, they who fly from the occasions gain the victory. **Hence you must, in the first place, keep a restraint on the eyes, and must abstain from looking at young women. Otherwise, says St. Thomas, you can scarcely avoid the sin.** Hence Job said: “I made a covenant with my eyes that I would not so much as think upon a virgin.” (Job 31:1) He was afraid to look at a virgin; because from looks it is easy to pass to desires, and from desires to acts. St. Francis de Sales used to say that to look at a woman does not do so much evil as to repeatedly look at her a second time. If the devil has not gained a victory the first, he will gain the second time. **And if it be**

necessary to abstain from looking at women, it is much more necessary to avoid conversation with them. “Tarry not among women.” (Ecclesiasticus 42:12) we should be persuaded that, in avoiding occasions of this sin, no caution can be too great. Hence we must be always fearful, and fly from them. A wise man feareth and declineth from evil; a fool is confident.” (Proverbs 14:16) A wise man is timid, and flies away: a fool is confident, and falls.”

Question: Why are sexual sins harder to confess and less likely to be repented of than many other sins?

Answer: There are three reasons for this. First, because the sense of injustice committed, which is the primary stimulus to repent of one’s sins, is not strongly felt by many when they engage in such unlawful sexual acts. Second, there is a greater sense of shame when committing certain impure acts and hence greater difficulty confessing them in the sacrament of confession, or even repenting of them in one’s heart. Our Lady of Fatima revealed to us that *“More souls go to Hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason.”* Sr. Lucia of Fatima said this refers primarily to sins against chastity, also called sins of impurity. The reason for this statement is not because sins against chastity are the most grievous sins, but the most common and because of conscience and shame. Why? Because of conscience and shame, sins of impurity are less likely to be repented of and confessed than other sins.

Many people have a conscience that is too degraded because of their repeated sins against nature, and they have hardened themselves so much in their sin that their conscience almost never castigates them for their sins anymore. St. Thomas Aquinas also confirms that the more a person, whether married or unmarried, seeks or indulges himself with venereal pleasures in his life, the more detrimental in effect will this “blindness of mind” be “since if one consent to them this increases the force of concupiscence and weakens the strength of the mind” (*Summa Theologica*) and this proves that even the married must be very careful to never exceed the limits set by nature for the procreation of children. This is also why sins of impurity are less likely to be repented of than other sins, for venereal pleasure blunts the conscience and increases a person’s “blindness of mind” concerning spiritual and moral matters.

St. Alphonsus: “He who has offended God by mortal sin has no other remedy to prevent his damnation but the confession of his sin. "But, if I am sorry for sin from my heart? If I do penance for it during my whole life? If I go into the desert and live on wild herbs, and sleep on the ground?" You may do as much as you please; **but if you do not**

confess every mortal sin that you remember, you cannot obtain pardon. ...
Accursed shame: how many poor souls does it send to hell! St. Teresa used to say over and over again to preachers: "Preach, O my priests, preach against bad confessions; for it is on account of bad confessions that the greater part of Christians are damned."
(*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 546)

Third, sexual activity of all kinds is presented by our post-Christian or even anti-Christian popular culture as natural and good, and sexual abstinence is even taught to be unhealthy.

The sixth commandment, relating to chastity and purity, has always been referred to as "the difficult commandment" by many people. Today, with pornography everywhere and women and girls dressing more immodestly than ever before, for many it may indeed seem as "the impossible commandment." However, Jesus assures us: "What is impossible with men is possible with God." (Luke 18:27) We may add that all who invoke the Blessed Virgin Mary for help in overcoming sins of impurity will receive the grace to do so, as she herself has revealed to St. Bridget of Sweden and various other saints. But those who strive to live chaste lives know from experience, when sins of impurity are humbly repented of and confessed, that a great burden is removed from our consciences, and we experience that peace of soul that the world and carnal indulgence cannot give.

St. Alphonsus, Precepts of the Decalogue, Chapter VI, The Sixth and Ninth Commandments: "St. Thomas says, the devils delight in no sin so much as in those against chastity. The reason why the devil takes so much delight in this vice is that it is difficult for a person who indulges in it to be delivered from it. And why? First, because this vice blinds the sinner, and does not allow him to see the insult that he offers to God, nor the miserable state of damnation in which he lives and slumbers. The prophet Osee says that sinners of this kind lose even the desire of returning to God. "*They will not, he says, set their thoughts to return to their God.*" And why? "*For the spirit of fornication is in the midst of them.*" (Os. v. 4.) Secondly, because this vice hardens the heart, and makes it obstinate. Thirdly, the devil takes peculiar delight in this vice, because it is the source of a hundred other sins—of thefts, hatred, murder, perjury, detraction, etc. ... St. Isidore says: "Run through all sins, you will find none equal to this crime." ... St. Remigius says that not many Christian adults are saved, and that the rest are damned for sins of impurity. Father Segneri says that three fourths of the reprobate are damned for this vice.

"St. Gregory relates that a nobleman committed a sin against purity. In the beginning he felt great remorse of conscience; but, instead of going to confession

immediately, he deferred it from day to day, until, disregarding his sin, and the voice of God, which called him to repentance, he was suddenly struck dead without giving any sign of conversion. After he was buried a flame was seen issuing from his grave for three successive days, which reduced to ashes not only the flesh and bones of the unhappy man, but also the entire sepulchre.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 471-473)

All who through shame hide or omit their sins in confession are damned

St. Alphonsus speaks in great detail concerning the shame that is inherent in confessing and how this shame makes many people commit sacrilegious confessions, and he shows quite clearly how all those who fall for this sin of omission are damned.

St. Alphonsus, **On the Ruin of Souls who through Shame omit to Confess their Sins**: “In the missions we should moreover strongly and often inculcate the necessity of overcoming the shame that one feels in confessing one’s sins. Those who are experienced missionaries know that this cursed shame has been the cause of the loss of many souls. It follows that as the principal fruit of the missions consists in the remedy that they apply to this evil, they are not only useful but even necessary for country places; for as there is only a small number of confessors, who are very often the relatives or friends of their penitents, false shame has more force in making the people conceal sins in confession.

“*V. False Shame in Confession.*

“It is a pity to see how many souls the devil gains by this means, especially in matters concerning impure sins; for he makes them lose shame at the moment of committing them, and gives this shame back to them when there is question of mentioning them in confession. St. Antonine, speaking of this matter, relates that a holy hermit, seeing one day the devil in the church going among those that wished to confess, asked him what he was doing there; the evil spirit answered: “To induce these people to commit sin. I have taken shame from them; now I return it to them in order that they may not confess it.” St. John Chrysostom also says: “God has given shame to the commission of sin, and confidence to the confession of it. The devil inverts this: he inspires him who sins with confidence, and him who confesses with shame.”

“Alas! Christian soul, you have sinned; if you do not confess your sins you will certainly be damned. Why then do you not confess your sin? You answer: I am ashamed. Hence rather than overcome this shame you wish to be condemned for all eternity to the fire of hell? It is a shame to offend so good a God who has created us; it

is not a shame to confess to have offended him. But since you do not wish to manifest your sin, refrain at least from going to confession. To the sin that you have committed do you wish to add the sacrilege of a bad confession? Do you know what you are doing when you commit a sacrilege? For the sins on account of which you have deserved hell there is no other remedy than the blood of Jesus Christ, who will purify you if you confess it well; but by concealing your sin, you even tread under foot the blood of Jesus Christ.

“The present mission is for you a good occasion for making your confession to a priest who does not know you, whom afterwards you will see no more, and who will no more see you; if you do not wish to profit by this occasion, God will perhaps not grant it to you again, and you will be damned. Remember that if you do not confess now, the devil will gain absolute sway over you, and then perhaps God will abandon you, and there will be no more hope for you. Courage, then! go to confession immediately.

“What do you fear? Ah! here are no doubt the pretexts that the devil will suggest to you:

“1. What will my confessor say when he hears that I have fallen in such a way? Well! he will say that you have been weak, as happens to so many others who live in this world; he will say that you did wrong to sin, but that you afterwards performed a noble deed in over coming shame to confess your sins.

“2. At least he will not fail to give me a scolding. Oh no, why should he scold you? Know that confessors cannot have greater consolation than when they hear a person accusing himself of a sin that he has committed; for then he can securely absolve him and thus deliver him from hell.

“3. I have not enough confidence to manifest this sin to my spiritual Father. Well! go to confession to an other priest of the place or to a stranger. But if my confessor hears that I have gone to confession to an other, he will be offended, and will no more hear my confession. And you, in order not to displease your confessor wish to commit a sacrilege and to damn your soul? If you go to hell, will your confessor be able to talk you out of it?

“4. Who knows whether the confessor will not make known my sin to others? What folly to think that a confessor could wish to commit so great a crime as to break the seal of confession by manifesting your sin to others! To how many confessors are you to declare your sin? It suffices that you tell it once to one priest only, who hears your sin as he hears a thousand others in other confessions. But why have you so many unreasonable fears, and have not the fear of damning your self by not confessing your sin? This should deprive you of all consolation and all peace; for, if you do not confess your sin, there will remain in your conscience a viper that will gnaw your heart during

your whole life in this world, and after death, during all eternity in hell.

“Well now, let us take courage, and make known to the confessor the recesses of your conscience; immediately after confession you will find the peace that you have lost, and you will ever thank God for having given you the strength to overcome the devil. Hasten, therefore, to be delivered from this viper that causes you so much pain, and become reconciled with God. ... Speak thus [asking the confessor for help in confessing your sins that you are ashamed of mentioning], and then it will be the confessor’s duty to deliver you from the serpent that torments you as if you were one of the damned, although you are not yet in hell.

“I have wished to mention here in a practical manner those pretexts which induce so many poor souls to conceal their sins and are the cause of their damnation. As this cursed shame is everywhere prevalent, especially among women, we must make them understand the answers given above to the false pretexts which the devil puts before them in order to make them conceal their sins.

“It is true, I am well aware that, in the missions, usually a special sermon is preached to move the hearers not to hide any sin through shame; but I say that this point is so important that even an entire sermon is not sufficient: first, because it may happen that souls needing it most are not present; secondly, because for persons who have concealed their sins for a long time, it is not enough to hear the remedy spoken of but once; the preacher should often insist upon this matter, which I regard as the most important that one has to treat in the missions; for even in the missions many persons, although they have been present at the sermons, have continued to hide their sins. This is particularly necessary when one preaches in conservatories in which many girls and women are living together. As the occasions of sin are more frequent there, sins are also more frequent; and for persons that live in these establishments it is more difficult to have a confessor to whom they would confess with less repugnance; hence we should oftener speak to them about false shame, which causes them to conceal sins in confession, and it is very useful to make a deep impression upon their minds by relating to them melancholy examples.

“In all the missions given by our Congregation it is customary for him who explains the catechism to relate every day one of the terrible examples of persons damned for having concealed sins in confession. Many of these examples are found in good authors, and I have given some of them in my treatise INSTRUCTIONS TO THE PEOPLE ON THE COMMANDMENTS. I think the preacher would do well to put to a profitable use similar examples. They may be of benefit not only to him who preaches the sermon, but also to him who gives the instruction or meditation, and even to him who gives the exercises to priests; for among them are often found parish priests,

preachers of Lenten sermons, and other ecclesiastics who are anxious to preach in a profitable manner.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 316-320)

Sacrilegious confessions leads to Hell

In another part of the same work entitled, “Of Persons Who Have Made Sacrilegious Confessions”, St. Alphonsus gives us some very horrifying examples of the death and damnation of those people who hide or omit their sins from the priest and God in the sacrament of confession.

St. Alphonsus, **Of Persons Who Have Made Sacrilegious Confessions**: “I. IN the chronicles of St. Benedict it is related that a solitary named Pelagius, who kept sheep for his poor parents, led a life so exemplary that all called him a saint. He lived in this manner many years. After the death of his parents he sold the little property that they had left him and retired into a hermitage. He, unfortunately, consented once to an unchaste thought. After this sin he fell into a state of great melancholy because he would not confess it, lest he should lose the good opinion of his confessor. While he was in this state of melancholy a pilgrim who passed by said to him: "Pelagius, confess your sin: God will pardon you, and your peace shall be restored." The pilgrim then disappeared. After this Pelagius resolved to do penance for his sin, but not to confess it, flattering himself that God would perhaps pardon him without confession. He entered into a monastery, in which he was immediately received on account of his reputation for sanctity, and there led an austere life, crucifying himself with fasts and penances. At last the hour of death came: he made his last confession; as he had always through shame concealed the sin during life, so he also concealed it at death; he received the viaticum, died, and was buried, with the reputation of a saint. On the following night the sacristan found the body of Pelagius out of its grave. He buried it again; but on the second and third nights he found the body out of the grave. He called the abbot, who, in the presence of the other monks, said: "Pelagius, you were always obedient during life; be obedient now also in death. Tell me, on the part of God, if it be the divine will that your body be kept in a particular place?" The deceased, howling, said: "Alas! I am damned for having concealed one sin in confession. O Abbot, look at my body!" And behold! his body appeared like red-hot iron sending forth sparks of fire. All fled away; but Pelagius called back the abbot, that he might remove the consecrated particle that still remained in his mouth. The abbot removed the sacred host. Pelagius then told them to take his body out of the church and to throw it on a dunghill like a dog. It was

done as he desired.

“II. In the annals of the Capuchins we read of one who was esteemed a saint, but made bad confessions. Being seized with a grievous illness, he was told to go to confession. He sent for a certain Father, to whom he said, "My Father, you tell me to go to confession; but I will not make any confession." "And why?" said the Father. "Because," replied the sick man, "I am damned; for I have never confessed all my sins; and now God deprives me of the power of making a good confession." After this he began to howl, and to tear his tongue, saying, "Accursed tongue, that would not confess sins when you were able." And thus, gnawing his tongue to pieces, and howling, he breathed forth his soul into the hands of the devil. After death he became black as a cinder, a terrible noise was heard, and the room filled with an intolerable stench.

“III. Father Seraphine Razzi relates that in a city in Italy there was a married lady of noble rank who was reputed a saint. On her deathbed she received all the sacraments, and died with a high reputation for sanctity. After death her daughter, who always recommended to God the soul of her mother, heard one day, while she was at prayer, a great noise at the door. She turned round, and saw a horrible figure all on fire, and exhaling a great stench. At this sight she was so much terrified, that she was on the point of throwing herself out of the window; but she heard a voice saying: "Stop, stop, my daughter: I am your unhappy mother, who was considered a saint; but for some sins committed with your father, which I was ashamed ever to confess, God has condemned me to hell. Do not pray to God for me any more; for you only increase my pains." She then began to howl, and disappeared.

“IV. The celebrated Doctor John Ragusino relates that a certain very spiritual woman practised meditation and frequented the sacraments, so that she was considered by her Bishop to be a saint. The unhappy woman looked one day at a servant, and consented to an unchaste thought; but because the sin was only one of thought, she flattered herself that she was not bound to confess it. However, she was always tortured with remorse of conscience, and particularly in her last illness. But even at death she concealed the sin through shame, and died without confessing it. The bishop who was her confessor, and believed her to be a saint, caused her body to be carried in procession through the whole city, and through devotion got her buried in his own chapel. But on the following morning on entering the chapel he saw a body above the grave, laid on a great fire. He commanded it in the name of God to tell what it was. A voice answered that it was his penitent, and that she was damned for a bad thought. She then began to howl and to curse her shame, which had been the cause of her eternal ruin.

“V. Father Martin del Rio relates that in the province of Peru there was a young

Indian called Catharine, who was a servant to a respectable lady. Her mistress induced her to receive baptism, and to frequent the sacraments. She often went to confession, but concealed some of her sins. Just before her death she made nine confessions; but they were all sacrilegious. After her confession she said to her fellow-servants that she concealed her sins. They told her mistress, who, on questioning her, found out that these sins were certain acts of impurity. She therefore told the confessor, who returned, and exhorted his penitent to confess all her sins. But Catharine obstinately refused, and got into such a state of desperation, that she turned and said to her confessor, "Father, leave me; take no more trouble: you are only losing your time;" and then she turned her face to him and began to sing some profane songs. When she was near her end her companions exhorted her to take the crucifix. She answered: "What crucifix? I know not Christ crucified, and I do not wish to know him." And thus she died. So great were the noise and stench during the night, that the mistress was obliged to leave the house. The deceased afterwards appeared to one of her companions, and said that she was damned on account of her bad confessions.

"VI. Father Francis Rodriguez relates that in England, when the Catholic religion flourished in that country, King Augubert had a daughter, who, on account of her rare beauty, was sought by many princes. Being asked by her father whether she wished to marry, she answered that she had made a vow of perpetual chastity. The father obtained a dispensation from the Holy See, but she resolutely refused to accept it, saying that she wished for no other spouse than Jesus Christ. She only asked of her father permission to live a solitary life in his house. The father, because he loved her, complied with her request, and assigned to her a suitable maintenance. In her retirement she began to lead a saintly life in meditation, fasting, and works of penance, frequenting the sacraments, and frequently going to the hospitals to attend the sick. While she lived in this manner she fell sick in her youth and died. A certain lady who had been in her governess, while at prayer one night, heard a great noise, and saw a soul in the form of a woman in a strong fire, and bound in chains, in the midst of a multitude of devils. The soul said, "Know that I am the unhappy daughter of Augubert." "What!" replied the governess; "are you damned after a life so holy?" "Yes," replied the soul; "I am justly damned through my own fault. "And why?" "You must know that in my youth I took pleasure in listening to one of my pages, for whom I had an affection, reading a certain book. Once, after reading the book for me, the page kissed me; the devil began to tempt me, till in the end I committed sin with the page. I went to confession, and began to tell my sin; my indiscreet confessor instantly reproved me, saying, "What! has a queen been guilty of such a sin?" I then, through shame, said it was a dream. I afterwards began to perform penitential works and give alms, that God

might pardon me without confessing the sin. At death I said to the confessor that I was a great sinner; he told me to banish the thought as a temptation. After this I expired, and am now damned for all eternity." She then disappeared amid such noise, that the whole world appeared to be falling in pieces, and left in the chamber an intolerable stench, which lasted for many days.

"VII. Father John Baptist Manni, of the Society of Jesus relates that a certain lady had for several years concealed in confession a sin of impurity. Two religious of the Order of St. Dominic passed by the place. The lady, who was always waiting for a strange confessor, entreated one of them to hear her confession. When the Fathers departed, his companion said to the confessor of the lady that while she was confessing her sins he saw many serpents coming from her mouth, but that there was a large, horrible-looking serpent, whose head only came out, but afterwards went back entirely into the lady's mouth. He then saw all the serpents that came out return again. The confessor went back to the house of the lady, and on entering heard that she had died suddenly. Afterwards, when he was at prayer, the unhappy woman appeared and said to him, "I am the unfortunate person that made my confession to you; I committed one sin, which I voluntarily concealed from the confessors of the place. God sent you to me; but even then I could not conquer the shame of telling it. He therefore struck me suddenly dead when you entered the house, and has justly condemned me to hell." After these words the earth opened, and she fell into the chasm and instantly disappeared.

"VIII. Saint Antony relates that there was a widow who began to lead a holy life, but afterwards, by familiarity with a young man, was led into sin with him. After her fall she performed penitential works, gave alms, and even entered into a monastery, but never confessed her sin. She became abbess. She died, and died with the reputation of a saint. But one night a nun who was in the choir heard a great noise, and saw a spectre encompassed with flames. She asked what it was. The spectre answered, "I am the soul of the abbess, and am in hell." "And why?" "Because in this world I committed a sin, and have never confessed it. Go, and tell this to the other nuns, and pray no more for me." She then disappeared amid great noise.

"IX. In the annals of the Capuchins it is related that a certain mother, on account of having made sacrilegious confessions, began at death to cry out that she was damned for her grievous sins and for her bad confessions. Among other things, she said that she was bound to make restitution to certain persons, and that she had always neglected to do so. Her daughter then said to her, "My mother, let what you owe be restored; I am satisfied to sell all, provided your soul be saved." The mother answered: "Ah, accursed child! I am damned also on your account; for I have scandalized you by my

bad example." Thus she continued to howl like one in despair. They sent for one of the Capuchin Fathers. When he arrived he exhorted her to trust in the mercy of God; but the unhappy woman said: "What mercy! I am damned: sentence is already passed upon me, and I have already begun to feel the pains of hell." While she spoke thus, her body was raised to the ceiling of the chamber, and dashed with violence against the floor, and she instantly expired." (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 571-578)

"A similar misfortune befell a sinner who was damned on account of having deferred his confession. Venerable Bede relates that this man, who had been fervent, fell into tepidity and mortal sin, and deferred confession from day to day. He was seized with a dangerous illness; and even then put off his confession saying that he would afterwards go to confession with better dispositions. But the hour of vengeance had arrived: he fell into a deadly swoon in which he thought that he saw hell open under his feet. After he had come to his senses again, the persons who stood round his bed begged him to make his confession, but he answered: "There is no more time; I am damned." They continued to encourage him. "You are losing time," said he; "I am damned, I see hell opened; I there see Judas, Caiphas, and the murderers of Jesus Christ; and near them I see my place, because, like them, I have despised the blood of Jesus Christ by deferring confession for so long a time." Thus the unhappy man died in despair without confession, and was buried like a dog outside the church without having a prayer offered for his soul." (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 528)

"In the life of Father John Ramirez, of the Society of Jesus, it is related that, while preaching in a certain city, he was called to hear the confession of a girl who was dying. She was of noble birth, and had apparently led a holy life; she went frequently to Communion, fasted, and performed other mortifications. At death she confessed her sins to Father Ramirez with many tears, so that he was greatly consoled. But, after returning to the college, his companion said that while the young lady was making her confession he saw a black hand squeezing her throat. The Father immediately returned to the house of the sick lady, but before entering he heard that she was dead. He then returned to his college, and while he was at prayer the deceased appeared to him in a horrible form, surrounded by flames, and bound in chains, and said that she was damned on account of a sin committed with a young man, which she voluntarily concealed in confession through shame, and that at death she wished to confess it, but the devil induced her, through the same shame, to conceal it. After these words she disappeared, amid the most frightful howling and terrific clanking of chains." (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, p. 548)

“Tell me, my sister, if, in punishment of not confessing a certain sin, you were to be burnt alive in a caldron of boiling pitch, and if, after that, your sin were to be revealed to all your relatives and neighbors, would you conceal it? No, indeed, if you knew that by confessing it your sin would remain secret, and that you would escape being burnt alive. Now, it is more than certain that, unless you confess that sin, you will have to burn in hell for all eternity, and that on the day of judgment it will be made known to the whole human race. **"We must all," says the Apostle, "be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ" (i. Cor. v. 10). "If," says the Lord, "you do not confess the evil you have done, I will proclaim your ignominy to all nations; I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will show. . . thy shame to kingdoms"** (Nah. iii. 5).” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 549-550)

“The following fact is related by Father Martin del Rio, from the Annals of the Company of Jesus. It is an apparition that occurred in 1590 and was vouched for by trustworthy witnesses: Not far from Lima, dwelt a Christian lady who had three maid-servants, one of whom, called Martha, was a young Indian of about sixteen years. Martha was a Christian, but little by little she grew cool in the devotion she had at first displayed, became negligent in her prayers, and light, coquettish, and wanton in her conversations. Having fallen dangerously ill, she received the Last Sacraments. After this serious ceremony, during which she had evinced very little piety, she said, smiling to her two fellow servants, that in the confession she had just made she had taken good care not to tell all her sins to the priest. Frightened by this language, the girls reported it to their mistress, who by dint of exhortations and threats, obtained from the sick girl a sign of repentance and the promise to make a sincere and Christian confession. Martha confessed then, over again, and died shortly afterward.

“Scarcely had she breathed her last, when her corpse emitted an extraordinary and intolerable stench. They were obliged to remove it from the house to a shed. The dog in the courtyard, usually a quiet animal, howled piteously, as if he were undergoing torture. After the interment, the lady, according to custom, was dining in the garden in the open air, when a heavy stone fell suddenly onto the centre of the table with a horrible crash and caused all the table settings to bounce, but without breaking any article. One of the servants, having occupied the room in which Martha had died, was awakened by frightful noises; all the furniture seemed to be moved by an invisible force and thrown to the floor.

“We understand how the servant did not continue to occupy that room; her companion ventured to take her place, but the same scenes were renewed. Then they agreed to spend the night together there. This time they distinctly heard Martha’s voice, and soon that wretched girl appeared before them in the most horrible state, and all on fire. She said that by God’s command she had come to reveal her condition to them, that she was damned for her sins of

impurity and for the sacrilegious confessions she had continued to make until death. She added, “Tell what I have just revealed to you, that others may profit by my misfortune.” At these words she uttered a despairing cry and disappeared.

The fire of Hell is a real fire, a fire that burns like this world’s fire, although it is infinitely more active. Must not there be a real fire in Hell, seeing that there is a real fire in Purgatory? “It is the same fire,” says St. Augustine, “that tortures the damned and purifies the elect.”” (Rev. F.X. Schouppe, S.J. *The Dogma of Hell*, Chapter VII, The Pains of Hell)

Question: In what detail must one confess to a priest the sins of impurity or other sins that one have committed? When you quote Jean Gerson, you say that one must confess every single detail, but I don’t agree with this.

Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres Complètes*: “**What a young boy should tell in confession:** I sometimes stroked myself or others, urged by disorderly pleasure; I fondled myself, in my bed and elsewhere, something I would not have dared to do if people had been there. Sometimes the priest cannot absolve such fondling. **If they are not confessed and the details given, whatever the shame, one cannot be absolved, and the confession is worthless: one is destined to be damned for ever in Hell. The action and the way it has been done must be told.**”

This is not justice and the Church does not teach this, and God does not require such details to be given, since the one confessing could think that his confession will tempt the priest, or that this priest is a pedophile, or that the priest will tell the sin to others, or he could forget his sins, or many other reasons, and so, one is not obligated under pain of sin to confess all the details.

Answer: Apart from the legitimate excuse of a person honestly forgetting some of his sins, excuses when confessing one’s sins will never be lawful or permitted, and all those who tries to excuse themselves from providing the necessary details, will be damned. Here are some condemnations that shows that details in confession must be given.

Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* (# 24), Sept. 24, 1665:
“Voluptuousness, sodomy, and bestiality are sins of the same ultimate species, and so it is enough to say in confession that one has procured a pollution.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Alexander VII.** (Denz. 1124)

Pope Alexander VII, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* (# 25), Sept. 24, 1665: “He who

has had intercourse with an unmarried woman satisfies the precept of confession by saying: “I committed a grievous sin against chastity with an unmarried woman,” without mentioning the intercourse.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Alexander VII.** (Denz. 1125)

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* (# 50), Mar. 4, 1679: “Intercourse with a married woman, with the consent of her husband, is not adultery, and so it is enough to say in confession that one had committed fornication.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.** (Denz. 1200)

Pope Innocent XI, *Various Errors on Moral Matters* (# 58), Mar. 4, 1679: “We are not bound to confess to a confessor who asks us about the habit of some sin.” – **Condemned statement by Pope Innocent XI.** (Denz. 1208)

And the Council of Trent teaches the following concerning confession and the details which must be given in confession:

The Council of Trent, Session 14, Chapter V, On Confession: “But, whereas all mortal sins, even those of thought, render men children of wrath, and enemies of God, it is necessary to seek also for the pardon of them all from God, with an open and modest confession. Wherefore, while the faithful of Christ are careful to confess all the sins which occur to their memory, they without doubt lay them all bare before the mercy of God to be pardoned: whereas they who act otherwise, and knowingly keep back certain sins, such set nothing before the divine bounty to be forgiven through the priest: for if the sick be ashamed to show his wound to the physician, his medical art cures not that which it knows not of. **We gather furthermore, that those circumstances which change the species of the sin are also to be explained in confession, because that, without them, the sins themselves are neither entirely set forth by the penitents, nor are they known clearly to the judges; and it cannot be that they can estimate rightly the grievousness of the crimes, and impose on the penitents, the punishment which ought to be inflicted, on account of them.**”

Concerning the confession, one must confess every single sin one remembers as well as in what way they were done, and one should have thought on the shame of confessing it when one committed the act. The church teaches that all must be confessed, and thus, no detail can be left out. It is the priest’s job to hear it, so it is mortally sinful to leave it out or minimize the

severity of the sin. The Church has taught that all sins must be confessed, and in the priest's job, he must hear in what sinful and shameful way the sin has been performed in order to judge the severity of the crime. The priest is a judge according to the Church's teaching, and hiding a mortal sin will always end in damnation and eternal fire.

The Catholic Church teaches that Our Lord Jesus Christ through the apostles established a human priesthood with divine authority to forgive sins and to absolve men from guilt and bring them into a state of forgiveness and reconciliation with God. The Catholic Church teaches that this is no mere formality, but that the priest stands in the place of God as judge and performs a judicial act.

The Council of Trent, Session 14, Chapter V, On Confession: “From the institution of the sacrament of Penance as already explained, the universal Church has always understood, that the entire confession of sins was also instituted by the Lord, and is of divine right necessary for all who have fallen after baptism; because that **our Lord Jesus Christ, when about to ascend from earth to heaven, left priests His own vicars, as presidents and judges, unto whom all the mortal crimes, into which the faithful of Christ may have fallen, should be carried, in order that, in accordance with the power of the keys, they may pronounce the sentence of forgiveness or retention of sins. For it is manifest, that priests could not have exercised this judgment without knowledge of the cause; neither indeed could they have observed equity in enjoining punishments, if the said faithful should have declared their sins in general only, and not rather specifically, and one by one.**”

The Council of Trent, Session 14, Chapter VI, On the ministry of this Sacrament, and on Absolution: “But although the absolution of the priest is the dispensation of another's bounty, yet is it not a bare ministry only, whether of announcing the Gospel, or of declaring that sins are forgiven, **but is after the manner of a judicial act, whereby sentence is pronounced by the priest as by a judge:** and therefore the penitent ought not so to confide in his own personal faith, as to think that,--even though there be no contrition on his part, or no intention on the part of the priest of acting seriously and absolving truly,--he is nevertheless truly and in God's sight absolved, on account of his faith alone. For neither would faith without penance bestow any remission of sins; nor would he be otherwise than most careless of his own salvation, who, knowing that a priest but absolved him in jest, should not carefully seek for another who would act in earnest.”

The Church further teaches that, apart from confessing sins to an authorized Catholic priest (when one is available) and doing the penance required, there can be no forgiveness of sins. When a Catholic priest is not available, however, a person can be restored to grace by an act of perfect contrition according to the Council of Trent, but this person must also desire to go to Confession when the opportunity arrives. Confession and penance are therefore seen as necessary for salvation. The Catholic Church further teaches that by good works, prayers, fastings, participation in the sacraments, indulgences, the enduring of suffering and by acts of charity, an individual can atone for his guilt, merit God's grace, and remove the temporal punishment his sin deserves. In other words, an individual can make satisfaction for his own sins through his own works.

Excuses can be thought on in hell for all eternity when one wakes up and starts to realize that one must have humility in order to be saved. The people who sinned should have thought about the shame of confessing before they sinned in a shameful way before God and all the Angels and Saints in Heaven. All the excuses mentioned above can never be used except for one, but the other excuses will never be allowed. The excuse of forgetfulness is valid, but one must confess it in the next confession when one remembers it. One cannot have perfect contrition when one deliberately hides the truth and its severity, for this is a sin of omission and disobedience. There's nothing that can be cited in the Church's teaching that justifies a person hiding the severity and details of his sins. One must realize that hiding or minimizing one's sin is a sin first and foremost of disobedience, but secondly, a sin of pride, since one cares more about what a puny and insignificant human creature will think about you and your sins, rather than what God will think of you. Thus, such a person who hides or minimizes his sins is sinning because of vanity and vainglory, and by wanting others to have a better opinion of himself than what he knows he deserves because of his sins. A person who hides the details of his sins is thus sinning by wanting others to think better of him than he deserves, and this, of course, is not just or right.

In truth, if a person easily want to find God in confession, he must first and foremost consider in his mind how it is true justice that all men on earth should despise him for his sins, and that all should condemn him and reject him; and then confessing to a single priest will be much easier. Either one confesses one's sins now, or the Justice of God requires that all one's unconfessed sins will be displayed before every single person that has ever lived as well as the gaze of God, Our Lady and all the Angels, Saints and devils in the Day of Judgment; so one can either choose to confess one's sins in this life to a single priest, or choose to have the whole world see one's sins for all eternity, enduring a greater shame for one's sins forever in

the torment of the sulfurous fire of Hell than what a human can ever experience in this life however long he or she lives.

Fr. Martin von Cochem, O.S.F.C., *The Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Hell and Heaven*, On the Last Judgment: **“On that day all His enemies will be beneath His feet; on that day all His foes will be forced to confess their offences against Him, the Divine Arbiter.** They will then and there be compelled to own His divinity, His infinite charity, the countless benefits He has bestowed on them, in return for which they persecuted Him, blasphemed Him, put Him to a cruel death. ... **on that day the reprobate will be put to the greatest ignominy and anguish. For the Judge will reveal all the shameful, the abominable character of their misdeeds: He will reveal in the sight of Angels and Saints, of the devils and the damned, the infamous deeds they performed under cover of darkness.** Yes, He will pour out the full chalice of His indignation upon those wretched beings, who under the mask of their hypocrisy dared to desecrate His very sanctuary. He will cause those who have been corrupters of innocence to be seized and placed among the evil spirits, whose diabolical, thrice accursed work they carried on earth.

“On that day the Divine Judge will give all the impenitent sinners to drink deeply of the cup of shame and ignominy, as St. Basil tells us, when he says: “The confusion that will overtake the godless sinner in the Day of Judgment will be more cruel torture to him than if he were cast into a flaming fire.” **This is in fact the reason why God has appointed the final judgment, that sinners may not only be punished by the pain which will be their portion, but that they may also be put to public shame. St. Thomas Aquinas says: “The sinner does not only deserve pain, he deserves disgrace and ignominy,** for this is a punishment to which human beings only can be subjected. The lower animals can be chastised and put to death, but they cannot know what it is to suffer shame and contempt.” This accounts for the fact that any one who has a single spark of self-respect would rather suffer the heaviest punishment in secret, than be exposed to public disgrace.

“On all these grounds it will be surmised that the final judgment will stretch over a considerable period of time, and hence we have all the more reason to tremble at the prospect of it, and earnestly pray God that on that great day He will not overwhelm us with shame and confusion, but will grant us a share in His joy and glory.” (*The Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Hell and Heaven*, Part II, The Last Judgment, Chapter X, On the Length of Time that the Final Judgment will Last)

As long as one meditates on how it is justice that others despise us because of our sins—since

a single mortal sin deserves an infinite punishment in hell—confessing to a priest or even to more people, will go as a dance!

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 8, Art. 5: “If, however, he were bound to confess again, **his first confession would not be useless, because the more priests one confesses to, the more is the punishment remitted, both by reason of the shame in confessing, which is reckoned as a satisfactory punishment**, and by reason of the power of the keys: so that one might confess so often as to be delivered from all punishment.”

Indeed, so beneficial is speaking about one’s sins to a person that is not a priest that St. Thomas says that confessing one’s sins even to a layman will benefit one’s soul and gain God’s friendship; but that one must also confess it to a Catholic priest when one is able to do so.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 8, Art. 6, Reply to Objection 3: “... the sacramental power of Penance consists in a sanctification pronounced by the minister, so that if a man confess to a layman, although he fulfills his own part of the sacramental confession, he does not receive sacramental absolution. Wherefore his confession avails him somewhat, as to the lessening of his punishment, owing to the merit derived from his confession and to his repentance, but he does not receive that diminution of his punishment which results from the power of the keys; and consequently he must confess again to a priest [whenever he can do so].”

Confessing one’s sins to anyone will always be a good act of humility, and those who do this, whether much or little, will always gain some amount of grace. In addition, confessing one’s sins and humiliating oneself will also give the humble penitent “so many and so great advantages and consolations, which are most assuredly bestowed by absolution upon all who worthily approach to this sacrament.”

The Council of Trent, Session 14, Chapter V, On Confession: “Now, the very difficulty of a confession like this, and the shame of making known one’s sins, might indeed seem a grievous thing, were it not alleviated by the so many and so great advantages and consolations, which are most assuredly bestowed by absolution upon all who worthily approach to this sacrament.”

A great example which shows us that unconfessed sins will be punished eternally in hell is found in *The Revelations of St. Bridget*, which speaks about a certain woman who performed

unlawful and impure sexual acts but abhorred to confess her sins. The Revelation confirms the truth that a person who do not confess their sins in this life (to a valid Catholic priest if one is available) will have their sins displayed before the whole world. The foreword for this Chapter explains its contents, saying that: *“A saint tells the bride that even if a person were to die once each day for God’s sake, it would not be enough to give thanks to God for his eternal glory. He also describes the terrible punishments endured by a deceased woman in her every limb because of the carnal pleasure in which she spent her life.”*

The Revelations of St. Bridget, Book 6, Chapter 16: “One of the saints spoke to the bride [St. Bridget], saying: “If, for God’s sake, I endured death for every hour I spent in the world and were to keep coming back to life, still with all that I would never be able to thank God fully for his love. Indeed, his praise is ever on my lips and joy is ever in my soul, glory and honor are never withheld from my sight nor the sounds of exultation taken from my hearing.”

“Then the Lord said to the same saint: “Tell my bride here what those persons deserve who care more about the world than about God, who love the creature more than the Creator. Tell her what kind of punishment that woman is now undergoing who spent her entire lifetime in the world in sinful pleasure.” The saint replied: “Her punishment is most severe. For the pride she had in her every limb, [through vanity] her head and hands, arms and legs burn horribly in a blazing fire. Her bosom is being pricked as though by the hide of a hedgehog whose quills fasten to her flesh and mercilessly press into her. **The arms and other limbs with which she used to lasciviously embrace the loved one so tenderly are now stretched out like two snakes that coil themselves around her, mercilessly devouring and tearing her to pieces without rest.** Her belly is terribly twisted, as though a sharp pole were being driven into her private parts and thrust violently inward so as to penetrate ever more deeply. Her thighs and knees are like ice, hard and stiff, with no warmth nor rest. The feet that used to carry her to her pleasures and lead others along with her now stand atop sharp razors slicing them incessantly.”

The Explanation in *St. Bridget’s Revelations* of this hair raising example of the miserable end of all who perform unlawful, non-procreative and lascivious sexual acts and touches, like this woman did, tells us that “This woman pursued her selfish will and completely abhorred going to confession. A tumor developed in her throat, and she died unconfessed. She was shown standing before God’s judgment with the devils accusing her and shouting: “Here is the woman who tried to hide herself from you, Lord! But we know her well enough!” The judge answered: “Confession is like an excellent washing-woman. Therefore, because she did not

want to wash when she had the opportunity, she is now soiled with your impurities. Because she was unwilling to expose her shame to the few, it is only right that she should be shamed by everyone before the many.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 6, Chapter 16) Thus, it is clear that if a person refuses to confess his sins in this life, “it is only right that she should be shamed by everyone before the many.”

Question: How great must one’s purpose of amendment in confession be in order for a person to be forgiven his sins? Many times, I confess thinking that it is certain that I will fall again.

Response: St. Alphonsus answers this question for us in a section “**On the Purpose of Sinning no More**” in great detail: “Sorrow and a purpose of amendment necessarily go together. “A sorrow of the soul and a detestation of sin,” says the Council of Trent, “along with the purpose of sinning no more.” The soul cannot have a true sorrow for sin without a sincere purpose never more to offend God. Now, in order to be a true purpose, it must have three conditions: it must be firm, universal, and efficacious.

“I. It must be firm, so that the penitent resolutely purposes to suffer every evil rather than offend God.

“Some say: “Father, I do not wish ever more to offend God; but the occasions of sin and my own weakness will make me relapse: I wish, but shall scarcely be able, to persevere.” My son, you have not a true purpose, and therefore you say: I wish, I wish. Know that hell is full of such wishes. It is a mere empty wish, not a true resolute will or purpose; a true purpose is a firm and resolute will to suffer every evil rather than to relapse into sin. It is true that there are occasions of sin; that we are weak, particularly if we have contracted a habit of any sin; and that the devil is strong: but God is stronger than the devil, and with his aid we can conquer all the temptations of hell. *I can do all things*, says St. Paul, *in Him who strengtheneth me*. It is true that we ought to tremble at our weakness, and distrust our own strength; but we ought to have confidence in God that by his grace we shall overcome all the assaults of our tempters. *Praising, I will call upon the Lord*, said David, *and I shall be saved from my enemies*. I will invoke the Lord, and he will save me from my enemies. He who recommends himself to God in temptations shall never fall.

““But, Father, I have recommended myself to God, and the temptation continues.” Do you, then, also continue to ask help from God as long as the temptation lasts, and you will never fall. God is faithful; he will not permit us to be tempted above our strength. *God*, says the Apostle, *is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able*. He has promised to give aid to all who pray for it. For every one that asketh receiveth. And this promise is made to all to sinners, as well as to the just: “For every one that asketh

receiveth." So there is no excuse for those who consent to sin; for if they recommend themselves to God, he will stretch out his hand, and support them, and they will not fall. He, then, who falls into sin falls through his own fault, either because he will not ask aid from God, or because he will not avail himself of the aid which the Lord offers to him.

"II. The purpose must be universal; that is, it must be a purpose of avoiding every mortal sin. Saul was commanded by God to put to death all the Amalecites, and all their cattle, and to burn all their goods. What did he do? He slew a great multitude of men and of cattle, and burnt a large quantity of their goods; but he saved the life of the king, and preserved what was most valuable of the property; and on account of this contempt of God's commandment he merited his malediction. Many penitents imitate Saul; they purpose to avoid some sins, but they cannot give up some dangerous familiarity, or some goods that they have a scruple about retaining, or some cherished feelings of anger and ill-will against a neighbor, or some hankering after revenge. Such persons wish to divide their heart, giving one half to God, and the other to the devil. The devil is content with his portion, but God is not satisfied with a part of their heart. Every one knows the history of Solomon how two women came to him, each claiming to be the mother of the child who was still left alive. He ordered the infant to be divided, and one half to be given to each of them. *Divide the living child in two.* The woman who was not the mother of the child remained silent and was satisfied with the order of the king; but the true mother said: *I beseech thee, my lord, give her the child alive, and do not kill it.* "No, my lord, if my child must die, I prefer that she should have it entire." Solomon concluded that she was the true mother of the child, and gave it to her. Thus, the devil because he is our enemy, and not our father, is content to have a part of our heart; but God, who is our true Father, is not satisfied unless he has the whole of it. *No man, says Jesus Christ, can serve two masters.* God does not accept for his servants those who wish to serve two masters; he wishes to be our only Lord, and he justly refuses to be the companion of the devil in the possession of our hearts. Our purpose, then, must be universal: it must be a purpose of avoiding all mortal sins. ...

"III. The purpose must be efficacious that is, it must make us practise all the means necessary to avoid sin; and one of the most necessary of these means, is to avoid the occasions of relapsing into sin. This is a most important point; for were men careful to fly from evil occasions, from how many sins would they abstain, and thus how many souls would escape damnation! The devil does not gain much without an occasion. But when a person voluntarily exposes himself to the occasion of sin, particularly of sins against chastity, it is morally impossible for him not to fall.

"It is necessary to distinguish proximate from remote occasions. The remote occasion is that to which all are exposed, or in which men seldom fall into sin. The proximate occasion is that which by itself ordinarily induces to sin, such as unnecessary familiarity of young men

with women of bad reputation. An occasion in which a person has frequently fallen is also called a proximate occasion. But occasions which are not proximate for others may be proximate for a particular person, who on account of his bad disposition or on account of a bad habit has frequently fallen into sin. They are in the proximate occasion of sin: 1. Who keep in their house a woman with whom they have committed sin. 2. They who go to taverns, or to any particular house in which they have frequently fallen into sin by quarrelling, or drunkenness, or immodest words or actions. 3. They who in gaming have been frequently guilty of fraud, or quarrels, or of blasphemies. Now, no one can receive absolution unless he purpose firmly to avoid the occasion of sin; because to expose himself to such occasions, though sometimes he should not fall into sin, is for him a grievous sin. And when the occasion is voluntary and is actually existing at the present time, the penitent cannot be absolved until he has actually removed the occasion of sin. For penitents find it very difficult to remove the occasion; and if they do not take it away before they receive absolution they will scarcely remove it after they have been absolved.

“Much less is he fit for absolution who refuses to remove the occasions, and only promises that in them he will not commit sin for the future. Tell me, my brother, do you expect that tow thrown into the fire will not burn? And how ran you expecting that if you expose yourself to the occasion of sin you will not fall? *And your strength*, says the prophet, *shall be as the ashes of tow, . . . and both shall burn together, and there shall be none to quench it.* Our strength is like the strength of tow to resist fire. A devil was once compelled to tell what sermon was most annoying to him. He answered: "The sermon on the occasions of sin." As long as we do not remove the occasions of sin, the devil is satisfied: he cares not about our purposes, promises, or oaths; for as long as the occasion is not removed the sin will not cease. The occasion (particularly of sins against chastity) is like a veil placed before the eyes, and does not allow us to see God, or hell, or heaven. In a word, the occasion blinds the sinner; and how can the blind keep himself in the straight way to heaven? He will wander into the road to hell without knowing where he is going; and why? Because he does not see. For all, then, who are in the occasion of sin, it is necessary to do violence to themselves in order to remove the occasion; otherwise they will remain always in sin.

“Here it is necessary to remark that for some who are more strongly inclined to evil, and who have contracted a habit of any vice, particularly the vice of impurity, certain occasions are proximate or nearly proximate which for others would be remote. Hence, if they do not avoid them they will be always relapsing into the same crimes like a dog returning to his vomit. ...

“What are these means [of making the occasions of sin remote]? There are three means: the frequentation of the sacraments, prayer, and avoiding familiarity with the person with whom you have sinned.

“The frequentation of the sacraments of penance and Eucharist would be in one respect

the best means; but it ought to be known that in necessary proximate occasions of incontinence it is a great remedy to withhold absolution in order to make the penitent more diligent in adopting the other two means, namely, to recommend himself frequently to God, and to avoid familiarity. When you rise in the morning, you must renew the resolution of not yielding to sin all that day; and you must pray for help, not only in the morning, but also several times during the day before the Most Holy Sacrament, or before the Crucifix; and must beg of the Most Holy Mary to obtain for you grace not to relapse. The other means to which it is absolutely necessary to attend is to avoid all familiarity with the accomplice by not remaining with her alone, by not looking at her face, not conversing with her, and by speaking to her (when strictly necessary) in such a manner as to show a dislike for her society. This is the most important means of making proximate occasions become remote, but he who has already received absolution will scarcely practise this means; and, therefore, in such cases, it is expedient to defer absolution until the proximate occasion becomes remote. But to render such occasions remote, eight or ten days are not sufficient; a long time is necessary.

“But should the penitent after adopting all these means always relapse, what is the last remedy? It is that which the Gospel recommends: *If thy right eye scandalize thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee.* Although it were your right eye, you must pull it out, and cast it to a distance from you. "It is better," says our Lord, "to lose thy eye than having it to be cast into hell." In such a case, then, you must remove the occasion, or you must certainly go to hell.”
(*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 539-546)

St. Alphonsus, On Confession: “Confession, in order to be good, must be entire, humble, and sincere.

“I. THE CONFESSION MUST BE ENTIRE.

“He who has offended God by mortal sin has no other remedy to prevent his damnation but the confession of his sin. ...

“Have you committed sin? If you do not confess it you shall be damned. Therefore, if you wish to be saved, you must confess it some time or other. And if at some time or other, why not now? as St. Augustine says. What do you wait for? Is it for death, after which you will not be able to make a confession? And know that the longer you conceal your sin and multiply sacrileges, the greater your shame and obstinacy in concealing it will become. "Obstinacy proceeds from the keeping back of sin," says St. Peter de Blois. How many miserable souls, who have formed a habit of concealing their sins, saying, "When death is near, then I will confess it," have not confessed it even at the hour of death! ...

“II. THE CONFESSION MUST BE HUMBLE.

“A penitent at confession should imagine himself to be a criminal condemned to death, bound by as many chains as he has sins to confess; he presents himself before the confessor,

who holds the place of God and who alone can loose his bonds and deliver him from hell. Therefore he must speak to the confessor with great humility. The Emperor Ferdinand, wishing to go to confession in his chamber, handed a chair to the confessor. When those who were in the room appeared surprised at so great an act of humility, the emperor said: "Father, I am now a subject, and you are my Superior."

"Some argue with the confessor, and speak to him with as much haughtiness as if they were his Superiors; what fruit can they derive from such confessions? It is necessary then, to treat your confessor with respect. Speak to him always with humility, and with humility obey all his commands. When he reproveth you, be silent, and receive his admonitions with humility; accept with humility the remedy that he prescribes for your amendment.

"Do not get into a passion with him nor think him unjust and uncharitable. What would you say if you saw a sick man, who, while the surgeon opens the imposthume, treats him as a cruel and uncharitable man? Would you not say that he was mad? "But he tortures me." Yes; but it is by this torture that you are cured: without it you would die.

"If the confessor tells you that he cannot absolve you until you have restored certain goods belonging to an other, obey him, and do not be importunate for absolution: do you not know that he who has received absolution does not afterwards make restitution?

"Does the confessor order you to return for absolution in a week or a fortnight, and in the mean time to remove the occasion of sin, to pray to God, to be firm in resisting all temptations to relapse into sin, and to practise all the other means that he recommends to you? Obey, and you shall thus free yourself from sin; do you not see that hitherto, when you were absolved immediately, you have, after the lapse of a few days, fallen again into the same crimes? "But if in the mean time death comes upon me?" But God has not hitherto taken away your life, when you continued so long a time in sin, and never thought of returning to him; will he, now that you desire to amend your life, send you a sudden death? "But it may be that death will come upon me during the time for which absolution is deferred." And if this may happen during that time, make acts of contrition continually. I have already said that he who has the intention of going to confession and makes an act of contrition instantly receives pardon from God.

"Of what use is it to receive absolution as often as you go to confession when you do not renounce sin? All these absolutions shall add to the fire that will torment you in hell. Listen to this fact. A gentleman contracted a habit of sin; he found a confessor who always absolved him, though he always relapsed. He died, and was seen in hell carried on the shoulders of an other person who was also damned. Being asked who it was that carried him, he answered: "He is my confessor, who, by absolving me as often as I went to confession, has brought me to hell. I am damned, and he who brought me to hell is also damned."

"Do not then, O my brother, be angry when the confessor defers absolution, and wishes

to see how you conduct yourself in the mean time. If you always relapse into the same sin, although you have confessed it, the confessor cannot absolve you unless you give some extraordinary and manifest sign that you have the necessary dispositions. And, if he gives you absolution, you and he are condemned to hell. Be obedient, then; do what he bids you; for, when you return, after having done what he prescribed, he will certainly absolve you, and thus you shall be delivered from the sin that you have been in the habit of committing.

“III. THE CONFESSION MUST BE SINCERE.

“The confession must be sincere, that is, without lies or excuses.

“1. Without lies... For example, it would be a mortal sin for a penitent to accuse himself of a mortal sin that he has not committed or to deny a mortal sin that he has committed and has never confessed, or to deny that he had a habit of a certain sin; for in all these he would be guilty of grievously deceiving the minister of God.

“2. Without lies, and without excuses. In the tribunal of penance the criminal must be his own accuser; he must be an accuser, not an advocate to excuse his guilt. The more sincerely a man accuses himself, without extenuating his fault, the more readily shall he obtain absolution and mercy from God. It is related that the Duke of Ossuna, being one day in a galley, went about among the slaves, asking for what crime they had been condemned. All answered that they were innocent; only one acknowledged that he deserved severer punishment. The viceroy said: "Then it is not right to have you here among so many innocents;" and therefore ordered him to be released. Now, how much more will God pardon him who confesses his sins, without excuses, in the tribunal of penance.

“How many are there who make their confession badly! Some tell their confessor the few good actions that they perform, but do not speak of their sins. "Father," they say, "I hear Mass every day; I say the beads; I do not blaspheme; I do not swear; I do not take my neighbor's property." Well, what then? Do you want to be praised by the confessor? Confess your sins; examine your conscience, and you will find a thousand things to be corrected: detractions, unclean expressions, lies, imprecations, unclean thoughts, hatred.

“Others, instead of accusing themselves, begin to defend their sins, and to dispute with the confessor. "Father," they say, "I blaspheme because I have a master that cannot be borne; I have indulged myself in hatred to a neighbor, because she has spoken ill of me; I have committed sin with men, because I had nothing to eat." What benefit do you expect from such confessions? What is your object? Is it that the confessor may approve of your sins? Listen to what St. Gregory says: "If you excuse yourself, God will accuse you; if you accuse yourself, God will excuse you." Our Lord complained bitterly to St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi of those who excuse their sins in confession, and throw the blame of their own faults upon others, saying: "Such a person has been the occasion of my sin: such another has tempted me." Thus they come to confession to commit new sins; for, in order to excuse their own sins, they injure a

neighbor's reputation without necessity. Such persons should be treated as a confessor treated a woman who, in order to excuse her own sins, told all the bad actions of her husband. "For your own sins," said the confessor, "you will say the 'Hail Holy Queen!' once; and for the sins of your husband, you will fast every day for an entire month." But must I do penance for the sins of my husband? Yes, if you confess all the sins of your husband in order to excuse your own sins. Thus, my sisters, confess henceforth your own sins, and not the sins of others, and say: "Father, it was not my companion, nor the occasion of sin, nor the devil, but my own malice, that made me voluntarily offend God."

"It is, indeed true, that you must sometimes make known to the confessor the sin of another, either in order to explain the species of some sin, or to make the confessor understand the danger to which you were exposed, that he may be able to give you useful advice for the regulation of your conduct. But when you can go to another confessor, to whom the person is unknown, go to him. If, in changing your confessor, you should suffer a notable inconvenience; or if you think that your ordinary confessor, because he is better acquainted with the state of your conscience, can give you more useful counsel, you are not obliged to go to another confessor. However, you should endeavor to conceal the accomplice as well as you can; for example, it is sufficient to tell the state of the person, if she is a young girl, if she is married, or if she has made a vow of chastity, without mentioning her name.

"St. Francis de Sales warns penitents not to make useless accusations in confession, nor to mention circumstances through habit. "I have not loved God with all my strength; I have not received the sacraments as I ought; I have had but little sorrow for my sins." All these are useless words; they are a loss of time. "I accuse myself of the seven deadly sins, of the five senses of the body, and of the ten commandments of God." Give up these useless accusations; it is better to tell the confessor some defect into which you are for a long time accustomed to fall, without any amendment. Confess, then, the faults that you wish to correct. Of what use is it to say: "I accuse myself of all the lies I have told, of all my detractions, of all the imprecations I have uttered? When you do not give up these vices, and when you say that you cannot avoid them, of what use is it to confess them? It is only a mockery of Jesus Christ, and of the confessor. When, then, my children, you accuse yourselves of such faults, even though they should be only venial sins, confess them with a purpose of not relapsing into them.

"V. The Penance Imposed by the Confessor.

"Satisfaction, which we call the penance, is a necessary part of the sacrament of penance. It is not precisely essential, because without it the confession may be valid, as would be the case if a penitent were dying and unable to perform suitable penance. But it is an integral part; so that, should a person at confession not have the intention of performing the penance enjoined the confession is null; for the penitent is obliged, in confessing his sins, to have the intention of complying with the penance imposed by the confessor. But if he has the intention

of performing the penance, and afterwards neglects to fulfil it, the confession is valid; but he is guilty of a mortal sin...

“It is necessary to know that, when a person commits a sin, he contracts the guilt, and renders himself liable to the punishment due to the guilt of sin. By the absolution of the confessor the guilt and the eternal punishment are remitted, and when the penitent has intense contrition, all the temporal punishment is also remitted. But when the contrition is not so great the temporal penalties remain to be suffered either in this life or in purgatory, as the Council of Trent teaches where it says, that the sacramental penance is not only a payment of the penalty that we have deserved, but also a means of cure for the base affections left in us by sin, our passions, bad habits, and hardness of heart; and that, moreover, it strengthens us against a relapse into the same sin. Therefore, my children, go to confession every week, or at least every fortnight, but never allow a month to pass without approaching the tribunal of penance. ...

“How soon after confession must the penance be performed? It must be performed within the time fixed by the confessor; and should he not fix a time, it ought to be performed within a short time; for when the penance is great, and particularly when it is medicinal, to defer the performance of it for a long time would be a mortal sin.

“Should a penitent have the misfortune of falling into mortal sin after confession, is he still bound to fulfill the penance? Yes; he is obliged to fulfill it. And does he satisfy his obligation by performing the penance in the state of sin? Yes: he also complies with his obligation.

“But, alas! many go to confession, accept the penance enjoined, but afterwards do not comply with it. "But, Father, I am not able to do all that my confessor has imposed upon me." And why did you accept a penance that you knew you could not perform? I recommend you to speak plainly, and to say to the confessor: "Father, I am afraid that I shall not do all that you have imposed on me; give me a lighter penance." Of what use is it to say: Father, I will do it; Father, I will do it; and afterwards to do nothing?

“But know that, if you omit your penance in this life, you will have to perform far greater penance in purgatory. Turlot relates that a sick man, who was confined to bed, and afflicted with many pains for a year, prayed to God to release him from life. God sent an angel to tell him to choose either to go to purgatory for three days, or to submit to his pains for another year. The sick man chose the three days in purgatory, where after his death, he was visited by the angel. He complained that the angel had deceived him, and that he was suffering there, not for three days, but for several years. The angel said to him, "What! a day has scarcely passed; your body is not yet buried; and you say that you are suffering here for several years!" The deceased then besought the angel to bring him back again to life, that he might suffer his former infirmities for another year. His prayer was heard; and after having returned to life, he

encouraged all that came to visit him, to suffer with cheerfulness all the pains of the present rather than wait for the pains of the next life.

“Would to God the penitents performed all the penance due to their sins! Ordinarily speaking, almost all have to suffer some of the temporal punishment that awaits them. Of several persons who led a holy life, we read that they have been for some time in purgatory. Let us, then, endeavor, in addition to our sacramental penance, to perform other good works, alms, deeds, prayers, fasts, and mortifications. Let us also endeavor to gain as many indulgences as we can. Holy indulgences diminish the pains that we must suffer in purgatory.”
(*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 546-560)

Question: What is the best prayer to use in order to be able to conquer temptations, and especially sexual temptations?

Answer: The Holy Rosary is undoubtedly the most powerful prayer of all the prayers against the temptations of the flesh as well as any other temptation that may befall a person. The reason behind the fact that the Holy Rosary is especially powerful in conquering sexual temptations of the flesh is that Our Lord and Our Lady – the Blessed Virgin Mary – loves the virtue of chastity with such a great love that they especially honor and help all those who honestly salute Our Blessed Mother in the Angelic salutation with the intention of gaining Her help to conquer their sensual or sinful temptations.

Even though the Holy Rosary is the best weapon against temptations of the flesh, it is also necessary that it be joined with mental prayers and prayers from the heart as well as fasting and other penances with a complete avoidance of all occasions of sin in order to smother the might of the Devil and his temptations. Countless of people have reported that their fleshly temptations diminished or vanished the moment that they started to pray the Rosary. The authors of this text can also testify that this have happened for themselves and for people close to them. Simply said, there’s no prayer that is more powerful than the Rosary.

St. Louis De Montfort: “Our Lady revealed to Blessed Alan De la Roche that no sooner had St. Dominic begun preaching the Rosary than hardened sinners were touched and wept bitterly over their grievous sins... everywhere that he preached the Holy Rosary such fervor arose that sinners changed their lives and edified everyone by their penances and change of heart.” (*The Secret of the Rosary*, p. 66.)

And Sister Lucy of Fatima, regarding the Holy Rosary, said the following words to Fr. Augustin Fuentes on December 26, 1957:

“Look, Father, the Most Holy Virgin, in these last times in which we live, has given a new efficacy to the recitation of the Rosary. She has given this efficacy to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or above all spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families, of the families of the world or of the religious communities, or even of the life of peoples and nations, that cannot be solved by the Rosary. There is no problem I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the Holy Rosary.”

Pope Pius XI truly loved the Rosary, as did many other Popes before him, and he published an Encyclical called *Ingravescentibus Malis* that explained the Rosary’s special and miraculous power to help us achieve victory in our life.

Pope Pius XI, *Ingravescentibus Malis* (# 3), On the Rosary, 1937: “Thus the Faithful of every age, both in public misfortune and in private need, turn in supplication to Mary, the benignant, so that she may come to their aid and grant help and remedy against sorrows of body and soul. And never was her most powerful aid hoped for in vain by those who besought it with pious and trustful prayer...We beseech God through the mediation of the Blessed Virgin, so acceptable to Him, since, to use the words of St. Bernard: "Such is the will of God, who has wished that we should have all things through Mary." (Sermon on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.)... From it, the young will draw fresh energy with which to control the rebellious tendencies to evil and to preserve intact the stainless purity of the soul; also in it, the old will again find repose, relief and peace from their anxious cares. To those who devote themselves to Catholic Action may it be a spur to impel them to a more fervent and active work of apostolate; and to all those who suffer in any way, especially the dying, may it bring comfort and increase the hope of eternal happiness. The fathers and mothers of families particularly must give an example to their children, especially when, at sunset, they gather together after the day’s work, within the domestic walls, and recite the Holy Rosary on bended knees before the image of the Virgin, together fusing voice, faith and sentiment. This is a beautiful and salutary custom, from which certainly there cannot but be derived tranquility and abundance of heavenly gifts for the household. When very frequently We receive newly married couples in audience and address paternal words to them, We give them rosaries, We recommend these to them earnestly, and We exhort them, citing Our own example, not to let even one day pass without saying the Rosary, no matter how burdened they may be with many cares and labors.”

Confession and Prayer

If no non-heretical priest is available for confession, then one must confess one's sins directly to God. It's also important to pray to the Holy Ghost for forgiveness, contrition and guidance in this regard. This short prayer – or a variation of it – is recommended:

“O, Holy Ghost, source of all light, come to my assistance and enable me to make a good confession. Bring to my mind the evil which I have done and the good which I have neglected. Grant me, moreover, heartfelt sorrow for my sins and the grace of a sincere confession. Mary, my Mother, help me to make a good confession.”

It is very good to pray three Our Father and three Hail Mary prayers before confession, asking the Blessed Mother specifically for the assistance to make a good confession. The Act of Contrition prayer should of course be prayed as well daily and often. This short prayer – or a variation of it – is highly recommended:

“O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of Heaven, and the pains of Hell; but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.”

PART 3. CHASTITY: THE ANGELIC VIRTUE

In this day and age, there are very few who speak or write about chastity since the world have become so lustful and sensual, but chastity is in fact one of the virtues that is most taught in the Holy Scripture. While most of the verses about chastity are found in the New Testament (which we will examine after the Old Testament passages on chastity), there are also some very noteworthy ones in the Old Testament Scripture which shows us that both the married and the unmarried Jews of the Old Law also were commanded by God to practice the virtue of chastity.

CHASTITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE OLD LAW

Chastity is a virtue above other virtues according to the biblical Book of Exodus and Jewish traditional teaching and history

It is described in *The Book of Exodus* how God, when He spoke to Moses and told him to tell the Jewish people that He wanted them to “be to Me a priestly kingdom, and a holy nation”, that God wanted all of the Jews (married as well as unmarried) to practice one specific virtue for three days before they were able to meet Him and enter into a covenant and union with Him and receive the Ten Commandments; and that virtue was chastity: “*He [Moses] said to them: Be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives.*” (Exodus 19:15)

Exodus 19:9-11,14-15 “The Lord said to him [Moses]: Lo, now will I come to thee in the darkness of a cloud, that the people may hear me speaking to thee, and may believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people to the Lord. And he [God] said to him [Moses]: Go to the people, and sanctify them today, and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments. And let them be ready against the third day: for on the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. ... **And Moses came down from the mount to the people, and sanctified them. And when they had washed their garments, He said to them: Be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives.**”

Unless the people had practiced chastity for three days, they would not have received the grace to appear before God and receive His Laws. The remarkable thing about this is that God first chose to tell the people to practice chastity before He told them about the Ten Commandments. The reason why Our Lord did this was to show us how much He values and wants us to practice the angelic virtue of chastity, thus showing us all that we must be very

pure and holy when serving God.

The Haydock Bible Commentary explains the verses of Exodus 19 in the following way: “**Ver. 10.** [*and let them wash their garments*], with their bodies, as the Jews understand by this expression. They were also to abstain from their wives, &c. By which exterior practices, they were admonished of the interior purity which God required. All nations seem to have adopted similar observances of continence, washing themselves, and putting on their best attire, when they appeared before God. See Herodotus, &c. (Calmet) --- **Ver. 15.** [*come not near your wives*]. St. Paul recommends continence when people have to pray, 1 Corinthians 7. [Even] On the pagan temple of Epidaurus, this inscription was placed, "Let those be chaste who enter here" (St. Clement of Alexandria, Strom. 5)”, and so, it is not strange that, if even pagans who do not know God observe the virtue of chastity at some times for the sake of serving their false god or gods, that Christians who are reborn through Christ’s Blood should adopt an even greater and more virtuous and chaste lifestyle than the pagans did, adding many more periods of chastity since this is only right, even by those who are married, as St. Paul suggests.

It is of course not a coincidence that it was the virtue of chastity that God commanded the Jewish people to practice in order to become sanctified and be worthy to appear before Him and enter into a covenant with Him. This moment when the Jewish people were to first meet Our Lord and enter into a Covenant with Him and receive the Ten Commandments was one of the greatest moments in the history of the Salvation of mankind and a once in a lifetime event. God solemnly bound Himself to the Jewish people through this spectacular event, and yet, God only asked that one specific virtue was to be practiced before meeting with Him, and that was chastity.

From this biblical example alone in *The Book of Exodus* it is easy to see for an honest person who does not love his flesh and the sensuality of the world just how much God loves and appreciates that men and women practice the virtue of chastity. This example from Holy Scripture also shows us that God wants even married people to practice chastity. In truth, we see that God Himself classifies the act of observing chastity for a while for even the married as a part of becoming “*sanctified*” and worthy to appear before Him according to the words in the Holy Bible, contrary to what many lustful people now teach. Chastity is simply in a class of its own when compared to most of the other virtues, but too few people in the world care for or appreciate the inestimable graces that are received by people who practice chastity. It is undoubtedly so that a refusal to practice chastity, whether inside or outside of marriage, is one of the greatest causes of why most people are damned to burn in Hell for all eternity. This truth was also revealed to us by Our Lady of Fatima, who said: “*The sins which lead most*

souls to hell are sins of the flesh... Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God!"

The Book of Exodus also shows us that God directly commanded the priests of the Old Law (which was the prophetic symbol and sign of the priesthood of the New Law) to “sanctify” themselves when they served the Lord, which, as we have seen in *The Book of Exodus*, meant that they had to be chaste (Exodus 19:10-22). This, of course, directly proves that the Catholic Church’s teaching and practice of clerical celibacy is the only biblical one. And so important is this matter of priestly chastity to God, that Our Lord directly threatens to strike priests who refuse to follow His commandment concerning this matter: “*He [God] said unto him [Moses]: Go down, and charge the people: lest they should have a mind to pass the limits to see the Lord, and a very great multitude of them should perish. The priests also that come to the Lord, let them be sanctified, [that is, chaste] lest he strike them.*” (Exodus 19:21-22)

One of the major problems that plagues Protestants and other heretics of today is that they have little or no understanding of the ancient custom of taking a permanent or temporal vow of chastity, even in marriage. This has occurred since in their short 475 year history, they have no examples of good and virtuous people doing such things in their inherently fleshly, impure and lustful religion. When a Protestant thinks of marriage, he automatically thinks that sex must occur and that he is allowed to perform all kinds of lascivious, perverse, unnatural or lustful sexual deeds while married, but that is obviously not the way Jewish or even early Christian people thought of or viewed marriage.

Living a celibate life within marriage was not unknown in Jewish tradition. It was told that Moses, who was married, remained continent the rest of his life after the command to abstain from sexual intercourse (Exodus 19:15) given in preparation for receiving the Ten Commandments, and that the seventy elders also abstained thereafter from their wives after their call, and so did Eldad and Medad when the spirit of prophecy came upon them. Indeed it was said that the prophets became celibate after the Word of the Lord communicated with them (*Midrash Exodus Rabbah* 19; 46.3; *Sifre to Numbers* 99 sect. 11; *Sifre Zutta* 81-82, 203-204; *Aboth Rabbi Nathan* 9, 39; *Tanchuman* 111, 46; *Tanchumah Zaw* 13; 3 *Petirot Moshe* 72; *Shabbath* 87a; *Pesachim* 87b, Babylonian Talmud).

Jewish tradition mentions that, although the people had to abstain from sexual relations with their wives for only three days prior to the revelation at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:15), Moses chose to remain continent the rest of his life with the full approval of God. The rabbis explained that this was so because Moses knew that he was appointed to personally commune with God, not

only at Mount Sinai but in general throughout the forty years of sojourning in the wilderness. For this reason Moses kept himself “apart from woman”, remaining in the sanctity of separation to be at the beck and call of God at all times; they cited God’s command to Moses in Deuteronomy 5:28 (*Midrash Exodus Rabbah* 19:3 and 46.3).

Moses understood how he was called by God to a more perfect and pure service than the rest of the Jewish people, and thus spoke accordingly, saying:

“If the Israelites, with whom the Shechinah spoke only on one occasion and He appointed them a time [thereof], yet the Torah said, Be ready against the third day, come not near a woman: I, with whom the Shechinah speaks at all times and does not appoint me a [definite] time, how much more so!’ And how do we know that the Holy One, blessed be He, gave His approval? Because it is written, Go say to them, Return to your tents, which is followed by, But as for thee, stand thou here by me. (*The Babylonian Talmud Seder Mo'ed, Shabbath*, Vol. II, tr. Rabbi Dr. H. Freedman, Rebecca Bennet Publications, 1959, p. 411-412)

“Thus, Moses said: ‘If in connection with Mount Sinai, which was hallowed only for the occasion [of Revelation], we were told: *Come not near a woman* (ib. XIX, 15), then how much more must I, to whom He [God] speaks at all times, separate myself from my wife?’”

We also have information from the Jewish traditional teachings on Moses and his chaste and pure marriage after Sinai. In truth,

“it was God Himself who told him [to separate himself from his wife], for it says, "With him do I speak mouth to mouth" (Num. XII, 8). R. Judah also said that it was told him directly by God. For Moses too was included in the injunction, "Come not near a woman", thus all were forbidden; and when He afterwards said: "Return ye to your tents" (Deut. 5:30) He permitted them [to their husbands]. Moses then asked: "Am I included in them?" and God replied: "No; but As for thee, stand thou here by Me" (Deut. 5:31).” (*Midrash Rabbah Exodus*, XLVI. 3, tr. Rabbi Dr. S.M. Lehrman, Soncino Press, NY, 1983, p. 529)

The Holy Prophets Elijah and Elisha were also celibate all their lives (*Zohar Hadash* 2:1; *Midrash Mishlei* 30, 105, *Pirke Rabbi Eliezer* 33). Carmelite tradition teaches that a community of Jewish hermits had lived at the Mount of Carmel from the time of Elijah until the Catholic *Order of the Carmelites* were founded there. The Carmelite Constitution of 1281

teaches that from the time when Elijah and Elisha had dwelt devoutly on Mount Carmel, Priests and Prophets, Jewish and Christian, had lived praiseworthy lives in holy penitence and purity adjacent to the site of the fountain of Elisha, in an uninterrupted succession.

There is quite much about chastity in the Jewish tradition and writings, but the Jews of today, however, speak nothing or near to nothing about this. When for the sake of the Torah (i.e., intense study in it), a rabbi would abstain from relations with his wife, it was deemed permissible, for he was then cohabiting with the Shekinah (the Divine Presence) in the Torah (*Zohar re Gn 1:27; 13:3 and Psalm 85:14 in the Discourse of Rabbi Phineas to Rabbis Jose, Judah, and Hiya*).

Jewish tradition also mentions the celibate Zenu'im (Chaste ones) to whom the secret of the Name of God was entrusted, for they were able to preserve the Holy Name in "perfect purity" (*Kiddushin 71a; Midash Ecclesiastes Rabbah 3:11; Yer. yoma 39a, 40a*). Those in hope of a divine revelation consequently refrained from sexual intercourse and were strict in matters of purity (*Enoch 83:2; Revelation 14:2-5*). Indeed, Philo (*Apol. pro Judaeis IX, 14-17*), Josephus, (*Antiq. XVIII. 21*) and St. Hippolytus (*Philosophumena IX, IV, 28a*) wrote on the celibacy of the Jewish Essenes hundreds of years before the discovery of their settlements in Qumran by the Dead Sea.

Philo Judaeus (c. 20 B.C.-50 A.D.), a Jewish philosopher, described Jewish women who were virgins who have kept their chastity not under compulsion, like some Greek priestesses, but of their own free will in their ardent yearning for Wisdom: "Eager to have Wisdom for their life-mate, they have spurned the pleasures of the body and desire no mortal offspring but those immortal children which only the soul that is dear to God can bring forth to birth" (Philo, *Cont. 68*; see also Philo, *Abr. 100*). For "the chaste are rewarded by receiving illumination from the concealed heavenly light" (*Zohar 11. 229b-230a*). Because "if the understanding is safe and unimpaired, free from the oppression of the iniquities or passions... it will gaze clearly on all that is worthy of contemplation" (Philo, *Sob. 1.5*). Conversely, "the understanding of the pleasure-loving man is blind and unable to see those things that are worth seeing... the sight of which is wonderful to behold and desirable" (Philo, *Q. Gen.IV.245*)

Indeed, Holy communities of men and women that was both married and unmarried practiced the evangelical, monastic lifestyle of chastity and purity both before and after the promulgation of the Gospel. Anne Catherine Emmerich wrote the following interesting information when explaining how some of these virtuous people lived before the promulgation of the Gospel. She said, speaking concerning "The Ancestors Of St. Anne – The

Essenes”:

“Until Isaiah assembled these people together and gave them a more regular organization, they were scattered about the land of Israel, leading lives of piety and intent on mortification. They wore their clothes without mending them till they fell off their bodies. They fought particularly against sexual immorality, and often by mutual consent lived in continence for long periods, living in huts far removed from their wives. When they lived together as husband and wife, it was only with the intention of producing a holy offspring which might bring nearer the coming of the Savior. I saw them eating apart from their wives; the wife came to take her meal after the husband had left the table. There were ancestors of St. Anne and of other holy people among these early Essenes.” (*The Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary* by Anne Catherine Emmerich)

According to Wikipedia: “The Essenes were a sect of Second Temple Judaism that flourished from the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD which some scholars claim seceded from the Zadokite priests. Being much fewer in number than the Pharisees and the Sadducees (the other two major sects at the time), the Essenes lived in various cities but congregated in communal life dedicated to asceticism, voluntary poverty, daily immersion, and abstinence from worldly pleasures, including (for some groups) celibacy. Many separate but related religious groups of that era shared similar mystic, eschatological, messianic, and ascetic beliefs. These groups are collectively referred to by various scholars as the "Essenes." Josephus records that Essenes existed in large numbers, and thousands lived throughout Roman Judea.”

Josephus describes this pious collection of pure and chaste men and women that lived in a similar way that monks and nuns now live in his work *The Jewish War*.

Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, Book II, Chapter 8: “For three forms of philosophy are pursued among the Judeans: the members of one are Pharisees, of another Sadducees, and the third [school], who certainly are reputed to cultivate seriousness, are called Essenes; although Judeans by ancestry, they are even more mutually affectionate than the others. Whereas these men shun the pleasures as vice, they consider self-control and not succumbing to the passions virtue. And although there is among them a disdain for marriage, adopting the children of outsiders while they are still malleable enough for the lessons they regard them as family and instill in them their principles of character: without doing away with marriage or the succession

resulting from it, they nevertheless protect themselves from the wanton ways of women...

“To those who are eager for their school, the entry-way is not a direct one, but they prescribe a regimen for the person who remains outside for a year, giving him a little hatchet as well as the aforementioned waist-covering and white clothing. Whenever he should give proof of his self-control during this period, he approaches nearer to the regimen and indeed shares in the purer waters for purification, though he is not yet received into the functions of communal life. For after this demonstration of endurance, the character is tested for two further years, and after he has thus been shown worthy he is reckoned into the group.

“... [They are] long-lived, most of them passing 100 years—as a result, it seems to me at least, of the simplicity of their regimen and their orderliness. Despisers of terrors, triumphing over agonies by their wills, considering death—if it arrives with glory—better than deathlessness. The war against the Romans proved their souls in every way: during it, while being twisted and also bent, burned and also broken, and passing through all the torture-chamber instruments, with the aim that they might insult the lawgiver or eat something not customary, they did not put up with suffering either one: not once gratifying those who were tormenting [them], or crying. But smiling in their agonies and making fun of those who were inflicting the tortures, they would cheerfully dismiss their souls, [knowing] that they would get them back again.

“... There are also among them those who profess to foretell what is to come, being thoroughly trained in holy books, various purifications, and concise sayings of prophets. Rarely if ever do they fail in their predictions.

“There is also a different order of Essenes. Though agreeing with the others about regimen and customs and legal matters, it has separated in its opinion about marriage. For they hold that those who do not marry cut off the greatest part of life, the succession, and more: if all were to think the same way, the line would very quickly die out. To be sure, testing the brides in a three-year interval, once they have been purified three times as a test of their being able to bear children, they take them in this manner; but they do not continue having intercourse with those who are pregnant, demonstrating that the need for marrying is not because of pleasure, but for children.”
(Flavius Josephus: translation and commentary, vol. 1b: Judean War)

Regarding monks and nuns, the Old Testament records people who took special vows of consecration to God (Nazirites, cf. Num. 6), the Old Testament equivalent of monks and nuns. In the New Testament, Anna the prophetess seems to have lived like a cloistered nun, as “she did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day” (Luke

2:37). St. Paul also tells us of an order of widows devoted to good works who had vowed to not marry again (cf. 1 Tim. 5:9-12).

St. John Damascene (c. 676-749 A.D.), a Christian theologian, describes of Moses and the Israelites concerning purity, “Did not God, when He wished the Israelites to see Him, bid them purify the body? [Ex. 19:15; Num. 6:2] Did not the priests purify themselves and so approach the temple’s shrine and offer victims? And did not the law call chastity the great vow?” (*An Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Book IV, Chapter XXIV.--Concerning Virginity). Why so few people today speak or write about chastity and purity is not hard to guess since almost all men and women, whether married or not, are filled with impurity, lust-fulness and sensuality. This is also the reason why God performs less miracles and why He reveals Himself to less people nowadays. Indeed, since almost all are entrenched in the flesh, this greatly hinders their spirituality and conversation with God. God, however, is never far away from those who seek and love purity and chastity. Thus, “If you long for God to manifest Himself to you, why do you not hear Moses, when he commands the people to be pure from the stains of marriage, that they may take in the vision of God [Ex. 19:15].” (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginity*, Chapter XXIV, ca. 335-395 A.D.)

There is “a time to be far from embraces” for those who are married according to God’s Holy Word in the Book of Ecclesiastes

In truth, contrary to what many lustful people nowadays teach, Our Lord and God teaches us in *The Book of Ecclesiastes* that there is “**A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces**” (Ecclesiastes 3:5) and this teaching of Our Lord in Holy Scripture directly applies to the married since He wishes them to practice chastity from time to time in order to grow in holiness and purity. The phrase “*A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces*” refers to the marital act. Haydock Catholic Bible Commentary explains this verse: “*Verse 5. **Embraces**. Contenance was sometimes prescribed to married people, Leviticus xx. 18., and 1 Corinthians 7. (St. Jerome) (St. Augustine, Enchiridion 78.) (Calmet).*” This clearly shows us not only that Our Lord *wants* all the married to sometimes abstain from the marital act, but also that the marital act sometimes *must* be abstained from altogether instead of being performed every day as the world and human sensuality predicates.

There are two main reasons for why the Holy Bible instructs married spouses to abstain from the marital act, teaching them that there is “**a time to be far from embraces**”. The first reason is that spouses who perform the marital act often will more easily fall into sexual sins either with his own spouse or with himself or with some other person, since he who indulges

his flesh often is much more apt to fall into sexual sins of various sorts just like a person who drinks wine often is much more apt to fall into the sin of drunkenness than a person who rarely or never drinks wine at all. The second reason is that chastity helps a person's prayer to become better and stronger and "*give[s] you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment*" (1 Cor. 7:35) according to God's Holy Word in the Bible.

The majority of the Jews in the Old Testament Religion awaited the coming and birth of the Messiah, and because of this, they also extolled the procreation of the Jewish race since they understood that the Messiah would be born from their race. The majority of them did not understand, however, that God would bring forth the Messiah from a pure virgin and without any sexual intercourse. The reason God chose to become man through a virgin, and without any human sexual relations is because Our Lord values chastity and purity above the marital life. It was not fitting that God who is purity Himself, should become man through an act that had become wounded and lustful through concupiscence after the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve. Thus, Our Lord decreed that He would become Man both since His dignity required this, but also because He wanted His people to understand that the meritorious action of observing chastity is a great virtue that showers humanity with blessings of different kinds.

St. Methodius, *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* (c. 311 A.D.): "For consider, O virgins, how he [St. Paul, in Holy Scripture], desiring with all his might that believers in Christ should be chaste, endeavors by many arguments to show them the dignity of chastity, as when he says, "Now, concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman," thence showing already very clearly that it is good not to touch a woman, laying it down, and setting it forth unconditionally. But afterwards, being aware of the weakness of the less continent, and their passion for intercourse, he permitted those who are unable to govern the flesh to use their own wives, rather than, shamefully transgressing, to give themselves up to fornication. Then, after having given this permission, he immediately added these words, "that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency;" which means, "if you, such as you are, cannot, on account of the incontinence and softness of your bodies, be perfectly continent, I will rather permit you to have intercourse with your own wives, lest, professing perfect continence, ye be constantly tempted by the evil one, and be inflamed with lust after other men's wives."" (Discourse III, Chapter XI)

Speaking about the greatness and practice of purity and chastity of the men and women of the Old Law, St. Jerome (347-420) confirms the historical truth that chastity was practiced even

then, as well as that Moses laid off the earthly garments of marriage in order to arraign himself in the pure and spotless garment of heaven and eternity, since he knew very well that “The truth is that, in view of the purity of the body of Christ, all sexual intercourse is unclean” and that sex is only tolerated and excused for the procreation of children: “Does he imagine that we approve of any sexual intercourse except for the procreation of children?”

St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus*, Book 1, Section 20, A.D. 393: “But I wonder why he [Jovinianus] set Judah and Tamar before us for an example [Gen. xxxviii], unless perchance even harlots give him pleasure; or Onan who was slain because he grudged his brother seed [Gen. xxxviii. 9]. Does he imagine that we approve of any sexual intercourse except for the procreation of children? As regards Moses, it is clear that he would have been in peril at the inn, if Sephora which is by interpretation a bird, had not circumcised her son, and cut off the foreskin of marriage with the knife which prefigured the Gospel [Ex. iv. 24-26]. This is that Moses who when he saw a great vision and heard an angel, or the Lord speaking in the bush [Ex. iii. 5], could not by any means approach to him without first loosing the latchet of his shoe, that is, putting off the bonds of marriage. And we need not be surprised at this in the case of one who was a prophet, lawgiver, and the friend of God, seeing that all the people when about to draw nigh to Mount Sinai, and to hear the voice speaking to them, were commanded to sanctify themselves in three days, and keep themselves from their wives. I am out of order in violating historical sequence, but I may point out that the same thing was said by Ahimelech [1 Sam. xxi. 4] the priest to David when he fled to Nob: “If only the young men have kept themselves from women.” And David answered, “of a truth about these three days.” For the shew-bread, like the body of Christ, might not be eaten by those who rose from the marriage bed. And in passing we ought to consider the words “if only the young men have kept themselves from women.” The truth is that, in view of the purity of the body of Christ, all sexual intercourse is unclean. In the law also it is enjoined that the high priest must not marry any but a virgin, nor must he take to wife a widow [Levit. xxi. 13, 14]. If a virgin and a widow are on the same level, how is it that one is taken, the other rejected? And the widow of a priest is bidden abide in the house of her father, and not to contract a second marriage [Levit. xxi. 3]. If the sister of a priest dies in virginity, just as the priest is commanded to go to the funeral of his father and mother, so must he go to hers. But if she be married, she is despised as though she belonged not to him. He who has married a wife, and he who has planted a vineyard, an image of the propagation of children, is forbidden to go to the battle. For he who is the slave of his wife cannot be the Lord’s soldier. And the laver in the tabernacle was cast from the mirrors of the women who fasted, signifying the bodies of pure virgins: And

within, in the sanctuary, both cherubim, and mercy-seat, and the ark of the covenant, and the table of shew-bread, and the candle-stick, and the censer, were made of the purest gold. For silver might not be brought into the holy of holies [Ex. xxxvii].”

The figure of the Eucharist in the Holy Bible requires people to be chaste in order to receive it, teaching us to be chaste for three days before receiving the Eucharist

Another example of chastity in the Old Testament is found in *The First Book of Kings* (also called *First Samuel*) where the future King David, being on the run from King Saul, asks the priest Achimelech for some food to alleviate his and his friends’ hunger.

1 Kings 21:2-5: “And David said to Achimelech the priest: ‘...Now therefore if thou have any thing at hand, though it were but five loaves, give me, or whatsoever thou canst find.’ And the priest answered David, saying: ‘I have no common bread at hand, but only holy bread, if the young men be clean, especially from women?’ And David answered the priest, and said to him: “Truly, as to what concerneth women, we have refrained ourselves from yesterday and the day before, when we came out, and the vessels of the young men were holy. Now this way is defiled, but it shall also be sanctified this day in the vessels.”

Haydock Commentary explains some very noteworthy and interesting things about these remarkable verses: “**Verse 4.** If the young men be clean, &c. If this cleanness was required of them that were to eat that bread, which was but a figure of the bread of life which we receive in the blessed sacrament [the Eucharist]; how clean ought Christians be when they approach to our tremendous mysteries? And what reason hath the Church of God to admit none to be her ministers, to consecrate and daily receive this most pure sacrament, but such as devote themselves to a life of perpetual purity. (Challoner) --- **Verse 5.** Vessels, i.e., the bodies, have been holy; that is, have been kept from impurity (Challoner)... Septuagint, "my men are all purified." (Calmet) --- Defiled. Is liable to expose us to dangers of uncleanness, (Challoner) as we shall perhaps have to fight. (Haydock) --- Sanctified. That is, we shall take care, notwithstanding these dangerous circumstances, to keep our vessels holy; that is, keep our bodies from every thing that may defile us. (Challoner)”

Just like in the case of *The Book of Exodus* where God demanded the people to be chaste for three days before receiving His Holy Word, so the figure and sign of the most Holy Eucharist in the Old Testament time also refers to the three days of chastity before receiving it. We see

the three day standard of practicing chastity before receiving the Holy Eucharist in these words: “Truly, as to what concerneth women, we have refrained ourselves from yesterday and the day before, when we came out, and the vessels of the young men were holy.” (1 Kings 21:5) And as is the case with many types and figures of the Old Law that was fulfilled in the New Law, just like in the Old Law, where the “holy bread” that prefigured the Eucharist was only allowed to be received **“if the young men be clean, especially from women”** so too the Holy Eucharist may never be received without abstaining at least three days from the marital sexual act, since **“The dignity of so great a Sacrament [of the Eucharist] also demands that married persons abstain from the marriage debt for some days previous to Communion.”** That is also why chastity **“is particularly to be observed for at least three days before Communion, and oftener during the solemn fast of Lent.”** (*The Catechism of the Council of Trent*)

Likewise, the reception of the Word of God and the Ten Commandments by the people of Israel in *The Book of Exodus* after three days of chastity signifies that there is a necessity for all to be chaste for three days in order to receive the Word of God (Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself) made flesh in the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist, which is the true manna from Heaven **“come down in the sight of all the people”** according to Holy Scripture. “And he [God] said to him [Moses]: Go to the people, and sanctify them today, and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments. And let them be ready against the third day: **for on the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.** ... **And Moses came down from the mount to the people, and sanctified them. And when they had washed their garments, He said to them: Be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives.**” The Old Testament could not be more clear on the beneficial nature of chastity, and that it is necessary for a person to practice it for three days before receiving the Most Holy Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Old Law and the Old Testament, every time God commanded the people to “sanctify” themselves this meant that they were to be chaste for a period of time as evidenced from *The Book of Exodus*, as we saw above. The commandment to the people to “sanctify” themselves that were given by God and His Prophets and Priests in the Old Testament are quite often used in the Old Testament, but most people who read the Old Testament do not understand that the Jewish sanctification actually meant to practice the virtue of chastity for a certain amount of time. Thus, the Church of the Old Testament just like the Church of the New Covenant practiced chastity, and drew down a shower of grace and mercy from the Lord: *“The Lord knoweth the days of undefiled; and their inheritance shall be for ever.”* (Psalms 36:18)

Indeed, the necessity for us all to “sanctify” ourselves is crucially important, and especially so when we are to receive Our Lord’s Holy Body and Blood. Speaking about the reception of the Holy Eucharist, St. Jerome expresses himself in the following terms in his *Commentary on The Gospel of Matthew*: “If the loaves of Proposition might not be eaten by them who had known their wives carnally, how much less may this Bread [the Eucharist] which has come down from heaven be defiled and touched by them who shortly before have been in conjugal embraces? It is not that we condemn marriages, but that at the time when we are going to eat the flesh of the Lamb, we ought not to indulge in carnal acts.” (Epist. xxviii, among St. Jerome’s works)

For the same reason, in the year 1679 A.D., Pope Innocent XI addressed all priests in an encyclical, teaching them how married people are to be instructed and disposed in order to be able to receive the Most Holy Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist: “In the case of married persons, however, let them seriously consider this, since the blessed Apostle does not wish them to “defraud one another, except perhaps by consent for a time, that they may give themselves to prayer” [cf. 1 Cor. 7:5], let them advise these seriously that they should give themselves more to continence because of reverence for the most holy Eucharist, and that they should come together for Communion in the heavenly banquet with a purer mind.” (Pope Innocent XI (1676-1689), *From the Decree C. S. Conc.*, Feb. 12. 1679, Denzinger #1147)

Pope Innocent XI also added additional instructions on how both the married as well as all others are to be instructed and disposed for the reception of Our Lord’s Body and Blood in the following words: “It will be of benefit, too, besides the diligence of priests and confessors, to make use also of the services of preachers and to have an agreement with them, that, when the faithful have become used to frequenting the most holy Sacrament (which they should do), they preach a sermon on the great preparation for undertaking that, and show in general that those who by devout zeal are stirred to a more frequent or daily partaking of the health bringing Food, whether lay tradesmen, or married people, or any others, ought to understand their own weakness, so that because of the dignity of the Sacrament and the fear of the divine judgment they may learn to revere the celestial table on which is Christ; and if at any time they should feel themselves not prepared, to abstain from it and to gird themselves for a greater preparation. ... Furthermore, let bishops and priests or confessors refute those who hold that daily communion is of divine right...” (Pope Innocent XI (1676-1689), *From the Decree C. S. Conc.*, Feb. 12. 1679, Denzinger #1149-1150)

So a good advice to pious persons is that they remain chaste for three days before receiving the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist in the same way as the Jewish people were commanded by God to practice chastity for three days before they received the Word of God in the Old Covenant; and just like David and his men had to be chaste and pure for three days before they received the figure and sign of the Body of Christ in the Old Law. The honor that a chaste and virtuous person gives to Christ and the Holy Eucharist by practicing the virtue of chastity for three days before receiving the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist is, simply said, inestimable. The biblical Commentary of First Kings also teaches us this fact, mentioning that “If this cleanness was required of them that were to eat that bread, which was but a figure of the bread of life which we receive in the blessed sacrament [the Eucharist]; how clean ought Christians be when they approach to our tremendous mysteries?”

In fact, the Catholic Church has always admonished and taught spouses that there is a necessity to abstain from the marriage debt for at least three days before receiving the Most Holy Eucharist of the Mass in order to obtain blessings from God, while also recognizing and admonishing spouses that **“The dignity of so great a Sacrament [of the Eucharist] also demands that married persons abstain from the marriage debt for some days previous to Communion”**.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent speaks much of the necessity of purity and preparation before receiving the Holy Eucharist. In the section ***“On the Sacrament of Matrimony”*** it teaches that the three days standard of observing chastity before receiving Communion was taught by their predecessors, thus indicating that the Tradition of the Church always taught this truth: “But as every blessing is to be obtained from God by holy prayer, the faithful are also to be taught sometimes to abstain from the marriage debt, in order to devote themselves to prayer. **Let the faithful understand that (this religious continence), according to the proper and holy injunction of our predecessors, is particularly to be observed for at least three days before Communion, and oftener during the solemn fast of Lent.** Thus will they find the blessings of marriage to be daily increased by an abundance of divine grace; and living in the pursuit of piety, they will not only spend this life in peace and tranquility, but will also repose in the true and firm hope, which confoundeth not, of arriving, through the divine goodness, at the possession of that life which is eternal.”

In the section ***“On the sacrament of the Eucharist, Preparation Of Body”*** The *Catechism of Trent* corroborates the fact that the story of David in the Bible shows us that we must both fast and be chaste before receiving the Holy Eucharist: “Our preparation should

not, however, be confined [only] to the soul; it should also extend to the body. We are to approach the Holy Table fasting, having neither eaten nor drunk anything at least from the preceding midnight until the moment of Communion. **The dignity of so great a Sacrament also demands that married persons abstain from the marriage debt for some days previous to Communion.** This observance is recommended by the example of David, who, when about to receive the showbread from the hands of the priest, declared that he and his servants had been clean from women for three days. The above are the principal things to be done by the faithful preparatory to receiving the sacred mysteries with profit; and to these heads may be reduced whatever other things may seem desirable by way of preparation.”

Indeed, there is a “*great necessity of this previous preparation*” for all who presume to receive the Most Holy Body of Our Lord: “We now come to point out the manner in which the faithful should be previously prepared for sacramental Communion. To demonstrate the great necessity of this previous preparation, the example of the Savior should be adduced. Before He gave to His Apostles the Sacrament of His precious Body and Blood, although they were already clean, He washed their feet to show that we must use extreme diligence before Holy Communion in order to approach it with the greatest purity and innocence of soul.” (*The Catechism of Trent, On the sacrament of the Eucharist, Necessity Of Previous Preparation For Communion*)

Considering all of the above, it is clear why The Catechism of Trent, in the Chapter about the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and the *Necessity Of Previous Preparation For Communion*, rightly declared that he who dares to approach the Holy Eucharist “**without this preparation [of purity] not only derives from it no advantage, but even incurs the greatest misfortune and loss,**” which directly contradicts the lustful and depraved world who teaches that God does not require any kind of special purity in order to receive Him: “In the next place, the faithful are to understand that as he who approaches thus prepared and disposed is adorned with the most ample gifts of heavenly grace; so, on the contrary, he who approaches without this preparation not only derives from it no advantage, but even incurs the greatest misfortune and loss. It is characteristic of the best and most salutary things that, if seasonably made use of, they are productive of the greatest benefit; but if employed out of time, they prove most pernicious and destructive. It cannot, therefore, excite out surprise that the great and exalted gifts of God; when received into a soul properly disposed, are of the greatest assistance towards the attainment of salvation; while to those who receive them unworthily, they bring with them eternal death. Of this the Ark of the Lord affords a convincing illustration. The people of Israel possessed nothing more precious and it

was to them the source of innumerable blessings from God; but when the Philistines carried it away, it brought on them a most destructive plague and the heaviest calamities, together with eternal disgrace. Thus also food when received from the mouth into a healthy stomach nourishes and supports the body; but when received into an indisposed stomach, causes grave disorders.” (*The Catechism of Trent, On the Sacrament of the Eucharist; and the Necessity Of Previous Preparation For Communion*)

Indeed, in *The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Jesus also tells us that we will be punished if we receive Him in the Eucharist with a wicked or impure heart. *Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to St. Bridget, saying*, “When the words ‘This is my body’ are spoken, the bread becomes the Body of Christ that people receive, both the good and the wicked, one person as much as one thousand, according to the same truth but not with the same effect, for the good receive it unto life, while the wicked receive it unto judgment.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget, Book 4, Chapter 61*) And so, “**as the sacred feasts approach, observe chastity with your wives for several days preceding, so that you may approach the Lord’s altar with a peaceful conscience.**” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon 19:3*)

Before the apostasy of the 20th and the 21st century, it was commonly known by the faithful of the Church that the Church taught married spouses to abstain for at least three days from marital relations as well as that all people (except the sick or weak) were to fast from the preceding midnight until the moment of Communion in order for the servants of Christ to be pure and better disposed to receive the Holy Eucharist. Nowadays, however, since people are worldly and lustful, they either reject or ignore this ancient Church teaching. It is indeed obvious that Christians who receive the true Body of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist rather than just a figure or shell of it as the Jews did in the Old Law, should minimally practice as much chastity or even more purity than those in the Old Law did, since this is only reasonable and just. The true Body of Christ is of infinitely more value and deserving of honor than the figure of it, and yet most so-called Christians of today do not even practice as much virtue as the Jews in the Old Law did.

Already in the 6th century, Pope St. Gregory the Great, in his *Epistle to Augustine, Bishop of the English*, rightly declared that God demands from us purity and chastity when we are to receive Him in the Most Holy Eucharist of the Mass, since this was even required in the Old Law which was only a sign of the Eucharist.

“Furthermore it is to be attentively considered that the Lord in mount Sinai, when about to speak to the people, first charged the same people to abstain from women.

And if there, where the Lord spoke to men through a subject creature, purity of body was required with such careful provision that they who were to hear the words of God might not have intercourse with women, how much more ought those who receive the Body of the Almighty Lord to keep purity of the flesh in themselves, lest they be weighed down by the greatness of the inestimable mystery! Hence also it is said through the priest to David concerning his servants, that if they were pure from women they might eat the shew bread; which they might not receive at all unless David first declared them to be pure from women." (Selected Epistles of St. Gregory, in "Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers", Volume XIII, Book XII, Epistle LXIV)

It is a sad fact to have to relate, but carnal Christians who reject purity and holiness before receiving the Most Holy Eucharist of the Mass show a lack of estimation and appreciation for the Body of Christ by their worldly and pleasure seeking lifestyle, showing themselves to be lovers of the flesh and of the world rather than of Our Lord. It is an utter disgrace and blemish on every Christian (who have received countless of more graces than the Jews of the Old Law) to practice less virtue than the Jews in the Old Law did. This lack of virtue is undoubtedly also one of the main reasons of why the Church's members have been decreased drastically during the 20th century and why so many of them were allowed to fall into immorality and apostasy from God. The Holy Bible is crystal clear when it says that: "*whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord. Therefore are there many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep.*" (1 Corinthians 11:27-30)

Our Lord Himself tells us in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* that there is an absolute necessity for all to receive Him in purity and chastity. *Our Lord spoke to St. Bridget in a revelation, saying:* "I am like a ruler who fought faithfully in the land of his pilgrimage, and returned with joy to the land of his birth. This ruler had a very precious treasure [the most Holy Eucharist]. At its sight, the bleary-eyed became clear-sighted, the sad were consoled, the sick regained their strength, the dead were raised. For the purpose of the safe and honest protection of this treasure, a splendid and magnificent house of suitable height was built and finished with seven steps leading up to it and the treasure. The ruler entrusted the treasure to his servants for them to watch over, manage, and protect faithfully and purely. This was in order that the ruler's love for his servants might be shown and that the servants' faithfulness toward the ruler might be seen.

"As time went on, the treasure began to be despised and its house rarely visited, while

the guardians grew lukewarm, and the love of the ruler was neglected. Then the ruler consulted his intimate advisers concerning what was to be done about such ingratitude, and one of them said in answer: 'It is written that the neglectful judges and guardians of the people were ordered to be hanged in the sun. However, mercy and judgment are your nature; you are lenient toward all, for all things are yours and you are merciful toward all.'

"I am the ruler in the parable. I appeared like a pilgrim on earth by virtue of my humanity, although I was mighty in heaven and on earth by virtue of my divinity. I fought so hard on earth that all the muscles of my hands and feet were ruptured out of zeal for the salvation of souls. As I was about to leave the world and ascend into heaven, I left it a most worthy memorial, my most Holy Body, in order that, in the same way that the Old Law could glory in the ark, the manna, and the tablets of the covenant, and in other ceremonies, so the new man could rejoice in the New Law—not, as before, in a shadow but in the truth, indeed, in my crucified body that had been foreshadowed in the law. In order that my body might be given honor and glory, I established the house of the Holy Church, where it was to be kept and preserved, as well as priests to be its special guardians, who in a certain way are above the angels by reason of their ministry. The one whom angels fear to touch due to a reverent fear, priests handle with their hands and mouth.

"I honored the priests with a sevenfold honor, as it were, on seven steps. On the first step, they should be my standard-bearers and special friends by reason of the purity of their mind and body, for purity is the first position near to God, whom nothing foul can touch nor adorn. It was not strange that marital relation was permitted to the priests of the law during the time in which they were not offering sacrifice, for they were carrying the shell, not the nut itself. Now, however, with the coming of the truth and the disappearance of the figure, one must strive all the more fully for purity by as much as the nut is sweeter than the shell. As a sign of this kind of continence, first the hair is tonsured, so that desire for pleasure does not rule over spirit or flesh.

"... My grievance now, however, is that these steps have fallen apart. Pride is loved more than humility, impurity is practiced instead of purity, the divine lessons are not read but the book of the world, negligence is to be seen at the altars, God's wisdom is regarded as foolishness, the salvation of souls is not a concern. As if this were not enough, they even throw away my vestments and scorn my weapons. On the mountain, I showed Moses the vestments that the priests of the law were to use. It is not as though there were anything material in God's heavenly dwelling, but it is because spiritual things cannot be understood except by means of physical symbols. Thus, I revealed a spiritual truth by means of something physical in order that people might realize how much reverence and purity are needful for those who have the truth itself—my Body—given that those who were wearing but a shadow and a figure had so much purity and reverence.

“Why did I reveal such magnificence in material vestments to Moses? It was, of course, in order to use them to teach and symbolize the magnificence and beauty of the soul. **As the vestments of the priests were seven in number, so too the soul that approaches the Body of God shall have seven virtues without which there is no salvation. The first vestment of the soul, then, is contrition and confession. These cover the head. The second is desire for God and desire for chastity. The third is work in honor of God as well as patience in adversity. The fourth is caring neither for human praise nor reproach but for the honor of God alone. The fifth is abstinence of the flesh along with true humility. The sixth is consideration of the favors of God as well as fear of his judgments. The seventh is love of God above all things and perseverance in good undertakings.**

“These vestments, however, have been changed and are now despised. People love to make excuses and smooth over their guilt instead of going to confession. **They love constant lasciviousness instead of chastity.** They love work for the benefit of the body instead of work for the salvation of the soul. They love worldly ambition and pride instead of the honor and love of God. They love all kinds of redundancy instead of praiseworthy thrift, presumption and criticizing God’s judgments instead of the fear of God, and the clergy’s thanklessness toward everyone instead of God’s love toward all. Therefore, as I said through the prophet, I shall come in indignation, and tribulation shall give them understanding... My mercy shows pardon to them all and endures them all. However, my justice calls for retribution, for I cry out each day and you see well enough how many answer me. Nevertheless, I will still send out the words of my mouth. Those who listen will complete the days of their lives in that joy that can neither be expressed nor imagined because of its sweetness. To those, however, who do not listen, there will come, as it is written, seven plagues in the soul and seven plagues in the body. They will find this out, if they think and read about what has been done. Otherwise, they will quake and quail when they do experience it.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 4, Chapter 58)

Again, God’s holy word is clear that there is “**A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.**” (Ecclesiastes 3:5) But most people, however, refuse to obey these words of Our Lord which says that one must practice chastity from time to time. Instead, they choose to act in a gluttonous way in the marital act by overindulging in it even though it is contrary to reason to have more marital relations than what is necessary.

The infinite value of the many and great graces and special friendship of God that lustful people lose because of their inordinate love of this fleshly act is, simply said, impossible to estimate, since a single Grace is truly of more worth than the whole of the universe combined.

“He that loveth cleanness of heart, for the grace of his lips shall have the King [of Heaven] for his friend.” (Proverbs 22:11)

Many Popes and Saints, as we have seen, tried to get all Christians to practice chastity before they received the Eucharist. It is clear that this is an Apostolic Tradition, since the Church, from the beginning, tried to admonish and teach Her children to always abstain from the sexual act before receiving the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. For example, in the year 866, Pope St. Nicholas the Great wrote a letter to Boris, prince of Bulgaria, and explained the reason for abstaining from marital relations on Sundays and holy days, saying that: “If we must abstain from worldly labor on Sundays, how much the more must we be on our guard against fleshly lust and every bodily defilement.” And so, it is certain that the Church always have taught that Christians are to remain chaste before receiving the Eucharist. St. Caesarius of Arles (c. 470-543 A.D.), who was a fierce promoter of chastity before receiving the Most Holy Eucharist, wrote concerning “a good Christian” in the following way: “That man is a good Christian who, as often as the sacred feasts come around, in order that he may receive Holy Communion more serenely, observes chastity with his wife during the few preceding days, that he may presume to approach the Lord’s altar with a free and serene conscience because of his chaste body and pure heart.” (*Sermon 16:2*)

Jonas, Bishop of Orleans from 818 to 843, scolded married folk for “irreverently coming” to church after engaging in marital relations. Not only were these married folk “so indiscreet as to come up as far as the altar,” lamented Jonas, but they also received “the Body and Blood of Christ.” Jonas warned those soiled with the “uncleanness” of their marital activity: “Let them understand that they should only enter Christ’s Church and receive His Body and Blood with a clean body and a pure heart.” (Jonas of Orleans, *De Institutione Laicorum*) St. Caesarius of Arles adds: “Who is unable to advise that, as often as the sacred solemnities approach, chastity with one’s own wife should be observed several days preceding, so that the altar of the Lord may be approached with an upright and pure conscience. Indeed, if a man communicated without chastity, he will receive judgment where he might have had a remedy.” (*Sermon 1:12*)

Origen (c. 182-254 A.D.) in his *Treatise on the Passover*, Exegesis of Exodus 12, explains that the Holy Bible teaches us that we must receive the Holy Eucharist with: “Your loins girded.” He then goes on to explain what this means: “We are ordered, when we eat the Passover [the Eucharist], to be pure of bodily sexual union, for this is what the girding of the loins means [in the Holy Scripture]. Thus Scripture teaches us to bind up the bodily source of seed and to repress inclinations to sexual relations when we partake of the flesh of Christ.”

The amount of Popes, Fathers and Saints that could be quoted concerning the absolute necessity to be chaste before the reception of the Holy Eucharist and the Body and Blood of Christ is almost endless. Gratian, in his *Marriage Canons From "The Decretum"*, which is based largely on the authority of the Church Fathers (written in the 12th century), clearly shows us how this Apostolic Tradition of observing a period of chastity before receiving the Holy Eucharist was firmly established and believed by the faithful in the Early Church.

However, these quotations and Early Church Canons also clearly shows us the necessity of abstaining from marital relations *not only* before Receiving the Sacraments of the Holy Mass, but also on all Holy Days. Gratian writes concerning this,

“That spouses may not lawfully render each other the debt during times of prayer, St. Jerome writes in a certain sermon, saying: "A man should abstain from the Flesh of the Lamb when he renders the debt to his wife. You know, most dear brothers, that one who renders the debt to his wife cannot devote himself to prayer, nor can he eat the Flesh of the Lamb." Also: "If those who touched women could not eat the Showbread [that was the mere sign of the future Eucharist described in the biblical book of 1st Sam. 21:4], how much more should those who have not refrained from matrimonial embrace refrain from touching and violating the Bread Come Down from Heaven? Now, we do not condemn marriage, but when we are to eat the Flesh of the Lamb, we ought to forego carnal works."

“Also, [Saint] Augustine, [in Sermon ii of the Temporal Cycle, that is, for the Second Sunday of Advent]: "One should abstain from conjugal union on the solemnities of the saints. On Christmas and other festivals we ought to abstain, not only from the company of unbelieving concubines, but also from our own wives." Also, [Saint] Ambrose, in his sermon on the Lord's Coming: "On fast days one ought also to abstain from one's wife. Brethren, you should abstain, not only from every impurity, but you should also carefully hold yourself back from your own wives. Let no one have relations with his wife. The same, on the First Letter to the Corinthians [Chapter 7]: If a wife is taken for procreating children, not much attention needs to be dedicated to that. What is necessary for conception and childbirth shows that one can abstain from works of the flesh on feast days and rogation days, as the law demands at those times."

“Also, Augustine, in his book Questions on the Old and New Testaments, [Question cxxvii], says: "One must refrain from one's wife on certain days. Sometimes a Christian may lawfully approach his wife, at other times he may not. On the rogation days and fast days, one may not lawfully approach her, because one should then abstain

even from lawful things, in order to entreat and pray more easily. Hence the Apostle [1 Cor. 7:5] says that spouses should abstain for a time by mutual consent, to devote time to prayer. For according to the law [cf. Is. 58:4], one may not sue and fight during fasts, although one might afterwards." Also, [Saint] John Chrysostom: "Without continence, one does not truly do penance. One who claims to do penance and master himself by self-denial speaks in vain if he does not abandon the bed-chamber [cf. Joel 2:16] and add continence to his fasting."

"Also, [Pope Saint] Gregory, [to the Questions of Augustine, Bishop of the English, Reply 10]: "A man should refrain from entering a church after sleeping with his wife... We do not suggest that marriage is wrong, but because lawful conjugal relations cannot occur without lust, one should abstain from entering a sacred place... Lawful union of the flesh must be for the sake of offspring, not for lust, and fleshly intercourse for having children, not for satisfying vice... But since, in the act of union, men are dominated, not by desire to procreate offspring, but by lust, spouses do have something to regret in their union."

"Gratian: The following forbid the celebration of marriage on days of abstinence. Hence in the Council of Laodicea, [A.D. 363-364, canon 52]: "Marriages or feasts may not be celebrated during lent." Also, from the Council [Lateran Council of 649] of Pope [Saint] Martin, [canon 48]: "The feasts of the martyrs may not be celebrated during Lent, but the offering may be made in their memory on Saturdays and Sundays. Neither feasts nor weddings may be celebrated during Lent." Also, from the Council of Lerida [A.D. 546]: "Weddings may not be celebrated from Septuagesima until the Octave of Easter, during the three weeks before the feast of St. John, and from Advent until Epiphany. If any do so, let them be separated [excommunicated]." Also, [Pope Saint] Nicholas, to the questions of the Bulgarians, [A.D. 866, Letter 99]: "I think it no way possible to take a wife or have any celebrations during the season of Lent.""
(Gratian, Marriage Canons From *The Decretum* (Vulgate Edition), Case Thirty-Three, Question IV, Part 1 and 2)

Thus, "As often as you come to church and wish to receive the sacraments of Christ on a feast, observe chastity several days before it, so that you may be able to approach the Lord's altar with a peaceful conscience. Devoutly practice this also throughout Lent, even to the end of the Pasch, so that the Easter solemnity may find you pure and chaste. In fact, a good Christian should not only observe chastity for a few days before he communicates, [that is, before he receives the Holy Eucharist] but he should never know his wife except from the desire for children. A man takes a wife for the procreation of children, not for the sake of lust. Even the marriage rite mentions this: 'For the procreation of children,' it says. Notice that it does not

say for the sake of lust, but ‘for the procreation of children.’

“... So, too, we read in the Old Testament that, when the Jewish people were about to approach Mount Sinai, it was said to them in the Lord’s teaching: ‘Be sanctified, and be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives,’ [Exodus 19:15] and: ‘if any man be defiled in a dream by night, let him not eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of salvation, lest his soul be cut off from his people.’ [Deut. 23:10; Lev. 7:20] If after defilement which happens to us even unwillingly we may not communicate [receive the Eucharist] unless compunction and almsgiving come first, and fasting, too, if infirmity does not prevent it, who can say that there is no sin if we do such things intentionally when we are wide awake?

“... Since no man wants to come to church with his tunic covered with dirt, I do not know with what kind of a conscience he dares to approach the altar with his soul defiled by dissipation. Evidently, he does not fear what the Apostle said: ‘Whoever partakes of the Body and Blood of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of the Body and the Blood of the Lord.’ [1 Cor. 11:27] If we blush and fear to touch the Eucharist with dirty hands, we should fear much more to receive the same Eucharist within a polluted soul. As I mentioned, we have been created in our soul according to God’s image. Now, if you put your image on a tablet of wood or stone, and someone impudently wanted to shatter that image with stones or to stain it with dirt, I wonder whether you would not take up arms against him, I ask you, if you are so jealous of your image that was painted on a lifeless tablet, what kind of an injury do you suppose God suffers when His living image in us is defiled by dissipation? Therefore, if we do not restrain ourselves for our own sake, let us do so for the sake of God’s image according to which we have been made.

“Above all, no one should know his wife when Sunday or other feasts come around. Similar precautions should be taken as often as women menstruate, for the Prophet says: ‘Do not come near to a menstruous woman.’ [Ezech. 18:6] If a man is aware that his wife is in this condition but refuses to control himself on a Sunday or feast, the children who are then conceived will be born as lepers, or epileptics, or perhaps even demoniacs [that is, he means that it is common that this happens for such unrestrained and lustful spouses]. Lepers are commonly born, not of wise men who observe chastity on feasts and other days, but especially of farmers who do not know how to control themselves. Truly, brethren, if animals without intellect do not touch each other except at a fixed and proper time, how much more should men who have been created according to God’s image observe this? What is worse, there are some dissolute or drunken men who sometimes do not even spare their wives when they are pregnant. Therefore, if they do not amend their lives, we are to consider them worse than animals. Such men the Apostle addresses when he says: ‘Every one of you learn how to possess his vessel in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who have no hope.’ [1 Thess. 4:4,5] Because what is worse, many do not observe proper chastity with

their own wives, they should give abundant alms, as I said above, and forgive all their enemies. Thus, as we mentioned, what has become defiled by dissipation may be cleansed by constant alms giving.” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon 44*)

Now, then, when exactly must one start to observe chastity and purity if one wants to receive the Eucharist in accordance to the ordinances of the Church? The Bible is clear on this point in *The First Book of Kings*: “**And the priest answered David, saying: ‘I have no common bread at hand, but only holy bread, if the young men be clean, especially from women?’ And David answered the priest, and said to him: ‘Truly, as to what concerneth women, we have refrained ourselves from yesterday and the day before [that is, three days in total when adding the same day he received the bread], when we came out, and the vessels of the young men were holy. Now this way is defiled, but it shall also be sanctified this [third] day in the vessels.’” (1 Kings 21:3-5) This biblical text shows us that spouses must be chaste on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, if they are to receive the Most Holy Eucharist on a Sunday. This means that they must be chaste for two whole days before the reception of the Eucharist, as well as completely chaste on the whole day they also received the Holy Eucharist.**

Likewise, the reception of the Word of God and the Ten Commandments by the people of Israel in *The Book of Exodus* after three days of chastity signifies that there is a necessity for all to be chaste for three days in order to receive the Word of God (Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself) made flesh in the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist, which is the true manna from Heaven “**come down in the sight of all the people**” according to Holy Scripture. “And he [God] said to him [Moses]: Go to the people, and sanctify them today, and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments. And let them be ready against the third day: **for on the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.** ... And Moses came down from the mount to the people, and sanctified them. And when they had washed their garments, He said to them: **Be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives.**” Thus, as is the case with many types and figures of the Old Law that was fulfilled in the New Law, just like in the Old Law, where the “holy bread” that prefigured the Eucharist was only allowed to be received “**if the young men be clean, especially from women**” so too the Holy Eucharist may never be received without abstaining three days from the marital sexual act, since “**The dignity of so great a Sacrament [of the Eucharist] also demands that married persons abstain from the marriage debt for some days previous to Communion**”. (*The Catechism of the Council of Trent*)

Holy Scripture again mirrors this teaching in *The Book of Exodus* and *The Book of First Kings* and confirms the practice of observing chastity for three days by teaching in *The Book of Tobias* that one should not consummate the marriage immediately after one has been married, but that one should wait for three days while praying earnestly to God to bless their marriage, “*because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock.*” (Tobias 8:4) The Holy Archangel Raphael, acting as God’s messenger, instructs husbands and wives to always wait three days in prayer before consummating the marriage. “*But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her.*” (Tobias 6:18)

These words shows us that spouses must remember their bond with the Lord first and foremost and that the fleshly or physical part of the marriage must always come secondhand. By this highly virtuous act of abstaining from marital relations for three days, the devil’s power over married couples is undoubtedly thwarted and diminished. Holy Scripture thus advices spouses to be “joined to God” for three days in prayer before performing the marital act. Not only that, but spouses should always fervently pray to God before every marital act and ask Him to protect them from falling into sin, and also after the marital act in order to ask Our Lord to forgive them if they committed any sin during the act. This is the safe road of the fear of God that every righteous man or woman should follow if they wish to enter Heaven.

Tobias 6:18, 20-22 “[St. Raphael said to Tobias:] But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her.... But the second night thou shalt be admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs. And the third night thou shalt obtain a blessing that sound children may be born of you. And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children.”

It is sad to see that none today seem to care anything about these promises or virtuous deeds that promise these remarkable and wondrous graces that Our Lord said He would bless a virtuous couple with. One could think that even a worldly or ungodly couple would appreciate the grace of not receiving a child that is deformed and that they, if they believed in God or were aware of these promises, would act in accordance to the words of the Holy Scripture; but now neither “Catholics” or so-called Christians nor any people of the world care anything about these words of our Lord that promises the inestimable grace of receiving “a blessing that sound children may be born of you.”

Tobias 8:4-10 “Then Tobias exhorted the virgin, and said to her: Sara, arise, and let us pray to God today, and tomorrow, and the next day: because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock. For we are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God. So they both arose, and prayed earnestly both together that health might be given them, And Tobias said: Lord God of our father, may the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains, and the rivers, and all thy creatures that are in them, bless thee. Thou made Adam of the slime of the earth, and gave him Eve for a helper. And now, Lord, thou know that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever. Sara also said: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, and let us grow old both together in health.”

These three days also correspond perfectly to Our Lord’s suffering, death and resurrection, which is the mold that all Christians must conform to and form themselves after if they want to be saved. “Know you not that all we, who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in his death? For we are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, to the end that we may serve sin no longer. For he that is dead is justified from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall live also together with Christ: Knowing that Christ rising again from the dead, dieth now no more, death shall no more have dominion over him. For in that he died to sin, he died once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God: So do you also reckon, that you are dead to sin, but alive unto God, in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Let no sin therefore reign in your mortal body, so as to obey the lusts thereof.** **Neither yield ye your members as instruments of iniquity unto sin; but present yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of justice unto God.** For sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are whom you obey, whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto justice. But thanks be to God, that you were the servants of sin, but have obeyed from the heart, unto that form of doctrine, into which you have been delivered.” (Romans 6:3-17)

Douay Rheims Bible Commentary explains the verses in Romans 6:6 in this way: “Our old man: *Our corrupt state, subject to sin and concupiscence, coming to us from Adam, is called*

our old man, as our state, reformed in and by Christ, is called the new man. --- Body of sin: The vices and sins, which then ruled in us, are named the body of sin.”

In truth, if we are dead to the world, we shall live forever with Christ. Therefore, every time we will receive the Holy Eucharist, we must be chaste for two days before we receive it, as well as on the day we receive it. For example, if we want to also receive it on a Friday apart from the normal time on the Sunday, we must be chaste on the days of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Then, if we also decide to receive it on the Sunday, we must continue to be chaste on Saturday and Sunday. Those, however, who choose to perform the marital act on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday, are obliged to abstain from the Eucharist that Sunday so that the next week, they may receive it in a state of perfect purity.

It must be said, however, that no one that is married should perform the marital act on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday, since these days signify Our Lord’s suffering, death, and resurrection which is what we all must conform to if we wish to be saved, by putting to death our old sinful, fleshly and sensual nature and man, and by being resurrected in Christ, rising to heaven in purity and chastity as a new spiritual man that has been freed from our former Body of sin: **“Therefore, if you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above; where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God: Mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth.** For you are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, who is your life, then you also shall appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, **uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence,** and covetousness, **which is the service of idols.**” (Colossians 3:1-5)

The virtue of Chastity helps people become victorious in battles or war according to the Holy Bible

The Jews of the Old Testament time understood how the practice of chastity would benefit them both spiritually and physically and that is also why the common practice of many of the Jews who entered into military life (as we saw in the case of King David and his men) were to remain chaste and sanctify their life in order to receive the grace of God to become victorious in battle. This virtuous and great example of chastity that David and his men in the Old Testament time practiced in wartime and as soldiers, is found in *The First Book of Kings* (also called *First Samuel*) where the future King David, being on the run from King Saul, asks the priest Achimelech for some food to alleviate his and his friends’ hunger.

1 Kings 21:2-5: “And David said to Achimelech the priest: ‘...Now therefore if thou have any thing at hand, though it were but five loaves, give me, or whatsoever thou canst find.’ And the priest answered David, saying: ‘I have no common bread at hand, but only holy bread, *if the young men be clean*, especially from women?’ And David answered the priest, and said to him: ‘Truly, as to what concerneth women, we have refrained ourselves from yesterday and the day before, when we came out, and *the vessels* of the young men were *holy*. Now this way *is defiled*, but it shall also *be sanctified* this day in the vessels.’”

Indeed, God Himself directly commanded the Jews to always be pure and chaste when they were to engage in a war or a battle: “*When thou goest out to war against thy enemies, thou shalt keep thyself from every evil thing. If there be among you any man, that is defiled in a dream by night, he shall go forth out of the camp. And shall not return, before he be washed with water in the evening: and after sunset he shall return into the camp.*” (Deuteronomy 23:9-11)

The wonderful example of purity and chastity in the Old Testament of the soldier Urias the Hethite, whose name means “my light is Yahweh” or “flame of God”, also shows us that the practice of being totally chaste even from one’s own wife, was a necessity for all men in the army. After King David had unlawfully impregnated Urias’ wife by an act of fornication or adultery, David tried to get Urias to sleep with his own wife since David himself had illicitly made her with child. However, Urias refused to indulge in the sensual pleasures of the flesh, showing us very clearly by his answer to David that it was common knowledge of the necessity for the army to practice absolute chastity, and that his act of abstaining from sex was an act that effected other people too, since he says that his chastity is connected to “thy welfare and by the welfare of thy soul”: “And Urias said to David: The ark of God and Israel and Juda dwell in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord abide upon the face of the earth: and shall I go into my house, to eat and to drink, and to sleep with my wife? By thy welfare and by the welfare of thy soul I will not do this thing.” (2 Kings 11:11 or 2 Samuel 11:11)

When one remembers that God commanded the Jews to always practice chastity in both war and peace time, it is not hard to understand why in the cases when they lost their wars, their lack of chastity was a main reason (if not the greatest reason) why they lost their battles and their independence.

The Christian Crusaders also practiced chastity like the Jews and did penance in order to become victorious in battles against the heathen. Many times God also revealed through

supernatural revelations to the Christian combatants just like He did to the Jews that unless they were virtuous and pure, they would lose future battles. The order of the Knights Templar was one of these virtuous orders who solemnly took vows of chastity and perfect purity, constantly warring against the Devil, the flesh and the world on one side, and the Heretic, Saracen, Muslim or Infidel on the other. They were a kind of warrior monk; a new breed indeed in the Christian world; and because of their spectacular purity, a small number of the Crusaders could miraculously defeat a multitude of infidels, who were much more numerous and stronger than they were themselves. These pure servants of Christ also wore a white dress which signified their inner purity. In *The History of the Knights Templar*, by Charles G. Addison, we read the following words concerning this: “To all the professed **knights**, both in winter and summer, we give, if they can be procured, white garments, that those who have cast behind them a dark life may know that they are to commend themselves to their Creator by a pure and white life. For what is whiteness but perfect chastity, and chastity is the security of the soul and the health of the body. And unless every knight shall continue chaste, he shall not come to perpetual rest, nor see God, as the apostle Paul witnesseth: Follow after peace with all men, and chastity, *without which no man shall see God...*”

As we have already seen from the example of the Holy Scripture, God commanded those who are engaged in war to always remain chaste during their war in order to become victorious. *The Book of Judith* in the Holy Bible is another great example of how the Jewish people was saved from death and triumphed over their enemies through the holy fear, virtue and chastity of a holy woman named Judith.

The book describes how Judith and the Jewish people was being occupied by a heathen army and that all seemed as though they were going to either starve to death or be butchered by the enemy army. God, however, had other plans and choose a virtuous and chaste woman to single-handedly save the Jewish people from certain death.

Judith 15:11 “For thou [Judith] hast done manfully, and thy heart has been strengthened, **because thou hast loved chastity**, and after thy husband hast not known any other: therefore also the hand of the Lord hath strengthened thee, and therefore thou shalt be blessed for ever.”

Judith 16:26 “And chastity was joined to her virtue, so that she knew no man all the days of her life, after the death of Manasses her husband.”

As we can see from these verses, the love and practice of the virtue of chastity is not a vain or

useless practice, but it is in fact a virtue so dearly loved by God that He showers humanity with countless of graces and helps of different sorts because of it.

Our Lord also teaches us in the New Testament Holy Scripture that a widow will become more blessed if she do not remarry, just like in the case of the holy widow Judith who stayed unmarried after the death of her husband. “*But more blessed shall she be, if she so remain, [that is, a widow] according to my counsel; and I think that I also have the spirit of God.*” (1 Cor. 7:40) This passage clearly shows us that God desires both men and women to stay chaste and unmarried after their spouse have died, and that the virtuous and chaste life of all who stay chaste are “more blessed” and beloved by God when compared to those who remarry and have children for the love of God. In truth, God is infinitely more honored by those souls who, for His sake, offers up their purity and chastity as a holocaust to Him, since the marital life is more sensual with many cares and worries that draws us away from God and perfection.

The Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her Chastity and Purity is undoubtedly a direct proof that God loves the chaste and pure with a special love, since God has never loved nor will ever love anyone (whether angel or saint) more than Her. In *The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Our Lord explicitly revealed this truth about Our Lady in the following words, “**The angels and other saints bear witness that your love for me was more ardent and your chastity more pure than that of any other, and that it was more pleasing to me than all else. Your head was like gleaming gold and your hair like sunbeams, because your most pure virginity, which is like the head of all your virtues, as well as your control over every illicit desire pleased me and shone in my sight with all humility.** You are rightly called the crowned queen over all creation - “queen” for the sake of your purity, “crowned” for your excellent worth.” (*The Revelations of Saint Bridget*, Book 5, Revelation 4)

In truth, the love and practice of the virtue of chastity draws down many great blessings on mankind, and victory in war is just one of them, as we have just seen. Too few today, however, are able to see or appreciate the great worth of this angelic virtue.

The Book of Wisdom teaches that chastity is very beneficial for salvation

The Book of Wisdom clearly describes the difference that the Holy Scripture makes between virtuous and chaste people on the one hand, and carnal, sensual and worldly people on the other. The memory of the chaste generation is indeed immortal and “it triumpheth crowned for ever, winning the reward of undefiled conflicts.”

Wisdom 4:1-5 “O how beautiful is the chaste generation with *glory*: for the memory thereof is immortal: because it is known both with God and with men. When it is present, they imitate it: and they desire it when it hath withdrawn itself, and it triumpheth crowned for ever, winning the reward of undefiled conflicts [in the cause of continence]. But the multiplied brood of the wicked shall not thrive, and bastard slips shall not take deep root, nor any fast foundation. And if they flourish in branches for a time, yet standing not fast, they shall be shaken with the wind, and through the force of winds they shall be rooted out. For the branches not being perfect, shall be broken, and their fruits shall be unprofitable, and sour to eat, and fit for nothing.”

Haydock Commentary adds the following words about verse 1: “*Glory*. The offspring of the chaste is happy, (Calmet) and honorable: (Haydock) very different from that of adulterers. (Calmet) --- Bodily chastity is a great virtue. (Worthington)”

The Book of Tobias teaches spouses to practice chastity

Another great story of virtue and chastity found in the Old Testament Scripture is the story of the holy youth Tobias in *The Book of Tobias* or *Tobit*. Not surprisingly, this book is sadly missing from most protestant “bible” versions. Sad to say, being controlled by the devil and impurity, it is not hard to understand why the devil was allowed to fool the protestants to reject this biblical book since they are such fierce enemies of all sexual purity and morality.

The Book of Tobias describes how the holy youth Tobias was commanded by almighty God through the Archangel Raphael to never perform the marital act for the sake of lust and that he shall be “*moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham*” he “*mayest obtain a blessing in children*”. Tobias, who was a holy, chaste and virtuous person of course consented to this admonishment by the Holy Angel Raphael and answered God in his prayer, saying to Him that: “*not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity [children], in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever*”, thus showing us a great and edifying example of marital purity, and the necessity for all to perform the marital act for the sole purpose of procreation of children and the love of God, if they want to perfectly please Our Lord rather than their own fleshly lusts and desires.

Tobias 6:22; 8:9 “And when the third night is past, [after praying to God for three days in chastity] thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a

blessing in children... [Tobias said:] And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity**, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.”

Tobias 6:16-17 “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: Hear me, and I will show thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. **For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.**”

The holy youth Tobias approached his bride Sara after three days of prayer and chastity, **not for fleshly lust but only for the love of posterity**, having been instructed by the Archangel Raphael that to engage in the marital act he shall “be moved rather for love of children than for lust” so “that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children”. Our Lord’s words about “the seed of Abraham” refers to those who are going to be saved from Hell by Christ’s redemptive blood since God solemnly revealed in the New Testament Scripture that “if you be Christ’s, then are you the seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:29) The “blessing in children” obviously refers to an abundant blessing of offspring blessed by God for those who perform the marital act for the sole motive of procreation rather than the satisfaction of their sexual lust.

The practice of observing chastity for three days after one gets married as the Holy Bible and the Church have always told us to follow, is something that God’s Holy Word considers to be vitally important, and that is why every couple should follow this biblical advice of praying together or individually in chastity, purity and holiness for three days before consummating their marriage. In truth, after they have consummated their marriage, they should also continue this practice of prayer for three days before they perform every marital act since Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself commanded “that we ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1). Our Lord’s words in the Bible are not to be followed only once, but should be practiced every day even until death in order to increase grace and virtuous living.

Our Lord spoke to Tobias through the Archangel Raphael, saying: “But thou [Tobias] when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, **and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her.** ... But the second night thou shalt be admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs. And the third night thou shalt obtain a blessing that sound children may be born of you. **And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the**

fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children. (Tobias 6:18, 20-22)

Notice how Our Lord and God in the biblical *Book of Tobias* clearly promises that all those who pray and abstain from the marital act for three days before having marital relations shall receive the inestimable graces of receiving “*sound children*” on the third night and that they shall be admitted “*into the society of the holy Patriarchs*” on the second. The honor of being “*admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs*” is of course too great to even describe in human terms since the Holy Patriarchs were the most beloved friends of God because of their purity. The blessing on the third night of “*sound children may be born of you*” obviously means that those couples who do not perform the marital act for the sake of lust or too often and who are virtuous and wait for three days in accordance with the promise of Holy Scripture, will give birth to a child without birth deformities or defects. This may be hard for many to believe, but this is really and truly what Holy Scripture is promising and saying.

This is not to say, however, that personal sins of the parents are the only reasons why children are born with defects or deformities. There are also other causes for a child’s defects described in *The Gospel of John*, where the apostles asks Our Lord the reason why a man was born blind: “And Jesus passing by, saw a man, who was blind from his birth: And his disciples asked him: Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” (John 9:1-3)

Our Lord also tells us in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* that sin and the disorder of nature produce the defects that we all have to endure: “I am the Creator of all things, and all things are foreknown to me. I know and see all that has been and all that will be. But, although I know and can do all things, still, for reasons of justice, I no more interfere with the natural constitution of the body than I do with the inclination of the soul. Each human being continues in existence according to the natural constitution of the body such as it is and was from all eternity in my foreknowledge. The fact that one person has a longer life and another a shorter has to do with natural strength or weakness and is related to a person’s physical constitution. It is not due to my foreknowledge that one person loses his sight or another becomes lame or something like that, since my foreknowledge of all things is such that no one is the worse for it, nor is it harmful to anyone. Moreover, these things do not occur because of the course and position of the heavenly elements, but due to some hidden principle of justice in the constitution and conservation of nature. For sin and natural disorder bring about the

deformity of the body in many ways. This does not happen because I will it directly, but because I permit it to happen for the sake of justice. Even though I can do all things, still I do not obstruct justice. Accordingly, the length or brevity of a person's life is related to the weakness or strength of his physical constitution such as it was in my foreknowledge that no one can contravene." (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 2, Chapter 1)

It is indeed very sad to see that no one today, whether married or unmarried seem to care anything about these promises and wonderful, virtuous deeds of chastity and purity in Holy Scripture and that so few people actually try to practice any of these virtuous deeds we have just seen and read about, that will produce these remarkable and wondrous graces from Our Lord and which He promised He would bless a virtuous couple and their offspring with. One would think that even a worldly or ungodly couple would appreciate the grace of receiving a child that is sound and without deformity and that they—if they believed in God or were aware of these promises—would act in accordance to the words of the Holy Scripture; but now neither “Catholics” or so-called Christians nor anyone else of the world seem to care anything about these words of our Lord that promises the inestimable grace and blessing of receiving a sound child free from all birth deformities or defects, and the honor of being admitted “into the society of the holy Patriarchs”.

The words in the Book of Tobit also shows us that spouses must remember their bond with the Lord first and foremost and that the fleshly or physical part of the marriage must always come secondhand. In truth, “married women who have observed mutual fidelity and have neither known anything outside of themselves not even themselves except the desire for children, if they continually give alms and observe God's precepts as well as they can, will merit happily to be associated with holy Job, Sara, and Susanna, along with the Patriarchs and Prophets.” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 6:7, 6th century)

By practicing this highly and virtuous act of abstaining from marital relations for three days, the devil's might and power over married couples is undoubtedly thwarted and diminished. Holy Scripture thus advice spouses to be “joined to God” for three days in prayer before performing the marital act. Not only that, but spouses should always fervently pray to God before every marital act in the future and ask Him to protect them from falling into sin, and also after the marital act in order to ask Our Lord to forgive them if they committed any sin during the act of marriage. This is the safe road of the fear of God that every righteous man or woman should follow if they wish to enter Heaven.

St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, A.D. 419: “Whosoever possesses his

vessel (that is, his wife) with this intention of heart, [that is, for the procreation of children] certainly does not possess her in the "disease of desire," as the Gentiles which know not God, but in sanctification and honor, as believers who hope in God. A man turns to use the evil of concupiscence, and is not overcome by it, when he bridles and restrains its rage, as it works in inordinate and indecorous motions; and never relaxes his hold upon it except when intent on offspring, and then controls and applies it to the carnal generation of children to be spiritually regenerated, not to the subjection of the spirit to the flesh in a sordid servitude. That the holy fathers of olden times after Abraham, and before him, to whom God gave His testimony that "they pleased Him," thus used their wives, no one who is a Christian ought to doubt, since it was permitted to certain individuals among them to have a plurality of wives, where the reason was for the multiplication of their offspring, not the desire of varying gratification." (Book 1, Chapter 9 - This Disease of Concupiscence in Marriage is Not to Be a Matter of Will, But of Necessity [for the Procreation of Children])

God's Holy Word is clear. Spouses are to engage in the marital act moved rather for love of children than for lust. They are also to practice chastity from time to time (Ecclesiastes 3:5; 1 Corinthians 7:5).

By the grace of God, let us not live like pagans or heathens anymore who only searches for ways to please their flesh and the world and others, but let us rather strive to please God our heavenly Father and our spiritual nature; and that is also why we all, (whether married or unmarried) who have resurrected with Christ from the dead, and from our old sinful nature, must leave every form of carnality and impurity behind, instead look up and embrace Our Lord in the purity of the heart and of the body, longing for what is above, and for high and spiritual things. "This then I say and testify in the Lord: That henceforward you walk not as also the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, **having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts. Who despairing, have given themselves up to lasciviousness, unto the working of all uncleanness, unto covetousness. But you have not so learned Christ.**" (Ephesians 4:17-20)

Contrary to the world today, Saint Augustine, writing *On the Good of Widowhood* in about A.D. 414, describes the pure mindset of the Holy Jews and Patriarchs during the Old Testament era, telling us how they would willingly have chosen a life of perpetual chastity rather than the marital life had it been known to them that children could be had in another way than through sexual intercourse: "Forsooth different in the times of the Prophets was the

dispensation of holy females, whom obedience, not lust, forced to marry, for the propagation of the people of God, that in them Prophets of Christ might be sent beforehand; whereas the People itself also, by those things which in figure happened among them, whether in the case of those who knew, or in the case of those who knew not those things, was nothing else than a Prophet of Christ, of whom should be born the Flesh also of Christ... Whence also holy women were kindled, not by lust of sensual intercourse, but by piety of bearing; so that we most rightly believe of them that they would not have sought sensual intercourse, in case a family could have come by any other means. And to the husbands was allowed the use of several wives living; and that the cause of this was not lust of the flesh, but forethought of begetting, is shown by the fact, that, as it was lawful for holy men to have several wives living, it was not likewise lawful for holy women to have intercourse with several husbands living; in that they would be by so much the baser, by how much the more they sought what would not add to their fruitfulness.” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Widowhood*, Section 10)

The Book of Leviticus commands spouses to practice chastity during the woman’s menstruation and infertile period under pain of death, thus showing us that God wants married persons to practice chastity during this time period

The way to perfection regarding the marital act is that spouses only perform the act with the sole intention and hope of conceiving children. That means spouses are to be chaste during the monthly infertile period of the woman and when she is pregnant.

We read in the Old Testament that God had forbidden even the married to perform the marital act during the infertile monthly cycle of the woman: “*The woman, who at the return of the month, hath her issue of blood, shall be separated seven days.*” (Leviticus 15:19) Haydock Commentary explains: “*Days, not only out of the camp, but from the company of men.*” As soon as a woman showed signs of infertility (menstruation), intercourse would cease until the cessation of the flow of blood and she became fertile again: “*Thou shalt not approach to a woman having her flowers: neither shalt thou uncover her nakedness.*” (Leviticus 18:19) Haydock Commentary adds: “*Saint Augustine believes that this law is still in force. [On Lev. 20:18] This intemperance was by a positive law declared a mortal offense of the Jews.*” This clearly shows us that God does not want spouses to perform the marital act during this time.

To abstain from sexual intercourse during a woman’s menstrual period or pregnancy and subsequent restricted days has all but been ignored by most of today’s people. Observing the period of restriction for sexual activity not only diminishes sexual sins and temptations, but it

also places a woman into her fertile period when it is most beneficial for conception to occur. This helps to fulfill the initial command of God to “be fruitful and multiply,” a command that is clearly not being observed by many people today. God Thus, the wise commandment of God for the women and the men to not have any communication with each other during this time of separation.

A woman’s menstrual cycle is about 28 days long, and the menstrual phase is about 5 days. Adding 7 days after the menstrual phase in accordance with God’s word in the Bible would mean that men and women should remain chaste for at least 12 days out of every 28 days during the woman’s natural menstrual cycle.

Good husbands and wives do not have sexual relations whenever their unbridled lust desires it, but only at times prescribed for this purpose and when it is necessary. The guide of good and pious husbands and wives are thus their conscience and reason instead of their selfish, unbridled lust. “All things have their season, and in their times all things pass under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted. A time to kill, and a time to heal. A time to destroy, and a time to build. A time to weep, and a time to laugh. A time to mourn, and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather. **A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.**” (Ecclesiastes 3:1-5)

The phrase “A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces” refers to the marital act. Haydock Commentary explains: “*Ver. 5. Embraces. Contenance was sometimes prescribed to married people, Leviticus xx. 18., and 1 Corinthians vii. (St. Jerome) (St. Augustine, Enchiridion 78.) (Calmet).*” This shows us that the marital act must sometimes be abstained from altogether and not engaged in everyday as the evil and immoral world teaches. As said already, one of the reasons for abstaining from the marital act is in order to cultivate virtue and chastity. This is important to do from time to time, for people who have sex often are more likely to become enslaved by this pleasure and fall into sexual sin. “The task of the law is to deliver us from a dissolute life and all disorderly ways. Its purpose is to lead us from unrighteousness to righteousness, so that it would have us self-controlled in marriage, in begetting children, and in general behavior.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter VI, Section 46, written about 198-203 A.D.)

People who never try to control their lust and that let their temptations roam freely—indulging in it whenever it pleases them—have allowed their lust to become their “fix” or “high”. People who act in this way have become worshipers of this fleeting fleshly pleasure and have grown attached to it. Such people must be very careful about themselves, for

whenever they die and are called before the throne of Our Lord Jesus Christ, their eternal destiny will be decided based on what they loved more in this life: Our Lord and His Love, or themselves and their unbridled, selfish lust. If they loved themselves and their lust more than they loved the Lord, they will not be saved. Only in Hell will many spouses regret that they never thought of controlling their lust or that they never had relations at proper times or at proper seasons. In truth, “there are others who have become absorbed by marriage and fulfill their desires... and, as the prophet says, "have become like beasts" [Ps. 48:13].” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Section 67)

If we claim that we are not pagans anymore, but yet act in the same way as them, satisfying our flesh and the world at every turn, how shall we not stand condemned before Our Lord in the frightful day of Judgment? “And you, when you were dead in your offenses, and sins, Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of this air, of the spirit that now worketh on the children of unbelief: In which also we all conversed in time past, in the desires of our flesh, fulfilling the will of the flesh and of our thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest: But God, (who is rich in mercy,) for his exceeding charity wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ, (by whose grace you are saved,) And hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in the heavenly places, through Christ Jesus. That he might shew in the ages to come the abundant riches of his grace, in his bounty towards us in Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians 2:1-7)

Legal marital relations in the Bible is described as a cause of impurity

In the book of Leviticus, the infallible Word of God describes how even legal marital relations between husband and wife makes them impure or unclean, thus describing the marital act itself as the cause of impurity, and not as something “holy” or “good,” as many people nowadays have deceived themselves into believing.

Leviticus 15:16-18,24 “The man from whom the seed of copulation goeth out, shall wash all his body with water: and he shall be unclean until the evening. The garment or skin that he weareth, he shall wash with water, and it shall be unclean until the evening. The woman, with whom he copulateth, shall be washed with water, and shall be unclean until the evening. ... If a man copulateth with her in the time of her flowers, he shall be unclean seven days: and every bed on which he shall sleep shall be defiled.”

Douay-Rheims Bible Commentary explains Leviticus 15 thus: “These legal uncleannesses were

instituted in order to give the people a horror of carnal impurities.”

As we can read from these verses from Holy Scripture, God describes even legal marital relations as a cause of defilement and impurity between husband and wife and ordains that both of them shall be considered as unclean on the day they had marital relations. Leviticus also prohibits the man from seeing his wife during her infertile monthly cycle, thus diminishing the temptations of both parties. “*The woman, who at the return of the month, hath her issue of blood, shall be separated seven days.*” (Leviticus 15:19)

However, one must not think that the marital act is evil or impure in and of itself from the moral viewpoint when it is performed for the sake of procreation, but rather that after the fall, the human will or intent almost always yields more or less to concupiscence and self-gratification. St. Augustine explain it thus: “I do not say that nuptial union that is, union for the purpose [or motive] of procreating is evil [or sinful], but even say it is good. But...If men were subject to the evil of lust to such an extent that if the honesty of marriage were removed [such as in the case of most men and women today], all of them would have intercourse indiscriminately [by unnatural and excessively lustful sexual acts], in the manner of dogs...” (*Against Julian*, Book III, Chapter 7:16, A.D. 421)

The main reason why Holy Scripture defines the marital act as a cause of defilement and impurity is because the sexual act is so potent in giving a person lascivious thoughts and desires—by implanting and defiling the mind with countless unholy and ungodly desires. While the marital act performed for the purpose of procreation is a lawful act, the act still defiles the mind by giving it all sorts of lascivious feelings, pictures or thoughts, in addition to making the spouses intoxicated by the drug of sexual pleasure, and this is also the reason why the Holy Bible directs all spouses who have performed the marital act to consider themselves impure, so that they may seek Our Lord’s help in order to conquer their concupiscences, temptations and thoughts that arises as a result of the marital act.

St. Thomas Aquinas confirms this truth of the defects of the marital act after the fall, teaching that “**because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time, [as in the case of intoxication of drugs]... the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused..**” (*Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1, 5) This is also why St. Paul warns those who are going to marry and perform the marital sexual act that they “shall have tribulation of the flesh”: “*But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have tribulation of the flesh.*” (1

Corinthians 7:28).

The only couple who performed the marital act without this curse of concupiscence was the parents of Our Blessed Lady at the time they conceived Her, since Our Lord supernaturally protected them from feeling any concupiscence so that they would not be able to transmit the original sin to Our Lady, who would become the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ. That is why Mary was conceived free from original sin from the first moment of her conception in the womb of her mother. Every child would have been born without original sin if Adam and Eve had not sinned. From this we can understand that it is very important for parents to fight against the search for self-gratification in order to draw down abundant blessings and graces from Heaven to themselves and their children. God's eyes and special grace are always on the pure and good who refuse to indulge in unlawful pleasures inside or outside of marriage, and that is why this topic of chastity is vitally important to teach to all men, as lust in all its forms is the greatest cause of why people in end are damned according to the Saints: *“The Lord knoweth the days of undefiled; and their inheritance shall be for ever.”* (Psalms 36:18)

CHASTITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE NEW LAW

The Holy Bible is clear that chastity is better and more blessed than matrimony, and that “It is good for a man not to touch a woman”, and that married people should abstain from the sexual act from time to time “that you may give yourselves to prayer”

St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians is one of the most clear examples in Scripture of how God places the virtue of virginity, chastity and purity above the marital state. Our Lord Jesus Christ, speaking through the mouth of St. Paul in First Corinthians, is crystal clear that: *“It is good for a man not to touch a woman”* and that *“he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: **and he is divided.** And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband.”*

St. Paul is also clear that every married couple should practice chastity from time to time, in order to give time to prayer: *“But for fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render the debt to his wife, and the wife also in like manner to the husband... Defraud not one another, [of the marital debt] except, perhaps, by consent, for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer; and*

return together again, lest Satan tempt you for your incontinency.” (1 Cor. 7:2,5)

Haydock Commentary explains *First Corinthians 7:2,5*: “**Verse 2. &c.** But *because of fornication, let every man have, and live with his own wife, and not leave her, nor dismiss her.* Take notice, that St. Paul speaks these words to those that are already married, and speaks not of the unmarried till the 8th verse. He does not then here exhort every one to marry, but admonishes married persons to live together, and not to refuse the marriage duty, which neither the husband nor the wife can do without mutual consent, because of the marriage engagement. Yet he advises them to abstain sometimes from what they may lawfully do, that they may *give themselves to prayer*, and as it is added in the common Greek copies, *to fasting*. St. Chrysostom observes, that the words of St. Paul, are not only, that *they may pray*, (which no day must be omitted) but that they *may give themselves to prayer*, that is, may be better disposed and prepared for prayer, contemplation, and for receiving the holy Sacrament, as we find the priests even of the ancient law, were to abstain from their wives, when they were employed in the functions of their ministry. But such kind of advice is not relished by all that pretend to be reformers. *And return together again....yet I speak this by way of indulgence*, of what is allowed to married persons, and not commanded them, unless when one of the married couple is not willing to abstain. (Witham)”

St. Paul could not be more clear in *First Corinthians, 7:1, 7-10*, of the perfection of chastity and how this pure life is preferable and better than a marital life. He says, “Now concerning the thing whereof you wrote to me: **It is good for a man not to touch a woman... For I would that all men were even as myself [that is, chaste]**: but every one hath his proper gift from God; one after this manner, and another after that. **But I say to the unmarried, and to the widows: It is good for them if they so continue, even as I.** But if they do not contain themselves, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to be burnt. But to them that are married, not I but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband.”

Haydock Commentary on the same verses of *First Corinthians 7:7-10* quoted above says: “**Verse 7-9.** *I would, or I could wish you all were even as myself*, and as it is said in the next verse, to *continue unmarried as I do*. From hence it is evident, that St. Paul was not then married, who according to the opinion of the ancient fathers, was never married. --- *But every one hath his proper gift from God*, so that some prudently embrace a single life, and also make a religious vow of always living so, as it has been practiced by a great number both of men and women in all ages, ever since Christ’s time. Others have not this more perfect gift: they find themselves not disposed to lead, or vow a single life, they marry lawfully: *it is better*

to marry than to burn, or be burnt by violent temptations of concupiscence [or to be burnt in Hell], by which they *do not contain themselves* from disorders of that kind. It is against both the Latin and Greek text to translate, *they cannot contain themselves*, as in the Protestant [translation]... But let it be observed, that when St. Paul allows of marriage, he speaks not of those who have already made a vow of living always a single life. Vows made to God must be kept. (Psalm lxxv. 12.; Ecclesiastes v. 3.) And St. Paul expressly says of such persons, who have made a vow of perpetual continency, and afterwards marry, *that they incur damnation, because they violate their first faith*, or vow made to God. See 1 Timothy v. 12. This saying, therefore, *it is better to marry than to burn*, cannot justify the sacrilegious marriages of priests, or of any others who were under such vows. **There are other remedies which they are bound to make use of, and by which they may obtain the gift of continency and chastity. They must ask this gift by fervent prayers to God, who gives a good spirit to them that ask it.** (Luke xi. [13.]) They must join fasting, alms, and the practice of self-denials, so often recommended in the gospel. See the annotations on Matthew xix. The like remedies, and no others, must they use, who being already in wedlock, are under such violent temptations, that they are continually in danger of violating, or do violate the chastity of the marriage-bed. For example, when married persons are divorced from bed and board, when long absent from one another, when sick and disabled, when one has an inveterate aversion to the other: they cannot marry another, but they can, and must use other remedies. (Witham) --- *If they do not contain [let them marry]. . . God will never refuse the gift of continency. Some translators have corrupted this text, by rendering it, if they cannot contain.* (Challoner)”

St. Paul continues in his discourse in *First Corinthians* 7:25-35, saying: “... Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord; but I give counsel, as having obtained mercy of the Lord, to be faithful. **I think therefore that this is good for the present necessity, that it is good for a man so to be [that is, to be chaste].** Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, *such shall have tribulation of the flesh*. But I spare you. This therefore I say, brethren; the time is short; it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as if they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you to be without solicitude. **He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and**

the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your profit: not to cast a snare upon you; but for that which is decent, and which may give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment.”

Haydock Commentary explains *First Corinthians 7:25-35*: “**Verses 25-28.** *Now concerning virgins, &c.* He turns his discourse again to the unmarried, who (if they have made no vow) may lawfully marry, though he is far from commanding every one to marry, as when he says, *seek not a wife.* And *such shall have tribulation of the flesh*, cares, troubles, vexations [and sexual temptations] in the state of marriage, *but I spare you*, I leave you to your liberty of marrying, or not marrying, and will not discourage you by setting forth the crosses of a married life. (Witham) --- **Ver. 30.** *And they who weep.* In this passage the apostle teaches us, in the midst of our greatest afflictions not to suffer ourselves to be overwhelmed with grief, but to recollect that the time of this life is short, and that temporary pains will be recompensed with the never-fading joys of eternity. (Estius) --- **Ver. 33.** [*But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided*]. It is far easier to give our whole heart and application without any the least reserve to *God*, than to divide them without injustice.”

In *First Corinthians 7:38-40*, Our Lord through St. Paul continues to admonish his chaste servants to adopt the angelic life of chastity and purity, teaching us that the chaste life is better than the marital life: “Therefore, both he that giveth his virgin in marriage, doth well; **and he that giveth her not, doth better.** A woman is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty: let her marry to whom she will; only in the Lord. **But more blessed shall she be, if she so remain [in chastity], according to my counsel; and I think that I also have the spirit of God.**”

Haydock Commentary explains *First Corinthians 7:38-40*: “**Verse 38. &c.** *He that giveth her not, doth better.* And *more blessed shall she be, if she so remains, according to my counsel.* It is very strange if any one, who reads this chapter without prejudices, does not clearly see, that St. Paul advises, and prefers the state of virginity to that of a married life. --- *I think that I also have the spirit of God.* He puts them in mind, by this modest way of speaking, of what they cannot doubt of, as to so great an apostle. (Witham)”

In truth, the level of dishonesty that a Protestant or a heretic must sink to in order to deny that Holy Scripture places chastity or virginity above the marital life is simply said satanic and

inexcusable. It cannot be doubted that they must have had their conscience thoroughly seared by a hot iron of Satan in order to be able to pervert such clear and unambiguous words of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

God could not be clearer than when He said that *“It is good for a man not to touch a woman”* (1 Corinthians 7:1), thus directly contradicting the heretical viewpoint that marriage is the same as the chaste life; showing us very clearly that the marital life is below the chaste and pure life of the angels and saints in Heaven that those virtuous men and women imitates. And if still someone could misunderstand Our Lord’s words, St. Paul adds that he wishes *“that all men were even as myself”* that is, chaste (1 Corinthians 7:7) and He further teaches both the unmarried and widowed to continue to live a single and chaste life, saying: *“But I say to the unmarried, and to the widows: It is good for them if they so continue, [that is, it is good for them to continue to live a single and chaste life] even as I.”* (1 Corinthians 7:8) And if that was not clear enough, Our Lord Jesus Christ through St. Paul continues to urge all unmarried to stay chaste and pure as they are, saying that, *“I think therefore that this is good for the present necessity, that it is good for a man so to be [that is, chaste]. Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.”* (1 Corinthians 7:26-27)

In addition, St. Paul also teaches in Holy Scripture that a widow will become “more blessed” if she do not remarry and stay continent: *“But more blessed shall she be, if she so remain, [that is, a widow] according to my counsel; and I think that I also have the spirit of God.”* (1 Corinthians 7:40) If one becomes “more blessed” by not marrying, then it obviously means that one becomes less blessed by embracing the marital life. St. Ephrem the Syrian writes, “Chastity’s wings are greater and lighter than the wings of marriage. Intercourse... is lower. Its house of refuge is modest darkness. Confidence belongs entirely to chastity, which light enfolds.” (Hymn 28, On the Nativity)

St. Paul also warns those who would marry as opposed to those who would remain virgins that spouses “shall have tribulation of the flesh”: *“But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have tribulation of the flesh. But I spare you.”* (1 Corinthians 7:28). It is certain that St. Paul does not refer to the desire to procreate as a tribulation of the flesh. Consequently, he can be referring only to one thing—sexual pleasure. Indeed, sexual pleasure is a tribulation of the flesh that must hence be fought against in thought and deed in some way or the Devil will succeed in tempting a spouse to fall into mortal sins of impurity either with their spouse, with himself or with someone other than his spouse.

The reason why St. Paul specifically warns those who choose to get married of the dangers inherent in the marital life is because those people who choose *not* to get married, by choosing to remain in the angelic state of chastity, will not get sexually tempted to commit sin in the same way or in the same measure as the married man or woman will, either with their spouse, their self, or some other person, since the sexual pleasure that has never been indulged in, will always remain more of an abstract or theoretical pleasure for those who remain chaste and unmarried, and thus, will always be easier to control for them. Indeed, since the temptation to indulge the flesh and the sensuality is not physically present tempting them all the time, as in the case of those who are married and who can perform the marital act every day with their spouse, their sensual temptations are also much smaller than the others who indulge their flesh more often.

When St. Paul mentions “that they also who have wives, be as if they had none” (1 Corinthians 7:29), he is speaking about how spouses must not place the carnal love they have for each other above their love for Our Lord. St. Paul’s words are clear: The spouses must act as though they were not married (within due limits of course) since the married man “is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided.” (1 Corinthians 7:33). This division of the married man and woman makes it a great necessity that even married people consider themselves in their own thought processes as though they are unmarried and chaste, although their external and physical marital duties hinders them from pursuing this endeavor to the fullest. As St. Paul says: “it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none”.

St. Paul also explains how married men and women think more on the world and of carnal things, while the chaste and pure people think more on the things of the Lord, of Heaven, and of spiritual things. Again, the Holy Bible is clear that: “*He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband.*” (1 Corinthians 7:32-34)

And so, it is perfectly clear that the Holy Scripture infallibly and unambiguously teaches that marriage and the marital life is an impediment to the spiritual life, while the life of chastity and purity “give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment” (1 Cor. 7:35). Thus, “if a man wishes to be uninstructed, and prefers to avoid begetting children because of the

business it involves, "let him remain unmarried," says the apostle, "even as I am." [1 Cor. 7:8]" (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter X, Section 68)

It is also remarkable and noteworthy that St. Paul calls those who are married "bondmen", which means "slaves" or "serfs", thus indicating the inherent spiritual danger and enslavement of worldly, fleshly and sensual cares, troubles and worries that constantly will plague all those who choose to enter into the married state. "*Wast thou called, being a bondman? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a bondman, is the freeman of the Lord. Likewise he that is called, being free, is the bondman of Christ. You are bought with a price; be not made the bondslaves of men.*" (1 Cor. 7:21-23) In truth, those who are called to a higher and more pure life and who wish to save their souls should meditate often on these words of St. Paul in order to discern the height and greater security from sin that the chaste and unmarried life offers when compared to the marital life.

"As the slave is in the power of his master, so is one spouse in the power of the other (1 Corinthians 7:4). But a slave is bound by an obligation of precept to pay his master the debt of his service according to Romans 13:7, "Render . . . to all men their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due," etc." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 64, Art. 1)

All those who choose to get married are in truth slaves and enchained by the marriage bond, and what is worse—if they have a weak will—enslaved and bound with the cruel fetters of an addiction to the sexual pleasure that is very hard to get free from! Indeed, married people do not even have the power to command over their own body and remain in chastity against the other spouse's will, but must give the marital debt to the other spouse whenever he or she asks for it (the only exception being in the case of sickness or other lawful necessities) while also having to fulfill all other duties of the marital life that constantly disturbs and distracts us from our spiritual life, and the thought of God. This is the exact reason why "The same Paul also in the same chapter, when discussing the subjects of virginity and marriage, calls those who are married slaves of the flesh, but those not under the yoke of wedlock freemen who serve the Lord in all freedom [1 Cor. 7:21-23]." (St. Jerome, *Letter CXXVIII, To Gaudentius*, Section 3, written in A.D. 413)

St. John of the Ladder makes some interesting observations concerning the dangers of marriage in his famous spiritual classic the *Ladder of Divine Ascent*. His comments on marriage should be pondered: "Someone caught up in the affairs of the world can make progress, if he is determined. But it is not easy. Those bearing chains can still walk. But they often stumble and are thereby injured. ... The married... (are) like someone chained hand and

foot.”

One must obviously love all of one’s family, friends as well as all others in the world as much as one can, but one must also remember that most people, whether wife, family or friends, however dear or near, often reject God and hinder one’s own spiritual advancement. The only one who will always remain true to us and that we know with a certainty will never become evil is God, and with God, His Angels and Saints in Heaven. But humans, however dear or near, often fall away or makes us fall away from the truth, or tries to tempt us to commit sins of various kinds, and this rejection of God by our family, wife, children or friends requires us to exclude them from our communion and familiarity in order for us to save our souls. Our Lord Jesus Christ explicitly mentions that such acts are necessary sometimes: *“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”* (Luke 14:26)

Douay Rheims Commentary explains Luke 14:26: *“Hate not: The law of Christ does not allow us to hate even our enemies, much less our parents: but the meaning of the text is, that **we must be in that disposition of soul, as to be willing to renounce, and part with every thing, how near or dear soever it may be to us, that would keep us from following Christ.**”*

If there ever arises a time that we become aware of the fact that our family or friends are trying to tempt or lead us into sin, we are obliged by the direct command of Our Lord to abstain from their company and unnecessary familiarity in order to save our eternal souls—lest we fall and tumble into sin and lose our souls. For “you are bought with a price; be not made the bondslaves of men.” (1 Cor. 7:23) In truth, “To be subjected, then, to the passions, and to yield to them, is the extremest slavery; as to keep them in subjection is the only liberty. The divine Scripture accordingly says, that those who have transgressed the commandments are sold to strangers, that is, to sins alien to nature, till they return and repent. Marriage, then, as a sacred image, must be kept pure from those things which defile it.” (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata*, Book II, Chapter XXIII, On Marriage)

Can a married Christian be saved? Yes, says St. Chrysostom, “But they must expend greater effort if they wished to be saved, because of the constraint imposed on them. For the person who is free of bonds will run more easily than the one who is enchained [by marriage]. Will the latter [the married] then receive a greater reward and more glorious crown [for his struggle than the unmarried and chaste]? Not at all! For he placed this constraint upon

himself when he was free not to.” (*Oppugn., III*; PG 47.376.) Again St. John asks, “Cannot the person who lives in the city and has a house and wife be saved?” He answers that certainly there are many ways to salvation. This is evident from our Savior saying that in Heaven there are many mansions (John 14:2). St. Paul affirms the same when he suggests that in the Resurrection there will be many types and degrees of glory, one of the sun, another of the moon, and another of the stars (1 Cor. 15:41). Certainly the monk and the married Christian can both be saved, but they will not possess the same eternal glory. As the sun is brighter than the moon, and as one star is brighter than another, so shall it be at the general resurrection. But all the bodies of the elect shall be happily changed to a state of incorruption (*Oppugn., III*; PG 47.356). “There are choirs of virgins, there are assemblies of widows, there are fraternities of those who shine in chaste wedlock; in short, many are the degrees of virtue.” (*Hom. XXX in 1 Cor.*; PG 61.254; NPNF, p. 178-179.)

In truth, “Marriage is honorable; but I cannot say that it is more lofty than virginity; for virginity were no great thing if it were not better than a good thing. Do not however be angry, ye women that are subject to the yoke. We must obey God rather than man. But be ye bound together, both virgins and wives, and be one in the Lord, and each others adornment. There would be no celibate if there were no marriage. For whence would the virgin have passed into this life? Marriage would not have been venerable unless it had borne virgin fruit to God and to life. ... Hast thou chosen the life of Angels? Art thou ranked among the unyoked? Sink not down to the flesh; sink not down to matter; be not wedded to matter, while otherwise thou remainest unwedded.” (St. Gregory Nazianzen, *Orations of St. Gregory Nazianzen*, Oration XXXVII, Section X)

St. Methodius, *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* (c. 311 A.D.): “Come, now, and let us examine more carefully the very words which are before us, [1 Cor. 7] and observe that the apostle did not grant these things unconditionally to all, but first laid down the reason on account of which he was led to this. For, having set forth that “it is good for a man not to touch a woman,” he added immediately, “Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife”, that is, “on account of the fornication which would arise from your being unable to restrain your voluptuousness” -- “and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.” And this is

very carefully considered. "By permission" he says, showing that he was giving counsel, "not of command;" for he receives command respecting chastity and the not touching of a woman, but permission respecting those who are unable, as I said, to chasten their appetites. These things, then, he lays down concerning men and women who are married to one spouse, or who shall hereafter be so..." (Discourse III, Chapter XII.-- Paul an Example to Widows, and to Those Who Do Not Live with Their Wives)

St. Francis de Sales classic *"Introduction to the Devout Life"*, confirms this teaching of St. Paul in the Holy Bible: "Married people ought not to keep their affections fixed on the sensual pleasures of their vocation, but ought afterwards to wash their hearts to purify them as soon as possible, so that they may then with a calm mind devote themselves to other purer and higher activities. In this way they will perfectly carry out St. Paul's excellent teaching that they who have wives should be as though they had none [1 Cor. 7:29]. St. Gregory the Great says that a husband or wife carries out this instruction by taking bodily consolation with the spouse in such a way as not to be turned aside from spiritual demands. St. Paul also says, "Let those who use the world be as though they used it not" [1 Cor. 7:31]. Everyone should use the things of this world according to his calling, but in such manner that he does not engage his affection in it, but rather remains as free and ready to serve God as if he did not use it. We should place our joy in spiritual things, but only *use* corporal ones. When we make bodily pleasures our joy, our rational soul becomes debased and brutish." (St. Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, pg. 266)

Indeed, contrary to what many lustful people nowadays impiously claim, St. Augustine's Commentary on Matthew 22:30 explains that a good Christian spouse ought to *hate* conjugal connection and carnal intercourse with his wife: "And the Lord Himself says: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Hence it is necessary that whoever wishes here and now to aim after the life of that kingdom, should hate not the persons themselves, but those temporal relationships by which this life of ours, which is transitory and is comprised in being born and dying, is upheld; because he who does not hate them, does not yet love that life where there is no condition of being born and dying, which unites parties in earthly wedlock. Therefore, if I were to ask any good Christian who has a wife, and even though he may still be having children by her, whether he would like to have his wife in that kingdom; mindful in any case of the promises of God, and of that life where this incorruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; though at present hesitating from the greatness, or at least from a certain degree of love, he would reply with execration that he is strongly averse to it. Were I to ask him again, whether he would like his wife to live with him there, after the resurrection, when

she had undergone that angelic change which is promised to the saints, he would reply that he desired this as strongly as he reprobated the other. Thus a good Christian is found to love in one and the same woman the creature of God, whom he desires to be transformed and renewed; but to hate the corruptible and mortal conjugal connection and carnal intercourse: i.e. to love in her what is characteristic of a human being, to hate what belongs to her as a wife. ... It is necessary, therefore, that the disciple of Christ should hate these things which pass away, in those whom he desires along with himself to reach those things which shall for ever remain; and that he should the more hate these things in them, the more he loves themselves.” (St. Augustine, *On the Sermon on the Mount*, Book I, Chapter 15, Section 40-41, c. 394 A.D.)

What is the life of the perfect Christian couple? St. Augustine answers that their life consists in living together as a brother and sister, having his wife as though he had her not, except for when they come together for the procreation of children: “A Christian may therefore live in concord with his wife... providing for the procreation of children, which may be at present in some degree praiseworthy; or providing for a brotherly and sisterly fellowship, without any corporeal connection, having his wife as though he had her not, as is most excellent and sublime in the marriage of Christians: yet so that in her he hates the name of temporal relationship, and loves the hope of everlasting blessedness.” (St. Augustine, *On the Sermon on the Mount*, Book I, Chapter 15, Section 42, c. 394 A.D.)

In addition, St. Augustine addresses those who murmur against the Church’s doctrine that it is better and more holy to live in total chastity: “But I am aware of some that murmur: What, say they, if all men should abstain from all sexual intercourse, whence will the human race exist? Would that all would this, only in charity out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeigned; much more speedily would the City of God be filled, and the end of the world hastened. For what else does the Apostle [St. Paul], as is manifest, exhort to, when he says, speaking on this head, **I would that all were as myself [1 Cor. 7:7]...**” (*On the Good of Marriage*, Section 10)

Chastity is above other virtues according to God’s Holy Word in the Book of James

The Book of James in the Holy Bible tells us that “*the wisdom, that is from above, first indeed is chaste,*” again showing us how the Holy Bible sets the virtue of chastity above other virtues.

James 3:17-18 “But the wisdom, that is from above [Heaven], ***first indeed is chaste,***

then peaceable, modest, easy to be persuaded, consenting to the good, full of mercy and good fruits, without judging, without dissimulation. And the fruit of justice is sown in peace, to them that make peace.”

The fact that chastity is especially valued among the different virtues in the Bible, as well as that it is described as a more perfect and blessed life is completely rejected or ignored by almost all Protestants and other heretics. Since their life is sensual and directed to pleasing their own flesh, sensuality and selfishness, they reject the inherent value and goodness of practicing chastity inside or outside of marriage and refuse to speak about its value since they themselves have decided to live a life for their flesh, rather than for the spirit. Not only that, but a lot of these heretics actually tries to get people to have as much sex and sexual pleasure as they can, thus directly contradicting the chaste words of the Holy Bible with their foul and unchaste teachings.

St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon 6:7*: “Now, there are three professions in the holy Catholic Church: there are virgins, widows, and the married. Virgins produce the hundred-fold, widows the sixty-fold, and the married thirty-fold. One bears more, another less, but they are all kept in the heavenly barn and happily enjoy eternal bliss. Therefore, while the virgins think of Mary, the widows consider Anne, and married women reflect upon Susanna, they should imitate the chastity of those women in this life so that they may merit to be united and associated with them in eternity. Good virgins, who want to be such not only in body but also in heart and tongue, are united to holy Mary with the rest of the army of Virgins. Good widows, not voluptuous, loquacious, inquisitive, envious, haughty ones, serve God as blessed Anne did by fasting, almsgiving, and prayers, and together with St. Anne are united with the many thousands of widows. Moreover, married women who have observed mutual fidelity and have neither known anything outside of themselves nor even themselves except with the desire for children, if they continually give alms and observe God’s precepts as well as they can, will merit happily to be associated with holy Job, Sara, and Susanna, along with the patriarchs and prophets.”

Marriage hinders many from being saved according to the Gospel of Luke

Indeed, it is a little known truth today, but marriage and the marital life can be so dangerous to our own spiritual welfare that Our Lord in *The Gospel of Luke* even warned about that some people who enter marriages are hindered from being Saved and enter Heaven due to their marital life, thus showing to us that virginity and chastity is very necessary and beneficial for

salvation.

*Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke in a parable, saying: “A certain man made a great supper, and invited many. And he sent his servant at the hour of supper to say to them that were invited, that they should come, for now all things are ready. And they began all at once to make excuse. The first said to him: ‘I have bought a farm, and I must needs go out and see it: I pray thee, hold me excused.’ And another said: ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to try them: I pray thee, hold me excused.’ And another said: ‘**I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.**’ And the servant returning, told these things to his lord. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant: ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the feeble, and the blind, and the lame.’ And the servant said: ‘Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.’ And the Lord said to the servant: ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. **But I say unto you, that none of those men that were invited, shall taste of my supper.**’ And there went great multitudes with him. And turning, he said to them: ‘If any man come to me, and *hate not* his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.’” (Luke 14:16-27)*

Haydock Bible Commentary explains Luke 14:16, saying: “By this man [who was inviting the people to the supper in Heaven] we are to understand Christ Jesus, the great mediator between God and man. He sent his servants, at supper-time, to say to them that were invited, that they should come... We may remark, that the three different excuses exactly agree with what St. John says: *All that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life* [1 John 2:16]. The one says, ***I have married a wife, by which may be understood the concupiscence of the flesh***; another says, *I have bought five yoke of oxen*, by which is denoted the concupiscence of the eyes; and the pride of life is signified by the purchase of the *farm*, which the third alleges in his justification. (St. Augustine, de verb. Dei.)”

Those people who thus will be hindered from entering the Great Supper (Heaven) and be cast into Hell for all eternity, are all those people who put something or someone before God, or who loved God less than He was worthy to be loved. The things that this parable enumerated as hindrances to salvation, that is, earthly pleasures and possessions and earthly wives or acquaintances, are the most common causes of why people are damned in this life. Thus, “he

who said, "I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come" [Luke 14:20] to the divine supper was **an example to convict those who for pleasure's sake were abandoning the divine command [of loving God and that which is above above everything else]**; for if this saying is taken otherwise, neither the righteous before the coming of Christ nor those who have married since his coming, even if they be apostles, will be saved." (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XII, Section 90)

Our Lady of Fatima (1917): "The sins of the world are too great! The sins which lead most souls to hell are sins of the flesh! Certain fashions are going to be introduced which will offend Our Lord very much. Those who serve God should not follow these fashions. The Church has no fashions; Our Lord is always the same. **Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God...** Oh! Men must do penance! If they amend their lives Our Lord will still pardon the world; but if they do not, the chastisement will come! Priests should occupy themselves only with the affairs of the Church! They must be pure, very pure." Mother Godinho asked her (Jacinta): "Do you know what it means to be pure?" "Yes, Yes. I know to be pure in body means to be chaste, to be pure in mind means not to commit sins; not to look at what one should not see, not to steal or lie, and always to speak the truth, even if it is hard."

In the case of the wife or a spouse, many couples perversely love the sexual pleasure they derive from the marital act, and this happens since the vehemence and force of the sexual pleasure is so strong and acts just like a drug which places the person into a state of bliss of pleasure, thus making it very hard to control without actually starting to love the physical fleshly pleasure, just like drug addicts love their pleasure, which is a kind of idolatry of the flesh. All acts which hold great pleasure is extremely easy to become addicted to, and sexual pleasure of course works in the exact same way too. That is why we see so many use pornography or commit adultery, masturbation or fornication. When one has chosen to become addicted to the sexual pleasure or high, whether it be by masturbation, pornography, or by indulging in the marital act with one's spouse too often or in an inordinate or unlawful way, it will always become extremely difficult to get free from. The sexual pleasure is so addictive that sexual addicts who are also drug abusers have testified that while their drug abuse was comparatively easy to quit, their sexual thoughts and desires remains and tempts them every day. Thus, it is obvious that it would have been much better for these people if they had remained chaste and thus viewed the sexual pleasure as more of an abstract pleasure rather than to be guilty of, and commit sexual idolatry. St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians correctly explains that those who become subject and controlled by their covetousness (as in

the case of those who are lustful) are serving idols, their idol being the sensual pleasure: “*But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints: or obscenity, or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose; but rather giving of thanks. For know you this and understand, that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person (which is a serving of idols), hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*” (Ephesians 5:3-5)

Haydock Commentary wisely explains Ephesians 5:3-5 thus: “**Verse 3.** *Covetousness.* The Latin word is generally taken for a coveting or immoderate desire of money and riches. St. Jerome and others observe, that the Greek word in this and divers other places in the New Testament may signify **any unsatiable desire, or the lusts of sensual pleasures; and on this account, St. Jerome thinks that it is here joined with fornication and uncleanness** [i.e., sexual sins]. --- **Verse 5.** *Nor covetous person, which is a serving of idols.* **It is clear enough by the Greek that the covetous man is called an idolater,** whose idol is mammon; though it may be also said of other sinners, **that the vices they are addicted to are their idols.** (Witham)”

If these people would have only subdued their flesh a little through small penances, their sins, bad marriages and eternal damnation could have easily been corrected or averted. “*Know you not that they that run in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain. And every one that striveth for the mastery, refraineth himself from all things:* and they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible one. I therefore so run, not as at an uncertainty: I so fight, not as one beating the air: But *I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway.*” (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

Haydock Commentary explains First Corinthians 9:24-27: “**Verse 25.** He *refraineth himself [from all things]*, &c. [If the athlete] Curbs his inclinations, abstains from debauchery, or any thing that may weaken him, or hinder him from gaining this corruptible crown [of human glory], how much more ought we to practice self-denials for an eternal crown? --- **Verse 27.** *I chastise [my body]*, &c. Here St. Paul shews the necessity of self-denial and mortification to subdue the flesh, and its inordinate desires. (Challoner) --- Not even the labors of an apostle are exemptions from voluntary mortification and penance.”

Indeed, Our Lord Himself in the Holy Gospel shows us the necessity to never place our love for family or friends above our love for God since they are many times opposed to virtue or the faith: “Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace, but the

sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. **And a man's enemies shall be they of his own household.** He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not up his cross, and followeth me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that shall lose his life for me, shall find it. He that receiveth you, receiveth me: and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.” (Matthew 10:34-40)

Haydock Commentary explains Matthew 10:32-40: “**Verse 34.** *I came not to send [peace, but the sword], &c.* That is, dissension and war, in order that the false peace of sinners may be destroyed, and that those who follow me, may differ in morals and affections from the followers of this world. The sword, therefore, is the gospel, which separates those parents who remain in infidelity. (Menochius) It must be observed, that the gospel does not necessarily of itself produce dissensions amongst men, but that Christ foresaw, from the depravity of man's heart, that dissensions would follow the propagation of the gospel. (Haydock) --- Indeed before Christ became man, there was no sword upon the earth; that is, the spirit had not to fight with so much violence against the flesh; but when he became man, he shewed us what things were of the flesh, and what of the spirit, and taught us to set these two at variance, by renouncing always those of the flesh, which constantly endeavor to get master over us, and follow the dictates of the spirit. (Origen)”

“**Verse 35.** *I am come to set a man at variance [with his family], &c.* Not that this was the end or design of the coming of our Savior; but that his coming, and his doctrine would have this effect, by reason of the obstinate resistance that many would make, and of their persecuting all such as should adhere to him. (Challoner) No one can be connected with the earth and joined to heaven. Those who wish to enjoy the peace of heaven, must not be united to the lovers of this world by any connection. (Baradius)”

“**Verse 37.** *[He that loveth father or mother more than me] Is not worthy of me, &c.* That is, is not worthy to be my disciple, and to enjoy my kingdom. (Menochius)”

“**Verse 38.** *[And he that taketh not up his cross, and followeth me, is not worthy of me], &c.* There are two kinds of crosses which our Savior here commands us to take up: one corporal, and the other spiritual. By the former, he commands us to restrain the unruly appetites of the touch, taste, sight, &c. By the other, which is far more worthy our notice, he teaches us to govern the affections of the mind, and restrain all its irregular motions, by humility, tranquility, modesty, peace, &c. Precious indeed in the sight of God, and glorious is that cross, which governs and brings under proper rule the lawless passions of the mind. (St. Augustine)”

“**Verse 39.** *He that findeth [his life, shall lose it], &c.* That is, he that findeth in this life

pleasures and comforts, and places his affections upon them, will certainly soon lose them. For Isaiah says, (Chap. xl, ver. 6) *All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of the field. The grass is withered, and the flower is fallen....* (St. Ambrose) But if he continues moderately happy as to temporal concerns till death, and places his affections on them, he hath found life here, but shall lose it in the next world. But he that shall, for the sake of Christ, deprive himself of the pleasures of this life, shall receive the reward of a hundred fold in the next. (Haydock)”

“It is not expedient to marry” for many people in this world according to the Gospel of Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew gives us a good account of the superiority of chastity over marriage, and explains how many men refuse to accept to see the biblical truth that “*it is not expedient to marry*” for many in this world.

Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to the Apostles, saying: “And I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication [or adultery], and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery.’ His disciples say unto him: ‘If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry.’ [And Jesus] said to them: ‘All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs, who were born so from their mother’s womb: and there are eunuchs, who were made so by men: and there are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. He that can take, let him take it.’ Then were little children presented to him, that he should impose hands upon them and pray. And the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said to them: ‘Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to me: for the kingdom of heaven is for such.’ And when he had imposed hands upon them, he departed from thence.” (Matthew 19:9-15)

Douay Rheims Bible Commentary explains Matthew 19: “**Verse 9.** [*whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication*]. In the case of fornication, that is, of adultery, the wife may be put away: but even then the husband cannot marry another as long as the wife is living. --- **Verse 11.** *All men take not this word*. That is, all receive or accept not the gift of living singly and chastely, unless they pray for the grace of God to enable them to live so, and for many it may be necessary to that end to fast as well as pray: and to those it is given from above.”

Haydock Bible Commentary goes on to explain Our Lord's words about chastity in Matthew, Chapter 19 thus: "**Verse 11.** *All receive not this word*, To translate all *cannot* take, or *cannot* receive this word, is neither conformable to the Latin nor Greek text. To be able to live singly, and chastely, is given to every one that asketh, and prayeth for the grace of God to enable him to live so. (Witham) *All cannot receive it*, because *all do not wish it*. The reward is held out to all. Let him who seeks for glory, not think of the labor. None would overcome, if all were afraid of engaging in the conflict. If some fail, are we to be less careful in our pursuit of virtue? Is the soldier terrified, because his comrade fights and falls by his side? (St. Chrysostom) *He that can receive it, let him receive it. He that can fight, let him fight, overcome and triumph.* It is the voice of the Lord animating his soldiers to victory. (St. Jerome) --- **Verse 12.** *There are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs, for the kingdom of heaven.* This text is not to be taken in the literal sense; but means, that there are such, who have taken a firm and commendable resolution of leading a single and chaste life, in order to serve God in a more perfect state than those who marry: as St. Paul clearly shews. 1 Cor. 7. 37, 38. (Challoner) Thus St. Jerome on this place, and St. Chrysostom where they both expressly take notice, that this grace is granted to every one that asketh and beggeth for it by prayer. (Witham) To the crown and glory of which state, let those aspire who feel themselves called by heaven."

The infallible word of God is clear that "*it is not expedient to marry*" for many people in this world and that "*all men take not this word*". Our Lord then goes on to inspire and urge all to try to become chaste by teaching us that: "**there are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. He that can take, let him take it.**" The reason why Our Lord teaches that "it is not expedient to marry" for many people in this world is that most people who marry in this life fall into grievous habitual sins of the flesh with their spouse by performing mortally sinful, non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts (such as masturbation of self or of spouse, foreplay, oral and anal sex, and sensual touches and kisses) which they would not have done if they would have remained single.

Sexual pleasure works very much the same as any pleasure in this world, but some good examples of pleasures that can be compared to it is the pleasure that people get from alcohol or drugs. Now, if a man has never taken drugs or alcohol he cannot know anything about their effects, and thus, he cannot desire these pleasures at all. The consequence of this lack of desire is that there is no desire to abuse either alcohol or drugs at all. Sexual pleasure affects a man in a similar way. If a man have not had a venue to act on his sexual desire, nor looked longingly and with desire on a woman, always choosing to turn his eyes down in humility every time a woman came near him, his sexual desire will remain more of an abstract or theoretical pleasure. But a man who marries a woman and starts having sexual relations with

her (allowing his eyes to fixate on a woman with sensual desire) does not have this advantage of having sexual pleasure remain an abstract or theoretical pleasure, and consequently, the possibility of him getting tempted to commit sins of impurity with either his own wife or with some other woman, is immediately increased. And as always, the sensual fire almost always begins through the eyes when a person is not careful enough to control or consider where he or she is looking.

A person who drinks wine will always be more tempted to drink more than what is lawful than a person who does not drink at all. This example absolutely proves that it is not good for all men and women to marry, for most people in this world abuse the God given power of procreation in their genital parts by committing unlawful sexual acts with their spouse or with another person than their spouse. If they would have remained unschooled in the ways of sexual pleasure, or chosen to remain in the angelic state of chastity, their way to Heaven would have been infinitely more easy, but since their desire was to please their own flesh: the door to Heaven was closed and the door to Hell and eternal torment and suffering was opened. **“For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.... No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other.” (Matthew 6:21, 24)**

The fact and teaching that sexual pleasure is an evil (but not a sin in itself) even in marriage comes from both the Holy Scripture and the Natural Law which teaches us that ***those who are married and perform the sexual act “shall have tribulation of the flesh”*** (1 Corinthians 7:28) and that the married life makes a person ***“divided”***. The truth that sexual pleasure even in marriage is an evil is amply proven by the fact that it is intoxicating like a drug, as well as that it is very addictive. Only a madman will think that getting intoxicated is something good, and all understand this truth from the Natural Law. St. Augustine explains that, “But that [sexual] pleasure... does it not engage the whole soul and body, and does not this extremity of pleasure result in a kind of submersion of the mind itself, even if it is approached with a good intention, that is, for the purpose of procreating children, since in its very operation it allows no one to think, I do not say of wisdom, but of anything at all? ... What lover of the spiritual good, who has married only for the sake of offspring, would not prefer if he could to propagate children without it or without its very great impulsion? I think, then, we ought to attribute to that life in Paradise, which was a far better life than this, whatever saintly spouses would prefer in this life, unless we can think of something better.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book IV, Chapter 13, Section 71)

Indeed, as we have seen, one can even understand from reason alone that concupiscence and

sexual desire is evil since according to St. Thomas, “there is a loss of reason incidental to the union of man and woman, both because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time [as in the case of intoxication of drugs], as the Philosopher says (Ethic. vii, 11); and again because of the tribulation of the flesh which such persons have to suffer from solicitude for temporal things (1 Corinthians 7:28).” Only a fool of the highest degree could dare to claim that being intoxicated so “that it [reason] is unable to understand anything at the same time” is good or a gift from God since even nature itself tells us that this is evil and unlawful unless this act of intoxication is excused by an absolutely necessary motive; and that is also why a Catholic cannot regard those who hold this heresy as Catholics: “Who does not know that conjugal intercourse is never committed without itching of the flesh, and heat and foul concupiscence, whence the conceived seeds [of the children] are befouled and corrupted?” (Pope Innocent III, *On the Seven Penitential Psalms*)

The fact that the current state of marriage after the fall is defective and infirm is something that most so called Christians totally reject or ignore:

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1, 5: “Whether certain blessings are necessary in order to excuse [marriage and sexual intercourse in] marriage? Wherever there is indulgence [as St. Paul states], there must needs be some reason for excuse. **Now marriage is allowed in the state of infirmity "by indulgence" (1 Corinthians 7:6).** Therefore it needs to be excused by certain goods. **... the aforesaid [marital sexual] act does not differ from the act of fornication... But the act of fornication is always evil. Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...**”

Indeed, today there is a virtual blackout of Our Lord’s teaching in the Holy Bible about the inherent dangers of marriage and the potential that the sexual act has to damn a person, and almost no one seem to even know or acknowledge this fact about the marital life even though it is clearly taught in the same Bible that millions or billions of people read during their life.

But this is not something new, since lustful and blind people have always existed. The main difference from before, however, is that today, this ignorance seem to rule almost the whole society, whereas before, a considerable part of the world cherished and extolled chastity, purity and virginity as a more blessed and pure lifestyle, which is also why many married spouses vowed chastity with each other in order to prepare to meet the Lord in chastity and purity. This is also proven by the fact that sins of impurity, such as masturbation, was

generally considered bad, filthy or evil by almost all people before in time, and not like today, as something good or normal.

In this context, St. Jerome explains the holy Bible's words about the inherent danger of marriage and the marital sexual act, showing quite clearly from the Holy Scripture that the marital act can endanger the salvation of our souls, unless we are really careful.

"I have said in my book, [Ag. Jov. 1:7] "If it is good for a man not to touch a woman, then it is bad for him to touch one, for bad, and bad only, is the opposite of good. But, if though bad it is made venial, then it is allowed to prevent something which would be worse than bad," and so on down to the commencement of the next chapter. The above is my comment upon the apostle's words: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." [1 Cor. 7:1-2]... "Notice the apostle's carefulness. He does not say: 'It is good for a man not to have a wife,' but, 'It is good for a man not to touch a woman'; as if there is danger in the very touching of one – danger which he who touches cannot escape." You see, therefore, that I am not expounding the law as to husbands and wives, but simply discussing the general question of sexual intercourse – how in comparison with chastity and virginity, the life of angels, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" [1 Cor. 7:1]." (St. Jerome, *Letter XLVIII, To Pammachius*, c. 394 A.D.)

When one actually sees how many of the books of the Bible and the Saints there are that actually teaches about the inherent dangers of marriage and the marriage act, as well as the doctrine of the necessity of chastity and sexual purity for both the married and the unmarried, and that even the married must practice chastity from time to time, one can understand that it is a spiritual problem behind the reason for why so many people can read the same biblical books and texts as others without actually understanding a whiff of the words they read. It is sad, but their filthy and sensual life blinds them from seeing and understanding what the words they read actually mean. In truth, it is a biblical fact, "...as Paul also says of those who are absorbed in marriage that they aim to "please the world." [1 Cor. 7:33] Again the Lord says, "Let not the married person seek a divorce, nor the unmarried person marriage," [1 Cor. 7:27, 32-36] that is, he who has confessed his intention of being celibate, let him remain unmarried." (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter XV, Section 97)

In contrast to virginity or chastity, "Conjugalitv, on the other hand, runs completely away

from Christ by reason of the surging of corruptible flesh and worldly cares of every kind; or it only slightly approaches God.” (St. Gregory of Nazianzen, *In Praise of Virginity*, PG 37, 563A)
St. John Chrysostom, the inspired interpreter of the Apostle Paul, writes in the same spirit concerning the admission of marriage: “So, do not prefer over virginity that which was admitted because of your weakness. Rather, do not even put them on the same level.” (St. John Chrysostom, “On Virginity” 15, PG 48, 545)

St. John Chrysostom comments on this passage (in Matthew 19) from the Bible and explains Our Lord’s words about the greatness and perfection of a life of total and perpetual chastity:

“But what is, “If such be the case of a man with his wife?” That is, if to this end he is joined with her, that they should be one, or, on the other hand, if the man shall get to himself blame for these things, and always transgresses by putting away, it were easier to fight against natural desire and against one’s self, than against a wicked woman.

“What then saith Christ? He said not, “yea, it is easier, and so do,” lest they should suppose that the thing is a law; but He subjoined, “Not all men receive it, but they to whom it is given,” [Matt. 19:11] raising the thing, and showing that it is great, and in this way drawing them on, and urging them.

“But see herein a contradiction. For He indeed saith this is a great thing; but they, that it is easier. For it was meet that both these things should be done, and that it should be at once acknowledged a great thing by Him, that it might render them more forward, and by the things said by themselves it should be shown to be easier, that on this ground too they might the rather choose virginity and continence. For since to speak of virginity seemed to be grievous, by the constraint of this law He drove them to this desire. Then to show the possibility of it, He saith, “There are some eunuchs, who were so born from their mother’s womb, there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men, and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven’s sake,” [Matt. 19:12] by these words secretly leading them to choose the thing, and establishing the possibility of this virtue, and all but saying, Consider if thou wert in such case by nature, or hadst endured this selfsame thing at the hands of those who inflict such wanton injuries, what wouldest thou have done, being deprived indeed of the enjoyment, yet not having a reward? Thank God therefore now, for that with rewards and crowns thou undergoest this, which those men endure without crowns; or rather not even this, but what is much lighter, being supported both by hope, and by the consciousness of the good work, and not having the desire so raging like waves within thee.

“For the excision of a member is not able to quell such waves, and to make a calm,

like the curb of reason; or rather, reason only can do this.

“For this intent therefore He brought in those others, even that He might encourage these, since if this was not what He was establishing, what means His saying concerning the other eunuchs? But when He saith, that they made themselves eunuchs, He means not the excision of the members, far from it, but the putting away of wicked thoughts. Since the man who hath mutilated himself, in fact, is subject even to a curse, as Paul saith, “I would they were even cut off which trouble you.” [Gal. 5:12] And very reasonably. For such a one is venturing on the deeds of murderers, and giving occasion to them that slander God’s creation, and opens the mouths of the Manichæans, and is guilty of the same unlawful acts as they that mutilate themselves amongst the Greeks. For to cut off our members hath been from the beginning a work of demoniacal agency, and satanic device, that they may bring up a bad report upon the work of God, that they may mar this living creature, that imputing all not to the choice, but to the nature of our members, the more part of them may sin in security, as being irresponsible; and doubly harm this living creature, both by mutilating the members, and by impeding the forwardness of the free choice in behalf of good deeds.

“These are the ordinances of the devil, bringing in, besides the things which we have mentioned, another wicked doctrine also, and making way beforehand for the arguments concerning destiny and necessity even from hence, and everywhere marring the freedom given to us of God, and persuading us that evil deeds are of nature, and hence secretly implanting many other wicked doctrines, although not openly. For such are the devil’s poisons.

“Therefore I beseech you to flee from such lawlessness. For together with the things I have mentioned, neither doth the force of lust become milder hereby, but even more fierce. For from another origin hath the seed that is in us its sources, and from another cause do its waves swell. And some say from the brain, some from the loins, this violent impulse hath its birth; but I should say from nothing else than from an ungoverned will and a neglected mind: if this be temperate, there is no evil result from the motions of nature.

“Having spoken then of the eunuchs that are eunuchs for nought and fruitlessly, unless with the mind they too practise temperance, and of those that are virgins for Heaven’s sake, He proceeds again to say, “He that is able to receive it, let him receive it,” at once making them more earnest by showing that the good work is exceeding in greatness, and not suffering the thing to be shut up in the compulsion of a law, because of His unspeakable gentleness. And this He said, when He showed it to be most possible, in order that the emulation of the free choice might be greater.

“And if it is of free choice, one may say, how doth He say, at the beginning, “All

men do not receive it, but they to whom it is given?" That thou mightest learn that the conflict is great, not that thou shouldst suspect any compulsory allotments. For it is given to those, even to the willing.

"But He spake thus to show that much influence from above is needed by him who entereth these lists, whereof He that is willing shall surely partake. For it is customary for Him to use this form of speech when the good work done is great, as when He saith, "To you it is given to know the mysteries."

"And that this is true, is manifest even from the present instance. For if it be of the gift from above only, and they that live as virgins contribute nothing themselves, for nought did He promise them the kingdom of Heaven, and distinguish them from the other eunuchs.

"But mark thou, I pray, how from some men's wicked doings, other men gain. I mean, that the Jews went away having learnt nothing, for neither did they ask with the intent of learning, but the disciples gained even from hence." (St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 62 on Matthew, Chapter 19, Section 3*)

Just like in the days of St. Jerome, Noah or Lot, people talk about the joys of marriage and the world, but totally ignore its dangers, since their sensuality controls their life: "You set before me the joys of wedlock. I for my part will remind you of Dido's sword and pyre and funeral flames. In marriage there is not so much good to be hoped for as there is evil which may happen and must be feared. Passion when indulged always brings repentance with it; it is never satisfied, and once quenched it is soon kindled anew. Its growth or decay is a matter of habit; led like a captive by impulse it refuses to obey reason." (St. Jerome, *Letter CXXIII, To Ageruchia, Section 14, A.D. 409*)

Truly, the dangers of marriage cannot be overstated, and that is also why God infallibly teaches this truth many times in Holy Scripture. St. Jerome in his "*Against Jovinianus*" continues to explain the perfection of chastity and how God explicitly warns the married in the Bible about the dangers of marriage and the marital act: "Let us turn back to the chief point of the evidence: "It is good," he [St. Paul] says, "for a man not to touch a woman." If it is good not to touch a woman, it is bad to touch one: for there is no opposite to goodness but badness. But if it be bad and the evil is pardoned, the reason for the concession is to prevent worse evil. But surely a thing which is only allowed because there may be something worse has only a slight degree of goodness. He would never have added "let each man have his own wife," unless he had previously used the words "but, because of fornications." Do away with fornication, and he will not say "let each man have his own wife." Just as though one were to lay it down: "It is good to feed on wheaten bread, and to eat the finest wheat flour," and yet to

prevent a person pressed by hunger from devouring cow-dung, I may allow him to eat barley.

“Does it follow that the wheat will not have its peculiar purity, because such an one prefers barley to excrement? That is naturally good which does not admit of comparison with what is bad, and is not eclipsed because something else is preferred. At the same time we must notice the Apostle’s prudence. He did not say, it is good not to have a wife: but, it is good not to touch a woman: as though there were danger even in the touch: as though he who touched her, would not escape from her who "hunteth for the precious life," who causeth the young man’s understanding to fly away. "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk upon hot coals and his feet not be scorched?"” (St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus*, Book 1, Section 7)

Our Lord’s and Lady’s warning in the Bible and to the children at Fatima in 1917 confirms this point in great detail, clearly placing emphasis on the fact that marriages in the final days of the earth will be oriented towards pleasing sensuality and selfishness: **“The sins of the world are too great! The sins which lead most souls to hell are sins of the flesh!... Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God.”** Indeed, almost no one today seem to care that this is a fact and that this is happening even though it is clearly warned about in the Bible that ***“IN THE LAST DAYS, shall come dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves... incontinent... lovers of pleasure more than of God: Having an appearance indeed of godliness but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid.”*** (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

Indeed, the Catholic Prophetess Mother Shipton prophesied our time in perfect detail: “For in those wondrous far off days, The women shall adopt a craze To dress like men, and trousers wear And to cut off all their locks of hair. They’ll ride astride with brazen brow, As witches do on broomsticks now. [Craze in women to dress like men, wearing trousers and cutting their hair, adopting various hairstyles and riding horses, and bikes straddle instead of side-saddle.] ... They’ll be a sign for all to see Be sure that it will certain be. Then love shall die and marriage cease And nations wane as babes decrease. [Failure of marriages and divorce. Decrease in population (in Europe) and wholesale abortion in America and Europe.] And wives shall fondle cats and dogs And men live much the same as hogs. [Many women having animals, and many men watching porn, being lazy and filthy like hogs, and performing unlawful sexual acts with their spouse such as foreplay.] ... When pictures seem alive with movements free, When boats like fishes swim beneath the sea. When men like birds shall scour the sky. Then half the world, deep drenched in blood shall die.”

Consider this fact: Did Jesus say that few are saved? Yes He did (Luke 13:23-24, 28). In

today's world, what sin does most, if not all people fall into? **It is sexual sins!** Just look at the perverted protestants, the evil Vatican II "Catholics", or even the deceived traditionalists, who all of them practice some form or another of sexual foreplay or unlawful inflaming of lust, as well as all kinds of other perversions too disgusting even to mention. It is thus clear why Our Lady of Fatima revealed to us that "*More souls go to Hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason*" and why this message was especially emphasized in Her revelations; for Our Lady, the Queen of Prophets, knew what the second part of the 20th century had in store for humanity after the introduction of the TV and other evil media, which in a large part is responsible for all of this impurity.

It is almost impossible to watch media or live in the modern society today and not be perverted by their evil influence that teaches us perverse sexual heresies. That is why the world has become so evil and why the apostasy is so universal. In truth, Our Lord Jesus Christ warned about the world's delusion of our time when He said: "And as it came to pass in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat and drink, they married wives, and were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark: and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it came to pass, in the days of Lot: they did eat and drink, they bought and sold, they planted and built. And in the day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed." (Luke 17:26-30)

Haydock Bible Commentary explains Luke 17: "**Ver. 27.** After having compared his second coming to lightning, in order to shew how sudden it will be, he next compares it to the days of Noe [Noah] and Lot, to shew that it will come when men least expect it; **when, entirely forgetting his coming, they are solely occupied in the affairs of this world,** in buying and selling, &c. He only mentions those faults which appear trivial, or rather none at all, (passing over the crimes of murder, theft, &c.) purposely to shew, that if God thus punishes merely the immoderate use of what is lawful, **how will his vengeance fall upon what is in itself unlawful.** (Ven. Bede) --- **Ver. 32.** As Lot only escaped destruction by leaving all things, and flying immediately to the mountain, whereas his wife, by shewing an affection for the things she had left, and looking back, perished; **so those who, in the time of tribulation, forgetting the reward that awaits them in heaven, look back to the pleasures of this world, which the wicked enjoy, are sure to perish.** (St. Ambrose)"

The amount of fools in this world who commit sexual sins inside and outside of marriage are innumerable. Sad to say, they could all have increased their chances of reaching Heaven by refusing to marry and indulging in their sinful sexual pleasure. But since their heart was set

on earthly and perishable things, and they did not marry for an honorable and pure cause, God's justice also demands that they shall perish with the dead and rotting bodies that they loved more than they loved Him; which was the filth and stinking treasure of their vile hearts. "Moreover, the Paedagogue [Instructor] warns us most distinctly: "Go not after thy lusts, and abstain from thine appetites [Sir. 18:30]; for wine and women will remove the wise; and he that cleaves to harlots will become more daring. Corruption and the worm shall inherit him [Sir. 19:2-3], and he shall be held up as public example to greater shame." And again—for he wearies not of doing good—"He who averts his eyes from pleasure crowns his life." (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Instructor*, Book II, Chapter X)

Thus, Our Lord Jesus Christ's teaching in *The Gospel of Matthew* shows us all that it's impossible to love Him at the same time as a physical and temporal thing or pleasure without actually hating or despising Him in the process. (Matthew 6:21,24)

St. Alphonsus, **on the damnation of the impure**: "Continue, O fool, says St. Peter Damian (speaking to the unchaste), continue to gratify the flesh; **for the day will come in which thy impurities will become as pitch in thy entrails, to increase and aggravate the torments of the flame which will burn thee in hell: The day will come, yea rather the night, when thy lust shall be turned into pitch, to feed in thy bowels the everlasting fire.**" (*Preparation for Death*, p. 117)

Our Lord Jesus Christ is perfectly right when He said in Matthew 19:14 that "*the kingdom of heaven is for such [children]*," and one of the most distinguishing traits of children is that they are chaste and pure and free from all sexual temptations, until they reach the age of puberty. Whether married or unmarried, if one wants to enter "the Kingdom of Heaven," one must do all in one's power to try to imitate the virtue and chastity that is inherent in children. Not only children can reach this stage of chastity or purity (where one is not bothered by the stings and temptations of the flesh), but also those who manfully labor in fasts and prayers, taking care to avoid mortal and venial sins and to not commit any act that will tempt or incite their sexual desire, always refusing to see or look at anything that might disturb their chastity. "Brother Roger, a Franciscan of singular purity, being once asked why he was so reserved in his intercourse with women, replied, that when men avoid the occasions of sin, God preserves them; but when they expose themselves to danger, they are justly abandoned by the Lord, and easily fall into some grievous transgressions." (St. Alphonsus, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, Mortification of the Eyes, p. 221)

In truth, "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away." (Matthew 11:12) The words *suffereth violence* means that it is not to be obtained but by main force by using violence upon oneself by mortifications and penances, and by resisting our perverse inclinations. Too few, however, care anything about mortifications and penances, and that is also why the world and most of the members of the Church have been allowed to fall into such great immorality, apostasy and heresy that was unheard of before the twentieth century.

St. Alphonsus de Liguori, in his masterpiece "*The Glories Of Mary*" describes how we are to achieve Purity Of Heart, and how The Blessed Virgin Mary is a powerful helper for those who are struggling with sexual sin, and also On How to Avoid Sexual Sins: "St. Ambrose says, that "whoever has preserved chastity is an angel, and that he who has lost it is a devil." Our Lord assures us that those who are chaste become angels, "*They shall be as the angels of God in heaven*" (Matthew 22:30). But the impure, becomes as devils, hateful in the sight of God. St. Remigius used to say that the greater part of adults are lost by this vice. Seldom, as we have already said with St. Augustine, is a victory gained over this vice. But why? It is because **the means by which it may be gained are seldom made use of.**

"These means are three, according to Bellarmine and the masters of a spiritual life: **fasting, the avoidance of dangerous occasions, and prayer.**

"1. By fasting, is to be understood especially mortification of the eyes and of the appetite. Although our Blessed Lady was full of divine grace, yet she was so mortified in her eyes, that, according to St. Epiphanius and St. John Damascene, she always kept them cast down, and never fixed them on any one; and they say that from her very childhood her modesty was such, that it filled every one who saw her with astonishment. Hence St. Luke remarks, that, in going to visit St. Elizabeth, "*she went with haste,*" (Luke 1:39) that she might be less seen in public. Philibert relates, that, as to her food, it was revealed to a hermit named Felix, that when a baby she only took milk once a day. St. Gregory of Tours affirms that throughout her life she fasted; and St. Bonaventure adds, "that Mary would never have found so much grace, had she not been most moderate in her food; for grace and gluttony cannot subsist together." In fine, Mary was mortified in all, so that of her it was said "*my hands dropped with myrrh*" (Canticle 5:5).

"2. The second means is to fly the occasions of sin: "*He that is aware of the snares shall be secure*" (Proverbs 11:15). Hence St. Philip Neri says, that, "in the war of the senses, cowards conquer:" that is to say those who fly from dangerous occasions. Mary fled as much as possible from the sight of men and therefore St. Luke remarks, that in going to visit St. Elizabeth, she went with haste into the hill country. An author observes that the Blessed Virgin left St. Elizabeth before St. John was born, as we learn from the same Gospel where it is said, "*that Mary abode with her about three months, and she returned to her own house.*"

Now Elizabeth's full time of being delivered was come, and she brought forth a son" (Luke 1:56). And why did she not wait for this event? It was that she might avoid the conversations and visits which would accompany it.

"3. The third means is prayer. "And as I knew," said the wise man, "that I could not otherwise be continent except God gave it . . . I went to the Lord and besought Him" (Wisdom 8:21). The Blessed Virgin revealed to St. Elizabeth of Hungary, that she acquired no virtue without effort and continual prayer. St. John Damascene says, that Mary "is pure, a lover of purity." Hence she cannot endure those who are unchaste. But whoever has recourse to Her will certainly be delivered from this vice, if he only pronounces her name with confidence. The Venerable [Saint] John of Avila used to say, "that many have conquered more temptations by only having devotion to her Immaculate Conception."

*"O Mary, O most pure dove, how many are now in hell on account of this vice! Sovereign Lady, obtain us the grace always to have recourse to thee in our temptations, and always to invoke thee, saying, "Mary, Mary, help us." Amen." (From *The Glories Of Mary*, by St. Alphonsus de Liguori)*

There is no marriage in Heaven according to the Gospel of Matthew

In the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 22, Jesus explains *"that in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married; but shall be as the angels of God in heaven"*. Through these words, He is telling us that perpetual chastity is an inherent part in the Angelic and Heavenly Life, thus showing us once again that chastity is morally superior to marriage and the marital life.

And Jesus answering, said to them: "You err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married; but shall be as the angels of God in heaven. And concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken by God, saying to you: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And the multitudes hearing it, were in admiration at his doctrine." (Matthew 22:29-33)

Marriage and those acts which specifically pertain to it only endure for a short moment in this temporal life, while the virtue of chastity begins in this life, to continue through all eternity in Heaven in indescribable bliss and happiness. Haydock Commentary, "**Ver. 30.** *If not to marry, nor to be married*, be like unto angels, the state of religious persons, and of priests, is justly styled by the Fathers an angelic life. (St. Cyprian, lib. ii. de discip. et hab. Virg. sub

finem.) (Bristow)”

Marriage did not even exist until after the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve, but chastity always existed and will always exist – whether in Heaven or on Earth – as long as the latter continues to exist. Marriage was instituted by God for procreation of children, but He also allows it to be used as a relief from concupiscence and the sin of uncleanness, adultery and fornication by giving the marital act an indulgence so long as the marital act is always subordinated to the primary end or purpose of the marital act—the procreation of children (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* #54). But this state of alleviation from temptation to sin that married people enter into when getting married is a defective state not originally intended by the Creator from the beginning—before the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve. Chastity and purity however is not a defective state, but the original and desired state that God wanted all humans to live in from the beginning. “Thus,” says St. Jerome, “it must be bad to touch a woman. If indulgences is nonetheless granted to the marital act, this is only to avoid something worse. But what value can be recognized in a good that is allowed only with a view of preventing something worse?” And St. Augustine adds, “Thus also this mortal begetting, on account of which marriage takes place, shall be destroyed: but freedom from all sexual intercourse is both angelic exercise here, and continues for ever.” (*On the Good of Marriage*, 8)

Before the fall, people would have been able to procreate children without the evil of lust. “*In Eden, it would have been possible to beget offspring without foul lust. The sexual organs would have been stimulated into necessary activity by will-power alone, just as the will controls other organs.*” (St. Augustine, *City of God*, Book 14, Chapter 26.) Our Lord Jesus Christ never intended for us to be plagued by sexual desire. And because this defective desire brings with it so many sins and temptations of the flesh, it is perfectly true to say that marriage is a defective state compared to what the Creator had in mind from the beginning. This is also why St. Gregory the Theologian calls human procreation, “nocturnal, servile, and subject to passion”, (*On Holy Baptism*) and before him David said, “I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me”. (Ps. 51:5) If Adam and Eve had never sinned, all humans had now been chaste and pure just as God intended it to be from the beginning.

The church historian, Venerable Bede (673-735 A.D.), stated that in the first age of the world humankind was propagated by the union of men and women. However, in “the last age of history” God has “taken manhood from the flesh of the Virgin.... to prove that He loves the glory of virginity more than marriage.” (Venerable Bede, *Hexaemeron, Book I, PL 91:31*) Just like all the other Fathers and Saints of the Church, Venerable Bede saw First Corinthians,

Chapter 7, as a reminder “that prayer is hindered by the marital duty, because as often as one renders the debt to his wife he is unable to pray” which in turn teaches us that marriage became “wounded and sick” after the fall and original sin of Adam and Eve. (Venerable Bede, *Super Epistolas Catholicas Exposito: In Primam Epistolam Petri*)

St. John Chrysostom, *On Virginity*, Chapter 14: “Someone would object perhaps: if it is better to have no relations with a woman, why has marriage been introduced into life? What use, then, will woman be to us, if she is of help neither in marriage nor in the procreation of children? What will prevent the complete disappearance of the human race since each day death encroaches upon it and strikes man down, and if one follows this programme, there is no reproduction of others to replace the stricken? If all of us should strive after this virtue and have no relations with a woman, everything -- cities, households, cultivated fields, crafts, animals, plants -- everything would vanish. For just as when a general dies, the discipline of the army inevitably is thrown entirely into confusion, so if the ruler of all the earth, if mankind disappears because of not marrying (carnal coupling), nothing left behind will preserve the security and good order of the world, and this fine precept will fill the world with a thousand woes.

“If these words had been merely those of our enemies and of the unbelievers, I would have hardly considered them. However, many of those who appear to belong to the Church say this. They fail to make an effort on behalf of virginity because of their weakness of purpose. By denigrating it and representing it as superfluous, they want to conceal their own apathy, so that they seem to fail in these contests not through their own neglect of duty but rather through their correct estimation of the matter [he means that they delude themselves by their false view of thinking that they are correct]. Come then, having dismissed our enemies -- for “The natural man does not accept what is taught by the spirit of God. For him that is absurdity.” [1 Cor 2:14] -- let us teach two lessons to those who claim to be with us: that virginity is not superfluous but extremely useful and necessary; and that such a charge is not made with impunity but will endanger the detractors in the same way that right actions will earn wages and praise for the virtuous.

“When the whole world had been completed and all had been readied for our repose and use, God fashioned man for whom he made the world. After being fashioned, man remained in paradise and there was no reason for marriage. Man did need a helper, and she came into being; not even then did marriage seem necessary. It did not yet appear anywhere but they remained as they were without it. They lived in paradise as in heaven and they enjoyed God’s company. Desire for carnal intercourse, conception, labor, childbirth and every form of corruption had been banished from

their souls. As a clear river shooting forth from a pure source, so were they in that place adorned by virginity.

“And all the earth was without humanity. This is what is now feared by those who are anxious about the world. They are very anxious about the affairs of others but they cannot tolerate considering their own. They fear the eclipse of mankind but individually neglect their own souls as though they were another’s. They do this when they will have demanded of them an exact accounting for this and the smallest of sins, yet for the scarcity of mankind they will not have to furnish even the slightest excuse.

“At that time there were no cities, crafts, or houses -- since you care so very much for these things -- they did not exist. Nevertheless, nothing either thwarted or hindered that happy life, which was far better than this. But when they did not obey God and became earth and dust, they destroyed along with that blessed way of life the beauty of virginity, which together with God abandoned them and withdrew. As long as they were uncorrupted by the devil and stood in awe of their master, virginity abided with them. It adorned them more than the diadem and golden raiments do kings. However, when they shed the princely raiment of virginity and laid aside their heavenly attire, they accepted the decay of death, ruin, pain and a toilsome life. In their wake came marriage: marriage, a garment befitting mortals and slaves.

“But the married man is busy with the world’s demands” [1 Cor 7:33]. Do you perceive the origin of marriage? It springs from disobedience, from a curse, from death. For where death is, there is marriage. When one does not exist, the other is not about. But virginity does not have this companion. It is always useful, always beautiful and blessed, both before and after death, before and after marriage. Tell me, what sort of marriage produced Adam? What kind of birth pains produced Eve? You could not say. Therefore why have groundless fears? Why tremble at the thought of the end of marriage, and thus the end of the human race? An infinite number of angels are at the service of God, thousands upon thousands of archangels are beside him, and none of them have come into being from the succession of generations, none from childbirth, labor pains and conception. Could he not, then, have created many more men without marriage? Just as he created the first two from whom all men descended.”

In this context, St. Jerome adds, “Marriage replenishes the earth, virginity fills Paradise.” (*Ag. Jovinianus* 1:16) After all, humans can be married only during this life. They will be virgins, however, for eternity. He summarized, “For marriage ends at death; virginity thereafter begins to wear the crown.” (*Ibid.*, 1:22) Thus, after the fall, marriage and especially the marital act became wounded and highly potent to damn and bring a person under its control, similarly how a drug acts against a drug addict: “Now, [after the fall] Adam had intercourse

with his wife Eve.’ Consider when this happened. After their disobedience, after their loss of the Garden, then it was that the practice of intercourse had its beginning. You see, before their disobedience they followed a life like that of the angels, and there was no mention of intercourse. ... How could there be, when they were not subject to the needs of the body?” (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Genesis*, Homily XVIII; PG 53.153) Chrysostom adds that “When he was created, Adam remained in paradise, and there was no question of marriage. He needed a helper and a helper was provided for him. But even then marriage did not seem to be necessary... Desire for sexual intercourse and conception and the pangs and childbirth and every form of corruption were alien to their soul.” (*On Virginit*y)

According to St. Chrysostom, marriage was allowed in case one should exceed proper limits in admiring the bloom of youth and thus exciting passion (*Exp. in Ps. XLIII*; PG 55.181). Thus marriage was established following the Fall of man. It possessed a certain honor for what it was, but it in no way actually produced sanctity. This it was not able to do. Marriage was a solemn thing, that through which God “recruits our race” and which is the source of numberless blessings, not the least of which is its serving as a “barrier against uncleanness.” St. John Chrysostom states, “Marriage is not holiness, but marriage preserves the holiness which proceeds from Faith... marriage is honorable... Marriage is pure: it does not however give holiness, except by forbidding the defilement of that [holiness] which has been given by our Faith.” (*Hom. XXX in Heb.*; PG 63.210; NPNF, p. 504). This is an important text in discerning Chrysostom’s teaching about marriage since it was preached at the end of his life and only published posthumously. It is popular in modern Chrysostom scholarship to suggest that Chrysostom experienced a radical change in his thinking on marriage, and came to embrace a more modern notion of marriage as holiness and sex as love. This text, among others, refutes this position. Note also here that Chrysostom roots the holiness of the individual believer in the faith itself. In Homily 10 he is more explicit saying, “Every believer is a saint in that he is a believer. Though he live in the world he is a saint... the faith makes the holiness” (*Ibid.*, Hom. X; PG 63.87).

Sexual intercourse is not necessarily or directly sinful. However, Chrysostom nowhere suggests that intercourse is “holy”, “sacred”, or even primarily “an expression of love”. These romantic notions are really quite modern, and lack any substantive Patristic source. At the same time Chrysostom is prepared to emphasize the mysterious nature of human sexuality and to associate it very closely with love in his *Homilies on Colossians*. For Chrysostom, however, the mystery of love is that between the spouses and the child which results from their union, not primarily between the spouses themselves.

St. John Damascene, speaking on virginity, says: “Virginity is the rule of life among the angels, the property of all incorporeal nature. ... Virginity is better than marriage, however good. ... But celibacy is, as we said, an imitation of the angels. Wherefore, virginity is as much more honorable than marriage, as the angel is higher than man. But why do I say angel? Christ, Himself, is the glory of virginity.” (*An Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Book IV, Chapter XXIV) And so, “**flee thou youthful desires, and pursue justice, faith, charity, and peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**” (2 Timothy 2:22)

Now, “Tell me, will someone still dare to compare marriage with virginity? Or look marriage in the face at all? Saint Paul does not permit it. He puts much distance between each of these states. “The virgin is concerned with things of the Lord,” he says, but “the married woman has the cares of this world to absorb her.” [1 Cor 7:34] Moreover, after gathering married people together and having done this favor for them, hear how he reproaches them again for he says: “Return to one another, that Satan may not tempt you.” [1 Cor 7:5] And since he wishes to indicate that not all sins stem from the devil’s temptations but from our own idleness, he has added the more valid reason: because of “your lack of self-control.” [1 Cor 7:5]

“Who would not blush hearing this? Who would not earnestly try to escape blame for incontinence? For this exhortation is not for everyone but for those extremely prone to vice. If you are enslaved by pleasures, he says, if you are so weak as to have always given way to coitus and to gape in eager expectation at it, he joined to a woman. The consent therefore comes not from one approving or praising this action but from one scoffing at it with derision. If it had not been his desire to assail the souls of pleasure-seekers, he would not have set down this term, “incontinence,” which quite emphatically conveys the idea of censure. Why did he not say “because of your weakness”? Because that phrase is one of indulgence but to say incontinence denotes excessive moral laxity. Thus, the inability to refrain from fornication unless you always have a wife and enjoy sexual relations is an indication of incontinence. What would those people who consider virginity superfluous say at this point? For the more virginity is practiced the more praise it receives, whereas marriage is deprived of all praise especially when someone has used it immoderately. “I say this,” Paul declares, “by way of concession, not as a command.” [1 Cor 7:6] But where there is a concession there is no place for praise.” (St. John Chrysostom, *On Virginity*, Chapter XXXIV)

In this dogmatic light, it is evident that none of the holy Fathers speaks of marriage (much less of “sexual relations” themselves) as the way to spiritual enlightenment and knowledge of God, as do some “theologians” of more recent times. St. Gregory the Theologian lists in great detail the achievements of marriage, all mostly relating to culture and civilization, that is, the earthly goods. (St. Gregory the Theologian, “Parthenias epenos” (“In Praise of Virginity”), PG.

37, 563A). Such praises of marriage are woven by “those who are of one mind with their ribs,” that is, happily married. But nowhere among these “achievements” do they mention the matters of spiritual ascent, that is, knowledge of God and theosis. On the contrary, the Fathers say that, on the one hand, marriage and the things belonging to it constitute an obstacle to ascent; while on the other hand, the road upward is the road of purity, of self-control or, in a word, virginity.

And even this simple drawing near to God within marriage is possible only through exercising self-restraint. Whereas, “to be sure, marriage is deprived of all praise whatsoever, when one indulges in it to the point of satiety.” (St. John Chrysostom, “Peri Parthenias” (“On Virginity”), 48, PG 48, 557.) Then the words of St. Gregory of Nyssa hold true: “. . . lest through such passionate attachments (as in I Cor. 7:5) he become wholly flesh and blood, in whom the Spirit of God does not remain.” (St. Gregory of Nyssa, “Peri Parthenias” (“On Virginity”), 8, PG 46, 356D). Elsewhere the same Father says: “So, it seems that these examples are instructing us, through the remembrance of those great Prophets [that is, Elias and John], to become entangled in none of those things that are pursued in the world. Marriage is one of these things pursued; rather it is the beginning and root of the pursuit of things vain.” (St. Gregory of Nyssa, “Peri Parthenias” (“On Virginity”), 7, PG 46, 352D).

Whereas the Holy Father views marriage (and honorable marriage at that) in this way, he praises virginity, writing: “If one wishes carefully to examine the difference between this way of life (that is, marriage) and virginity, he will find it almost as great as the difference between earth and heaven.” (St. Gregory of Nyssa, “Peri Parthenias” (“On Virginity”), 3, PG 46, 355).

St. Gregory the Theologian is more specific in comparing the two life-styles. On virginity since the time of Christ, he writes: “Precisely then [that is, with Christ’s birth from the Virgin] did virginity shine brightly to mortals; free of the world, and freeing the feeble world. It so surpasses marriage and the fetters of the world even as the soul is apt to be more excellent than the flesh and the wide heaven than the earth; as the stable life of the blessed is more excellent than transitory life; as God is superior to man.” (St. Gregory the Theologian, “In Praise of Virginity”, PG 37, 538A)

This is precisely why virginity, and not marriage, has such power: “through itself it brought God down for participation in human life, while in itself it enables man to soar to the longing for the things of heaven.” (St. Gregory of Nyssa, “Peri Parthenias” (“On Virginity”), 2, PG 46, 324B)

Marriage does not attain such heights, for “even though marriage be honorable (Heb. 13:4), yet it can only go so far as not to defile those who engage in it. But to produce Saints is not within the power of marriage but of virginity.” (St. John Chrysostom, “Peri Parthenias” (“On Virginity”), 30, PG 48, 554). In response to those who ask how Abraham, being married, attained perfection, while so many virgins lost the kingdom of God (cf. Matt. 25:1-13), Saint John Chrysostom answers: “It was not marriage that made Abraham a Saint, nor virginity that destroyed those miserable maidens. But rather, what made the Patriarch illustrious was his soul’s other virtues, and likewise what handed the maidens over to the fire was their life’s other vices.” (St. John Chrysostom, “Peri Parthenias” (“On Virginity”), 382, PG 48, 593)

The correctness of this Patristic view on marriage and virginity, and the unfoundedness of the views of the new so called theologians, is confirmed by the Church’s life itself. The greatest Saints and servants of the divine mysteries were not the greatest lovers (and I am referring to human sexual love, about which the new “theologians” speak about), but the greatest practitioners of self-control.

The Church Fathers, well aware of the physical sexuality present in the Song of Songs, generally cautioned against reading it until a ‘mature spirituality’ had been obtained, lest the Song be misunderstood and lead the reader into temptation. Origen says, “I advise and counsel everyone who is not yet rid of the vexations of flesh and blood and has not ceased to feel the passion of his bodily nature, to refrain completely from reading this little book.” (Origen, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, cited in *Anchor Bible Commentary Song of Songs* 117)

When asked for advice about what scriptural books a young girl should read, Jerome recommended the Psalms, Proverbs, Gospels, Acts and the Epistles, followed by the rest of the Old Testament. Of the *Song* however, Jerome counsels caution, saying “... she would fail to perceive that, though it is written in fleshly words, **it is a marriage song of a spiritual bridal**. And not understanding this, she would suffer from it.” (St. Jerome, *Letter cvii, To Laeta*, cited in *Anchor Bible Commentary Song of Songs* 119)

Indeed, “Do not think... that the body is made for intercourse. If you wish to understand... for what reason the body was made, then listen: it was made that it should be a temple to the Lord; that the soul, being holy and blessed, should act in it as if it were a priest serving before the Holy Spirit that dwells in you.” (Origen, *Exegesis on 1 Corinthians 7:29*)

It is not coincidental that in this day and age when almost all are heretics, many people are

falsely interpreting King Solomon's *Song of Songs* in a literal way instead of a figurative way that signify the spiritual relationship between God and the soul, and Christ and Our Lady, that the Holy Fathers did. The Fathers never interpreted the *Song of Songs* as a glorification of sex, and they unanimously rejected those impious and lustful people who tried to excuse their sensuality by perverting the Bible for the sake of their own lustful selfishness.

Bad parents will be tormented in a far greater fire for their bad example than those who remained chaste

Most people who beget children in this world do not carefully consider the ramifications of raising children. Their only concern is to please their selfish interests and unlawful sensual desires. But the moment after they have died and entered into the eternal spiritual reality, they shall all see the evil fruit of their ways. "*For behold, the days shall come, wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck.*"

Luke 23:27-31 "And there followed him a great multitude of people, and of women, who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them, said: Daughters of Jerusalem, **weep not over me; but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days shall come, wherein they will say: 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck.'** **Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: 'Fall upon us'; and to the hills: 'Cover us.'** For *if in the green wood* they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?"

Haydock Bible Commentary adds, "**Verse 31.** *In the green wood:* by which are signified persons of virtue and sanctity; as by the *dry wood*, the wicked, who bring forth no fruit, and who, like dry wood, are fit to be cast into the fire. (Witham) --- If they be thus cruel with me [Jesus], how will they treat you!"

Simply said, those parents who beget and raise worldly and ungodly children for the sake of worldly and ungodly purposes will be tormented for an eternity in a far greater and more excruciating fire than a person who did not have children and remained chaste. Since they took upon themselves the great and heavy burden of raising children, they shall also have to answer to Our Lord for every moment of their life that they raised their children. By living a worldly, selfish and sensual lifestyle, most parents give the most abominable and sad example to their children, and this results in the child taking after the sins of the parents in almost

every way. That is why an evil parent and child who will both be damned will torment each other for an eternity in Hell, since they were one of the greatest causes of their own damnation.

*The Son of God spoke, saying: “Sometimes I let evil parents give birth to good children, **but more often, evil children are born of evil parents, since these children imitate the evil and unrighteous deeds of their parents as much as they are able** and would imitate it even more if my patience allowed them. **Such a married couple will never see my face unless they repent.** For there is no sin so heavy or grave that penitence and repentance does not wash it away.” (St. Bridget’s Revelations, Book 1, Chapter 26)*

It is hard to imagine the rage and hatred that children will have against their parents, but if we consider that their hatred will be eternal and with a perfect knowledge of the fact that their parents greatly influenced them to be eternally damned, one can understand how great this hate will be. That is why every person should carefully consider the cost and labor of marrying and becoming a parent. Unless a person is ready to take responsibility for their children, they must remain chaste and pure, and as we have seen, this chastity will also greatly increase their chances of reaching Heaven.

And concerning the education and upbringing of one’s children, The Blessed Virgin Mary revealed the following words to Sister Mary of Agreda: “It is an act of justice due to the eternal God that the creature coming to the use of reason, direct its very first movement toward God. By knowing, it should begin to love Him, reverence Him and adore Him as its Creator and only true Lord. The parents are naturally bound to instruct their children from their infancy in this knowledge of God and to direct them with solicitous care, so that they may at once see their ultimate end and seek it in their first acts of the intellect and will. They should with great watchfulness withdraw them from the childishness and puerile trickishness to which depraved nature will incline them if left without direction. If the fathers and mothers would be solicitous to prevent these vanities and perverted habits of their children and would instruct them from their infancy in the knowledge of their God and Creator, then they would afterwards easily accustom them to know and adore Him. My holy mother [St. Anne], who knew not of my wisdom and real condition, was most solicitously beforehand in this matter, for when she bore me in her womb, she adored in my name the Creator and offered worship and thanks for his having created me, beseeching Him to defend me and bring me forth to the light of day from the condition in which I then was. So also parents should pray with fervor to God, that the souls of their children, through his Providence, may obtain Baptism and be freed

from the servitude of original sin. And if the rational creature has not known and adored the Creator from the first dawn of reason, it should do this as soon as it obtains knowledge of the essential God by the light of faith. From that very moment the soul must exert itself never to lose Him from her sight, always fearing Him, loving Him, and reverencing Him.” (From *The Mystical City of God*, The Divine History and Life of The Virgin Mother of God, Book 1, Chapter 6)

Pope Pius XI, in *Casti Connubii*, adds that: “If a true Christian mother weigh well these things, she will indeed understand with a sense of deep consolation that of her the words of Our Savior were spoken: "A woman . . . when she hath brought forth the child remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world"; [John 16:21] and proving herself superior to all the pains and cares and solitudes of her maternal office with a more just and holy joy than that of the Roman matron, the mother of the Gracchi, she will rejoice in the Lord crowned as it were with the glory of her offspring. Both husband and wife, however, receiving these children with joy and gratitude from the hand of God, will regard them as a talent committed to their charge by God, not only to be employed for their own advantage or for that of an earthly commonwealth, but to be restored to God with interest on the day of reckoning.

“The blessing of offspring, however, is not completed by the mere begetting of them, but something else must be added, namely the proper education of the offspring. For the most wise God would have failed to make sufficient provision for children that had been born, and so for the whole human race, if He had not given to those to whom He had entrusted the power and right to beget them, the power also and the right to educate them. For no one can fail to see that children are incapable of providing wholly for themselves, even in matters pertaining to their natural life, and much less in those pertaining to the supernatural, but require for many years to be helped, instructed, and educated by others. Now it is certain that both by the law of nature and of God this right and duty of educating their offspring belongs in the first place to those who began the work of nature by giving them birth, and they are indeed forbidden to leave unfinished this work and so expose it to certain ruin. But in matrimony provision has been made in the best possible way for this education of children that is so necessary, for, since the parents are bound together by an indissoluble bond, the care and mutual help of each is always at hand.

“Since, however, We have spoken fully elsewhere on the Christian education of youth, [in the encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*, 31 Dec. 1929] let Us sum it all up by quoting once more the words of St. Augustine: "As regards the offspring it is provided that they should be begotten lovingly and educated religiously," [St. Augustine, *De Gen. ad litt., lib. IX*] -- and this is also expressed succinctly in the [1917] *Code of Canon Law*: "The primary end of marriage is

the procreation and the education of children." [Cod. iur. can., c. 1013 & 7]" (Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (#'s 15-17), Dec. 31, 1930)

Our Lord Jesus Christ must come before our family and friends according the Gospel of Mark

Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us in *The Gospel of Mark* that we must be able to leave behind even our own family members for the sake of God and the Kingdom of Heaven when necessity requires it.

“And Peter began to say unto him [Jesus]: ‘Behold, we have left all things, and have followed thee.’ Jesus answering, said: ‘Amen I say to you, there is no man who hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, Who shall not receive an hundred times as much, now in this time; houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions: and in the world to come life everlasting. But many that are first, shall be last: and the last, first.’” (Mark 10:28-31)

Most people do not realize that in most cases, the very ones we hold the most dear and near are in fact also those who are the most dangerous to our eternal salvation. St. Alphonsus, speaking on detachment from relatives, says: “If attachment to relatives were not productive of great mischief Jesus Christ would not have so strenuously exhorted us to estrangement from them... a man’s enemies shall be they of his own household (Mt. 10:36)... Relatives are the worst enemies of the sanctification of Christians...” (*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, p. 96) That is why a person who intends to marry must be extremely careful to choose a pious and virtuous husband or wife. Only choosing a spouse based on physical beauty or money or any other worldly motive is completely insane since this person (for better or for worse) will greatly influence not only the souls of the children, but also that of the spouse.

Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (# 115), December 31, 1930: “To the proximate preparation of a good married life belongs very specially the care in choosing a partner; on that depends a great deal whether the forthcoming marriage will be happy or not, since one may be to the other either a great help in leading a Christian life, or, a great danger and hindrance. And so that they may not deplore for the rest of their lives the sorrows arising from an indiscreet marriage, those about to enter into wedlock should carefully deliberate in choosing the person with whom henceforward they must live continually: they should, in so deliberating, keep before their minds the thought first of

God and of the true religion of Christ, then of themselves, of their partner, of the children to come, as also of human and civil society, for which wedlock is a fountain head. Let them diligently pray for divine help, so that they make their choice in accordance with Christian prudence, not indeed led by the blind and unrestrained impulse of lust, nor by any desire of riches or other base influence, but by a true and noble love and by a sincere affection for the future partner; and then let them strive in their married life for those ends for which the State [of Matrimony] was constituted by God. Lastly, let them not omit to ask the prudent advice of their parents with regard to the partner, and let them regard this advice in no light manner, in order that by their mature knowledge and experience of human affairs, they may guard against a disastrous choice, and, on the threshold of matrimony, may receive more abundantly the divine blessing of the fourth commandment: 'Honor thy father and thy mother (which is the first commandment with a promise) that it may be well with thee and thou mayest be long-lived upon the earth.' (*Eph.*, VI, 2-3; *Exod.*, XX, 12)."

A person who intends to marry must first ask themselves the question whether they would stay with the person they intend to marry if that person became poor or invalid or suffered some serious illness or accident that made him or her grotesque and ugly. Unless a person stays with their spouse in such a situation, they have committed a mortal sin and have broken the sacramental bond of Holy Matrimony which they promised to each other until death. "The happiness of marriage ought never to be estimated either by wealth or beauty, but by virtue. "Beauty," says the tragedy, "helps no wife with her husband; But virtue has helped many; for every good wife who is attached to her husband knows how to practice sobriety." Then, as giving admonitions, he says: "First, then, this is incumbent on her who is endowed with mind, That even if her husband be ugly, he must appear good looking; For it is for the mind, not the eye, to judge." And so forth." (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book IV, Chapter XX.--Of A Good Wife.)

St. John Chrysostom, in addressing the daily family problems of his age, argues that they are due to the absence of correct criteria in the choice of one's spouse. He addresses himself to the parents who in that period played an important role in the choice, and he says to the father: "When you consider and look for a possible groom, pray and tell God, please send whomever you'd like, leave the situation up to Him, and since you have honored Him in this way, He will reward you. Always ask God to be a mediator in all of your works. For, if we dealt with all of our affairs in this way, there would never be a divorce, nor suspicion of adultery, nor cause for envy, nor battles and disputes, but we would enjoy great peace and harmony, and when there is harmony, other virtues will follow." (*To Maximus*, EHE, vol. 27, p. 208) This humble prayer

and supplication to God for help in finding a suitable and pure spouse that will benefit ourselves and our children can of course be made by every person who desires to marry.

A successful marriage is one that regards success in terms of virtue rather than wealth. The husband must have a virtuous soul, goodness, prudence, and fear of God. Chrysostom says, “A young woman who is prudent, independent, and cultivates piety, is as valuable as the whole world.” (*On the Letter to the Hebrews*, Homily 20, EΠΕ, vol. 21, p. 236) “Many people who had amassed a great fortune lost it all, for they didn’t have a sensible wife capable of preserving it.” (*On the Second Letter to the Thessalonians*, Homily 5, EΠΕ, vol. 23, p. 112)

God wants us to enter marriage for pious and pure motives and not for selfish and impure motives. Concerning this, St. John Chrysostom explains that one should marry a woman for the sake of having a helpmate and a partner in our life, instead of for money or other evil and selfish reasons. “The very benefit God has given thee by nature, do not thou mar the help it was meant to be. So that it is not for her wealth that we ought to seek a wife: it is that we may receive a partner of our life, for the appointed order of the procreation of children. It was not that she should bring money, that God gave the woman; it was that she might be an helpmate.” (*Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles*, Homily XLIX, Acts XXIII. 6-30, Ver. 17)

Many men seek after a beautiful wife. Is this enough for a marriage to succeed? St. Chrysostom emphasizes that “the beauty of the body, when it is not accompanied by virtue of the soul, can imprison the husband for twenty or thirty days, it won’t last longer though, for when she shows her bad side, the love will be destroyed. When, however, women shine from the beauty of their souls, as time passes and increasingly reveals the nobility of their souls, their husbands are drawn ever closer to them.” (*Sermon in Kalendais*, EΠΕ, vol. 31, p. 490)

The Catholic Church from the very beginning of its foundation by Our Lord Jesus Christ has always taught and admonished future spouses that they should not enter marriages for lustful or worldly motives, and that is also why, in about the year 110, the Holy Bishop Saint Ignatius of Antioch (who were taught by the Apostles) taught that “those who are married should be united with the consent of their bishop, to be sure that they are marrying according to the Lord and not to satisfy their lust.” (*Ignatius To Polycarp* 5)

The love of good spouses are thus concentrated on the things that are eternal and heavenly, rather than the things that are perishable, fleshly and of a sensual nature. Indeed, this truth of loving one’s spouse with a heavenly love was so perfectly mirrored in the life of St. Peter that “They say that the blessed Peter, on seeing his wife led to death, rejoiced on account of her call

and conveyance home [to Heaven], and called very encouragingly and comfortingly, addressing her by name, "Remember thou the Lord." Such was the marriage of the blessed, and their perfect disposition towards those dearest to them. Thus also the apostle says, "that he who marries should be as though he married not," and deem his marriage free of inordinate affection, and inseparable from love to the Lord; to which the true husband exhorted his wife to cling on her departure out of this life to the Lord." (St. Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book VII, Chapter XI)

St. Gregory Nazianzen says that marriage indeed is good, as long as those who enter it have motives that are honorable and pure: "It is good to marry; I too admit it, for marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled. [Heb. 13:4] It is good for the temperate, not for those who are insatiable, and who desire to give more than due honor to the flesh. When marriage is only marriage and conjunction and the desire for a succession of children, marriage is honorable, for it brings into the world more to please God. But when it kindles matter, and surrounds us with thorns, and as it were discovers the way of vice, then I too say, It is not good to marry." (*Orations of St. Gregory Nazianzen*, Oration XXXVII, Section IX)

Thus, it is evident that one should not concentrate on physical characteristics or riches and similar things if one intends to enter marriage. Rather, if one wants to please Our Lord and really desires what's best for oneself and one's children, bodily and spiritually, one must concentrate first-and-foremost on how the other spouse one intends to marry is spiritually disposed. For troubles, contradictions, accidents and illnesses will always be a normal part in marriage and every day life for all people, and there is no real way to protect oneself from such things.

The chaste and mortified servants of Christ saves more souls

Today, the fact that the two virtues of chastity and mortification of the senses are special in helping to save one's own and other peoples souls, has been almost completely forgotten. Our Lady of Fatima testified to this truth, when, after appearing to the Children of Fatima, She said, "*Sacrifice yourselves for sinners and say often, especially when you make some sacrifice, 'O my Jesus, this is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the offenses committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.'*" Our Lady further said, "*Pray, pray a great deal and make many sacrifices, for many souls go to Hell because they have no one to make sacrifices and to pray for them.*"

In truth, because the sensual attraction and desire in human beings is so strong and hard to

resist, all those people who manfully labor in interior mortifications and sacrifices, rejecting their carnal nature for the Love of God and of Souls, shall also be rewarded for their sacrifices by God in the same measure as they were able to resist their sensuality: “Amen, I [Jesus] say to you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, ***or wife***, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.” (Luke 18:29) Not only will the chaste be rewarded with a greater reward in Heaven but they will also help to draw down abundant blessings from Heaven by their prayers which has a greater power to shower humanity with the dew of grace, helping and spurring on carnal people to admire and respect the wonderful, pure and simple lifestyle of those who actually decide to live in the angelic life of chastity and self-denial for the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

For most people it is very hard to remain chaste or deny themselves their sensual appetites since they are worldly and the fallen nature of the flesh draws them to a fleshly and sensual lifestyle. And that is precisely the reason for why a person who renounces the world and its fleeting pleasures is more effective in attracting and saving souls, and in drawing down abundant blessings from God. St. Paul, in fact, seems to allude to this in his letter to the Galatians, when he says: “*But that Jerusalem, which is above, is free: which is our mother. For it is written: Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not: break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: ***for many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband.****” (Galatians 4:26-27)

St. Paul here tells us that those who are barren and have not given birth to children beget many children and even “more than of her that hath a husband.” But how can a barren person have more children than those who are married? In truth, many times spiritual children are brought into Heaven and the arms of Our Heavenly Lord by those chosen vessels of Our Lord who have renounced the small and fleeting pleasures of the world by practicing mortifications and penances and the virtue of chastity. Simply said, a person who renounces the world and its pleasures sets a great example to others, encouraging them to not live for their own selfish fleshly pleasures. One can accurately say that a person’s reward in Heaven will correspond perfectly to the amount of virtue that he practiced during this short life. The more one practices virtue, the greater one will be rewarded in Heaven, and conversely, the less one practices virtue, the less will also one’s reward in Heaven be. Many men can indeed preach about holiness and good deeds, but there are few who actually put their words into practice. Mere words are as nothing compared to a person that actually lives a life of holiness and virtue. For instance, one single person like St. Francis of Assisi would do much more good by his mere example to others than what 100 other men would do by simply preaching about it.

Indeed, since the common knowledge of the labor and hardship of living in chastity and self-denial makes both God and men value and appreciate those who take upon themselves a pure, mortified and chaste lifestyle for the love of God, the direct effect on the sinner of the example of a virtuous and chaste man is that the sinner reflects on his own life and considers the fact that he is living a very degrading and sensual life filled with a selfish agenda. This shame for his sensual life then makes him try to amend in order to become more like a true servant of Christ. When holy and pure servants of Christ shows a good example to others, like the great St. Francis of Assisi, sinners feel ashamed over their sensual, worldly lifestyle, thinking that since this holy and pure person can reach such a level of purity and simplicity, they at least should be able to reach a level of virtue that it is in accordance to the law of Christ. But this is not all that the holy and chaste servants of Christ does, for they also inspire people who are already good to become even better, and to increase their virtue, spurring them on to adopt a life of chastity and self-sacrifice for the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In truth, chaste and holy servants of Our Lord draws down abundant blessings from God, and gives birth to many spiritual children by their holy and good example and life and, in fact, *“more than of her that hath a husband.”* Thus, *“continence from all intercourse is indeed better even than the intercourse of marriage itself, which takes place for the sake of begetting.”* (St. Augustine)

If all of these blessings that we have now seen that the chaste life provides was all this life could provide, it would undoubtedly be enough and more than enough, but chastity or virginity not only helps oneself and others become saved, but it also helps a person stay away from mortal or venial sins in this life, which in truth is one of the most important things we all must strive for if we want to be saved: “This doctrine of the excellence of virginity and of celibacy and of their superiority over the married state was, as we have already said, revealed by our Divine Redeemer [Our Lord Jesus Christ] and by the Apostle of the Gentiles [St. Paul]; so too, it was solemnly defined as a dogma of divine faith by the Holy Council of Trent [in Session 24, Canon 10], and explained in the same way by all the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church.” (Pope Pius XII, *Sacra Virginitas* (# 32), March 25th, 1954)

The devil and his servants on this earth as well as a person’s sensual desires hinder weak-willed souls from adopting a more virtuous and chaste life

St. Augustine, in his famous work *“The Confessions of Saint Augustine,”* explains to us how the Devil and our own fleshly lusts and desires many times deceives us, and tries to get us to refuse or delay a good, chaste and holy life: “Why, therefore, do we delay to abandon our hopes of this world, and give ourselves wholly to seek after God and the blessed life? But stay!

Even those things are enjoyable; and they possess some and no little sweetness. We must not abandon them lightly, for it would be a shame to return to them again. Behold, now is it a great matter to obtain some post of honor! And what more could we desire? We have crowds of influential friends, though we have nothing else, and if we make haste a presidentship may be offered us; and a wife with some money, that she increase not our expenses; and this shall be the height of desire. Many men, who are great and worthy of imitation, have applied themselves to the study of wisdom in the marriage state. Whilst I talked of these things, and these winds veered about and tossed my heart hither and there, the time passed on; but I was slow to turn to the Lord, and from day to day deferred to live in You, and deferred not daily to die in myself. Being enamored of a happy life, I yet feared it in its own abode, and, fleeing from it, sought after it. I conceived that I should be too unhappy were I deprived of the embracements of a woman; and of Your merciful medicine to cure that infirmity I thought not, not having tried it. As regards continency, I imagined it to be under the control of our own strength (though in myself I found it not), being so foolish as not to know what is written, that none can be continent unless Thou give it; and that You would give it, if with heartfelt groaning I should knock at Your ears, and should with firm faith cast my care upon You.” (St. Augustine, *The Confessions of Augustine*, Book VI, Chapter XI, A.D. 398)

Indeed, one will often see when reading the lives of the saints how their worldly family and friends (inspired by the devil or the world) tried in every way possible to dissuade them from adopting the heavenly and angelic lifestyle of chastity, and in some cases, their family or friends even tried to physically hinder them from dedicating their lives to the perpetual service of Our Lord Jesus Christ. For instance, when St. Thomas Aquinas chose to become a Dominican friar (c. 1245) he met with: “severe opposition from his family... St. Thomas was literally captured by his brothers and imprisoned in the family castle... The most dramatic episode of his imprisonment, came when his brothers sent a temptress to his quarters. As soon as St. Thomas saw that the girl’s intention was to seduce him, he ran to the fireplace, seized a burning stick and, brandishing it, chased her from the room with it. Then he traced a cross on the wall with the charred wood. When he fell asleep soon afterward, he dreamed that two Angels came and girded him about the waist with a cord, saying: ‘On God’s behalf we gird you with the girdle of chastity, a girdle which no attack will ever destroy.’” (*33 Doctors of the Church*, p. 367)

St. John the Apostle was loved by Our Lord with a special love because of his great love for chastity and purity

It is related by the Holy Abbot Joseph, in *The Conferences of John Cassian* (c. 420) how Our

Lord Jesus Christ loved the Blessed Apostle St. John with a special love above the other Apostles because of his virginity and great purity: “This also, we read, was very clearly shown in the case of John the Evangelist, where these words are used of him: "that disciple whom Jesus loved," [John 13:23] though certainly He embraced all the other eleven, whom He had chosen in the same way, with His special love, as this He shows also by the witness of the gospel, where He says: "As I have loved you, so do ye also love one another;" of whom elsewhere also it is said: "Loving His own who were in the world, He loved them even to the end." [John 13:34,1] But this love of one in particular did not indicate any coldness in love for the rest of the disciples, but only a fuller and more abundant love towards the one, **which his prerogative of virginity and the purity of his flesh bestowed upon him.**”
(Conference 16, Chapter XIV, On Friendship)

Referring to one of the legends associated with the wedding feast at Cana, Alcuin, an eminent educator, scholar, and theologian born about 735; died 19 May, 804, reported that the bridegroom at that wedding feast was none other than St. John the beloved apostle. Having seen the miraculous power of Jesus in his changing water into wine, John left his bride in order to follow Jesus. Of course, St. John did so before consummating his marriage, thus preserving his virginity. (Alcuin, *Commentarium in Joannem*, Book 1, chapter 2, verse 8, PL 100:771-772)

Indeed, as we can see, the purity of the most beloved Apostle of Our Lord and his renunciation of this world is clearly put forth in his writings: “Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof: but he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever.” (1 John 2:15-17)
Thus, from the beginning, Our Lord Jesus Christ taught St. John and the Holy Apostles those wondrous words of chastity and purity that are found in Holy Scripture, inspiring them to not love the world or its empty and fleeting pleasures, telling them to leave the marital life and sexual relations behind in order to be able to perfectly embrace Our Lord and their priestly duty.

“*The Life and Revelations of St. Gertrude the Great*” (1256-1302) reveals the following interesting and marvelous information about chastity and the virginity of St. John the Apostle, and how all those who faithfully persevere in chastity until their death are especially loved and honored by Our Lord in Heaven: “On another occasion during the same feast [of St. John], as the Saint took great satisfaction in the frequent praises which were given to the [same]

Apostle for his perfect virginity, she asked this special friend of God to obtain by his prayers that we might preserve our chastity with such care as to merit a share in his praises. St John replied: "He who would participate in the beatitude which my victories have won, must run as I ran when on earth." Then he added: "I frequently reflected on the sweet familiarity and friendship with which I was favored by Jesus, my most Loving Lord and Master, in reward for my chastity, and for having watched so carefully over my words and actions that I never tarnished this virtue in the slightest degree. The Apostles separated themselves from such company as they considered doubtful, but mixed freely with what was not (as it is remembered in the Acts, that they were with the women, and Mary the Mother of Jesus); I never avoided women when there was an opportunity of rendering them any service, either of body or soul; but I still watched over myself with extreme vigilance, and always implored the assistance of God when charity obliged me to assist them in any way. Therefore these words are chanted of me: *In tribulatione invocasti me et exaudivi te [Thou calledst upon me in affliction, and I delivered thee]*(Psalm 80:8).

"For God never permitted my affection to render anyone less pure; wherefore I received this recompense from My beloved Master, that my chastity is more praised than any other Saint [after Our Lord and Our Lady]; and I have obtained a more eminent rank in Heaven, where, by a special privilege, I receive with extreme pleasure the rays of this love, which is as a mirror without spot and the brightness of eternal light. So that, being placed before this Divine love, whose brightness I receive each time that my chastity is commemorated in the Church, my loving Master salutes me in a most sweet and affable manner, filling my inmost soul with such joy, that it penetrates into all its powers and sentiments like a delicious beverage. And thus the words, *Ponan te sicut signaculum in conspectu meo [I will make thee as a signet in my sight, for I have chosen thee]* (Haggai 2:24), are sung of me; that is, I am placed as a receptacle for the effusions of the sweetest and most ardent charity."

"Then St. Gertrude, being raised to a higher degree of knowledge, understood by these words of Our Lord in the Gospel, "In My Father's house there are many mansions" (John 14:2); that there are three mansions in the heavenly kingdom, which correspond with three classes of persons who have preserved their virginity.

"... At Communion, as she [St. Gertrude] prayed for the Church, but felt a want of fervor, she prayed to Our Lord to give her fervor, if her petitions were agreeable to Him; and immediately she beheld a variety of colors: white, which indicated the purity of the virgins; violet, which symbolized confessors and religious; red, which typified the martyrs; and other colors, according to the merits of the Saints. Then, as she feared to approach Our Lord because she was not adorned with any of these colors, she was inspired by the Holy Ghost, "who teaches man wisdom," **to return thanks to God for all those who had been elevated to the grace and state of virginity; beseeching Him, by the love which**

made Him be born of a Virgin for us, to preserve all in the Church to whom He had vouchsafed this favor in most perfect purity of body and soul, for His own honor and glory; and immediately she beheld her soul adorned with the same shining whiteness as the souls of the virgins.” (*The Life and Revelations of Saint Gertrude*, Book 4, Chapter 4 & 56)

St. Chrysostom explains that the only profitable thing for us to do while on this earth is to shun the perishable and carnal, instead searching for the heavenly and eternal, and this glorious path of shunning the earthly and carnal that reaches all the way into Heaven is most perfectly walked on by all those who have adopted the pure life of chastity like the Apostles and the other chaste servants of Christ, thus freeing themselves from many earthly and carnal troubles: “Is it a fine thing to build one’s self splendid houses, to have servants, to lie and gaze at a gilded roof? Why then, assuredly, it is superfluous and unprofitable. For other buildings there are, far brighter and more majestic than these: on such we must gladden our eyes, for there is none to hinder us. Wilt thou see the fairest of roofs? At eventide look upon the starred heaven. ‘But,’ saith some one, ‘this roof is not mine.’ Yet in truth this is more thine than that other. For thee it was made, and is common to thee and to thy brethren: the other is not thine, but theirs who after thy death inherit it. The one may do thee the greatest service, guiding thee by its beauty to its Creator; the other the greatest harm, becoming they greatest accuser on the Day of Judgment, inasmuch as it is covered with gold, while Christ hath not even needful raiment. Let us not, I entreat you, be subject to such folly, let us not pursue things which flee away, and flee those which endure: let us not betray our own salvation, but hold fast to our hope of what shall be hereafter: the aged, as certainly knowing that but a little space of life is left us; the young, as well persuaded that what is left is not much. For that day cometh so as a thief in the night. Knowing this, let wives exhort their husbands, and husbands admonish their wives; let us teach youths and maidens, and all instruct one another, to care not for present things, but to desire those which are to come.” (St. Chrysostom, *Hom. XLVII in Jn.*; PG 59.268-270)

The Holy Bible teaches that those who do not remarry after their spouse have died become “more blessed” through their chastity, and that the ministers of the Lord cannot remarry after their wife have died as well as that all of them must be totally “chaste”

The Holy Ghost and the Church from its foundation insisted on the inherent goodness and virtue of chastity, and of abstaining from remarriage after the death of one’s spouse by requiring that the men who wanted to become ministers of the Lord had been married only

once in order for them even to be able to become bishops, priests or deacons: “A faithful saying: if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. It behoveth therefore a bishop to be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, sober, prudent, of good behavior, **chaste**, given to hospitality, a teacher... Let deacons be the husbands of **one wife**... ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee: If any be without crime, **the husband of one wife**...” (1 Timothy 3:1-2,12; Titus 1:5-6)

Douay Rheims Bible Commentary explains that the meaning of the words of *one wife* “**is not that every bishop should have a wife (for St. Paul himself had none), but that no one should be admitted to the holy orders of bishop, priest, or deacon, who had been married more than once.**” Indeed, Holy Scripture itself teaches that a widow will become more blessed if she do not remarry, which confirms this teaching of God and His Church: “*But more blessed shall she be, if she so remain, [that is, a widow] according to my counsel; and I think that I also have the spirit of God.*” (1 Cor. 7:40) This proves to us, once and for all, that God wants both men and women to stay unmarried after their spouse have died and that their virtuous life is “more blessed” when compared to those who get married again.

While there is no sin in remarrying after the death of one’s spouse for those who are not ministers of the Lord, the Church’s insistence on the inherent spiritual goodness for both men and women to turn to chastity and purity after one’s spouse has died is quite obvious, and only the most desperate liars and deceivers (like protestants and other heretics who wants to flout this infallible biblical rule in order to remarry while calling themselves priests or ministers of God) can even dare to deny this obvious biblical truth.

Tertullian (160-220 A.D.), although married, perceived marriage as a state in which carnal desire could easily lead people away from God. His teaching about sexuality can be read in his work called “*Exhortation to Chastity*.” There he lists three forms of virginity. The ideal form was “virginity from one’s birth.” Next there was “renunciation of sexual connection,” a form of virginity undertaken after a man and a woman contracted marriage which the Church extols as the highest form of heroic virtue married couples can practice. The third form of virginity consisted in “marrying no more after the disjunction of matrimony by death.” (Tertullian, *Exhortation to Chastity*, in Ante Nicene Fathers, Vol. IV)

This final form of virginity was to be accomplished in two stages. In the first stage the husband would try to cut down marital activity to a minimum. Then, when his wife died, he would refrain from remarriage. Tertullian’s work called “*To His Wife*” advised widows “to love

the opportunity of continence” and he viewed a second marriage as “repeating the servitude of matrimony,” a rejection of “the liberty offered by the death of one’s spouse.” Married couples had to live in a state of life where marital relations were expected. After the death of a spouse the survivor was spiritually better off because he or she was no longer subject to the Pauline requirement of rendering the “marriage debt.” Since second marriages were “detrimental to faith” and “obstructive to holiness,” it is safe to say that Tertullian saw scant spiritual goodness in remarriage when he compared this state of life with the angelic life of chastity.

St. Methodius, *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* (c. 311 A.D.): “But we must now examine carefully the apostle’s language respecting men who have lost their wives, and women who have lost their husbands, and what he declares on this subject. “I say therefore,” he goes on, “to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.” Here also he persisted in giving the preference to continence. For, taking himself as a notable example, in order to stir them up to emulation, he challenged his hearers to this state of life, teaching that it was better that a man who had been bound to one wife should henceforth remain single, as he also did. But if, on the other hand, this should be a matter of difficulty to any one, on account of the strength of animal passion, he allows that one who is in such a condition may, “by permission,” contract a second marriage; not as though he expressed the opinion that a second marriage was in itself good, but judging it better than burning. ... Thus also the apostle speaks here, first saying that he wished all were healthy and continent, as he also was, but afterwards allowing a second marriage to those who are burdened with the disease of the passions, lest they should be wholly defiled by fornication, goaded on by the itchings of the organs of generation to promiscuous intercourse, considering such a second marriage far preferable to burning and indecency.”

People living in chastity are “the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb” according to the Book of Revelation or the Apocalypse

The Book of Revelation or The Apocalypse is remarkable in its description of future tribulations that await humanity. It does, however, also describe how a select few who are “*the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb... [who] were purchased from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*”

Apocalypse 14:1-5 “And I beheld, and lo a lamb stood upon mount Sion, and with him

an hundred forty-four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the noise of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder; and the voice which I heard, was as the voice of harpers, harping on their harps. And they sung as it were a new canticle, before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the ancients; and no man could say the canticle, but those hundred forty-four thousand, who were purchased from the earth. **These are they who were not defiled with women: for they are virgins.** These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb: And in their mouth there was found no lie; for they are without spot before the throne of God.”

These words are remarkable and an outstanding and irrefutable proof of the greatness of the virtue of chastity. The honor God gives to those who practice chastity or virginity is especially described in these words: “*And they sung as it were a new canticle, before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the ancients; **and no man could say the canticle, but those hundred forty-four thousand, who were purchased from the earth.***” Notice how no one “could say the canticle” but those who practiced the virtue of chastity or virginity. This, of course, totally rejects and demolishes the heretical position that living in chastity is nothing special compared with marriage, thus showing us once again that chastity is an especially holy and good deed.

St. Jerome writes, “These are they who sing a new song [Rev. 14:3] which no man can sing except he be a virgin. These are the first fruits unto God and unto the Lamb,’ [Rev. 14:4] and they are without spot. If virgins are the first fruits unto God, then widows and wives who live in continence must come after the first fruits—that is to say, in the second place and in the third. ... It is in your power, if you will, to mount the second step of chastity. [2 Tim. 2:20, 21] Why are you angry if, standing on the third and lowest step, you will not make haste to go up higher?” (*The Letters of St. Jerome*, Letter XLVIII, To Pammachius, Section 10, 11, A.D. 394)

Following Our Lord in perfection, purity and holiness, “Out of each tribe, except the tribe of Dan, the place of which is taken by the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand virgins who have been sealed are spoken of as future believers, who have not defiled themselves with women. And that we may not suppose the reference to be to those who have not had relations with harlots, he immediately added, “for they continued virgins.” Whereby he shows that all who have not preserved their virginity, **in comparison with the pure and angelic chastity and of our Lord Jesus Christ himself**, are defiled.” (St. Jerome, *Against Jovinian* 1:40, A.D. 420) Simply said, those who choose to live in chastity greatly increases their chance of

reaching Heaven, which is also why the Holy Scripture teaches us not indulge our sensual appetites: “Go not after thy lusts, but turn away from thy own will.” (Ecclesiasticus 18:30) And so, “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the soul.” (1 Peter 2:11)

Widows and all those who have vowed their chastity to Our Lord must remain pure and chaste until their death, or else they will have “damnation” according to the Holy Bible

In *St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy*, St. Paul gives Timothy great and edifying lessons concerning widows, and also explains to him that those who have vowed their chastity and whole self to Christ as his or her eternal Spouse must continue in this state until their death, or else they will have “damnation”.

1 Timothy 5:1-3, 5-6, 9-13, 15: “[Entreat] Old women, as mothers: young women, as sisters, in all chastity. Honor widows, that are widows indeed... But she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, let her trust in God, and continue in supplications and prayers night and day. For she that liveth in pleasures, is dead while she is living... Let a widow be chosen of no less than threescore years of age, who hath been the wife of one husband. Having testimony for her good works, if she have brought up children, if she have received to harbor, if she have washed the saints’ feet, if she have ministered to them that suffer tribulation, if she have diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows avoid. For when they have grown wanton in Christ, they will marry: **Having damnation**, because they have made void their first faith. And withal being idle they learn to go about from house to house: and are not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will therefore that the younger should marry, bear children, be mistresses of families, give no occasion to the adversary to speak evil. For some are already turned aside after Satan.”

Haydock Commentary explains these verses: “**Ver. 2.** All chastity refers to the heart, eyes, ears, words, looks, with the precautions of times and places. --- **Ver. 5.** She that is a widow indeed, and desolate, (destitute of help, as the Greek word implieth) may be maintained; and then let her be constant in prayers and devotions night and day. (Witham) --- Every Christian soul is a widow of Jesus Christ, who has been forcibly torn from her: and in her communications with heaven she ought to offer up an afflicted and humbled heart—the heart of a widow. It is thus she will avoid the dangers of the world, and secure true life in unchangeable felicity. (Haydock) --- **Ver. 6.** For she that liveth in pleasure, (i.e. that seeks to

live in ease and plenty) *is dead while she is living*, by the spiritual death of her soul in sin. (Witham) --- **Ver. 11.** As for the *younger widows*, admit them not into that number; *for when they have grown wanton in Christ*, which may signify in the Church of Christ, or as others translate, *against Christ*; when they have been nourished in plenty, indulging their appetite in eating and drinking, in company and conversation, in private familiarities, and even sometimes in sacrilegious fornications against Christ and their vows, they are for marrying again. See St. Jerome. (Witham)”

“**Ver. 12.** *Having*, or incurring and making themselves liable to *damnation*, by a breach of their *first faith*, their vow or promise, (Witham) by which they had engaged themselves to Christ. (Challoner) --- **Ver. 13.** *Idle*, &c. He shews by what steps they fall. Neglecting their prayers, they give themselves to idleness; they go about visiting from house to house; they are carried away with curiosity to hear what passes, and speak what they ought not of their neighbor’s faults. (Witham) --- **Ver. 14.** *The younger (widows) should marry*. They who understand this of a command or exhortation to all widows to marry, make St. Paul contradict himself, and the advice he gave to widows [in] 1 Corinthians vii. where he says, (ver. 40.) *She (the widow) will be more happy if she so remain according to my counsel*; [i.e., in chastity] and when it is there said, *I would have all to be as myself* [that is, in a chaste and unmarried state]. He can therefore only mean such young widows, of whom he is speaking, that are like to do worse. Thus it is expounded by St. Jerome to Sabina: "Let her rather take a husband than the devil." And in another epistle, to Ageruchia: "It is better to take a second husband than many adulterers." St. Chrysostom on this verse: "I will, or would have such to marry, because they themselves will do it." See also St. Augustine, de Bono viduitatis, chap. viii. (Witham)”

“**Ver. 15.** *For some are already turned aside after Satan*, by breaking the vows they had made. "Yet it does not follow, (says St. Augustine in the same place [de Bono viduitatis, chap. viii.]) that they who abstain not from such sins may marry after their vows. They might indeed marry before they vowed; but this being done, unless they keep them they justly incur damnation." "Why is it, (says he again, on Psalm lxxv.) they made void their first faith? but that they made vows, and kept them not. **But let not this (says he) make you abstain from such vows [of virginity or chastity], for you are not to comply with them by your own strength; you will fall, if you presume on yourselves; but if you confide in him to whom you made these vows, you will securely comply with them.**" How different was the doctrine and practice of the first and chief of the late pretended reformers, who were many of them apostates after such vows? (Witham)”

Those blessed men and women of Our Lord who enter into a Heavenly Marriage with Our Bridegroom, Our Lord Jesus Christ, commit literal adultery if they at some point in time should change their mind and “marry” another person, or have sexual relations with anyone. In former times, adultery was heavily punished, and even today, most people recognize that adultery is an especially evil deed. But if committing adultery against a human and mortal person is so shameful and evil, how much more evil must it not to be unfaithful, to reject or defile one’s eternal marriage to Our Lord Jesus Christ, Our Heavenly Spouse, and commit adultery with a mortal man or woman like a filthy adulterer? That is why all those who have vowed their chastity to Christ, and then breaks it, are damned.

St. Philip the Apostle had four daughters, virgins, whom Eusebius, a roman historian, testifies to have always remained such. St. Paul kept virginity or celibacy all his life; so did St. John and St. James; and when St. Paul (1 Timothy 5:12) reproves, as having damnation, certain young widows who, *after they have grown wanton in Christ will marry, having damnation because they have left their first faith*, – the fourth Council of Carthage (at which St. Augustine assisted) St. Epiphanius, St. Jerome, with all the rest of antiquity, understand it of widows who, being vowed to God and to the observance of chastity, broke their vows, entering into the ties of “marriage” against the first faith which previously they had given to Christ, their Spouse.

Gratian, *Medieval Marriage Law*: “But a more excellent reward is proposed for virgins and widows who practice continence. When this course is considered, elected, and promised by the required vow, not only marrying, but even wishing to marry, is damnable. The Apostle proves then when he says, not of those marrying for sensuality, but of those marrying in Christ [1 Tim. 5:11-12], “they will wish to marry, and are to be condemned because they have broken their first promise.” They are here condemned not for marrying, but for wishing to marry. It is not marriage in general, or even these marriages in particular, that are condemned. He condemns the denial of their dedication, and condemns the broken faith of their vow. It is not choosing a lower good that is condemned, but falling from a higher good. They are condemned, not because they later embrace conjugal fidelity, but because they brake their earlier pledge of continence... So, when he said, “they will wish to marry,” and adds immediately “and are to be condemned,” he then explains why, “because they have broken their first promise.” This shows that their desire to abandon their dedication is condemned, whether they later marry or not.” (Marriage Canons From *The Decretum*, Case Twenty-Seven, Question I, Part 2., C. 41. §1)

These verses from the Bible also proves that Martin Luther committed a most grievous sacrilege and unfaithfulness against Our Lord when he rejected his vow of chastity and spiritual marriage to Jesus Christ. **Martin Luther professed himself to be a Catholic monk once in his life before he apostatized and rejected the one and only biblical faith—Catholicism.** The Devil indeed needed a servant who would publicly reject purity and indulge in the marital life against his vow of chastity, and he found a perfect candidate in the apostate and heretic Martin Luther.

In light of his mortal sin of adultery, it is not hard to understand why Martin Luther dared to teach, amongst his other countless heresies, that Christ Our Lord sinned mortally by committing adultery with three women. Luther said:

“Christ committed adultery first of all with the women at the well about whom St. John tells us. Was not everybody about Him saying: ‘Whatever has He been doing with her?’ Secondly, with Mary Magdalene, and thirdly with the woman taken in adultery whom He dismissed so lightly. **Thus even, Christ who was so righteous, must have been guilty of fornication before He died.**” (Trishreden, Weimer Edition, Vol. 2, Pg. 107)

What an accursed and intolerable blasphemy from a man who is regarded as a “great reformer” by his duped followers! Luther also said that **“No sin can separate us from Him [God], even if we were to kill or commit adultery thousands of times each day.”** (‘Let Your Sins Be Strong,’ from ‘The Wittenberg Project;’ ‘The Wartburg Segment’, translated by Erika Flores, from Dr. Martin Luther’s Saemmtliche Schriften, Letter No. 99, 1 Aug. 1521)

One can understand why Luther also took the position that God was the author of evil and that man has no free will, for Luther’s sins needed to be excused: “... **with regard to God, and in all that bears on salvation or damnation, (man) has no ‘free-will’, but is a captive, prisoner and bond slave, either to the will of God, or to the will of Satan.**” (From the essay, ‘Bondage of the Will,’ ‘Martin Luther: Selections From His Writings,’ ed. by Dillenberger, Anchor Books, 1962 p. 190) **“God,” Luther says, “excites us to sin, and produces sin in us.”** (De Servo Arbitrio, Opp. Jenae, tom. iii., p. 170.) **“God damns some,” he adds, “who have not merited this lot, and others, before they were born.”** (Opp. Jena;, iii., 199; and Wittemb., torn, vi., fol. 522-23)

Luther also told his dupes to **“be a sinner and sin boldly, but believe and rejoice in**

Christ even more boldly... No sin will separate us from the Lamb, even though we commit fornication and murder a thousand times a day.” (Martin Luther, *Letter to Melancthon*, August 1, 1521)

It is indeed true that those who impiously claim (like Luther, Calvin and other protestants) that we humans have no free will, also agree that God is the cause of our sins, for if we have no free will, God created those who are damned only in order to be damned without any chance for them of repenting or being saved. According to this satanic view, God created those who are going to be damned with the explicit intention that they were going to be damned. It is safe to say that this false conception of God is pure evil, conceived by the devil himself. According to this evil and perverse worldview, we could not even do good with the grace of God if we wanted to since we have no free will! ([Please read this article about Martin Luther which reveals over 100 quotations of Martin Luther’s words and teachings which are so horrifying and disgusting that it’s almost beyond words to describe](#))

Only the most desperate liars, fools and dupes (that is, protestants) could delude themselves into believing that the impure and demonic spawn from hell, Martin Luther, was anything but a deceiver and apostate. Martin Luther rejected the Bible, the Church, and his marriage and vow of Chastity to Jesus Christ and “married” a woman and had children before he died, and as a consequence, was cast into the Eternal Fire of Hell for his heresies, apostasies, infidelities, adulteries, and other mortal sins.

Romans 13:12-14 “Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy: But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences.”

The Bible and the Fathers, Popes, Saints and Doctors of the Church unanimously teach that chastity and virginity is above the marital life

It is the unanimous opinion of the Fathers and Saints of the Church that no one, without exception, can reach the highest kind of union with God without the wonderful virtue of chastity, and that “virgins consecrated to God are most pleasing and dear to Him”. In addition to this, the Catholic Church and *The Council of Trent* also teaches infallibly that it is “**better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or in celibacy, than to be united in matrimony**” which, as we have seen, is a restatement of Our Lord Jesus Christ’s words through the mouth of St. Paul in the Holy Bible that teaches us that a life of chastity is better

than the marital life: “Therefore, both he that giveth his virgin in marriage, doth well; **and he that giveth her not, doth better. ... But more blessed shall she be, if she so remain [in chastity], according to my counsel; and I think that I also have the spirit of God.**” (1 Corinthians 7:38-40)

This, of course, means both inner and outer chastity; for there is no point in being chaste outwardly if the will or intent is unchaste and consents to impure thoughts. Chastity is first-and-foremost found in the heart of man, and that is why even a married man who performs his marital duty can be said to be chaste in a way, that is, in his thoughts, as long as his intention is not to live a lustful life. Thus, “The incorrupt soul is a virgin, even if having a husband.” (Chrysostom, *Hom. XXVIII in Heb.*; PG 63.201.) But chastity in deeds as well as in thoughts and at all times is of course always superior to this state of marital relations.

“Virginité is better than marriage, however good.” (St. John Damascene, *Expo. IV.24.*)
“That virginité is good I do agree. But that it is even better than marriage, this I do confess.” (St. John Chrysostom, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, Vol. 2: 1116)

Indeed, “As firstfruits are the most delicious, so virgins consecrated to God are most pleasing and dear to him. The spouse in the canticles feedeth among the lilies? One of the sacred interpreters, explaining these words, says, that ‘as the devil revels in the uncleanness of lust, so Christ feeds on the lilies of chastity.’ Venerable Bede asserts that the hymn of the virgins is more agreeable to the Lamb than that of all the other saints.” (St. Alphonsus, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, p. 7)

Since the countless protestant sects (from the very beginning of their creation in the 16th century by the devil) were especially hostile to the infallible biblical doctrine which teaches that chastity or virginité is much better and a more meritorious and blessed life than the marital life, *The Council of Trent* also had to specifically condemn and anathematize all who dared to oppose this biblical doctrine. Thus, the Church made clear to all this biblical teaching, which means that all who obstinately assert that marriage is above or equal to the state of chastity or virginité are damned and in a state of mortal sin, awaiting the moment of their death when they will enter the eternal Hell where they will be tormented and burn for their wicked, obstinate, impure heresy and false opinion.

Pope Pius IV, *Council of Trent*, ***ex cathedra***: “If any one saith, that the marriage state is to be placed above the state of virginité, or of celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginité, or in celibacy, than to be united in matrimony, **(Matt. 19:11; 1 Cor. 7:25) let him be anathema.**” (Session 14, Canon X, Nov. 11,

1563, on Matrimony; Denzinger #980)

The wicked heresy which states that, “there is no spiritual superiority in celibacy vs. conjugal chastity (sex within marriage)” is utterly false and refuted by the Holy Bible itself as well as the infallible teachings of the Popes. This is what the Church teaches infallibly as a dogma.

Pope Pius XII, *Sacra Virginitas* (# 32), March 25, 1954: **“This doctrine of the excellence of virginity and of celibacy and of their superiority over the married state** was, as We have already said, revealed by our Divine Redeemer and by the Apostle of the Gentiles; so too, **it was solemnly defined as a dogma of divine faith by the holy council of Trent**, and explained in the same way by all the holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Finally, We and Our Predecessors have often expounded it and earnestly advocated it whenever occasion offered. **But recent attacks on this traditional doctrine of the Church, the danger they constitute, and the harm they do to the souls of the faithful** lead Us, in fulfillment of the duties of Our charge, to take up the matter once again in this Encyclical Letter, and to reprove these errors which are so often propounded under a specious appearance of truth.”

St. Jerome writes concerning the greatness of chastity and virginity: “I praise wedlock, I praise marriage, but it is because they give me virgins. I gather the rose from the thorns, the gold from the earth, the pearl from the shell. “Doth the plowman plow all day to sow?” Shall he not also enjoy the fruit of his labor? Wedlock is the more honored, the more what is born of it is loved. Why, mother, do you grudge your daughter her virginity? She has been reared on your milk, she has come from your womb, she has grown up in your bosom. Your watchful affection has kept her a virgin. Are you angry with her because she chooses to be a king’s wife and not a soldier’s? She has conferred on you a high privilege; you are now the mother-in-law of God. “Concerning virgins,” says the apostle, “I have no commandment of the Lord.” Why was this? Because his own virginity was due, not to a command, but to his free choice. For they are not to be heard who feign him to have had a wife; for, when he is discussing continence and commending perpetual chastity, he uses the words, “I would that all men were even as I myself.” And farther on, “I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I.” (St. Jerome, *Letters of St. Jerome*, Letter 22:20, To Eustochium, A.D. 420)

Thus, “... the virtue of chastity... St. Ambrose says that ‘whoever preserves this virtue is an angel, and that whoever violates it is a demon.’” (St. Alphonsus, *The True Spouse of Jesus*

Christ, p. 17, A.D. 1755) Therefore, “in comparison with chastity and virginity, the life of angels, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" [1 Cor. 7:1].” (St. Jerome, *Letter XLVIII, To Pammachius*, c. 393 or 394 A.D.)

St. Gregory Nazianzen (c. 329-390): “Hast thou chosen the life of Angels? Art thou ranked among the unyoked? Sink not down to the flesh; sink not down to matter; be not wedded to matter, while otherwise thou remainest unwedded.” (*Orations of St. Gregory Nazianzen*, Oration XXXVII, Section X)

In the immoral ambiance of our days, it is important for Catholics to read the praises St. John Chrysostom makes in his work “*On Virginity*” of those who choose virginity as a state of life. **He compares virginity with the state of matrimony, to conclude that the former is higher.**

“As you do, I also think that virginity is a good thing, better than the nuptial life. I add that it is as superior to the nuptial life as Heaven is superior to earth, or as Angels to men. Since the Angels are not made of flesh and blood, for them there is no conjugal life. Since they do not live on earth, they are not subject to the disorders of passions and pleasures; they do not need to eat or drink; they are not attracted by a melodious music, a captivating song or a remarkable beauty, finally, they cannot be conquered by any type of softness.

“Man, however, even though he is inferior to the angelic spirits, zealously and carefully seeks to be as much like them as he can. How does he do so? Angels do not marry, neither does the virgin man. Angels live before God always at His service; so does the virgin man. Human nature, which bears the weight of the body, cannot ascend to Heaven as the Angels do; however, to compensate such deficiency, man has the greatest possible consolation, that is, by living pure of body and soul, he can receive and possess in the Eucharist the King of Heaven.

“Can’t you see all the excellence of virginity? Can’t you see how it transforms those who still live clothed in this flesh and makes them equal to Angels? Tell me in what point are those great lovers of virginity, Elias, Eliseus and St. John, different from Angels? In almost nothing. Only in this, that they are Angels in a mortal nature. Regarding the rest, anyone who analyzes them carefully sees that they deserve the same esteem as the angelic spirits. Further, because their condition is far inferior to the Angels, their merit is the greater. For because of their mortal nature, only with much violence and great effort could they attain such an eminent degree of virtue. See how much courage they had and the type of life they lived.” (St. John Chrysostom, *Book of Virginity*, In the Writings of the Roman Breviary, Lesson 3 of the feast of St. Aloysius Gonzaga)

In regards to the issue of the superiority of celibacy over marriage, St. Ignatius of Loyola wrote in his spiritual classic *The Spiritual Exercises*: “we must praise highly religious life, virginity, and continency; and matrimony ought not be praised as much as these”. (no. 356); and also “if a person thinks of embracing a secular life, he should ask and desire more evident signs that God calls him to a secular life than if there were question of embracing the evangelical counsels; for Our Lord Himself has evidently exhorted us to embrace His counsels, and, on the other hand, He has evidently laid before us the great dangers and difficulties of a secular life; so that, if we rightly conclude, revelations and extraordinary tokens of His will are more necessary for a man entering upon a life in the world than for one entering the religious state.” (Quoted in *Matrimony, Virginity, The Religious State, and Marriage* by An Anonymous Vincentian Father. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1897) It is highly important to notice how St. Ignatius’s admonition and advice to people intending to marry is completely different and directly opposed to the advice of the people of the world, who usually say that the evangelical life of perfection or entering a monastery is something meant for only a few, and only after very great signs. To this we could add St. Bernard’s comparison of the religious to the married, that “they live more purely, they fall more rarely, they rise more speedily, they are aided more powerfully, they live more peacefully, they die more securely, and they are rewarded more abundantly” (Ibid). We could also add a similar comparison made by St. John Chrysostom – often cited in relation to his praise of marriage – who said “among seculars shipwrecks are more frequent and sudden, because the difficulties of navigation are greater; but with anchorites storms are less violent, the calm is almost undisturbed. This is why we seek to draw as many as we can to the religious life” (Ibid).

While marriage is a good and holy institution, marriage in the spirit to God is infinitely more holy and good: “But now, at this time, not to seek offspring after the flesh, and by this means to maintain a certain perpetual freedom from every such work, and to be made subject after a spiritual manner unto one Husband Christ, is assuredly better and holier...” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, 32)

It is therefore a dogma of the Faith that cannot be doubted or denied that a life of chastity is above a life of marriage and that marriage is a hindrance to “the perfect degree of virtue”:

“A thing may be a hindrance to virtue in two ways. First, as regards the ordinary degree of virtue, and as to this nothing but sin is an obstacle to virtue. Secondly, as regards the perfect degree of virtue, and as to this virtue may be hindered by that which is not a sin, but a lesser good. On this way sexual intercourse casts down the mind not from virtue,

but from the height, i.e. the perfection of virtue. Hence Augustine says (De Bono Conjug. viii): "Just as that was good which Martha did when busy about serving holy men, yet better still that which Mary did in hearing the word of God: so, too, we praise the good of Susanna's conjugal chastity, yet we prefer the good of the widow Anna, and much more that of the Virgin Mary." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 153, Art. 2, Reply to Objection 1)

The Bible and the Saints teach that most people will be damned to burn for all eternity in Hell, but chastity greatly increases a person's chance to reach Heaven

Today, one almost never hears anyone speaking about the biblical truth that very few people actually escape eternal damnation in Hell. All virtues that we humans practice increases the chance for us to reach Heaven, but the virtue of chastity is special in helping to save a person's immortal soul since it is very hard to gain for most people, since they are weak, worldly and lustful; and because of this, very few people in this world try to gain it because of their sloth, weakness or bad will. Chastity undoubtedly greatly increases one's chances of reaching Heaven, and it is undoubtedly more effective in helping people escape eternal hell than almost any virtue in the world, but too few in this world seem to care about this fact which, in truth, is one of the most important truths that ever have been revealed to mankind.

Our Lady of Fatima, Portugal, 1917: "**The sins of the world are too great! The sins which lead most souls to hell are sins of the flesh! ... Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God...** [since these spouses marry for carnal and lustful motives or perform unlawful, non-procreative or unnecessary sexual acts with each other.]"

Catholics must understand that **few are saved**. Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed that the road to Heaven is straight and narrow and few find it, while the road to Hell is wide and taken by most (Mt. 7:13).

Matthew 7:13 "**Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it!**"

Luke 13:24 "**Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able.**"

Scripture also teaches that almost the entire world lies in darkness, so much so that Satan is even called the “prince” (John 12:31) and “god” (2 Cor. 4:3) of this world. “We know that we are of God, **and the whole world is seated in wickedness.**” (1 John 5:19)

When one reads these infallible and true words of Our Lord that explains to us how few people there are that actually escape the eternal torments in Hell, one can only marvel at the fact that so few people in this world actually desires to become chaste or embrace the monastic life. Chastity greatly increases a person’s chance of reaching Heaven, yet almost everyone, and especially the protestants, resists or denies this saving truth with every fiber of their sensual beings. In the former times, the Catholic Church and its members upheld the greatness of the virtue of chastity, and people of every class in society resolved to practice chastity and purity for the sake of saving their immortal souls from the fires of hell. Thus, there was always a considerable portion of humanity that lived as an example of evangelical perfection and virtue to everyone else, and this in turn helped even more people to adopt a more virtuous and chaste lifestyle.

Nowadays, however, the fear of Hell has vanished completely, and that is why no one cares anything for the great virtue of chastity. But the time will come when both married and unmarried shall lift up their voices in lamentation and weeping and curse themselves for refusing to practice the virtue of chastity and purity, but then, it is sadly too late for them. *“And the smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever: neither have they rest day nor night...”* (Apocalypse 14:11)

St. Leonard of Port Maurice (A.D. 1676-1751), when speaking **on the fewness of the saved, shows us how the Church and Her Fathers and Saints is unanimous in teaching this biblical doctrine:** “After consulting all the theologians and making a diligent study of the matter, he [Suarez] wrote, **The most common sentiment which is held is that, among Christians [Catholics], there are more damned souls than predestined souls.**’ Add the authority of the Greek and Latin Fathers to that of the theologians, and you will find that almost all of them say the same thing. This is the sentiment of Saint Theodore, Saint Basil, Saint Ephrem, Saint John Chrysostom. What is more, according to Baronius it was a common opinion among the Greek Fathers that this truth was expressly revealed to Saint Simeon Stylites and that after this revelation, it was to secure his salvation that he decided to live standing on top of a pillar for forty years, exposed to the weather, a model of penance and holiness for everyone. Now let us consult the Latin Fathers. You will hear Saint Gregory saying clearly, *‘Many attain to faith, but few to the heavenly kingdom.’* Saint Anselm

declares, *'There are few who are saved.'* Saint Augustine states even more clearly, *'Therefore, few are saved in comparison to those who are damned.'* The most terrifying, however, is Saint Jerome. At the end of his life, in the presence of his disciples, he spoke these dreadful words: *'Out of one hundred thousand people whose lives have always been bad, you will find barely one who is worthy of indulgence.'* (On *The Little Number of Those Who Are Saved*, by St. Leonard of Port Maurice)

What would not the billions of suffering souls in Hell do, who fell into the most horrifying torments imaginable for the sake of carnal impurities and temptations of the flesh, if they had a second chance to escape their eternal torment? In truth, they would gladly walk on the surface of the Sun, which is millions of degrees hot for a billion times billion years if God enabled them to do so. To choose a single second of sinful pleasure (which is how short this life is compared to eternity) for an **infinite time of excruciating torments and tortures in hell** is unfathomable, and yet, literally the whole world consents to this devilish trap!

Take heed that you, the reader, do not reject this admonishment, for it might be the last time you will hear such words before death suddenly strikes you and the Devil takes you and devours you for all eternity to come! "... Take all states, both sexes, every condition: husbands, wives, widows, young women, young men, soldiers, merchants, craftsmen, rich and poor, noble and plebian. What are we to say about all these people who are living so badly? The following narrative from Saint Vincent Ferrer will show you what you may think about it. He relates that an archdeacon in Lyons gave up his charge and retreated into a desert place to do penance, and that he died the same day and hour as Saint Bernard. After his death, he appeared to his bishop and said to him, *'Know, Monsignor, that at the very hour I passed away, **thirty-three thousand** people also died. Out of this number, **Bernard and myself** went up to Heaven without delay, **three** went to purgatory, and **all the others fell into Hell.***' Our chronicles relate an even more dreadful happening. One of our brothers, well-known for his doctrine and holiness, was preaching in Germany. He represented the ugliness of the sin of impurity so forceful that a woman fell dead of sorrow in front of everyone. Then, coming back to life, she said, *'When I was presented before the Tribunal of God, **sixty thousand** people arrived at the same time from all parts of the world; out of that number, **three** were saved by going to Purgatory, and **all the rest were damned.***' O abyss of the judgments of God! Out of thirty thousand, only five were saved! And out of sixty thousand, only three went to Heaven! **You sinners who are listening to me, in what category will you be numbered?... What do you say?... What do you think?...**" (On *The Little Number of Those Who Are Saved*, by St. Leonard of Port Maurice)

Fr. Martin Von Cochem's masterpiece book *"The Four Last Things"* (that deals specifically with the topics of Hell, the fear of God, death and judgment), explains the frightful truth of Our Lord's words in the Gospel **of how few people there actually are on this earth that even find the path to Heaven even once while living on this earth**, and much less persevere on it until their death:

"Let me ask thee, O reader, what proportion thinkest thou of all who live upon this earth will be saved? Half? or a third part? or perhaps a quarter? Alas, I fear, and not without good reason, that the number will not be nearly so large. Jesus Christ, who is eternal Truth, His holy apostles, and the Fathers of the Church, all tell us that so it will be.

"What does Christ say about the number of the elect? His words are these: "Many are called, but few are chosen." He repeats these words when He speaks of the guest who had not on a wedding garment: "Bind his hands and his feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness. For many are called, but few chosen." Were nothing more to be found to this intent in the whole of the Scriptures, this passage could not fail to alarm us. But there are many other similar ones, of which I will quote one or two. In the Gospel of St. Matthew we read that Our Lord said: "Enter ye in at the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction, and many there are that go in thereat. How narrow is the gate and strait is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there are that find it." (Matt. 7:13) Are not these words calculated to inspire us with anxiety and apprehension? May not we be amongst those who go in at the wide gate, who walk on the broad road that ends in everlasting perdition? In order that thou mayst better appreciate the meaning of Our Lord's words, and perceive more clearly how few are the elect, observe that Christ did not say that those were few in number who walked in the path to heaven, but that there were but few who found that narrow way. "How strait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there are that find it." It is as if the Savior intended to say: The path leading to heaven is so narrow and so rough, it is so overgrown, so dark and difficult to discern, that there are many who, their whole life long, never find it. And those who do find it are exposed constantly to the danger of deviating from it, of mistaking their way and unwittingly wandering away from it, because it is so irregular and overgrown. This St. Jerome says, in his commentary on the passage in question. Again, there are some who when they are on the right road, hasten to leave it, because it is so steep and toilsome. There are also many who are enticed to leave the narrow way by the wiles and deceits of the devil, and thus, almost imperceptibly to themselves, are led downwards to hell." (Fr. Martin Von Cochem, *The Four Last Things*, pp. 212-213)

If people could only open their fleshly eyes and start seeing with their spiritual eyes how short this life and the lust of the flesh is, everyone would immediately become chaste and pure, but no one today wants to contemplate or meditate on the end of all flesh, which is death and decay in the grave. They behave as mentally ill people who willfully forgets that they must die and be judged by our Lord Jesus Christ. The thought of death is indeed powerful to conquer every sin and sinful occasion, but while people know that they must die, they willfully choose to forget this fact, since the very thought of death and change is repugnant to their fleshly beings, and directly associated with the thought of being judged by God for their sins. And so, they choose to forget that they must die and be judged by God in order to not have to feel any distress, fear or remorse from their evil conscience every time they sin.

But the time will come when they – standing in shame and ignominy in front of the whole world at the day of judgment – will be forced against their will to remember and confess every single sinful and lustful act that they have ever committed from the moment they reached the age of reason to their very last breath, and then, after their just condemnation, their eternal punishment will begin. Their soul shall be separated from their sinful and fleshly rotting body for the sake of their vile and shameful affections and lusts and be cast into the eternal fire “*in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*” (Apocalypse 21:8)

Indeed, Our Lord Jesus Christ, speaking through an angel, teaches that: “Hell is so hot inside that if the whole world and everything in it were on fire, it could not compare to that vast furnace. The various voices heard in the furnace all speak against God. They begin and end their speech with laments. The souls look like people whose limbs are forever being stretched without relief or pause.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 4, Chapter 7) Hence, “Nicholas of Nice, speaking of the fire of Hell, says that nothing on earth could give an idea of it. He adds that if all the trees of the forests were cut down, piled into a vast heap and set on fire, this terrible pile would not be a spark of Hell.” (“The Dogma of Hell, Illustrated by Facts Taken from Profane and Sacred History” by Rev. Father Francois Xavier Schouppe, S.J.)

And so, “When you see anything good and great in the present life, think of the kingdom [of Heaven], and you will consider it as nothing. When you see anything terrible, think of hell, and you will deride it. When you are possessed by carnal desire, think of the fire, think also of the pleasure of sin itself, that it is nothing worth, that it has not even pleasure in it. For if the fear of the laws that are enacted here has so great power as to withdraw us from wicked actions, how much more should the remembrance of things future, the vengeance that is immortal, the punishment that is everlasting? If the fear of an earthly king withdraws us from

so many evils, how much more the fear of the King Eternal? Whence then can we constantly have this fear? If we continually hearken to the Scriptures. For if the sight only of a dead body so depresses the mind, how much more must hell and the fire unquenchable, how much more the worm that never dies. If we always think of hell, we shall not soon fall into it. ... Let it be continually spoken of, that you may never fall into it. It is not possible that a soul anxious about hell should readily sin. For hear the most excellent advice, "Remember," it says, "your latter end" [Sirach 28:6], and you will not sin for ever. A soul that is fearful of giving account cannot but be slow to transgression. For fear being vigorous in the soul does not permit anything worldly to exist in it. For if discourse raised concerning hell so humbles and brings it low, does not the reflection constantly dwelling upon the soul purify it more than any fire? Let us not remember the kingdom so much as hell. For fear has more power than the promise. And I know that many would despise ten thousand blessings, if they were rid of the punishment, inasmuch as it is even now sufficient for me to escape vengeance, and not to be punished. No one of those who have hell before their eyes will fall into hell. No one of those who despise hell will escape hell. For as among us those who fear the judgment-seats will not be apprehended by them, but those who despise them are chiefly those who fall under them, so it is also in this case. ... Nothing is so profitable as to converse concerning hell. It renders our souls purer than any silver. For hear the prophet saying, "Your judgments are always before me." [From Psalm 17:22, Septuagint] For although it pains the hearer, it benefits him very much." (St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 2 on Second Thessalonians, On the Fear of Hell*)

There is no better way to crush the power of the serpent and his wretched lusts and desires than to constantly, day and night, meditate on Hell and its frightful, eternal, indescribable darkness and torments that will befall all those miserable wretches who refuses to live a virtuous, pure and non-lustful life: "How shall we tie down this wild beast? What shall we contrive? How shall we place a bridle on it? I know none, save only the restraint of hell-fire." (St. John Chrysostom, *De Inani Gloria or On Vainglory, Section 76*)

Sad to say, "Unto many this seemeth an hard saying, Deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow Jesus" (Matt. 16:24). But much harder will it be to hear that last word, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:41). For they who now willingly hear and follow the word of the Cross, shall not then fear (Psalm 112:7) to hear the sentence of everlasting damnation. This sign of the Cross shall be in the heaven, when the Lord shall come to judgment (Matt. 24:30). Then all the servants of the Cross, who in their lifetime conformed themselves unto Christ crucified, shall draw near unto Christ the Judge with great confidence. Why therefore fearest thou to take up the Cross, which leadeth thee to a kingdom? In the Cross is salvation, in the Cross is life, in the Cross is protection against our enemies, in the

Cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness, in the Cross is strength of mind, in the Cross joy of spirit, in the Cross the height of virtue, in the Cross the perfection of holiness. Take up therefore thy Cross and follow Jesus (Luke 14:27), and thou shalt go into life everlasting.” (Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, Book 2, Chapter 12 - Of the King’s High Way of the Holy Cross)

St. Teresa of Avila, *The Life of the Holy Mother Teresa of Jesus*, (Written by Herself):
“I came to understand the truth I had heard in my childhood, that all things are as nothing, the world vanity, and passing rapidly away. I also began to be afraid that, if I were then to die, I should go down to hell. Though I could not bend my will to be a nun, I saw that the religious state was the best and the safest. And thus, by little and little, I resolved to force myself into it. The struggle lasted three months. I used to press this reason against myself: The trials and sufferings of living as a nun cannot be greater than those of purgatory, and I have well deserved to be in hell. It is not much to spend the rest of my life as if I were in purgatory, and then go straight to Heaven--which was what I desired. I was more influenced by servile fear, I think, than by love, to enter religion.

“The devil put before me that I could not endure the trials of the religious life, because of my delicate nurture. I defended myself against him by alleging the trials which Christ endured, and that it was not much for me to suffer something for His sake; besides, He would help me to bear it. I must have thought so, but I do not remember this consideration. I endured many temptations during these days. I was subject to fainting-fits, attended with fever,--for my health was always weak. I had become by this time fond of good books, and that gave me life. I read the Epistles of St. Jerome, which filled me with so much courage, that I resolved to tell my father of my purpose,--which was almost like taking the habit; for I was so jealous of my word, that I would never, for any consideration, recede from a promise when once my word had been given.”

Those who choose to live in total celibacy undoubtedly increases their chances of reaching heaven, since concupiscence and the sexual desire is the greatest cause why people are damned. Lust, in all its forms, is undoubtedly the greatest reason why people have a “blindness of mind” concerning spiritual things: “As Isidore says (Etym. x), "a lustful man is one who is debauched with pleasures." Now venereal pleasures above all debauch a man’s mind.” (St. Thomas Aquinas) The truth that lust is the most powerful of all human acts in inducing spiritual death, can even be understood from reason alone, since the sexual or lustful pleasure is the one pleasure of all who induces in man a kind of inability to reason: “... lust

applies chiefly to venereal pleasures, which more than anything else work the greatest havoc in a man's mind". (St. Thomas Aquinas) "And truly, the concupiscence of the flesh, beyond all other passions, doth greatly hinder us from being ready to meet Christ; whilst, on the other hand, nothing makes us more fit to follow our Lord, than virginal chastity." (St. Robert Bellarmine, *The art of dying well*, Chapter IV)

This proves that lust and sexual pleasure is the biggest cause why people in the end are damned, and it also shows us on what sins one should speak about when one tries to convert a sinner or a heretic. And this of course also applies to married people and St. Augustine also confirms the fact that "he who is intemperate in marriage, what is he but the adulterer of his own wife?" by quoting the great St. Ambrose's teaching concerning the necessity for married people to practice moderation in even their normal, natural and lawful marital acts (cf. St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, Book 2, Chapter 6).

A great reason why the people who commit sexual sins are so "hardened" in their sins, and so hard to be converted, is because sensual lusts (both for the married and the unmarried people alike) actually "**gives rise to blindness of mind, which excludes almost entirely the knowledge of spiritual things, while dulness of sense arises from gluttony, which makes a man weak in regard to the same [spiritual] intelligible things.**" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II:II, Q. 15, Art. 3) Indeed, this "blindness of mind" and "dulness of sense" is undoubtedly the main reason why most people, however much evidence is provided against their heresies, *refuse to convert*. It is therefore true to say that "**The perverse are hard to be corrected, and the number of fools [and damned people] is infinite**" (Ecclesiastes 1:15) because of their own bad will and lasciviousness, according to God's Holy and infallible Word. Their short moment of pleasure in this perishable world blinds them to the truth about God and the Natural Law, precipitating them into an eternal hell fire and torment.

It is a sad thing to have to speak about, but most people are damned because of their lusts inside or outside of marriage. "And according to the same custom of the Orientals, St. Peter writes: "Wherefore, having the loins of your mind girt up, being sober, trust perfectly in the grace which is offered you, &c." (1 Epist. i. 13.) And St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians says: "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." (i. 14.) Now, to have our "loins girt," signifies two things: First, the virtue of chastity; Secondly, a readiness to meet our Lord coming to judgment, whether it be the particular or the general judgment. The holy fathers, St. Basil, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory, give the first explanation. **And truly, the concupiscence of the flesh, beyond all other passions, doth greatly hinder us**

from being ready to meet Christ; whilst, on the other hand, nothing makes us more fit to follow our Lord, than virginal chastity. We read in the Apocalypse how virgins follow the Lamb "whithersoever he goeth." And the apostle saith: "he that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided." (1 Epist. to Cor. Vii. 32, 33.)" (St. Robert Bellarmine, *The art of dying well*, Chapter IV)

In truth, when one compare an eternity in Hell with the small act of giving up sexual intercourse and marriage, the sacrifice seems infinitely small and almost as though it was nothing. If we consider that lust and sexual desire is the greatest cause of why people in the end are damned and that chastity not only will increase our chances of reaching Heaven and that our eternal glory in Heaven will be greater because of it, but that it also will increase our effectiveness in helping other souls to be saved, this sacrifice seems to be no sacrifice at all. Thus, rising with Christ in perfection, "I have decided that there is nothing I should avoid so much as marriage. I know nothing which brings the manly mind down from the height [of spiritual things] more than a woman's caresses and that joining of bodies without which one cannot have a wife." (St. Augustine, *Soliloquia* I, x, 17)

Holy Monasteries of chaste servants of Christ are especially effective in helping humanity, according to Our Lady and the Fathers

Of all the prayers offered up to God, the prayers of His holy and chaste servants in holy monasteries and convents are the most effective of all the prayers in the world in drawing down blessings from Heaven – but not too many people actually understand this saving fact. Heretics, especially, scoff at the notion that those who marry Our Lord and renounce the world are actually doing anything good at all. Some of these heretics even say that it is evil or contrary to the missionary spirit of the gospel to live secluded in a monastery and avoid the world. They also frequently claim it's against the scripture to require perpetual chastity for priests and religious. The fact of the matter, however, is that the Holy Bible condemns their worldly and sensual worldview and lifestyle, as we have seen.

The Catholic Church always (and especially now during this time of apostasy) needs holy religious who will continue in the virtuous example set by the Holy Saints of the former times. This fact was confirmed when in A.D. 1634 The Blessed Virgin under the title of *Our Lady of Good Success* appeared to the Franciscan Nun, Venerable Mother Mariana de Jesus Torres, in Quito, Ecuador. (This event is approved by Holy Mother Church).

Our Lady solemnly spoke these words regarding the importance of holy monasteries and convents: **“Woe to the world should it lack monasteries and convents! Men do not comprehend their importance, for, if they understood, they would do all in their power to multiply them, because in them can be found the remedy for all physical and moral evils...** No one on the face of the earth is aware whence comes the salvation of souls, the conversion of great sinners, the end of great scourges, the fertility of the land, the end of pestilence and wars, and the harmony between nations. **All this is due to the prayers that rise up from monasteries and convents.”** (Words of *Our Lady of Good Success* to Venerable Mother Mariana de Jesus Torres)

In truth, not only are all monasteries vitally important for the spiritual and physical well-being of all Christians, but “In every house of Christians, it is needful that there be a virgin, for the salvation of the whole house is that one virgin. When wrath comes upon the whole city, it shall not come upon the house wherein a virgin is.” (St. Athanasius, *Canons, On Virginity*, Canon 98)

St. John Chrysostom posits, “What else is commanded of us but that we live like those intellectual and incorporeal powers [in Heaven]?” (Cf. *Virg.*, XXVII. 2; SC 125,180.) Christ has led New Covenant man to the angelic life (*Hom. XI in Rom.*; PG 60.489). The monastic way of life is the angelic way of life. St. Ephrem calls virginity the “dear friend” of the “Watchers.” “Watchers” is St. Ephrem’s word for the angels (*Hymn I On Virginity*). St. Athanasius the Great says the virgins presented on the earth a “picture of the holiness of the angels.” (*Apol. Const.* 33, PG 25.640; NPNF, p. 252.) Monasticism is essentially pure Christianity, and as such serves as a constant example to married Christians. To St. Chrysostom there is only one purpose for the present life. The present life is designed simply as a groundwork and “starting point” for the life to come. The one who is a foreigner here will be a citizen up there. The one who considers himself a citizen here will be a stranger in heaven, and the one who considers himself a citizen in heaven will be a stranger here (*Exp. in Ps. CXIX*; PG 55.341). If Christians do not learn this lesson this life becomes “worse than a thousand deaths!” (*Stat. Hom. VI*; PG 49.86; NPNF, p. 384.) As such we ought groan for this life as creation does, and not for death (*Stat. Hom. V*; PG 49.71). The present life is a type of school in which men are “under instruction by means of disease, tribulation, temptations, and poverty, and the other apparent evils, with a view to our becoming fit for the reception of the blessings of the world to come.” (*Hom. X in Rom.*; PG 60.473; NPNF, p. 404.) Monastics are the world’s chief instructors concerning this all important lesson. Chrysostom in very many places emphasizes that the monastic way of life is simply the authentic Christian life.

The monastic way is the way of the Cross. The crucified virgin lives free from troubles of this present life and reveling in happiness (*Exp. in Ps. XLIV*; PG 55.202). The crucified life is best modeled by the monk (*Philogn., VI*; PG 48.752). There are not two standards of Christian conduct, one for the monk and one for the married man (*Hom. VII in Heb.*; PG 63.67; NPNF, p. 402). St. John Chrysostom writes, “You certainly deceive yourself and are greatly mistaken if you think that there is one set of requirements for the person in the world and another for the monk. The difference between them is that one is married and the other is not: in all other respects they will have to render the same account.” (*Oppugn., III*; PG 47.372.) The Holy Scriptures do not know two standards, but one single Christian ethic. Chrysostom writes, “Therefore, when Paul orders us to imitate not only the monks, not only the disciples of Christ, but Christ Himself, when he decrees the greatest punishment for those who do not imitate them, how can you say that this way of life is a greater height? For all people must reach the same point! And this is what overturns the whole world, the idea that only the monk is required to show a greater perfection, while the rest are allowed to live in laxity. But this is not true! It is not! ... the same philosophy is demanded of all.” (*Oppugn., III*; PG 47.374.) The laws governing monks and married Christians are common to both groups, except for those dealing with marriage, and even here St. Paul calls upon the married to imitate the monks (*Hom. VII in Mt.*; PG 57.81-82). All humanity is called upon to return to the original state of purity of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and to go beyond it. The Holy Scriptures want all to live the life of the monks, even if they should happen to have wives (*Oppugn., III*; PG 47.373). Christ asks (not commands) men to lay aside the childish garments of earthly marriage and to put on more fitting and perfect clothes, the clothes of virginity (*Virg., XV. 1.5-7*; SC 125, p. 146). Parents should do everything they can to raise monastic children. This doesn’t mean that all children must become monks, but they must be trained as “athletes of Christ,” and if they become monks that is a blessing, but it is not insisted upon (*Educ. Lib.*, 19.282-287; SC 188, pp. 102, 104). To oppose monasticism is ignorance so great, that a greater ignorance could not be (*Oppugn., III*; PG 47.366).

St. Gregory of Nyssa says, “And it has been proved as well that this union of the soul with the incorruptible Deity can be accomplished in no other way but by herself attaining by her virgin state to the utmost purity possible—a state which, being like God, will enable her to grasp that to which it is like, while she places herself like a mirror beneath the purity of God, and moulds her own beauty at the touch and the sight of the Archetype of all beauty.” (*On Virginity*, Chapter XI) In contrast to the pure and angelic sons and daughters of Our Lord Jesus Christ, “the grosser mind looks down; it bends its energies to bodily pleasures as surely as the sheep stoop to their pasture; it lives for gorging and still lower pleasures; it is alienated from the life

of God, and a stranger to the promise of the Covenants; it recognizes no good but the gratification of the body. It is a mind such as this that “walks in darkness,” (1 John 1:6) and invents all the evil in this life of ours; avarice, passions unchecked, unbounded luxury, lust of power, vain-glory, the whole mob of moral diseases that invade men’s homes.” (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginity*, Chapter IV)

The Blessed Virgin Mary Herself reveals to us in “*The Mystical City of God*,” the many benefits that adopting a life of obedience, celibacy and chastity will produce in our souls. *Our Lady spoke to by Sister Mary of Agreda, saying*: “My dear daughter, I will not deny thee the instruction thou askest of me with the desire of putting it into practice; but do thou receive it with an appreciative and devout mind, ready to follow it in deed. The wise man says "My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, thou hast engaged fast thy hand to a stranger, thou art ensnared with the words of thy mouth, and caught with thy own words" (Prov. 6, 12). Accordingly he who has made vows to God has bound his own will; so that he has no freedom of acting except according to the will and direction of Him to whom he has bound himself; for he is chained down by the words of his own mouth uttered in the profession of his vows. Before taking his vows, the choice of his ways was in his own hands; but having once bound and obliged himself, let him know that he has entirely lost his liberty and had delivered himself up to God in his superiors. The whole ruin or salvation of souls depends upon the use of their free will; but since most men use it ill and damn themselves, the Most High has established religious life under the sacred vows. Thus the creature, by once using its liberty to make a perfect and prudent choice, can deliver up to his Majesty that very liberty, which so many pervert, if it remains free and unhampered in its choice.

“By these vows the liberty to do evil is happily lost, and the liberty for doing good is assured. It is like a bridle, which leads away from danger and directs into the smooth and sure road. The soul is freed from the slavery and subjection of the passions, and acquires a new power over them, resuming her place as mistress and queen in the government of her kingdom and remaining subject only to the law of grace and the inspirations of the Holy Ghost. If she thus applies her whole will solely to the fulfillment of all that she has promised to God, the Holy Spirit will govern and direct all her operations. The creature thereby passes from the condition and state of a slave to that of a child of the Most High, from an earthly to an angelic life, while the corruption and evil effects of sin cannot exert their full power. It is impossible that thou ever be able in this earthly life to calculate or comprehend, what and how many are the blessings and treasures those souls gather for themselves, who with all their powers and affection strive to fulfill perfectly the vows or their profession. For I assure thee, my dearest, that those who are perfect and punctual in their religious obligations can equal and even surpass the martyrs in merit.

“The order which religious souls should maintain in their desires should be: that they strive to be punctual in fulfilling the obligations of their vows and all the virtues, which are connected with them. Afterwards and secondarily they may engage in voluntary practices, such as are called supererogatory. This order some of the souls, who are misled by the devil to entertain an indiscreet zeal for perfection are wont to invert; thus, while they fail seriously in the obligations of their state, they are eager to add other voluntary exercises and practices, which are usually of small use or benefit, or arise from a spirit of presumption and singularity. They secretly desire to be looked upon as distinguished in zeal and perfection, while in truth they are very far even from the beginning of perfection. I do not wish to see in thee a fault so reprehensible: but first fulfill all the duties of thy vows and of community life, and then thou mayest add what thou canst, according to thy ability and the inspiration of divine grace. This together will beautify thy soul and will make it perfect and agreeable in the eyes of God.” (*The Mystical City of God*, Book 2, Chapter 2)

For many people, the obedience of monastic life seems utterly detestable, but after death, in truth, there will not be a single soul who will regret having adopted the higher and more blessed life of chastity. In contrast, there are undoubtedly billions of souls burning right now in hell who wishes that they had lived a celibate and chaste life.

Blessed Edmund Campion who was a martyr for the faith speaks about this topic in a letter of his: “For I know what liberty there is in obedience, what pleasure in labour, what sweetness in prayer, what dignity in humility, what peace in conflicts, what nobleness in patience, what perfection in infirmity. But the difficulty is to reduce these virtues to practice. And this is your work, to run over a portion of your earthly course in the chariot of Paradise. I, as the poet says, will follow as I can, *non passibus equis*. My dearest brethren, our life is not long enough to thank Christ for revealing these mysteries to us. Which of us would have believed, unless He had called him and instructed him in this school, that such thorns, such filth, such misery, such tragedies, were concealed in the world under the feigned names of goods and pleasures? Which of us would have thought your kitchen better than a royal palace? your crusts better than any banquet? your troubles than others’ contentment? your conflicts than their quiet? your crumbs than their abundance? your vileness than their triumphs and victories? For I ask you whether, if you could all your lives, as they would like, feed your eyes on spectacles, and changes of scene and of company, your eyes would be the stronger? If you fed your ears with news, would they be the fuller? If you gave your mind its lusts, would it be richer? If you fed your body with dainties, could you make it immortal? This is their blunder who are deceived by vanities, and know not what a happy life means. For while they hope and expect great things, they fancy they are making vast progress, and not one in a hundred obtains what he

dreamed; and if perchance one obtains it, yet after making allowance for his pains, and his loads of care, the slipperiness of fortune, his disgraceful servility, his fears, plots, troubles, annoyances, quarrels, crimes, which must always accompany and vex the lovers of the world, he will doubtless find himself to be a very base and needy slave. One sigh of yours for heaven is better than all their clamours for this dirt; one colloquy of yours, where the angels are present, is better than all their parties and debauched drinking-bouts, where the devils fill the bowls. One day of yours consecrated to God is worth more than all their life, which they spend in luxury. My brethren, run as you have begun; acknowledge God's goodness to you, and the dignity of your state. Can any pomp of kings or emperors, any grandeur, any pleasure, I will not say equal, but even shadow forth your honour and consolation? They (I speak of the good among them) fight under Christ their king, with their baggage on their back; you are eased of your burdens, and are called with the beloved disciple to be familiar followers of your Lord. They are admitted to the palace, you to the presence chamber; they to the common pasture, you to the choicest banquets; they to friendship, you to love; they to the treasury, you to the special rewards.

“Think what difficulties they have who even live as they ought in this naughty world; then you will more easily see what you owe to His mercy in calling you out of infinite dangers into His society. How hard it is for them to follow Christ when He marches forth in haste against His enemies, who have wives in their bosoms, children on their shoulders, lands on their backs, cares on their heads, whose feet are bound with cords, whose spirits are well-nigh smothered. Is not your happiness great, whom the King marshals by His side, covers with His cloak, clothes and honours with His own livery? What great thing is it for me to have left friends for Him who left heaven for me? What great thing for me to be a servant to my brethren, when He washed the feet of the traitor Judas? What wonder if I obey my fathers, when He honoured Pilate? What mighty thing for me to bear labours for Him who bore His cross for me? What disgrace if I a sinner bear to be rebuked, when He an Innocent was curst, spit upon, scourged, wounded, and put to death?” (Edmund Campion, *Letters to the Novices*, Prague, Feb. 19th 1577)

In this context of despising the world and its pleasures, Thomas á Kempis, in one of the greatest books ever written called *The Imitation of Christ*, explains to us “Of the Love of Jesus above All Things”: “Blessed is he that understandeth (Psalm 119:1,2) what it is to love Jesus, and to despise himself for Jesus' sake. Thou oughtest to leave thy beloved, for thy beloved (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37; Cant. 2:16); for that Jesus will be loved alone above all things. The love of things created is deceitful and inconstant; the love of Jesus is faithful and persevering. He that cleaveth unto a creature, shall fall with that which is subject to fall; he that embraceth Jesus shall be made strong for ever. Love Him, and keep Him for thy friend, who, when all go

away, will not forsake thee, nor suffer thee to perish in the end. Some time or other thou must be separated from all, whether thou wilt or no. Keep close to Jesus both in life and in death, and commit thyself unto His faithfulness, who, when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy Beloved is of that nature, that He will admit of no rival; but will have thy heart alone, and sit on His throne as King. If thou couldst empty thyself perfectly from all creatures, Jesus would willingly dwell with thee.” (Readings and Prayers for St. Louis-Marie de Montfort’s *Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary*, Day 32 of 33 from *Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas á Kempis, Book 2, Chapter 7, Of the Love of Jesus above All Things)

The Son of God speaks on how a man should reason: “Pride is meaningless, since it is not the recipient who should be praised for goods given him, but the giver. Greed is meaningless, since all the things of earth will be left behind. **Lust is nothing but filth.** Therefore I do not desire these things but want to follow the will of my God whose reward will never come to an end, whose good gifts never grow old...” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 2, Chapter 25)

Holy communities of men and women that was both married and unmarried practiced the evangelical, monastic lifestyle of chastity and purity both before and after the promulgation of the Gospel

Many holy communities, both before and after the promulgation of the Gospel, followed God’s wondrous and splendid instruction on virtue and purity by choosing to live lives of piety, virtue, mortification and chastity, limiting their marital relations to a bare minimum or necessity in order to nurture and increase graces for themselves, their children and the whole world. The men and the women lived separated in holy communities, but met when the time of conception was most advantageous. They did not, however, have marital relations every time conception was most advantageous, but generally tried to have as little marital relations as possible, while also producing holy offspring for Our Lord. Thus, most of their life was spent in chastity, holiness and purity, and they also produced offspring for the love of our Lord and Creator while living such a good life. By the grace of God, many spouses also resolved to practice complete abstinence and chastity and thus acquired a greater crown in Heaven for their wonderful purity: “More blessed indeed are those marriages to be reckoned, where the parties concerned, whether after the procreation of children, or even through contempt of such an earthly progeny, have been able with common consent to practice self-restraint toward each other: both because nothing is done contrary to that precept whereby the Lord forbids a spouse to be put away (for he does not put her away who lives with her not carnally, but spiritually), and because that principle is observed to which the apostle gives

expression, "It remaineth, that they that have wives be as though they had none" [1 Cor. 7:29]." (St. Augustine, *On the Sermon on the Mount*, Book I, Chapter 14, Section 39, c. 394 A.D.)

Anne Catherine Emmerich wrote the following interesting information when explaining how some of these virtuous people lived before the promulgation of the Gospel. She said, speaking concerning "The Ancestors Of St. Anne – The Essenes":

"Until Isaiah assembled these people together and gave them a more regular organization, they were scattered about the land of Israel, leading lives of piety and intent on mortification. They wore their clothes without mending them till they fell off their bodies. They fought particularly against sexual immorality, and often by mutual consent lived in continence for long periods, living in huts far removed from their wives. When they lived together as husband and wife, it was only with the intention of producing a holy offspring which might bring nearer the coming of the Savior. I saw them eating apart from their wives; the wife came to take her meal after the husband had left the table. There were ancestors of St. Anne and of other holy people among these early Essenes." (*The Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary* by Anne Catherine Emmerich)

According to Wikipedia: "The Essenes were a sect of Second Temple Judaism that flourished from the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD which some scholars claim seceded from the Zadokite priests. Being much fewer in number than the Pharisees and the Sadducees (the other two major sects at the time), the Essenes lived in various cities but congregated in communal life dedicated to asceticism, voluntary poverty, daily immersion, and abstinence from worldly pleasures, including (for some groups) celibacy. Many separate but related religious groups of that era shared similar mystic, eschatological, messianic, and ascetic beliefs. These groups are collectively referred to by various scholars as the "Essenes." Josephus records that Essenes existed in large numbers, and thousands lived throughout Roman Judæa."

Josephus describes this pious collection of pure and chaste men and women that lived in a similar way that monks and nuns now live in his work *The Jewish War*.

Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, Book II, Chapter 8: "For three forms of philosophy are pursued among the Judeans: the members of one are Pharisees, of another Sadducees, and the third [school], who certainly are reputed to cultivate seriousness, are called Essenes;

although Judeans by ancestry, they are even more mutually affectionate than the others. Whereas these men shun the pleasures as vice, they consider self-control and not succumbing to the passions virtue. And although there is among them a disdain for marriage, adopting the children of outsiders while they are still malleable enough for the lessons they regard them as family and instill in them their principles of character: without doing away with marriage or the succession resulting from it, they nevertheless protect themselves from the wanton ways of women, having been persuaded that none of them preserves her faithfulness to one man.

“Since [they are] despisers of wealth—their communal stock is astonishing—, one cannot find a person among them who has more in terms of possessions. For by a law, those coming into the school must yield up their funds to the order, with the result that in all [their ranks] neither the humiliation of poverty nor the superiority of wealth is detectable, but the assets of each one have been mixed in together, as if they were brothers, to create one fund for all. They consider olive oil a stain, and should anyone be accidentally smeared with it he scrubs his body, for they make it a point of honor to remain hard and dry, and to wear white always. Hand-elected are the curators of the communal affairs, and indivisible are they, each and every one, [in pursuing] their functions to the advantage of all.

“No one city is theirs, but they settle amply in each. And for those school-members who arrive from elsewhere, all that the community has is laid out for them in the same way as if they were their own things, and they go in and stay with those they have never even seen before as if they were the most intimate friends. For this reason they make trips without carrying any baggage at all—though armed on account of the bandits. In each city a steward of the order appointed specially for the visitors is designated quartermaster for clothing and the other amenities. Dress and also deportment of body: like children being educated with fear. They replace neither clothes nor footwear until the old set is ripped all over or worn through with age. Among themselves, they neither shop for nor sell anything; but each one, after giving the things that he has to the one in need, takes in exchange anything useful that the other has. And even without this reciprocal giving, the transfer to them [of goods] from whomever they wish is unimpeded.

“Toward the Deity, at least: pious observances uniquely [expressed]. Before the sun rises, they utter nothing of the mundane things, but only certain ancestral prayers to him, as if begging him to come up. After these things, they are dismissed by the curators to the various crafts that they have each come to know, and after they have worked strenuously until the fifth hour they are again assembled in one area, where they belt on linen covers and wash their bodies in frigid water. After this purification they gather in a private hall, into which none of those who hold different views may enter: now pure themselves, they approach the dining room as if it were some [kind of] sanctuary. After they have seated themselves in silence, the baker serves the loaves in order, whereas the cook serves each person one dish of one food.

The priest offers a prayer before the food, and it is forbidden to taste anything before the prayer; when he has had his breakfast he offers another concluding prayer. While starting and also while finishing, then, they honor God as the sponsor of life. At that, laying aside their clothes as if they were holy, they apply themselves to their labors again until evening. They dine in a similar way: when they have returned, they sit down with the visitors, if any happen to be present with them, and neither yelling nor disorder pollutes the house at any time, but they yield conversation to one another in order. And to those from outside, the silence of those inside appears as a kind of shiver-inducing mystery. The reason for this is their continuous sobriety and the rationing of food and drink among them—to the point of fullness.

“As for other areas: although there is nothing that they do without the curators’ having ordered it, these two things are matters of personal prerogative among them: [rendering] assistance and mercy. For helping those who are worthy, whenever they might need it, and also extending food to those who are in want are indeed left up to the individual; but in the case of the relatives, such distribution is not allowed to be done without [permission from] the managers. Of anger, just controllers; as for temper, able to contain it; of fidelity, masters; of peace, servants. And whereas everything spoken by them is more forceful than an oath, swearing itself they avoid, considering it worse than the false oath; for they declare to be already degraded one who is unworthy of belief without God. They are extraordinarily keen about the compositions of the ancients, selecting especially those [oriented] toward the benefit of soul and body. On the basis of these and for the treatment of diseases, roots, apotropaic materials, and the special properties of stones are investigated.

“To those who are eager for their school, the entry-way is not a direct one, but they prescribe a regimen for the person who remains outside for a year, giving him a little hatchet as well as the aforementioned waist-covering and white clothing. Whenever he should give proof of his self-control during this period, he approaches nearer to the regimen and indeed shares in the purer waters for purification, though he is not yet received into the functions of communal life. For after this demonstration of endurance, the character is tested for two further years, and after he has thus been shown worthy he is reckoned into the group. Before he may touch the communal food, however, he swears dreadful oaths to them: first, that he will observe piety toward the deity; then, that he will maintain just actions toward humanity; that he will harm no one, whether by his own deliberation or under order; that he will hate the unjust and contend together with the just; that he will always maintain faithfulness to all, especially to those in control, for without God it does not fall to anyone to hold office, and that, should he hold office, he will never abuse his authority—outshining his subordinates, whether by dress or by some form of extravagant appearance; always to love the truth and expose the liars; that he will keep his hands pure from theft and his soul from unholy gain; that he will neither conceal anything from the school-members nor disclose anything of theirs

to others, even if one should apply force to the point of death. In addition to these, he swears that he will impart the precepts to no one otherwise than as he received them, that he will keep away from banditry, and that he will preserve intact their school's books and the names of the angels. With such oaths as these they completely secure those who join them.

“Those they have convicted of sufficiently serious errors they expel from the order. ... Now with respect to trials, [they are] just and extremely precise: they render judgment after having assembled no fewer than a hundred, and something that has been determined by them is non-negotiable. There is a great reverence among them for—next to God—the name of the lawgiver, and if anyone insults him he is punished by death. They make it point of honor to submit to the elders and to a majority. So if ten were seated together, one person would not speak if the nine were unwilling. They guard against spitting into [their] middles or to the right side and against applying themselves to labors on the seventh days, even more than all other Judeans: for not only do they prepare their own food one day before, so that they might not kindle a fire on that day, but they do not even dare to transport a container...

“They are divided into four classes, according to their duration in the training, and the later-joiners are so inferior to the earlier-joiners that if they should touch them, the latter wash themselves off as if they have mingled with a foreigner. [They are] long-lived, most of them passing 100 years—as a result, it seems to me at least, of the simplicity of their regimen and their orderliness. Despisers of terrors, triumphing over agonies by their wills, considering death—if it arrives with glory—better than deathlessness. The war against the Romans proved their souls in every way: during it, while being twisted and also bent, burned and also broken, and passing through all the torture-chamber instruments, with the aim that they might insult the lawgiver or eat something not customary, they did not put up with suffering either one: not once gratifying those who were tormenting [them], or crying. But smiling in their agonies and making fun of those who were inflicting the tortures, they would cheerfully dismiss their souls, [knowing] that they would get them back again.

“For the view has become tenaciously held among them that whereas our bodies are perishable and their matter impermanent, our souls endure forever, deathless: they get entangled, having emanated from the most refined ether, as if drawn down by a certain charm into the prisons that are bodies. But when they are released from the restraints of the flesh, as if freed from a long period of slavery, then they rejoice and are carried upwards in suspension. ... For the base, on the other hand, they separate off a murky, stormy recess filled with unending retributions. ... For the good become even better in the hope of a reward also after death, whereas the impulses of the bad are impeded by anxiety, as they expect that even if they escape detection while living, after their demise they will be subject to deathless retribution. These matters, then, the Essenes theologize with respect to the soul, laying down an irresistible bait for those who have once tasted of their wisdom.

“There are also among them those who profess to foretell what is to come, being thoroughly trained in holy books, various purifications, and concise sayings of prophets. Rarely if ever do they fail in their predictions.

“There is also a different order of Essenes. Though agreeing with the others about regimen and customs and legal matters, it has separated in its opinion about marriage. For they hold that those who do not marry cut off the greatest part of life, the succession, and more: if all were to think the same way, the line would very quickly die out. To be sure, testing the brides in a three-year interval, once they have been purified three times as a test of their being able to bear children, they take them in this manner; but they do not continue having intercourse with those who are pregnant, demonstrating that the need for marrying is not because of pleasure, but for children. Baths [are taken] by the women wrapping clothes around themselves, just as by the men in a waist-covering. Such are the customs of this order.” (This deliberately literal translation of the Greek is from Steve Mason, *Flavius Josephus: translation and commentary*, vol. 1b: *Judean War*)

We are not, however, still living in the Old Covenant. Today, after the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the standard of “perfection” and spiritual maturation is much higher (St. John Chrysostom, *Virg.*, XLIV. 1.12-13; SC 125. p. 252). Thus, “Since we have been vouchsafed a larger and more perfect teaching, God having no longer spoken by the prophets, but ‘having in these last days spoken to us by His Son,’ let us show forth a conversation far higher than theirs, and suitable to the honor bestowed on us. Strange would it be that He should have so far lowered Himself, as to choose to speak to us no longer by His servants, but by His own mouth, and yet we should show forth nothing more than those of old. They had Moses for their teacher, we, Moses’ Lord. Let us then exhibit a heavenly wisdom worthy of this honor, and let us have nothing to do with the earth” (St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. XV in Jn.*; PG 59.100-101).

God, who knows us better than ourselves, knows that man is weak and that man will fall into temptation when the chance to gratify the temptation is present. Thus, He ordained through the Holy Spirit that holy communities of men and women should be formed that lived a most exemplary and pure life. Sadly, these kinds of communities of true Catholics does not exist anymore, but by the grace of God and in accordance to prophecies that prophesy a renewal of things and of the Church, people will resolve to imitate these holy people. These people are, as it were, the life-blood of the whole human civilization and their prayers rise up to God as a perfect offering, and thus, the effect of such communities are always spiritually fruitful and advantageous for the world. Spouses should seriously consider practicing chastity unto the end of their lives for the sake of begetting spiritual children instead of fleshly or carnal

children; because the spiritual is so much higher than the carnal as much as Heaven is above the Earth or the angels above men. **“That virginity is good I do agree. But that it is even better than marriage, this I do confess.** And if you wish, I will add that it is as much better than marriage as Heaven is better than Earth, as much better as angels are better than men.” (St. John Chrysostom, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, Vol. 2: 1116, 392 A.D.)

Thus, the spouses who promise to be chaste until death beget eternal and spiritual children instead of fleshly and perishable children. St. Caesarius of Arles says, “You do not want to have a [fleshly] child? Settle a pious agreement with your husband; let him agree to an end of childbearing in accord with the virtue of chastity. The only sterility of a very pious wife is chastity.” (*Sermon 52:4*)

“But now in good, although aged, marriage, albeit there has withered away the glow of full age between male and female, yet there lives in full vigor the order of charity between husband and wife: because, the better they are, the earlier they have begun by mutual consent to contain from sexual intercourse with each other: not that it should be matter of necessity afterwards not to have power to do what they would, but that it should be matter of praise to have been unwilling at the first, to do what they had power to do. If therefore there be kept good faith of honor, and of services mutually due from either sex, although the members of either be languishing and almost corpse-like, yet of souls duly joined together, the chastity continues, the purer by how much it is the more proved, the safer, by how much it is the calmer.” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 3)

The Church from the very beginning has always taught and encouraged married and unmarried people to adopt a life of perfect chastity and virginity, and this teaching, as we have seen, is based on the teaching of the Apostles and the Holy Scripture. It is for this reason that *The Catechism of the Council of Trent* and the bishops and theologians of the Council who were instrumental in writing the Catechism recommended virginity and chastity to all in human society, whether old or young, teaching that: “For, now that the human race is increased... virginity is highly extolled and strongly recommended in the Sacred Scriptures to every one, as superior to the marriage state.”

Indeed, the marriage bond of spouses who promise perpetual chastity “will be only a firmer one”: “But God forbid that the nuptial bond should be regarded as broken between those who have by mutual consent agreed to observe a perpetual abstinence from the use of carnal concupiscence. Nay, it will be only a firmer one, whereby they have exchanged pledges

together, which will have to be kept by a special endearment and concord—not by the voluptuous links of bodies, but by the voluntary affections of souls.” (St. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Book 1, Chapter 12)

Tertullian (c. 160-225), exhorted all churchmen in A.D. 204 to embrace chastity and virginity when he wrote: “How many men, therefore, and how many women, in Ecclesiastical Orders, owe their position to continence, who have preferred to be wedded to God; who have restored the honor of their flesh, and who have already dedicated themselves as sons of that future age, by slaying in themselves the concupiscence of lust, and that whole propensity which could not be admitted within Paradise!” (*On Exhortation to Chastity*, Chapter 13)

It must be said, however, that everyone who chooses the admirable and superior state of chastity or virginity must not and cannot call himself better or more holy than a person who lives in the state of marriage. It is for God to reward a person for their deeds, and he who exalts himself on this earth shall surely be thrust into hell for his pride and presumption. Our Lord Jesus Christ is clear that “whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled: and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” (Matt. 23:12) If the chaste as well as the married have done their duty well, let them say in all humility, “*We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do.*” (Luke 17:10) Whether chaste or married, we must all account ourselves sinners worthy of nothing but eternal hellfire and suffering, for without God’s grace and the merit of Christ’s suffering and blood shed for our sins, we would all have ended up in hell in the eternal fire “*where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished.*” (Mark 9:43)

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, On Chastity: “Nor again, on the other hand, in maintaining thy chastity be thou puffed up against those who walk in the humbler path of matrimony. For as the Apostle saith, “Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled.” Thou too who retainest thy chastity, wast thou not begotten of those who had married? Because thou hast a possession of gold, do not on that account reprobate the silver. But let those also be of good cheer, who being married use marriage lawfully; who make a marriage according to God’s ordinance, **and not of wantonness for the sake of unbounded license; who recognize seasons of abstinence, that they may give themselves unto prayer; who in our assemblies bring clean bodies as well as clean garments into the Church; who have entered upon matrimony for the procreation of children, but not for indulgence.**” (On the Ten Points of Doctrine, *Lecture IV*, Section 25.--Of the Body)

While monasticism is to be preferred to marriage, it is to be preferred as a “better” above a “good”, and not as a “good” above an “evil.” Hence St. Gregory of Nazianzus writes, “It is good for one to be tied in marriage, temperately though, rendering more to God than to sexual relations. It is better to be free of these bonds, rendering everything to God and to the things above... Marriage is concerned about spouse and loved ones. Whereas for virginity, it is Christ.” (*On Self-Restraint*, PG 37, 643A-644A) Thus, St. Cyprian explains that “chastity maintains the first rank in virgins, the second in those who are continent, the third in the case of wedlock.” (*Of the Discipline and Advantage of Chastity*, no. 4)

And St. Augustine adds, “Thus also this mortal begetting, on account of which marriage takes place, shall be destroyed: but freedom from all sexual intercourse is both angelic exercise here, and continues for ever.... [I]t is good to marry, because it is good to beget children, to be a mother of a family: but it is better not to marry, because it is better not to stand in need of this work.... [W]e gather, that, in the first times of the human race, chiefly for the propagation of the People of God... it was the duty of the Saints to use this good of marriage, not as to be sought for its own sake, but necessary for the sake of something else: but now, whereas, in order to enter upon holy and pure fellowship, there is on all sides from out all nations an overflowing fullness of spiritual kindred, even they who wish to contract marriage only for the sake of children, are to be admonished, that they use rather the larger good of continence.... For what Christian men of our time being free from the marriage bond, having power to contain from all sexual intercourse, seeing it to be now "a time," as it is written, "not of embracing, but of abstaining from embrace," would not choose rather to keep virginal or widowed continence, than... to endure tribulation of the flesh, without which marriages cannot be...?” (*On the Good of Marriage*, Section 8-15)

Marriage not only remains good and honorable after the promulgation of the Gospel and the New Law, but itself has experienced a radical transformation. In fact, the essence of earthly marriage deepens in the New Covenant and more graphically shows forth its prototype. Marriage is a “mystery and a type of a mighty thing” according to the great St. Chrysostom (*Hom. XII in Col.*; PG 62.387; NPNF, p. 317). Earthly marriage in the New Covenant is designed to show forth the true “spiritual marriage” (Chrysostom, *Catech.*, 1.1.3; SC 50, p. 10) between Christ and the Church, and between Christ and the individual believing soul. This is the true glory of Christian marriage between God and man. Earthly marriage robs a virgin of her virginity. Spiritual marriage with Christ takes many, including those who have already lost their virginity, and re-creates them as virgins. Spiritual marriage restores virginity, making non-virgins virgins. “In the world virgins remain such before marriage, but not so after

marriage. Here it is not like that. But even if they are not virgins before marriage, after the marriage they become virgins. Thus the whole Church is a virgin.” (Chrysostom, *Hom. XXIII in 2 Cor.*; PG 61.553-554.) St. Ephrem writes, “O you, Virginity, your destruction is simple for all, but your restoration is easy only for the Lord of all.” (*Hymn 2 On Virginity*, and, *Hymn 8 On Epiphany*)

The glory of this spiritual marriage is also witnessed by the fact that, unlike earthly suitors who are looking for beauty and wealth, Christ took to Himself the most uncomely and impoverished of brides and made her comely and wealthy (Chrysostom, *Hom. XX in Eph.*; PG 62.137ff). The earthly dowry contract is a type of the covenant between God and man effected in the promises of obedience to the Bridegroom in Holy Baptism. Through a spiritual birth one enters into a spiritual marriage, not of passion or the flesh, but “wholly spiritual, the soul being united to God by a union unspeakable, and which he alone knoweth.” (*Ibid.*, PG 62.141; NPNF. p. 148.) The ultimate nuptial chamber is in heaven, where there is a beauty preserved for eternity not subject to aging, disease, or anxiety, but is “ever-blooming.” (Chrysostom, *Hom. XXVIII in Heb.*; PG 63.202)

In the same vein St. Ephrem the Syrian writes concerning the “bridal couch of delights”, “You have exchanged the transitory bridal couch for the bridal couch whose blessings are unceasing.” (*Hymn 24 On Virginity*) If the bridal chamber be so beautiful, asks St. John Chrysostom, what will the Bridegroom be like? (*Hom. XXVIII in Heb.*; PG 63.202.) Chrysostom graphically describes the union of Christ and the believer in the reception of the Holy Eucharist in the imagery of the consummation of earthly marriage via intercourse, “But what shall I say? It is not in this way only that I have shown My love to thee, but by what I have suffered. For thee I was spit upon, I was scourged. I emptied myself of glory, I left My Father and came to thee, who dost hate Me, and turn from Me, and art loath to hear My Name. I pursued thee, I ran after thee, that I might overtake thee. I united and joined thee to myself, ‘eat Me, drink Me,’ I said. Above I hold thee, and below I embrace thee. Is it not enough for thee that I have thy First-fruits above? Doth not this satisfy thy affection? I descended below: I not only am mingled with thee, I am entwined in thee. I am masticated, broken into minute particles, that the interspersion, and commixture, and union may be more complete. Things united remain yet in their own limits, but I am interwoven with thee. I would have no more any division between us. I will that we both be one.” (Chrysostom, *Hom. XV in 1 Tim.*; PG 62.586; NPNF, pp. 463-464.) “Let this be blended into that flesh. This is effected by the food which He hath freely given us, desiring to show the love which He hath for us; He hath kneaded up His body with ours, that we might be a certain One thing, like a body joined to a head. ... He hath given to those who desire Him not only to see Him, but even to

touch, and eat Him, and fix their teeth In His flesh, and to embrace Him, and satisfy all their love.” (Chrysostom, *Hom. XLVI in Jn.*; PG 59.260: NPNF. p. 166)

The reception of the Holy Gifts of God is the ultimate blending of flesh for Christians to embrace Christ and to satisfy all their love in the spiritual union. “This body that He given to us both to hold and to eat; a thing appropriate to intense love.” (Chrysostom, *Homily XXIV in 1 Cor.*; PG 61.204: NPNF. p. 143.) As earthly lovers are joined in a week long marriage feast, so the lover of Mankind weds Himself in Holy Baptism to the neophytes (newcomers), and the Bright Week festivities serve as a type of heavenly wedding feast. St. Ephrem the Syrian writes, “The soul is Your bride, the body Your bridal chamber, Your guests are the senses and thoughts. And if a single body is a wedding feast for You, how great is Your banquet for the whole Church?” (*Hymns on Paradise*) As in all typology the reality exceeds the type, for “no lover, even if he be violently mad, is so inflamed with his loved one as is God in His desire for the salvation of our souls.” (*Trois Catéchèses Baptismales*, 2.3-6) God wishes to unite with us more than any lover with his beloved (*Exp. in Ps. CXIV*; PG 55.316). Tertullian used similar graphic language to describe how Christ loves pious Christian women martyrs who refused to wear cosmetics and completely rejected the vanity it entails. “Go forth now to martyrdom already arrayed in the cosmetics and ornaments of prophets and apostles; drawing your whiteness from simplicity, your ruddy hue from modesty; painting your eyes with bashfulness, and your mouth with silence; implanting in your ears the words of God; fitting on your necks the yoke of Christ... Thus painted, you will have God as your Lover!” (*De Cultu Feminarum*, II.XIII.7.35-45; CCSL I, p. 370; ANF, p. 25)

St. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, A.D. 397: “For, if it was possible for one man to use many wives with chastity, it is possible for another to use one wife with lust. And I look with greater approval on the man who uses the fruitfulness of many wives for the sake of an ulterior object, than on the man who enjoys the body of one wife for its own sake. For in the former case the man aims at a useful object suited to the circumstances of the times; in the latter case he gratifies a lust which is engrossed in temporal enjoyments. And those men to whom the apostle permitted as a matter of indulgence to have one wife because of their incontinence, [1 Cor. 7] were less near to God than those who, though they had each of them numerous wives, yet just as a wise man uses food and drink only for the sake of bodily health, used marriage only for the sake of offspring. And, accordingly, if these last had been still alive at the advent of our Lord, when the time not of casting stones away but of gathering them together had come, [Eccles. 3:5] they would have immediately made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. For there is no difficulty in abstaining unless when there is lust in

enjoying. And assuredly those men of whom I speak knew that wantonness even in regard to wives is abuse and intemperance, as is proved by Tobit's prayer when he was married to his wife. For he says: "Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers, and blessed is Thy holy and glorious name for ever; let the heavens bless Thee, and all Thy creatures. Thou madest Adam, and gavest him Eve his wife for an helper and stay. . . . And now, O Lord, Thou knowest that I take not this my sister for lust... therefore have pity on us, O Lord." [Tobit 8:5-7]" (Book III, Chapter 18, Section 27.--We Must Take into Consideration the Time at Which Anything Was Enjoyed or Allowed.)

God might want a more virtuous, holy and pure way of life for a couple

The path to purity and perfection if one of the spouses is barren, is to perform the sexual act with the hope that God will grant a miracle of conception. This has happened numerous times throughout history and still happens even today. *The Golden Legend* tells us how the Blessed Virgin Mary's parents was granted this miracle of conception:

"I have seen thy shame [St. Joachim] and heard the reproach. That thou art barren is to thee no reproach by right, and God is avenger of sin and not of nature. And when he closeth the belly or womb, he worketh so that he openeth it after, more marvelously. And the fruit that shall be born shall not be seen to come forth by lechery, but that it be known that it is of the gift of God. The first mother of your people was Sara, and she was barren unto the ninetieth year, and had only Isaac, to whom the benediction of all people was promised. And was not Rachel long barren? And yet had she not after Joseph, that held all the lordship of Egypt? Which was more strong than Samson, and more holy than Samuel? And yet were their mothers barren. Thus mayst thou believe by reason and by example that the children long awaited be wont to be more marvelous. And therefore Anne thy wife shall have a daughter, and thou shalt call her Mary [The Blessed Virgin Mary], and she, as ye have avowed, shall be from her infancy sacred unto our Lord, and shall be full of the Holy Ghost.." (*The Golden Legend or The Lives of The Saints*, Vol 5, p. 59: The Nativity of Our Blessed Lady)

There is no guarantee, however, that God will grant barren couples children. In truth, God may want you to remain childless and then you have to accept this fact. There are many reasons why God would want this. One of the most common reasons for this is because God knows you will serve Him more devotedly because of it and that you will be of greater use in saving your own soul and the souls of other people, since, if you have no children, you will have more time to help and convert others and save yourself; instead of caring for your family

or children. Thus, “now that the resurrection is at our gates, and we do not speak of death, but advance toward another life better than the present, the desire for posterity is superfluous [since the world is filled with people]. If you desire children, you can get much better children now, a nobler childbirth and better help in your old age, if you give birth by spiritual labor.” (St. John Chrysostom, *On the Sacred Institution of Marriage*, Homily One)

In truth, “now [in the New Law] no one who is made perfect in piety seeks to have sons, save after a spiritual sense; but then [in the Old Law] it was the work of piety itself to beget sons even after a carnal sense: in that the begetting of that people was fraught with tidings of things to come [of the birth of the Savior], and pertained unto the prophetic dispensation.” (St. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage*, Section 19, A.D. 401)

There are also many examples in the Bible of God granting barren couples holy children first after they made a vow of raising the child in holiness and in the service of God. St. John the Baptist and Samson are just two examples of many. *The Golden Legend* tells us how St. John the Baptist’s parents was granted this miracle of conception:

“These two, Zachariah and his wife Elizabeth [the parents of John the Baptist], were just before our Lord, living in all the justifications, and holding all the commandments of the law without murmur or complaint, praising and thanking our Lord God. They had no children, for the holy woman was barren. They had great desire to have a son that might be bishop of the law by succession of lineage after Zachariah, and hereof had they in their youth prayed much to our Lord, but when it pleased not unto our Lord, they took it a worth and thanked God of all. They served the more devoutly our Lord God, for they had no charge but only to serve and attend unto him. Many there be that withdraw them from the service and love of our Lord for the love of their children.” (*The Golden Legend or The Lives of The Saints*, Vol 3: The Nativity of St. John Baptist)

However, God may also want you to use your time and effort in giving birth to spiritual children, which is far greater than giving birth to fleshly children. Thus, a couple should not mourn the lack of a child, but instead thank God for showing them that He wishes them to do something else with their time. St. John Chrysostom writes concerning infertility, “Let women not be distressed when they have no children: instead, let them give evidence of a thankful disposition and have recourse to the Creator and direct their request to him, the Lord of nature, not attributing childbirth to the intercourse of the partners nor to any other source than the Creator of everything.” (*Homilies on Genesis*, Homily XXI; PG 53.178)

St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 51:4: “Therefore, those to whom God is unwilling to give children should not try to have them by means of magical herbs or signs or evil charms. It is becoming proper for Christians especially not to seem to fight against the dispensation of Christ by cruel, wicked boldness. Just as women whom God wants to bear more children must not take medicines to prevent their conception, so those whom God wished to remain sterile should desire and seek this gift from God alone. They should always leave it to divine Providence, asking in their prayers that God in His goodness may deign to grant what is best for them. Those women whom God wants to bear children should take care of all that are conceived, or give them to someone else to rear. As many as they kill after they are already conceived or born, before the tribunal of the eternal Judge they will be held guilty of so many murders. If women attempt to kill the children within them by evil medicines, and themselves die in the act, they become guilty of three crimes on their own: suicide, spiritual adultery, and murder of the unborn child. Therefore, women do wrong when they seek to have children by means of evil drugs. They sin still more grievously when they kill the children who are already conceived or born, and when by taking impious drugs to prevent conception they condemn in themselves the nature which God wanted to be fruitful. Let them not doubt that they have committed as many murders as the number of the children they might have begotten.”

God also sometimes wants a couple to take in orphans and love them as if they were their own children; and barrenness can certainly be a result of this will of the Lord. A good couple should not be saddened if they are not given children through the natural way, but rejoice in the Lord and pray to Him fervently to be told what He wants them to do instead of raising their own fleshly children. They must love their adopted children as much as if they were their own, and not place the evil and worldly custom of loving humans just because they are of the same blood above the spiritual law that says that we must love all in the same way, whether they are of the same fleshly and temporal family as our own or not. St. John Chrysostom writes, “For that it is the business of widows—I speak of the bringing up of children—hear Paul saying, “If she hath brought up children” (1 Tim. 5:10); and again, “She shall be saved through the child-bearing,” (he has not said through her husband,) if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety” (1 Tim. 2:15).” (*Homilies on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*, Homily VI, 1 Thess. iv. 9-13, Ver. 13)

The Blessed Virgin Mary’s Life is the foundation of all chaste servants of Christ

Our Beloved Mother, Lady and Queen, The Blessed Virgin Mary, spoke to Sister Mary of Agreda (1602-1665), Spain, in a spiritual revelation recorded in the book *“The Mystical City of God,”* and explained the great necessity for all people to control their eyes, and to not set their eyes on things that might disturb their souls. She also told Sr. Mary of Agreda that Her own life was the foundation of the pure and chaste life of all religious and chaste servants of Our Lord, which is a fact that was not known publicly to many people at that time. In fact, Our Lady’s *“four vows of poverty, obedience, chastity and enclosure pleased the Lord very much, and I [The Blessed Virgin Mary] merited thereby that the Godfearing in the Church and in the law of grace are drawn to live under these vows, as is the custom in the present time.”*

The Virgin Mary spoke to Sister Mary of Agreda, saying: “My daughter, among the great and ineffable favors of the Omnipotent in the course of my life, was the one which thou has just learned and described; for by this clear vision of the Divinity and of the incomprehensible essence I acquired knowledge of the most hidden sacraments and mysteries, and in this adornment and espousal I received incomparable blessings and felt the sweetest workings of the Divinity in my spirit. My desire to take the four vows of poverty, obedience, chastity and enclosure pleased the Lord very much, and I merited thereby that the Godfearing in the Church and in the law of grace are drawn to live under these vows, as is the custom in the present time. This was the beginning of that which you religious practice now, fulfilling the words of David in the forty-fourth psalm: "After Her shall virgins be brought to the King;" for the Lord ordained that my aspirations be the foundation of religious life and of the evangelical law. I fulfilled entirely and perfectly all that I proposed to the Lord, as far as was possible in my state of life; **never did I look upon the face of a man, not even on that of my husband Joseph, nor on that of the angels, when they appeared to me in human form, though I saw and knew them all in God. Never did I incline toward any creature, rational or irrational, nor toward any human operation or tendency.** But in all things I was governed by the Most High, either directly by Himself or indirectly through the obedience, to which I freely subjected myself.

“Be careful therefore, my daughter, and fear so dreadful a danger; by divine assistance of grace raise thyself above thyself, never permitting thy will to consent to any disorderly affection or movement. I wish thee to consume thyself in dying to thy passions and in becoming entirely spiritualized, so that having extinguished within thee all that is of earth, thou mayest come to lead an angelic life and conversation. In order to deserve the name of spouse of Christ, thou must pass beyond the limits and the sphere of a human being and ascend to another state and divine existence. Although

thou art earth, thou must be a blessed earth, without the thorns of passion, one whose fruit is all for the Lord, its Master. If thou hast for thy Spouse that supreme and mighty Lord, who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, consider it beneath thy dignity to turn thy eyes, and much more thy heart, toward such vile slaves, as are the human creatures, for even the angels love and respect thee for thy dignity as spouse of the Most High. If even among men it is held to be a daring and boundless insolence in a plebeian to cast longing eyes upon the spouse of a prince, what a crime would it be to cast them on the spouse of the heavenly and omnipotent King? And it would not be a smaller crime if she herself would receive and consent to such familiarity. Consider and assure thyself that the punishment reserved for this sin is inconceivably terrible and I do not show it to thee visibly, lest thou perish in thy weakness. I wish that for thee my instructions suffice to urge thee to the fulfillment of all I admonish and to imitate me as my disciple, as far as thy powers go. Be also solicitous in recalling this instruction to the mind of thy nuns and in seeing that they live up to it.

“My daughter, the greatest happiness, which can befall any soul in this mortal life, is that the Almighty call her to his house consecrated to his service. For by this benefit He rescues the soul from a dangerous slavery and relieves her of the vile servitude of the world, where, deprived of true liberty, she eats her bread in the sweat of her brow. Who is so dull and insipid as not to know the dangers of the worldly life, which is hampered by all the abominable and most wicked laws and customs introduced by the astuteness of the devil and the perversity of men? The better part is religious life and retirement; in it is found security, outside is a torment and a stormy sea, full of sorrow and unhappiness. Through the hardness of their heart and the total forgetfulness of themselves men do not know this truth and are not attracted by its blessings. But thou, O soul, be not deaf to the voice of the Most High, attend and correspond to it in thy actions: I wish to remind thee, that one of the greatest snares of the demon is to counteract the call of the Lord, whenever he seeks to attract and incline the soul to a life of perfection in his service.

“Even by itself, the public and sacred act of receiving the habit and entering religion, although it is not always performed with proper fervor and purity of intention, is enough to rouse the wrath and fury of the infernal dragon and his demons; for they know that this act tends not only to the glory of the Lord and the joy of the holy angels, but that religious life will bring the soul to holiness and perfection. It very often happens, that they who have received the habit with earthly and human motives, are afterwards visited by divine grace, which perfects them and sets all things aright. If this is possible even when the beginning was without a good intention, how much more powerful and efficacious will be the light and influence of grace and the discipline of

religious life, when the soul enters under the influence of divine love and with a sincere and earnest desire of finding God, and of serving and loving Him?” (*The Mystical City of God*, “The Divine History and Life of The Virgin Mother of God”, Book 2, Chapter 1)

Also, not many people are aware of this truth, but all “our good works pass through the hands of Mary” and are increased by Her, and this makes it very important for everyone to pray the Rosary and direct our supplications and prayers directly to Our Lady for the great grace to remain chaste and pure until death. St. Louis De Montfort (1710) explains that: “... **inasmuch as our good works pass through the hands of Mary, they receive an augmentation [increase] of purity, and consequently of merit, and of satisfactory and impetratory value.** On this account they become more capable of solacing the souls in purgatory and of converting sinners than if they did not pass through the virginal and liberal hands of Mary. It may be little that we give by our Lady; but, in truth, if it is given without self-will and with a disinterested charity, that little becomes very mighty to turn away the wrath of God and to draw down His mercy.” (*True Devotion to Mary* #172)

Thus, “**in the heavens Mary commands the angels and the blessed. As a recompense, God has empowered her and commissioned her to fill with saints the empty thrones from which the apostate angels fell by pride.**” (*True Devotion to Mary* #28) And so “**the greatest saints, the souls richest in graces and virtues, shall be the most assiduous in praying to our Blessed Lady,** and in having her always present as their perfect model for imitation and their powerful aid for help.” (*True Devotion to Mary* #46) Those who fervently pray to Our Lady will always experience an alleviation in their temptations because, “**when the Holy Ghost, her Spouse, has found Mary in a soul, He flies there. He enters there in His fullness; He communicates Himself to that soul abundantly, and to the full extent to which it makes room for His Spouse.** Nay, one of the great reasons why the Holy Ghost does not now do startling wonders in our souls is because He does not find there a sufficiently great union with His faithful and inseparable Spouse.” (*True Devotion to Mary* # 36) Indeed, “... many others have proved invincibly, from the sentiments of the Fathers (among others, St. Augustine, St. Ephrem, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Germanus, St. John Damascene, St. Anselm, St. Bernard, St. Bernardine, St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure), **that devotion to Mary is necessary to salvation, and that... it is an infallible mark of reprobation to have no esteem and love for the holy Virgin.**” (*True Devotion to Mary* #40)

In contrast to the true children of God who love and honor Mary, and who salutes Her through the daily prayer of the Most Holy Rosary, heretics and especially the Protestants

regard Our Lady with contempt or disregard and often speak lowly of her as if she was a woman like everyone else and who just “happened” to be chosen by God, and nothing more. And what’s worse, they even get angry at people and accuse those who honor and pray to Our Lady for idolatry and heresy. Sadly, all heretics by their manifest contempt of Our Lady whom Our Lord loves and honors so much (and who is the most virtuous person that have ever lived or will ever live outside of Jesus Christ) reveal their impending and eternal damnation. “All the true children of God, the predestinate, have God for their Father and Mary for their Mother. **He who has not Mary for his Mother has not God for his Father. This is the reason why the reprobate, such as heretics, schismatics and others, who hate our Blessed Lady or regard her with contempt and indifference, have not God for their Father, however much they boast of it, simply because they have not Mary for their Mother.**” (St. Louis De Montfort, *True Devotion to Mary* #30)

Protestants especially reject the intercession of the Saints, but all that can read the Bible of course know that this is a complete rejection of the Bible. We see an example in Revelation chapter 5 of saintly intercession in Heaven. “... *elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, **and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.***” (Revelation 5:8) In the Book of Revelation or Apocalypse chapter 6, we also see dead saints who were martyred for the true faith of Jesus Christ, asking God to act on earth, and pleading to God to revenge their blood: “**And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?**” (Revelation 6:9-10) Notice that the souls of these dead martyrs cry out from underneath the altar. Since ancient times, the Catholic Church has placed the relics of martyrs underneath the altar. The fact that the voices of the martyrs come from under the altar – exactly where their relics are located in Catholic churches – is an interesting biblical confirmation of the Catholic and Biblical practice of relics. (Also see 2 Kings 2:8; 2 Kings 13:21; and Acts 19:12 for more biblical proof and passages of God’s power manifested through the relics of His holy departed or living servants.)

The next example we will look at comes from 1st Machabees chapter 5. This was a book which the Protestants removed from the Bible when they split from the Catholic Church. The comments given in the section on Purgatory in the book “[**The Bible Proves the Teachings of the Catholic Church**](#)” demonstrates that the Books of the Machabees are part of the true Old Testament. This is proven by the fact that the New Testament quotes from the Septuagint, which contains the Books of the Machabees and the 5 others which the Protestants reject. This

passage concerns a vision of Onias, a high-priest who had died, “*Now the vision was in this manner: Onias who had been high priest, a good and virtuous man, modest in his looks, gentle in his manners, and graceful in his speech, and who from a child was exercised in virtues, holding up his hands, prayed for all the people of the Jews: After this there appeared also another man... Then Onias answering... this is he that prayeth much for the people, and for all the holy city, Jeremias the prophet of God. Whereupon Jeremias stretched forth his right hand, and gave to Judas a sword of gold...*” (2 Machabees 15:12) This fascinating passage (which was removed from the Protestant bible) relates the vision of the deceased high-priest Onias. After his death, he was seen holding out his hands and interceding for the Jews by his prayers. Onias also presents the deceased prophet Jeremias, who gives a sword of gold to Judas Machabeus. Judas Machabeus is not to be confused with the traitor of the New Testament, Judas Iscariot. This passage is, therefore, another clear proof of the intercession of deceased saints, and the effectiveness of their prayers.

And so, it is an established fact of Holy Scripture that the Saints help us through their prayers. However, in comparison to all the Angels and Saints in Heaven, The Blessed Virgin Mary is greater than all Angels and men combined, according to the testimony and the Word of Our Lord Himself, and that is why her intercessory power with God is so much more effective than prayers to other Saints or Angels. (Please also see the section, [The Biblical Basis For Praying To Mary And For Catholic Teachings On Mary](#))

Indeed, *The Revelations of St. Bridget* reveals that Our Lord “preferred” his “Mother Mary above all others and loved her above every creature”, which shows us that after God, the most blessed and highly exalted creature of all in creation, is the Blessed Virgin Mary:

“[I saw a throne in Heaven on which sat the Lord Jesus Christ as Judge. At his feet sat the Virgin Mary. Surrounding the throne was a host of angels and a countless multitude of saints. A certain monk, a great scholar of theology, stood high up on a rung of a ladder that was fixed in the earth and whose top reached up to Heaven. With an impatient and agitated bearing, as though full of wickedness and guile, he put questions to the Judge:] First question. After this was said, the monk appeared on his rung as before saying: “O Judge, I ask you: Why do you seem unfair in your gifts and graces in that you gave preference to Mary your Mother before every creature and exalted her above the angels?”

Answer to the first question. The Judge answered: “Friend, in my deity are contained all future things and everything that will be done as well as everything that has been done, all of them being foreseen and foreknown from the start. Just as the fall of humankind was

something foreknown and permitted by God's justice but not accomplished through God nor something that had to happen due to God's foreknowledge, so too it was foreknown from eternity that the liberation of humankind would be accomplished through God's mercy.

"You ask why I preferred my mother Mary above all others and loved her above every creature. This is because a special mark of virtue was found in her. As when several logs are piled up and a fire is kindled, that log which is most capable and fit for burning is more quickly set aflame and starts burning. It was the same with Mary. When the fire of divine love, which in itself is immutable and eternal, began to kindle and be seen, and the deity wished to become incarnate, there was no creature more capable and fitter to receive this fire of love than the Virgin Mary, for no creature burned with such divine charity as she. And although her love has been shown and revealed in the last age, yet it was foreseen before the beginning of the world. Thus it was predetermined in the deity from all eternity that just as no one was found like her in charity, so too no one would be equal to her in grace and blessing." (Book 5, Interrogation 9)

In another revelation the Son of God spoke to her Mother and said:

"My most dear Mother, your words are sweet to me, for they come from your soul. You are like the dawn that breaks forth with clarity. You outshine all the heavens and your light and your clarity surpass all the angels. By your clarity, you drew to yourself the true sun, that is, my Divinity, so much so that the sun of my Divinity came to you and settled on you. By his warmth you are warmed in my love over all others and by his splendor you are enlightened in my wisdom more than all others. The darkness of the earth was chased away and all the heavens were enlightened through you. I say in my truth that your purity pleased me more than all the angels, and it drew my Divinity to you so that you were enkindled by the warmth of my Spirit; and through it you enclosed the true God and Man in your womb whereby mankind has been enlightened and the angels made joyful. Therefore, may you be blessed by your blessed Son! And for this reason, no prayer of yours will ever come to me without being heard, and through you, anyone who prays for mercy with the intention of mending their sinful ways will receive grace for your sake. For just as heat comes from the sun, so too all mercy is given through you. You are like a filled and flowing spring from which mercy flows to the help of the wretched."

"The Mother answered the Son: "All virtue and glory be yours, my Son! You are my God and my mercy; all good that I have comes from you. You are like the seed that was never sown but still grew and gave fruit a hundredfold and a thousandfold. For all mercy comes from you and since it is innumerable and ineffable, it can indeed be signified by the number one hundred, which signifies perfection, for all perfection comes from you and everyone is

perfected in virtue by you.”

“The Son answered the Mother: “Indeed, my Mother, you likened me rightly to the seed that was never sown but still grew, since I came with my Divinity to you, and my Manhood was not sown by intercourse but still grew in you, and from it mercy flowed out from you to all. Therefore, you have spoken rightly. Since you now draw mercy out of me with the most sweet words of your mouth, ask me what you want, and it shall be given to you.”

“The Mother answered: “My Son, since I have won mercy from you, I beg for mercy and help for the wretched. For there are namely four places: The first is Heaven, where the angels and the souls of the saints need nothing but you whom they have – for in you they have every good. The second place is hell, and those who stay there are filled with malice and excluded from all mercy. Therefore, nothing good can enter into them any more. The third is the place of those being purged in purgatory, and those who stay there need a threefold mercy since they are tormented in a threefold way. They suffer through their hearing, for they hear nothing but pain, sorrow, and misery. They suffer through their sight, for they see nothing but their own misery. They are tormented through their touch, for they feel the heat of the unbearable fire and of the harsh torment. My Lord and my Son, give them your mercy for the sake of my prayers!”

“The Son answered: “I will gladly give them a threefold mercy for your sake. First, their hearing shall be relieved, their sight will be eased, and their torment will be reduced and relieved. And all those who are in the greatest and most severe torment of the fires of purgatory shall from this moment come to the middle torment; those who are in the middle torment shall come to the lightest; and those who are in the lightest torment shall come home to rest.”

“The Mother answered: “Praise and honor to you, my Lord!” And she immediately said to her Son: “My beloved Son, the fourth place is the world, and its inhabitants are in need of three things: First, repentance for their sins. Second, penance and atonement. Third, the strength to do good deeds.”

“The Son answered: “Everyone who calls on your name and has hope in you along with a purpose of amendment for his sins shall be given these three things as well as the kingdom of Heaven. Your words are so sweet to me that I cannot deny you anything you plead for, for you want nothing other than what I want. You are indeed like a shining and burning flame by which the extinguished lights are enkindled and the burning lights are strengthened, for by your love which arose in my heart and drew me to you, those who are dead in sin will come to life again and those who are tepid and black like smoke will become strong in my love.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 50)

In an additional revelation the Mother of God spoke to her Son and said:

“Blessed be your name, my Son Jesus Christ, and all honor to your Manhood above all that is created! Glory to your Divinity above all good things, which are one God with your Manhood!”

“The Son answered: “My Mother, you are like a flower that grew in a valley. Around the valley there were five high mountains, and the flower grew out of three roots with a straight stem without any knots. This flower had five leaves that were filled with all sweetness. The valley with its flower grew above these five mountains, and the leaves of the flower spread themselves above every height of heaven and above all the choirs of angels. My beloved Mother, you are this valley for the sake of the great humility you had in comparison with all others. Your humility grew higher than five mountains.

“The first mountain was Moses because of his power. For he had power over my people through the Law, as if it were enclosed in his hand. But you enclosed the Lord of all law in your womb and, therefore, you are higher than this mountain. The second mountain was Elijah, who was so holy that he with soul and body was assumed into my holy place. But your soul, my most dear Mother, was assumed above all the choirs of angels to the throne of God along with your most pure body. You are therefore higher than Elijah. The third mountain was the strength of Samson that surpassed all other men. Yet the devil defeated him with his treachery. But you defeated the devil with your strength and power. You are therefore stronger than Samson. The fourth mountain was David, who was a man according to my heart and will, but yet fell into sin. But you, my beloved Mother, followed my will in all and never sinned. The fifth mountain was Solomon, who was full of wisdom but nevertheless was fooled. But you, my Mother, were full of all wisdom and were never fooled or deceived. You are therefore higher than Solomon.

“The flower grew from three roots, because of the three things you had from your youth: obedience, charity, and divine understanding. Out of these three roots grew the most straight stem without any knots, which means that your will was never bent to anything but my will. This flower also had five leaves that grew above all the choirs of angels. My dear Mother, you are indeed the flower with these five leaves.

“The first leaf is your nobleness, which is so great that my angels, who are noble before me, when seeing and considering your nobleness, saw that it was above them and more eminent than their holiness and nobleness. You are therefore higher than the angels. The second leaf is your mercy, which was so great that you, when you saw the misery of all the souls, had compassion over them and suffered the greatest torment at my death. The angels are full of mercy, and yet they never endure sorrow or pain, but you, my loving Mother, were merciful to the wretched when you felt all the sorrow and torment of my death, and you wanted to suffer torment for the sake of mercy rather than being separated from it. Therefore, your mercy surpassed the mercy of all the angels. The third leaf is your loving kindness. The

angels are loving and kind and want good for everyone, but you, my dearest Mother, had before your death a will like an angel in your soul and body and did good to everyone. And still you do not refuse anyone who reasonably prays for his own good. Therefore, your kindness is higher and greater than the angels. The fourth leaf is your beauty. The angels behold the beauty of each other and wonder over the beauty of all souls and all bodies, but they see that the beauty of your soul is above all that is created and that the nobleness of your body surpasses all created beings. And so, your beauty surpassed all the angels and everything created. The fifth leaf was your divine joy, for nothing pleased you but God, just as nothing but God delights the angels. Each and every one of them knows and knew his own joy in himself, but when they saw the joy in you to God, they beheld in their conscience how their joy flamed up in them like a light in the love of God. They saw that your joy was like a flaming bonfire, burning with the hottest fire, with flames so high that it came near to my Divinity. And for this reason, my most sweet Mother, your divine joy burned well above all the choirs of angels. Since this flower had these five leaves, namely, nobleness, mercy, loving kindness, beauty, and the highest joy in God, it was full of all sweetness.

“But the one who wants to taste of its sweetness should approach the sweetness and assume it into himself. This is also what you did, my most sweet Mother. You were so sweet to my Father that he assumed all of you into his Spirit, and your sweetness delighted him above all other things. The flower also bears a seed by the heat and power of the sun and from it grows a fruit. In this way the blessed sun, my Divinity, assumed Manhood from your virginal womb. For just as the seed makes and grows flowers of the same kind as the seed wherever it is sown, so my limbs were like yours in shape and appearance, even though I was a man and you a woman and a virgin. This valley was uplifted with its flower above all mountains when your body together with your most holy soul was lifted up above all the choirs of angels.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1, Chapter 51)

It should thus be clear to all of good will that “The Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of God; therefore she is far more excellent than all the Angels, even the Seraphim and Cherubim. She is the Mother of God; therefore she is most pure and most holy, so that under God no greater purity can be imagined.” (Pope Pius XI, *Lux Veritatis* #42, A.D. 1931)

The fact that Our Lady is more perfect than all other creatures, is also the reason why her intercessory power is greater than all other created beings. Christ Himself also confirms that His “Mother excel all the saints in virtue. Though the angels are pure, she is purer still. Though the prophets were filled with God’s Spirit, though the martyrs suffered greatly, yet my Spirit was fuller and more fervent in my Mother, and she was greater than any martyr. The confessors certainly practiced complete abstinence, but my Mother had still more perfect

abstinence, for in her was found my divinity along with my humanity.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 4, Chapter 92)

“Let us contemplate the sentiments of profound respect and maternal tenderness, which fill the soul of our blessed Lady, now that she has conceived Jesus in her chaste womb: He is her God, and yet He is her Son. Let us think upon this wonderful dignity bestowed upon a creature; and let us honour the Mother of our God. It is by this mystery that the prophecy of Isaias was fulfilled: “Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son;” and that of Jeremias: “The Lord hath created a new thing upon the earth; a woman shall compass a Man.”

“... But what human language could express the dignity of our Lady, who carries within her chaste womb Him that is the world’s salvation! If Moses, after a mere colloquy with God, returned to the Israelites with the rays of the majesty of Jehovah circling his head, what an aureola of glory is due to Mary, who has within her, as in a living heaven, that very God Himself! The divine Wisdom tempers the effulgence of her glory that it be not visible to men; and this in order that the state of humility, which the Son of God has chosen as the one in which He would manifest Himself to the world, should not be removed at the very outset by the dazzling glory which would, otherwise, have been seen gleaming from His Mother.

“... What so lovely in creation as this Virgin, who loves the Lord with such matchless love and is so exceedingly loved by this her Lord? It is she of whom the Scripture speaks, when it calls the bride the dearest hind. What, too, so lovely as that well-beloved Son of God, born of His beloved Father from all eternity, and now, at the end of time, as the apostle speaks, formed in the womb of His dearest Mother, and become to her, in the words of the same divine proverb, the sweetest fawn? Let us, therefore, cull our flowers, and offer them to both Child and Mother. But let me briefly tell you what are the flowers you must offer to our Lady. Christ says, speaking of His Humanity, ‘I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys.’ By Him, therefore, let us purify our souls and bodies, and so be able to approach our God in chastity. Next, preserve this flower of purity from all that would injure it; for flowers are tender things, and soon droop and fade. Let us wash our hands among the innocent, and, with a pure heart, and pure body, and cleansed lips, and chaste soul, let us gather in the paradise of our heavenly Father our fresh flowers for the new Nativity of our new King. With these flowers let us stay up this most saintly Mother, this Virgin of virgins, this Queen of queens, this Lady of ladies; that so we may deserve to receive the blessing of the Mother and of the divine Babe.” (*The Liturgical Year* by Dom Guéranger, O.S.B.)

The best way to honor Our Lady and ask Her for spiritual graces is undoubtedly to pray the Rosary daily, which countless of Popes and Saints have revealed is especially effective in helping to conquer our sins and everyday failings. St. Louis De Montfort writes: “I could tell

you at great length of the grace God gave me to know by experience the effectiveness of the preaching of the Holy Rosary and of how I have seen, with my own eyes, the most wonderful conversions it has brought about.” (*The Secret of the Rosary*, p. 10) St. Louis De Montfort: “Our Lady revealed to Blessed Alan De la Roche that no sooner had St. Dominic begun preaching the Rosary than hardened sinners were touched and wept bitterly over their grievous sins... everywhere that he preached the Holy Rosary such fervor arose that sinners changed their lives and edified everyone by their penances and change of heart.” (*The Secret of the Rosary*, p. 66)

In truth, Our Lord Himself directs us and tells us to take Our Lady as our Mother at the foot of the cross in the Holy Gospel when He gives Her over to John the Apostle (St. John being a type of the whole of humanity in the same way that many things in the Old Law prefigured things of the New Law). “*Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen his mother and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son. After that, he saith to the disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour, the disciple took her to his own.*” (John 19:25-27) Though other women were at the foot of the cross, Jesus singles out His mother. Jesus calls her “woman” because she is the woman of Genesis 3:15 – the one in complete opposition to the serpent. To see the overwhelming biblical evidence that Mary is the new Eve and the true Arc of the Covenant, as well as proof for other Catholic doctrines concerning Mary, please read the section about Her in the book “[The Bible Proves the Teachings of the Catholic Church](#)”, which proves without a doubt that Our Lady have been given an amazing and special intercessory power by Our Lord to help mankind gain victory over sin and the Devil.

The Life of St. Gemma Gelgani (1878-1903): “The reader already knows something of the way in which she strove all her life to keep this beautiful virtue [of chastity] unsullied in her heart. She cultivated a special devotion to St. Agnes, and to the other saints who were particularly remarkable for their purity. But it was above all to the Blessed Virgin that she entrusted the protection of her treasure, and for this purpose all her life long she never omitted to say three Hail Mary’s every day with her hands under her knees. She was once surprised in this position by her Aunt Elisa and upon her asking for an explanation she replied: ‘Grandmother taught me to do it. She said that if I said three Hail Mary’s in that way, the Blessed Virgin would never allow me to commit a sin against purity.’”

The Gospel of Luke tells us about Our Lady’s love of purity and chastity

The Gospel of Luke describes the angelic salutation that the Angel Gabriel gave to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Luke 1:26-35 “And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said unto her: **Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”**

Haydock Commentary explains Luke 1:26-35: “**Ver. 34.** How shall this be done? She only asks about the manner. --- Because I know not man. This answer, as St. Augustine takes notice, would have been to no purpose, had she not made a vow to God to live always a virgin. (Witham) --- Listen to the words of this pure Virgin. The angel tells her she shall conceive; but she insists upon her virginity, holding her purity in higher estimation than the promised dignity. (St. Gregory of Nyssa.) --- She did not doubt the truth of what the angel said, (as Calvin impiously maintained) but she wished it might not happen to the prejudice of her vowed virginity. (St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, Ven. Bede, Theophylactus, &c. &c.) --- You ask, how shall this be done, since you know not man? This, your ignorance of man, is the very reason why this will take place within you. For had you not been pure, you never would have been deemed worthy of so great a mystery. Not because marriage is bad, but because virginity is far more excellent. The common Lord of all ought in his birth to have something common with all mankind, and still something different. He was conceived and born in the womb like the rest of mankind, but he differed from them in being born of a virgin. (St. Chrysostom, xlix. in Genes.)”

It is of course not a coincidence that God chose a Virgin to bear and give birth to Himself.

Mary's love of chastity and purity was so pleasing to Our Lord that He was drawn to her womb and consented to become man. It was not suitable for God to become a man through the normal way of sexual copulation since, after the fall of Adam and Eve, the sexual act had become intoxicating, shameful and defective in its essence. Our Lord, being the source of all purity and virtue, chose a most holy vessel of chastity and purity ever created – The Blessed Virgin Mary – since the justice and greatness of His Majesty required this.

In *St. Bridget's Revelations*, Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself revealed that **“I preferred to be born of a virgin rather than of a woman who was not a virgin, because that which is purest befits me who am God most pure.** While it remained in the order of its creation, human nature had no deformity. But once the commandment was transgressed, there immediately arose a sense of shame, just as happens to people who sin against their temporal lord, who are even ashamed of the very limbs with which they have sinned. Along with shame over the transgression, there also sprang up a disordered impulse, especially in the reproductive organs. Yet, in order that this impulse might not be unproductive, it was by God's goodness turned to good, and the act of carnal union was established by divine commandment in order that nature might bear its fruits. However, since it brings greater glory to act above and beyond the commandment, adding whatever good one is led by love to make, it pleased God to choose for his work the institution tending to **greater purity and love, and that is virginity.** For it is more virtuous and generous to be in the fire of tribulation and not to burn than to be without fire and still want to be crowned. **Now, since virginity is like the fairest path to heaven while marriage is more like a road, it befitted me, God most pure, to rest in a virgin most pure.** Just as the first man was created from the virgin earth, not yet polluted by blood, and because Adam and Eve committed their sin while they were still in a sound state of nature, so too I, God, wished to be received in the purest vessel so as to transform everything by my goodness.” (*The Revelations of Saint Bridget*, Book 5, Interrogation 12)

In the same *Revelations of St. Bridget*, The Blessed Virgin Mary also describes how she had promised chastity to Our Lord long before she was told that she was going to conceive and give birth to God Himself: “I am the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of God... I will now show you more fully how, from the beginning, when I first heard and understood that God existed, I always, and with fear, was concerned about my salvation and my observance of His Commandments. But when I learned more about God—that he was my Creator and the judge of all my actions—I loved him more dearly, and I was constantly fearful and watchful so as to not offend him by word or deed.

“Later, when I heard that he had given the Law and the Commandments to the people

and worked such great miracles through them, I made a firm decision in my soul to never love anything but him, and all worldly things became most bitter to me. When still later I heard that God himself would redeem the world and be born of a Virgin, I was seized by such great love for him that I thought of nothing but God and desired nothing but him. I withdrew myself, as much as I was able, from the conversation and presence of parents and friends, and I gave away all my possessions to the poor, and kept nothing for myself but meager food and clothing.

“Nothing was pleasing to me but God! I always wished in my heart to live until the time of his birth, and perhaps, deserve to become the unworthy handmaid of the Mother of God. **I also promised in my heart to keep my virginity, if this was acceptable to him, and to have no possessions in the world.** However, if God wanted otherwise, my will was that his will, not mine, be done; for I believed that he could do all things and wanted nothing but what was beneficial and best for me. Therefore, I entrusted all my will to him.

“When the time approached for the virgins to be presented in the temple of the Lord, I was also among them due to the devout compliance of my parents to the Law. **I thought to myself that nothing was impossible for God, and since he knew that I wanted and desired nothing but him, I knew that he could protect my virginity, if it pleased him.** However, if not, I wanted his will to be done. After I had heard all the commandments in the temple, I returned home, burning even more now than ever before with the love of God, being inflamed daily with new fires and desires of love.” (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 1 Chapter 10)

In another revelation, Jesus Christ praises His mother’s most pure Virginity and other virtues and explains why He loves Her so much:

“The Son speaks: ‘I am crowned king in my divinity without beginning and without end. A crown has neither beginning nor end; thus it is a symbol of my power, which had no beginning and will have no end. I had another crown, too, in my keeping: I myself, God, am that crown. It was prepared for the person who had the greatest love for me. And you, my most sweet Mother, won this crown and drew it to yourself through righteousness and love. **The angels and other saints bear witness that your love for me was more ardent and your chastity more pure than that of any other, and that it was more pleasing to me than all else.** Your head was like gleaming gold and your hair like sunbeams, because **your most pure virginity, which is like the head of all your virtues, as well as your control over every illicit desire pleased me and shone in my sight with all humility.** You are rightly called the crowned queen over all creation - “queen” for the sake of your

purity, “crowned” for your excellent worth.” (*The Revelations of Saint Bridget*, Book 5, Revelation 4)

Venerable Maria de Agreda in her marvelous work “*The Mystical City of God: The Divine History and Life of The Virgin Mother of God*,” also explains that Our Lady and Queen was totally different than all of the other humans:

“The Blessed Birth Of Mary Immaculate. She was born pure and stainless, beautiful and full of grace, thereby demonstrating, that She was free from the law and the tribute of sin. Although She was born substantially like other daughters of Adam, yet her birth was accompanied by such circumstances and conditions of grace, that it was the most wonderful and miraculous birth in all creation [at that time since Our Lord had not been born yet] and will eternally redound to the praise of her Maker. At twelve o’clock in the night this divine Luminary issued forth, dividing the night of the ancient Law and its pristine darknesses from the new day of grace, which now was about to break into dawn. She was clothed, handled and dressed like other infants, though her soul dwelt in the Divinity; and She was treated as an infant, though She excelled all mortals and even all the angels in wisdom. Her mother did not allow Her to be touched by other hands than her own, but she herself wrapped Her in swaddling clothes: and in this Saint Anne was not hindered by her present state of childbirth; for she was free from the toils and labors, which other mothers usually endure in such circumstances.” (*The Mystical City of God*, Book 1, Chapter 7)

“Her Childhood Years. [Words of the Queen – The Virgin Mary speaks to Sister Mary of Agreda, Spain:] My dearest daughter, keep in mind, that all the living are born destined for death, but ignorant of the time allowed them; this they know for certain however, that the term of life is short, that eternity is without end, and that in this life only they can harvest what will yield life or death eternal. In this dangerous pilgrimage of life God has ordained, that no one shall know for certain, whether he is worthy (Eccles. 9, 1) of his love or hate; for if he uses his reason rightly, this uncertainty will urge him to seek with all his powers the friendship of that same Lord. God justifies his cause as soon as the soul acquires the use of reason; for from that time onward He enlightens and urges and guides man toward virtue and draws him away from sin, teaching him to distinguish between water and fire, to approve of the good and reject evil, to choose virtue and repel vice. Moreover, God calls and rouses the soul by his holy inspirations and continual promptings, provides the help of the sacraments, doctrines and commandments, urges man onward through his angels, preachers, confessors,

ministers and teachers, by special tribulations and favors, by the example of strangers, by trials, death and other happenings and dispositions of his Providence; He disposes the things of life so as to draw toward Him all men, for He wishes all to be saved. Thus he places at the disposal of the creature a vast field of benevolent help and assistance, which it can and should use for its own advancement. Opposing all this are the tendencies of the inferior and sensitive nature, infected with the *fomes peccati*, the foment of sin, tending toward sensible objects and by the lower appetites and repugnances, disturbing the reason and entralling the will in the false liberty of ungoverned desires. The demon also, by his fascinations and his deceitful and iniquitous suggestions obscures the interior light, and hides the deadly poison beneath the pleasant exterior. But the Most High does not immediately forsake his creatures; He renews his mercy and his assistance, recalling them again and again, and if they respond to his first call, He adds others according to his equity, increasing and multiplying them in proportion as the soul corresponds. As a reward of the victory, which the soul wins over itself, the force of his passions and concupiscences is diminished, the spirit is made free to soar higher and rise above its own inclinations and above the demons.

“But if man neglects to rise above his low desires and his forgetfulness, he yields to the enemy of God and man. The more he alienates himself from the goodness of God, so much the more unworthy does he become of the secret callings of the Most High, and so much less does he appreciate his assistance, though it be great. For the demon and the passions have obtained a greater dominion and power over his intellect and have made him more unfit and more incapable of the grace of the Almighty. Thereon, my dear daughter, rests the whole salvation or condemnation of souls, that is, in commencing to admit or resist the advances of the Lord. I desire thee not to forget this doctrine, so that thou mayest respond to the many calls which thou receivest of the Most High. See thou be strong in resisting his enemies and punctually solicitous in fulfilling the pleasure of thy Lord, for thereby thou wilt gratify Him and attend to the commands made known to thee by divine light. I loved my parents dearly, and the tender words of my mother wounded my heart; but as I knew it to be the will of the Lord to leave them, I forgot her house and my people in order to follow my Spouse. The proper education and instruction of children will do much toward making them more free and habituated to the practice of virtue, since thus they will be accustomed to follow the sure and safe guiding star of reason from its first dawn.” (*The Mystical City of God*, Book 1, Chapter 8)

Bad Company is the root of many evils

It is a little discussed topic nowadays, but the Holy Scripture and the Saints teach that there is a great necessity to have a detachment from all relatives and friends in order to be saved. St. Alphonsus, (c. 1755) when speaking **on the necessity to be detached from relatives, explains, saying:** “How many monks, says St. Jerome, ‘by compassion towards their father and mother have lost their own souls?’ How many religious by compassion for their relatives have been lost? In another place the saint says, that the more tender the affection of a religious for her kindred, the greater her impiety towards God... **St. Ignatius of Loyola refused to interfere in the marriage of one of his nieces, though she was heiress of the family. St. Francis Borgia would not ask the Pope for a dispensation (which he would have easily obtained) to have his son married to a relative, although the acquisition of a large estate depended upon the marriage...** When, then, relatives seek to implicate you in worldly affairs, withdraw at once from them.” In truth, **“If attachment to relatives were not productive of great mischief Jesus Christ would not have so strenuously exhorted us to estrangement from them... a man’s enemies shall be they of his own household (Mt. 10:36)... Relatives are the worst enemies of the sanctification of Christians...”**

An example in the lives of the seers of Fatima illustrates how there is also a necessity for all to be detached from friends, and especially those who are worldly or ungodly. It is related that “One afternoon Lucia brought some other girls, schoolmates. When they had gone, Francisco looked seriously at her and said: ‘Don’t walk with them, because you can learn to commit sins.’ ‘But they leave school when I do’ (Lucia replied). ‘When you leave, spend a little while at the feet of the hidden Jesus, and then come home alone.’” (William Thomas Walsh, *Our Lady of Fatima*, p. 164)

Our speech effects our purity

In *The First Letter of Saint Peter*, St. Peter tells us that we need to carefully consider how we speak and act. Sins against chastity are almost always begun by a lustful look or move, and shameful talk. That is why modesty in dress, speech and behavior is very important in the Christian life.

1 Peter 3:1-6 “In like manner also let wives be subject to their husbands: that if any believe not the word, they may be won without the word, by the conversation of the wives. **Considering your chaste conversation with fear. Whose adorning let it not be the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the**

putting on of apparel: But the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptibility of a quiet and a meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God. For after this manner heretofore the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: As Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters you are, doing well, and not fearing any disturbance.”

Haydock Commentary adds: “**Ver. 1.** *Let wives, &c.* In the first six verses he gives instructions to married women. 1. By their modest and submissive dispositions to endeavor to gain and convert their husbands, shewing them such a respect as Sara did, (whose daughters they ought to esteem themselves) who called Abraham her lord, or master; (Genesis xviii. 12.) 2. To be modest in their dress, without vanity; 3. That women take the greatest care of the *hidden man*, i.e. of the interior disposition of their heart, which he calls *the incorruptibility of a quiet and a meek spirit*; 4. *Not fearing any trouble*, when God’s service or the duty to their husbands require it. (Witham)”

The sinful and fleshly man and woman know not the humility of “*the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptibility of a quiet and a meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God.*” (1 Peter 3:4) All their actions are rather based on vanity and a most disgusting desire to get others or their spouse to sensually desire them, and that is also why (being spurred by the devil) they dress sensually, use makeup and unbecoming and disgraceful language. But those who have left the empty life of vanity and sensuality behind, and who refuses to dress like whores, using makeup and walk in “lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings” – have risen with Christ.

1 Peter 4:1-5 “Christ therefore having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought: **for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sins: That now he may live the rest of his time in the flesh, not after the desires of men, but according to the will of God.** *For the time past is sufficient* to have fulfilled the will of the Gentiles, for them who have walked in riotousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and unlawful worshipping of idols. Wherein they think it strange, that you run not with them into the same confusion of riotousness, speaking evil of you. Who shall render account to him, who is ready to judge the living and the dead.”

Haydock Commentary adds: “**Ver. 1.** *He that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sins.* Some expound these words of Christ; but he never had committed the least sin. The true sense is, that every one who suffers by Christ’s example, leaves off a sinful life, so as not to fall

into great sins. (Witham) --- **Ver. 3.** *For the time past is sufficient, &c.* As if he said, you who were Gentiles, have already lived too long in vices before your conversion; so that they who are not yet converted, *admire* at the change they see in you, make a jest of you, talk against you for your not running on with them in the same wicked and shameful disorders: but they shall render an exact account of all to the just Judge of the living and the dead... who judgeth and condemneth those who had lived according to the flesh, but gave life to those who had lived well, or done penance according to the spirit of God. (Witham)”

The evil of lust makes man blind to spiritual things “while dulness of sense arises from gluttony”

Most men and women of the world do not recognize or know about the fact that sensual lusts (both for the married and the unmarried) actually blinds people from understanding or perceiving spiritual things/truths. This fact also requires married people from not indulging too often in the marital act. For all who overindulge in the marital act will always experience a “**blindness of mind**” of spiritual things. Indeed, St. Thomas Aquinas, in his *Summa Theologica* explains that:

“Different causes produce different effects. **Now Gregory says (Moral. xxxi, 45) that dulness of sense arises from gluttony, and that blindness of mind arises from lust...** The perfect intellectual operation in man consists in an abstraction from sensible phantasms, wherefore the more a man’s intellect is freed from those phantasms, the more thoroughly will it be able to consider things intelligible, and to set in order all things sensible. Thus Anaxagoras stated that the intellect requires to be “detached” in order to command, and that the agent must have power over matter, in order to be able to move it. Now it is evident that pleasure fixes a man’s attention on that which he takes pleasure in: wherefore the Philosopher says (Ethic. x, 4,5) that we all do best that which we take pleasure in doing, while as to other things, we do them either not at all, or in a faint-hearted fashion. Now carnal vices, namely gluttony and lust, are concerned with pleasures of touch in matters of food and sex; and these are the most impetuous of all pleasures of the body. For this reason these vices cause man’s attention to be very firmly fixed on corporeal things, **so that in consequence man’s operation in regard to intelligible things is weakened**, more, however, by lust than by gluttony, forasmuch as sexual pleasures are more vehement than those of the table. **Wherefore lust gives rise to blindness of mind, which excludes almost entirely the knowledge of spiritual things**, while dulness of sense arises from gluttony, which makes a man weak in regard to the same [spiritual] intelligible things.”

(Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 15, Art. 3, Second and Third Articles)

St. Alphonsus Ligouri, in *The Great Means of Salvation and of Perfection*, **On The Necessity and Power of Prayer**, talks about how the impure temptations of the flesh affects us and that through them (if we yield to them) the Devil takes away all spiritual lights and makes us forget all our meditations and good resolutions, and even makes us disregard the truths of faith, and even almost lose the fear of the divine punishments. He writes that “it is especially to be remarked that no one can resist the impure temptations of the flesh without recommending himself to God when he is tempted. **This foe is so terrible that, when he fights with us, he, as it were, takes away all light; he makes us forget all our meditations, all our good resolutions; he makes us also disregard the truths of faith, and even almost lose the fear of the divine punishments...** He who in such a moment does not have recourse to God is lost... Chastity is a virtue which we have no strength to practice, unless God gives us; and God does not give this strength except to him who asks for it. But whoever prays for it will certainly obtain it.”

How to conquer temptations

There are many things that are necessary for us to do if we want to be able to conquer our temptations and sensual-fleshy desires. Sloth in performing acts of virtue is a sin, and therefore, it is necessary to know about and perform those acts which God requires from us. “If you desire to possess the purity which becomes the Spouse of Jesus, **you must cut off all dangerous occasions: you must cherish a holy ignorance of all that is opposed to chastity, and abstain from reading whatever has the slightest tendency to sully the soul.**” (St. Alphonsus, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, p. 32) In truth, “**The principal means of acquiring an ardent love of Christ are mental prayer, Communion, mortification, retirement.**” (*The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, p. 28) And so, “**If thou wouldst be certain of being in the number of the elect, strive to be one of the few, not of the many. And if thou wouldst be quite sure of thy salvation, strive to be among the fewest of the few; that is to say: Do not follow the great majority of mankind, but follow those who enter upon the narrow way, who renounce the world, who give themselves to prayer, and who never relax their efforts by day or by night, that they may attain everlasting blessedness.**” (Fr. Martin Von Cochem, *The Four Last Things*, p. 221, quoting from St. Anselm, *Archbishop and Doctor of the Church*)

The consent to bad thoughts is the beginning of all evil

St. Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787), *Bishop and Doctor of the Church*, writes concerning the absolute necessity of always resisting bad thoughts and temptations and that we must never in the least degree yield to them, as is shown by the following tragic example of a damned, christian soul:

“My dear Christians, be careful to banish these bad thoughts, by instantly turning for help to Jesus and Mary. He who contracts the habit of consenting to bad thoughts exposes himself to great danger of dying in sin, for the reason that it is very easy to commit sins of thought. In a quarter of an hour a person may entertain a thousand wicked desires, and for every evil desire to which he consents he deserves hell. At the hour of death the dying cannot commit sins of action, because they are unable to move; but they can easily indulge sins of thought, and the devil suggests every kind of wicked thought and desire to them when they are in that state. St. Eleazar, as Surius relates, was so violently and frequently tempted by bad thoughts at the hour of death, that he exclaimed: "Oh, how great is the power of the devils at the hour of death!" The saint, however, conquered his enemies, because he was in the habit of rejecting bad thoughts; but woe to those who have acquired a habit of consenting to them! Father Segneri tells us of a man who during his life had often consented to bad thoughts. At the hour of death he confessed his sins with great compunction, so that every one regarded him as a saint; but after death he appeared and said that he was damned; he stated that he made a good confession, and that God had pardoned all his sins; but before death the devil represented to him that, should he recover, it would be ingratitude to forsake the woman who loved him so much. He banished the first temptation: a second came; he then delayed for a little, but in the end he rejected it: he was assailed by a third temptation, and consented to it. Thus, he said, he had died in sin, and was damned. My brother, do not say, as many do, that sins against chastity are light sins, and that God bears with them.” (St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori, *THE ASCETICAL WORKS VOLUME XV, Preaching: Letter to a Religious, Letter to a Bishop, the Exercises of the Missions, Instructions on the Commandments and the Sacraments*, pp. 469-470)

The above shows that we must hate sinful desires with a passion and fervor in order to overcome them, rather than fall into evil lusts, gloomy enjoyment, or the sin itself. Indeed, “To abstain from sinful actions is not sufficient for the fulfillment of God’s law. The very desire of what is forbidden is evil.” (St. John Baptist de la Salle, A.D. 1651-1719)

Exhortations to chastity

St. Alphonsus, Discourse to Maidens: “St. Ignatius, Martyr, writing to his disciples,

exhorted them carefully to watch over the virgins, so that they might be constant in the promise that they had made to Jesus Christ of their virginity, which is so precious a gift before God. Virgins consecrated to the love of the divine Spouse are called by St. Cyprian the most noble part of the Church. Therefore, besides St. Cyprian, several among the holy Fathers, as St. Ephrem, St. Ambrose, St. John Chrysostom, and others, have composed works that treat entirely of the praises of virginity.

The glorious Apostle St. Matthew, as Denis the Carthusian relates, did not wish to allow the virgin St. Iphigenia, who was consecrated to Jesus Christ, to marry a monarch, although he promised to embrace the faith with all his people. Thomas Cantipratensis relates that at Rome the sister of the Count of Puglia, promised in marriage by his brother to a lord, fled in the disguise of a man so as not to be forced to marry; but she was pursued by her brother, and overtaken near a rock that projected into the sea. Putting her confidence in God, she threw herself into the abyss, and afterwards walked upon the water as far as a desert in Greece, where she remained safe. I wished to quote these examples to show that it is not a useless work, but a work that is very agreeable to God, when priests take care to exhort young persons to consecrate to Jesus Christ the lily of their virginity. This is the reason why in our missions it is customary, on the morning of one of the last days, that a missionary, assisted by another priest advanced in years, addresses in a retired place an instruction on this point to all the young women.

“Example of a Discourse to Young Women.

“My dear sisters, I do not pretend to explain to you in this discourse all the merits and all the advantages obtained by young maidens in consecrating their virginity to Jesus Christ. I will confine myself to pointing them out briefly.

“First, they become in the eyes of God beautiful as the angels of heaven: *They shall be as the angels of God in heaven* (Matt. xxii. 30). Baronius relates that at the death of a pious virgin, named Georgia, a great number of doves were seen flying about her; and when her body was carried to the church, these doves placed themselves on the part of the roof which corresponded to the place where the coffin was put, and flew away only after the burial of the deceased. Every one believed that these doves were angels, who thus honored her virginal body.

“Moreover, when a young person renounces the world and devotes herself to the love of Jesus Christ, she becomes the spouse of the Son of God. In the Gospel our Saviour is called now Father, now Mother, now Shepherd of Souls; but in regard to virgins he calls himself their Bridegroom or Spouse: *They went out to meet their bridegroom* (Matt. xxv. 1).

“A young person who wishes to establish herself in the world, if she is prudent,

makes careful inquiries about those that aspire to her hand, and tries to know which among them is the noblest and richest. Let us, then, address ourselves to the Spouse of the Canticles, who knows very well the prerogatives of the divine Spouse, and let us ask him what he is. Tell me, O divine Spouse! what is he who loves thee and renders thee the most happy among all women? *My beloved is white and ruddy, chosen out of thousands* (Cant. v. 10). My beloved, she says, is all white by his purity, and is ruddy by the love with which he is inflamed; he is, in a word, so beautiful, so noble, so affable, that one finds him to be the most amiable among all spouses.

“When to St. Agnes was offered as her spouse the son of the Prefect of Rome, this glorious virgin was right when she answered, as St. Ambrose tells us, that she had found a far better match.

“Such was also the answer of St. Domitilla, niece of the Emperor Domitian, which she gave to persons who tried to persuade her that she could be married to Count Aurelian, since he consented that she should remain a Christian: "But, tell me," she answered them, "if to a young woman there was presented, on the one hand, a great monarch, and on the other, a poor plebeian, which of the two would she choose for a husband? To accept Aurelian, I should have to renounce the King of heaven; this would be folly, and I do not wish to be guilty of it." Hence in order to remain faithful to Jesus Christ, to whom she had consecrated her virginity, she gave herself up to be burnt alive a punishment to which her barbarous lover had condemned her.

“Generous souls who renounce the world for the love of Jesus Christ, become the cherished spouses of the Son of God. They are called First-fruits of the Lamb: *First-fruits to God and to the Lamb* (Apoc. xiv. 4). Why the First-fruits? Because, says Cardinal Hugo, as the first-fruits are more agreeable than others, so virgins are objects of the Lord’s predilection. The divine Spouse is nourished among the lilies: *Who feedeth among the lilies*. And what are these lilies, if not fervent souls who consecrate their virginity to Jesus Christ? Venerable Bede assures us that the chant of the virgins, that is, the honor which the virgins render to God by preserving to him intact the lily of their purity, is more agreeable to the Lord than the chant of all the other saints. In fact, the Holy Ghost declares that no good can compensate for the merit of virginity. No price is worthy of a continent soul. For this reason, according to Cardinal Hugo, one can obtain a dispensation from all other vows, but not from the vow of virginity. It is also on this account that theologians believe that the Blessed Virgin would have been disposed to renounce the sublime dignity of the Mother of God rather than lose the treasure of her virginity.

“Who then here below can ever comprehend the glory that God reserves in paradise for his chaste spouses? Doctors teach that in heaven virgins have their own

glory, which is a certain crown or a special joy, of which other holy souls are deprived.

“But let us pass to what directly refers to the subject that we actually have in view.

“A young person will say: "If I marry can I not also sanctify myself?" I wish you to hear the answer to this, not from my mouth, but from that of St. Paul; you will also see at the same time the difference between virgins and married persons. The following are the words of the Apostle: *The unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord: that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband* (I Cor. vii. 34). Then he adds: *This I speak for your profit: . . . for that which is decent, and which may give you power to attend upon the Lord without impediment* (I Cor. Vii. 35).

“Let us ponder well this advice of the Apostle. In the first place, I must remark that married women can, it is true, be holy in spirit but not in body, while a virgin that sanctifies herself is holy in spirit and in body, having consecrated to Jesus Christ her virginity: *Holy both in body and in spirit*. Note, moreover, these words: *Which may give you power to attend upon the Lord without impediment*.—Ah! how many obstacles have not married women in order to sanctify themselves! the higher their rank the greater obstacles do they encounter. In order to sanctify oneself one must use the means, especially apply oneself much to mental prayer, frequent often the sacraments, and think without ceasing of God. But how can a married woman find time to occupy herself with the things of God? *She that is married thinks on the things of the world, how she may please her husband*. She must, says St. Paul, occupy herself with the things of the world; she has to provide for the wants of her family, for food, for clothing; she has to watch over the education of her children, to please her husband and the relatives of her husband; and this will be the cause, adds the Apostle, why her heart will be divided, as she is obliged to divide her affections between her husband, her children, and God. How can a married woman devote herself much to mental prayer and go frequently to Holy Communion if she does not find enough at home to provide for the wants of her family? The husband-wishes to be served; the children cry, scream, or ask for a thousand things; how can she go to make meditation amidst so many occupations and embarrassments? It will hardly be permitted her to go to church to recollect herself and to receive Communion on Sundays. She will still have a good will; but it will be very difficult for her to attend to the things of God as she should. It is true that by this very privation she may gain merit by resigning herself to the will of God, who in this state requires of her only a continual sacrifice of resignation and of patience. ...

“Ah, would to God that married women would have nothing else to deplore than to be deprived of the time necessary to attend to their devotions! The greatest evil is the

danger in which these unfortunate persons continually find themselves of losing the grace of God, being obliged to see frequently their brothers-in-law or other relatives, or friends of their husband, either at home or elsewhere. Of this young persons are ignorant; but this is well known by married women, who are every day exposed to all these dangers, and is also well known by the confessors who hear them. We do not speak of the sad days which all married women must spend. The bad conduct of the husband, the disagreeable things caused by the children, the necessities of housekeeping, dependence on a mother-in-law or sisters-in-law, the pains of child-birth that is always accompanied by danger of death, suspicions, troubles of conscience in regard to the education of the children—all this forms a chain of tribulations in which married women can only lament, happy indeed if they do not lose their soul, and if God gives them the grace not to pass from the hell of this life to an eternal hell in the next. Such is the lot that awaits young women who give themselves up to the world.

“But you will say, Among all the married women are there none that have sanctified themselves? I beg your pardon, there are some; but who are they? Those that sanctify themselves by martyrdom, those that know how to suffer everything for God, with a patience that nothing can overcome. How many are there that rise to such perfection? They are as rare as white flies. And if you meet with any one of these, you will learn that she is always weeping for regret of having entered the world, while she could have consecrated herself to Jesus Christ. For myself, I do not remember to have ever found among married women a single pious person who was content with her state of life.

“True happiness is therefore the inheritance of virgins consecrated to Jesus Christ. They are free from the dangers to which married persons are necessarily exposed. Their affections are not fixed on children, nor on men of the world, nor on perishable goods, nor on vain ornaments, nor on any kind of dependence. While married women are obliged to adorn themselves with care, and at great expense, to appear in the world according to their rank and to please their husbands, a virgin consecrated to Jesus Christ needs to cover herself only with a garment, however common it may be; she would even create scandal if she dressed herself with elegance. Moreover, virgins are not troubled with the care of a house, a family, a husband; their sole concern, the only desire of their hearts, is to please Jesus Christ, to whom they have dedicated their souls, their bodies, and all their affections. Thus they have more liberty of spirit to think of God, and more time to give themselves up to prayer and the frequentation of the sacraments. ...

“I shall put this question to you: Do you wish to leave the world to lead a comfortable life or to sanctify yourself; to do your will or that of Jesus Christ? And if

you wish to leave the world, to sanctify yourself, and to please Jesus Christ, I ask you a second question: Tell me: in what does sanctity consist? Sanctity does not consist in remaining in the convent, nor in spending the entire day in the church, but it consists, on the one hand, in practising mental prayer and going to communion when one can, and on the other, in obeying, in rendering one's self useful to the house, in living in retirement, and in suffering pain and contempt for God. ...

At least, when you have given yourselves to God, if you have to suffer at home, you bear all for the love of Jesus Christ, and the Lord well knows how to make your cross light and sweet; but what a pain to have to suffer, and to suffer for the world, without consolation and without merit! Believe me, if Jesus calls you to his love, if he wishes you for his spouses, listen without fear to his voice; you will not fail to be consoled and even to rejoice in the midst of sufferings. This will, however, only be the case as long as you love him and conduct yourselves as his true spouses.

“Learn, then, what are the means that you should use so as to live as true spouses of Jesus Christ, and to attain sanctity.

“In order that a virgin may be holy, it is not sufficient that she should preserve her virginity and that she be called a spouse of Jesus Christ: it will be necessary that she should practise the virtues that are proper to a spouse of Jesus Christ. We read in the Gospel that heaven is like virgins; but what virgins?—no doubt wise, but not foolish, virgins. Wise virgins were led to the nuptials; but the foolish found the doors shut, and the Bridegroom said to them: I know you not: You are virgins, but I do not recognize you as my spouses. The true spouses of Jesus Christ follow their divine Spouse wherever he goes: *These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth* (Apoc. xiv. 4). What is it to follow the spouse? St. Augustine explains this to us: It is to imitate him by walking in his footsteps in body and in soul. After having consecrated to him your body, you must give him your whole heart, so that your heart may be entirely occupied in loving him.

“1. The first means is mental prayer, to which you should particularly apply yourselves. But do not believe that in order to make mental prayer it is necessary to be in the convent or to spend the entire day in the church. It is true that at home there is often noise, and there is much disturbance caused by persons who come and go; however, if one wishes one can always find a place and a time for devoting oneself to prayer, as when the house is more quiet, either in the morning before others rise, or in the evening after they have retired. Nor is it necessary, in order to pray, that one should always be on one's knees: one may meditate even while working or while walking, when there is no other more suitable time; it is sufficient if one occupies one's self with God, as when one reflects on the Passion of Jesus Christ or on some other pious subject.

“2. The second means is the frequentation of the sacraments of confession and Communion. For confession we should choose a Director to whom we should be entirely submissive; without doing so we should not walk on the right road. As for Communion, it must depend entirely on obedience; but we must desire it and ask for it. This divine bread needs a soul that hungers after it; Jesus Christ wishes us to have a longing for him. It is frequent Communion that makes the spouses of Jesus Christ faithful to this heavenly Spouse, particularly in keeping them in holy purity. The Blessed Sacrament preserves in the soul all the virtues; but it is especially effective in preserving intact the lily of virginity, according to the words of the Prophet, who calls it: *The corn of the chosen ones, and wine which maketh virgins to spring forth* (Zach. ix. 17).

“3. The third means is retirement and vigilance. The divine Spouse compares his well-beloved to a lily surrounded by thorns: *As the lily among thorns, so is My love among daughters* (Cant. ii. 2). If a virgin wishes to live in the midst of society, of amusements, and other worldly frivolities, it will be impossible for her to remain faithful to Jesus Christ; she must, therefore, keep herself constantly among the thorns of obedience and of mortification, and should behave, especially towards men, not only with the greatest reserve and the greatest modesty in her looks and her words, but also when necessary with a rigid austerity, and even with rudeness. Such are the thorns that preserve lilies, that is, virgins; without these precautions they would soon go astray. The Lord also compares the beauty of his spouse to that of the turtle dove: *Thy cheeks are beautiful as the turtle-dove's* (Cant. i. 9). Why? Because the turtle-dove is naturally inclined to flee the company of other birds, and loves to be always alone. A virgin, therefore, appears beautiful in the eyes of Jesus Christ when she leads a retired life, and does all she can to keep herself retired and hidden from the eyes of others. St. Jerome says that this Spouse of souls is jealous. Hence it is very displeasing to him to see a virgin, after having consecrated herself to his love, seeking to appear in the world and to please men. Those persons that are truly virtuous prefer to disfigure themselves rather than be the object of a bad desire. The venerable Sister Catharine of Jesus, before becoming a religious of St. Teresa, washed herself with dirty water, and then exposed herself to the sun so as to spoil her complexion. Bollandus relates that St. Andregesina, having been promised in marriage, begged the Lord to make her quite deformed, and her prayer was immediately heard. She at once appeared covered with leprosy so that every one fled from her; but after the espousals had been dissolved, she recovered her former beauty. We read in the *Mirror of Examples*, that there was in a convent a young virgin who had consecrated herself to God, and whose eyes had charmed a prince. The latter having threatened to set fire to the convent if she did not

yield to his desires, what did she do? She tore out her eyes, and sent them to him in a basin with this message: "Here are the darts that have wounded your heart; take them, and leave me untouched." The same author also quotes the example of St. Euphemia, whom her father had promised in marriage to a count. Seeing that this suitor neglected no means to make her his wife, she one day took a knife and cut off her nose and her lips, saying: "Vain beauty, thou shalt not be to me any longer an occasion of sin!" Baronius also relates that St. Ebba, abbess of the monastery of Coldingham, fearing an invasion of the barbarians, cut off her nose and her upper lip as far as the teeth, and that after her example all the other religious, to the number of thirty, did the same thing. The barbarians actually came, and seeing them thus disfigured, they became furious, set fire to the monastery, and made all perish in the flames. The Church honors them as martyrs. They were incited to this heroic act by an impulse of the Holy Ghost; it is not permitted to others to act in this way. You see, moreover, in these examples what virgins who love Jesus Christ have done in order to escape the lust of men. Every fervent young maiden should at least endeavor to conduct herself with modesty, and expose herself as little as possible to the gaze of the world. If it should unfortunately happen that a virgin should be the victim of any violence, without her fault, let her be assured that her purity has not been tarnished. Hence St. Lucia answered the tyrant, who threatened to have her dishonored: "If I am outraged against my will, I shall obtain a double crown." We know the adage: "Not the feeling, but the consent, wounds the soul." Besides, you must be convinced that a young maiden who conducts herself with modesty and reserve will not fail to make herself respected.

"4. The fourth means in order to preserve purity is the mortification of the senses. St. Basil says: "It is altogether improper for a virgin to violate chastity, with the tongue, with the ears, with the touch, much less with the heart." A virgin, in order to remain pure, should be chaste with her *tongue*, by always speaking modestly, and only through necessity with men, and in this case in a few words; chaste with her *ears*, by avoiding to listen to discourses about the things of the world; chaste with her *eyes*, by keeping them shut or lowered to the ground in the presence of men; chaste with regard to the *touch*, by using the greatest precaution both in regard to others and in regard to herself; but she should be especially chaste in her *heart* by trying to resist every immodest thought by promptly having recourse to Jesus and Mary. For this purpose it will also be necessary for her to mortify her body by fasts, by abstinence, by disciplines, by *ciliciums*; but in order to practise these mortifications permission from the confessor must be asked: without this they would be rather hurtful to the soul, as they might inspire one with pride. No one should therefore practise such penances without having obtained permission from one's Director; but one should desire the permission

and ask it, for Directors do not grant it as long as we do not show them a desire to obtain it. Jesus is a Spouse of blood; he has espoused our souls on the cross, on which he has shed the last drop of his blood: *A bloody spouse thou art to me* (Exod. iv. 25). This is the reason why spouses that love him love to suffer tribulations, diseases, pains, ill-treatment, injuries, and they receive them not only with patience, but with joy. In this sense the passage of Scripture is understood, namely: *These follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth* (Apoc. xiv. 4). They follow Jesus their divine Spouse by singing his praises with joy, even in the midst of reproaches and pains, after the example of so many holy martyrs who expressed their happiness amid tortures, or while they were on their way to the place of execution.

“5. Finally, in order to obtain the grace of perseverance in a holy life, you should take care often to recommend yourselves to the Queen of heaven, the most pure Mother of God. She is the mediatrix who prepares and who concludes the union of souls with her divine Son; it is she that introduces and presents them to him as his spouses: *After her shall virgins be brought to the King* (Ps. xlv. 15). It is she, finally, that obtains for these chosen spouses the virtue of perseverance; without the help of Mary they would become so many faithless spouses.

“Prayer to Jesus Christ.

“(The preacher, after having made all his hearers go down on their knees at the foot of the crucifix, or a statue of the Infant Jesus, which would suit better under the circumstances, thus continues:)

“You, then, who are listening to me I am addressing myself to young maidens who feel themselves called by the divine Spouse to renounce the world for the love of him—you who have conceived the pious design of not belonging to the world, but to Jesus Christ... I wish only that by a simple act, without contracting any obligation, you should render thanks to Jesus Christ for the favor that he has done you of having called you to his love, and that you should offer yourselves to belong entirely to him during your whole life. Speak to him in the following manner:

“Ah! my Jesus, my God and my Redeemer, who didst die for me; pardon me if I also call Thee my Spouse: I am bold enough to do so, because I see that Thou deignest to invite me to this honor; it is a favor for which I know not how to thank Thee. At present I deserve to be in hell, and instead of punishing me Thou wishest me to become Thy spouse. Yes, my divine Spouse, I renounce the world, I renounce everything for love of Thee, and I give myself entirely to Thee. What is the world to me? My Jesus, Thou shalt hence forth be my only good, my only love. I see that Thou wishest to possess my whole heart; I wish to give it to Thee entirely: please accept my offering; do not repel me as I deserve to be repelled. Forget all the displeasure that I have given

Thee in the past; I repent of it with my whole soul; ah! would that I had died before offending Thee! Pardon me, inflame me with Thy holy love, and grant me the grace to be faithful to Thee, and never more to turn my back on Thee. Thou, my Spouse, hast given Thyself entirely to me; here I am, I give myself entirely to Thee.

“O Mary, my Queen and my Mother! bind, chain my heart to Jesus Christ, and attach it in such a manner that it may never be separated from him.

“(At the end, the preacher gives them the blessing with the crucifix, saying:)

“Now I am going to bless you, and by this blessing I wish to unite you to Jesus Christ in order that you may never more leave him; and while I am blessing you, you should give him your heart, saying:

“My Jesus, my divine Spouse, in future I will love Thee, Thee alone, and nothing more.” (*The complete ascetical works of St. Alphonsus*, vol. 15, pp. 261-276)

COMMON OBJECTIONS

Objection: There’s no evidence that a life of chastity or celibacy is a more holy or virtuous life than getting married, and those who try to say that celibacy or chastity is better than marital life, are just influenced by the prudish, false and heretical Manichean and Stoic teachings and worldviews which both extolled chastity and generally rejected as gross or evil the sensual pleasures of the flesh. Many of the Fathers and the Saints were very prudish in their worldview since they were heavily influenced by the heretical Manichean and Stoic teachings concerning marriage and sexual desire that flourished during their time, and that is why they taught that chastity or celibacy is a more holy or virtuous life than getting married. Indeed, the Fathers even go further than that, teaching that sexual desire and the normal, marital act even in marriage can be dangerous or harmful for the soul. In addition, the teaching of the Fathers and the Saints that one should despise and reject one’s sexual desires even in marriage, is outrageous and reek of gnosticism, and the Bible and the Church totally rejects this view of theirs as well as their other errors concerning sexual pleasure, marriage and celibacy.

Answer: As we will see, the teaching of the Fathers and the Saints concerning chastity that “chastity or celibacy is a more holy or virtuous life than getting married”, and that “the normal, marital act even in marriage can be dangerous or harmful for the soul”, and that, finally, “that one should despise and reject one’s sexual desires even in marriage” comes directly from the Bible and infallible Catholic teaching and Church tradition. The claim that these doctrines are heretical, Stoic or Manichean is a bold lie that is completely rejected by the Bible and the Church. In addition to the infallible teaching of the Bible and the Council of

Trent that teaches that virginity or chastity is better than matrimony, the Holy Fathers of the Church unanimously teaches that spouses should hate, despise and fight against the sexual pleasure even in marriage, and that virginity and chastity is better and more blessed than matrimony, which makes these doctrines infallible since “*the unanimous consent of the Fathers*” in a doctrinal matter is the official teaching of the Church according to the infallible teaching of the Catholic Church from the councils of Trent and Vatican I.

First, it is a fact that the Holy Bible and the Fathers, Popes, Saints and Doctors of the Church unanimously teach that chastity and virginity is better and more blessed than the marital life. It is the unanimous opinion of the Fathers and Saints of the Church that no one, without exception, can reach the highest kind of union with God without the wonderful virtue of chastity; and that “virgins consecrated to God are most pleasing and dear to Him”. In addition to this, the Catholic Church and *The Council of Trent* also teaches infallibly that it is “**better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or in celibacy, than to be united in matrimony**” which, as we have seen, is a restatement of Our Lord Jesus Christ’s words in the Holy Bible that teaches us that a life of chastity is better than the marital life: “Therefore, both he that giveth his virgin in marriage, doth well; **and he that giveth her not, doth better. ... But more blessed shall she be, if she so remain [in chastity], according to my counsel; and I think that I also have the spirit of God.**” (1 Corinthians 7:38-40)

Since the countless protestant sects (from the very beginning of their creation in the 16th century by the devil) were especially hostile to the infallible biblical doctrine which teaches that chastity or virginity is much better and a more meritorious and blessed life than the marital life, *The Council of Trent* also had to specifically condemn and anathematize all who dared to oppose this biblical doctrine. Thus, the Church made clear to all this biblical teaching, which means that all who obstinately assert that marriage is above or equal to the state of chastity or virginity are damned and in a state of mortal sin, awaiting the moment of their death when they will enter the eternal Hell where they will be tormented and burn for their wicked, obstinate, impure heresy and false opinion.

Pope Pius IV, *Council of Trent*, ***ex cathedra***: “If any one saith, that the marriage state is to be placed above the state of virginity, or of celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or in celibacy, than to be united in matrimony, **(Matt. 19:11; 1 Cor. 7:25) let him be anathema.**” (Session 14, Canon X, Nov. 11, 1563, on Matrimony; Denzinger #980)

The wicked heresy which states that, “there is no spiritual superiority in celibacy vs. conjugal

chastity (sex within marriage)” is utterly false and refuted by the Holy Bible itself as well as the infallible teachings of the Popes. This is what the Church teaches infallibly as a dogma.

Pope Pius XII, *Sacra Virginitas* (# 32), March 25, 1954: “**This doctrine of the excellence of virginity and of celibacy and of their superiority over the married state** was, as We have already said, revealed by our Divine Redeemer and by the Apostle of the Gentiles; so too, **it was solemnly defined as a dogma of divine faith by the holy council of Trent**, and explained in the same way by all the holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Finally, We and Our Predecessors have often expounded it and earnestly advocated it whenever occasion offered. **But recent attacks on this traditional doctrine of the Church, the danger they constitute, and the harm they do to the souls of the faithful** lead Us, in fulfillment of the duties of Our charge, to take up the matter once again in this Encyclical Letter, and to reprove these errors which are so often propounded under a specious appearance of truth.”

In *First Corinthians* 7:38-40, Our Lord through St. Paul continues to admonish his chaste servants to adopt the angelic life of chastity and purity, teaching us that the chaste life is better than the marital life: “Therefore, both he that giveth his virgin in marriage, doth well; and he that giveth her not, doth better. A woman is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty: let her marry to whom she will; only in the Lord. **But more blessed shall she be, if she so remain [in chastity], according to my counsel; and I think that I also have the spirit of God.**”

Haydock Commentary explains *First Corinthians* 7:38-40: “**Verse 38. &c. He that giveth her not, doth better**. And *more blessed shall she be, if she so remains, according to my counsel*. It is very strange if any one, who reads this chapter without prejudices, does not clearly see, that St. Paul advises, and prefers the state of virginity to that of a married life. (Witham)” In truth, the level of dishonesty that a Protestant or a heretic must sink to in order to deny that Holy Scripture places chastity or virginity above the marital life is simply said satanic and inexcusable. It cannot be doubted that they must have had their conscience thoroughly seared by a hot iron of Satan in order to be able to pervert such clear and unambiguous words of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

God could not be clearer than when He said that “*It is good for a man not to touch a woman*” (1 Corinthians 7:1), thus directly contradicting the heretical viewpoint that marriage is the same as the chaste life; showing us very clearly that the marital life is below the chaste and

pure life of the angels and saints in Heaven that those virtuous men and women imitates. And if still someone could misunderstand Our Lord's words, St. Paul adds that he wishes "*that all men were even as myself*" that is, chaste (1 Corinthians 7:7) and He further teaches both the unmarried and widowed to continue to live a single and chaste life, saying: "*But I say to the unmarried, and to the widows: It is good for them if they so continue, [that is, it is good for them to continue to live a single and chaste life] even as I.*" (1 Corinthians 7:8) And if that was not clear enough, Our Lord Jesus Christ through St. Paul continues to urge all unmarried to stay chaste and pure as they are, saying that, "*I think therefore that this is good for the present necessity, that it is good for a man so to be [that is, chaste]. Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.*" (1 Corinthians 7:26-27)

St. Paul also teaches in Holy Scripture that a widow will become "more blessed" if she do not remarry and stay continent: "*But more blessed shall she be, if she so remain, [that is, a widow] according to my counsel; and I think that I also have the spirit of God.*" (1 Corinthians 7:40) If one becomes "more blessed" by not marrying, then it obviously means that one becomes less blessed by embracing the marital life.

In addition to the infallible teaching of the Bible and the Council of Trent that teaches that virginity or chastity is better and more blessed than matrimony, the Holy Fathers of the Church unanimously teaches this doctrine, which makes this doctrine infallible and true from their teaching alone, since "*the unanimous consent of the Fathers*" in a doctrinal matter is the official teaching of the Church according to the infallible teaching of the Catholic Church from the councils of Trent and Vatican I. Thus, "**Virginity is better than marriage, however good.**" (St. John Damascene, *Expo. IV.24.*) "**That virginity is good I do agree. But that it is even better than marriage, this I do confess.**" (St. John Chrysostom, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, Vol. 2: 1116) And St. Jerome writes concerning the greatness of chastity and virginity that "in comparison with chastity and virginity, the life of angels, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" [1 Cor. 7:1]." (St. Jerome, *Letter XLVIII, To Pammachius*, c. 393 or 394 A.D.) St. Ephrem the Syrian writes, "Chastity's wings are greater and lighter than the wings of marriage. Intercourse... is lower. Its house of refuge is modest darkness. Confidence belongs entirely to chastity, which light enfolds." (*Hymn XXVIII, On the Nativity*)

Indeed, "As firstfruits are the most delicious, so virgins consecrated to God are most pleasing and dear to him. The spouse in the canticles feedeth among the lilies? One of the sacred interpreters, explaining these words, says, that 'as the devil revels in the uncleanness of lust, so Christ feeds on the lilies of chastity.' Venerable Bede asserts that the hymn of the virgins is

more agreeable to the Lamb than that of all the other saints.” (St. Alphonsus, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ*, p. 7)

St. John Chrysostom also **compares virginity with the state of matrimony, to conclude that the former is higher.** “As you do, I also think that virginity is a good thing, better than the nuptial life. I add that it is as superior to the nuptial life as Heaven is superior to earth, or as Angels to men. (St. John Chrysostom, Book of Virginity, In the Writings of the Roman Breviary, Lesson 3 of the feast of St. Aloysius Gonzaga)

Second, St. Paul also warns those who would marry as opposed to those who would remain virgins that spouses “shall have tribulation of the flesh”: “*But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have tribulation of the flesh. But I spare you.*” (1 Corinthians 7:28). It is certain that St. Paul does not refer to the desire to procreate as a tribulation of the flesh. Consequently, he can be referring only to one thing—sexual pleasure. Indeed, sexual pleasure is a tribulation of the flesh that must hence be fought against in thought and deed in some way or the Devil will succeed in tempting a spouse to fall into mortal sins of impurity either with their spouse, with himself or with someone other than his spouse. Thus, we see that it is a teaching that comes directly from the Bible that sexual desire and the normal, marital act even in marriage can be dangerous or harmful for the soul, contrary to what many heretics boldly claim nowadays, who try to castigate and reject this biblical teaching as some sort of Gnostic or Manichean teaching.

The reason why St. Paul specifically warns those who choose to get married of the dangers inherent in the marital life is because those people who choose *not* to get married, will not get sexually tempted to commit sin in the same way or in the same measure as the married man or woman will, either with their spouse, their self, or some other person, since the sexual pleasure that has never been indulged in, will always remain more of an abstract or theoretical pleasure for those who remain chaste and unmarried, and thus, will always be easier to control for them. Indeed, since the temptation to indulge the flesh and the sensuality is not physically present tempting them all the time, as in the case of those who are married and who can perform the marital act every day with their spouse, their sensual temptations are also much smaller than the others who indulge their flesh more often.

The Church understood from the beginning that the inspired words in Holy Scripture which teaches us that: “*It is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman*” (1 Corinthians 7:1) meant that the sexual marital act was especially powerful in influencing a man or a woman to

“walk according to the flesh” and thus fall into sins of the flesh and die spiritually. For it is written: “*The soul that sinneth, the same shall die.*” (Ezekiel 18:20)

When St. Paul mentions “that they also who have wives, be as if they had none” (1 Corinthians 7:29), he is speaking about how spouses must not place the carnal love they have for each other above their love for Our Lord. St. Paul’s words are clear: The spouses must act as though they were not married (within due limits of course) since the married man “is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided.” (1 Corinthians 7:33). This division of the married man and woman makes it a great necessity that even married people consider themselves in their own thought processes as though they are unmarried and chaste, although their external and physical marital duties hinders them from pursuing this endeavor to the fullest. Our Lord Jesus Christ, speaking through the mouth of St. Paul in *The Holy Bible* is crystal clear that “**it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none**; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as if they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you to be without solicitude.” (1 Corinthians 7:29-32)

St. Paul also explains how married men and women think more on the world and of carnal things, while the chaste and pure people think more on the things of the Lord, of Heaven, and of spiritual things. Again, the Holy Bible is clear that: “*He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: **and he is divided.** And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband.*” (1 Corinthians 7:32-34)

And so, it is perfectly clear that the Holy Scripture infallibly and unambiguously teaches that marriage and the marital life is an impediment to the spiritual life, while the life of chastity and purity “give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment” (1 Corinthians 7:35).

Third, spouses should hate, despise and fight against the sexual pleasure according to the teaching of the Holy Bible and the Saints. From the beginning, the Holy Bible, the Church, and all Her Saints taught all people, whether married or unmarried, that the best thing to do is to hate and despise the sexual pleasure, since by this virtuous act, all people, and especially the married, would be better able to control and resist the sexual pleasure and concupiscence

so as to become victorious over the flesh rather than being defeated by its desires and vices.

This is also exactly how Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Bible teaches us to view the sexual pleasure, since it is a higher call to live for the Spirit than for our own selfish desires: “And now, Lord, thou knowest, that **not for fleshly lust** do I take my sister to wife, **but only for the love of posterity**, [children] in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.” (Tobias 8:9)

The Holy Bible, Tobias 6:16-17, 22; 8:9 “Then the angel Raphael said to him [Tobias]: **Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.** ... And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, **moved rather for love of children than for lust**, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing in children... [Tobias said] And now, Lord, thou knowest, **that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife**, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.”

This teaching of God in the Holy Bible is of course also taught in the New Testament Bible of Our Lord Jesus Christ, teaching us that “**it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none**; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as if they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you to be without solicitude.” (1 Corinthians 7:29-32)

The Holy Bible makes it clear over and over again that sensuality and selfishness in all its forms will be punished with eternal damnation but that mortification, penance and the rejection of the perishable and carnal will be rewarded with eternal life and glory: “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For **if you live according to the flesh, you shall die**: but if by the Spirit you **mortify the deeds of the flesh**, you shall live.” (Romans 8:12)

The Holy Fathers of the Church also unanimously teach that sexual pleasure should be fought against, hated and despised. According to St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215), St. Paul speaks “not to those who chastely use marriage for procreation alone, **but to those who were desiring to go beyond procreation**, lest the adversary should arise a stormy blast and arouse

desire for alien pleasures.” Thus, “The human ideal of continence... teaches that one should fight desire and not be subservient to it so as to bring it to practical effect. ***But our [Christian] ideal is not to experience desire at all. Our aim is not that while a man feels desire he should get the better of it, but that he should be continent even respecting desire itself.***” (*The Stromata*, 3.7.57) St. John Chrysostom, carrying on the apostolic tradition of despising our fleshly lusts and desires, writes that: “For as we have the desire of sexual intercourse, but when we practice true wisdom we render the [sexual] desire weak... so also He hath implanted in us the love of life, forbidding us from destroying ourselves, but not hindering our despising the present life.” (*Homilies on the Gospel of St. John*, Homily LXXXV)

St. Augustine also agreed with this, teaching that “Thus a good Christian is found to... hate the corruptible and mortal conjugal connection and carnal intercourse ...***It is necessary, therefore, that the disciple of Christ should hate these things which pass away...***” (*On the Sermon on the Mount*, 1.15.41) Indeed, “The chaste... they resist lust lest it compel them to commit unseemly acts... But honesty arises from unseemliness when chaste union accepts, but does not love, lust.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, 5.9.37) Consequently, “there must be warfare against evil of concupiscence, which is so evil it must be resisted in the combat waged by chastity, lest it do damage.” (St. Augustine, *Against Julian*, 3.21.43)

St. Athanasius the Great who in truth is one of the greatest theologians in human history also confirms this biblical teaching that directs men to despise and reject sexual pleasure, teaching that “Marriage is good, as long as sexual relations are for procreation and not for pleasure. ... The law of nature recognizes the act of procreation: **have relations with your wife only for the sake of procreation, and keep yourself from relations of pleasure.**” (*Fragments on the Moral Life*, Section 2) “Therefore, having the hope of eternal life, we [Christians] despise the things of this life, even to the pleasures of the soul...” (Athenagoras the Athenian, *A Plea for the Christians*, Chapter XXXIII)

Thus, it is a fact that sexual pleasure is not love or a cause of holiness but a “tribulation of the flesh” that makes a person “divided” according to the Holy Bible. Today, there are many heretical people who argue that the marital act is holy in itself, and that it brings us closer to God. This, however, as we have seen, is a direct contradiction of Our Lord’s words in the Holy Scripture and the Natural Law which teaches us that ***those who are married and perform the sexual act “shall have tribulation of the flesh”*** (1 Corinthians 7:28) and that the married life makes a person “***divided***”.

For more quotations concerning these topics, please consult the chapter “*Spouses should hate, despise and fight against the sexual pleasure according to the teaching of the Holy Bible and the Saints*” in Part 2 of this book, and the chapter about *St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians* in Part 3. However, as we have seen, the whole of both Part 2 and Part 3 of this book perfectly proves that sexual pleasure can be dangerous or harmful even for the married in their sexual acts, as well as that chastity is a better and more blessed and virtuous life than matrimony, and that sexual pleasure should be hated, despised and fought against even in marriage.

Objection: You are not right in teaching that Mary was completely chaste during her whole life since the Bible teaches that Jesus had brothers during his life.

Matthew 13:55 “Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? **And his brethren, James, and Joses,** and Simon, and Judas?”

Answer: Most Protestants of our day reject the perpetual virginity of Mary; they think it contradicts the Bible. **Many of them will be shocked to find out that the first Protestants, including Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli and others all believed in the perpetual virginity of Mary.** The idea that Mary ceased to be a virgin and had other children besides Jesus was invented many generations after the original Protestant “reformation.” Thus, the Protestant position on this matter not only contradicts ancient Catholic tradition and the Bible (as we will see), but their own Protestant “tradition.”

MATTHEW 1:25 DOES NOT DISPROVE MARY’S PERPETUAL VIRGINITY

The first thing that Protestants usually quote against Mary’s perpetual virginity is Matthew 1:25.

Matthew 1:24-25 “Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: **And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.**”

According to Protestants, this proves that Mary ceased to be a virgin after the birth of Jesus. This is quite wrong. The Greek word for “until” or “till” (*heos*) does not imply that Joseph had marital relations with Mary after the birth of Jesus Christ. It simply means that they had no relations up to that point, without saying anything about what happened after that point. This is proven below by many passages. We should also bear in mind that the Bible was written

several thousand years ago. It was written at a time and in languages which don't express and imply things the same way that they would be expressed and implied in modern English.

For instance, in 2 Samuel 6:23 (2 Kings 6:23 in the Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible), we read that God cursed Michal, David's wife. He cursed her because she mocked David for the manner in which he rejoiced before the Ark of the Covenant. As a result, Michal had no children "until" the day of her death.

2 Samuel 6:23 "Therefore **Michal** the daughter of Saul **had no child until the day of her death.**"

Does this mean that Michal started having children after her death? Obviously it does not. This verse demonstrates **that when Scripture describes something as being true "until" or "before" a certain point, it doesn't necessarily mean that it ceased to be true after that point.** Here are numerous other examples of this:

Hebrews 1:13 "But to which of the angels said he at any time, **Sit on my right hand, until** I make thine enemies thy footstool?"

This refers to the Son of God. Does this mean that He will cease to sit at the right hand of the Father after God's enemies are made His footstool? Obviously it does not. He will remain at the right hand of God the Father.

1 Timothy 4:13 "**Till I come**, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."

Does this mean that they should abandon reading and doctrine after he comes? Obviously it does not.

Acts 23:1 "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, **I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.**"

Does this mean that Paul necessarily ceased to have a good conscience after that day? Obviously it does not.

The preposition "before" can be used the same way.

John 4:49 "Come down before my child dies."

Here we see that the word “before” can be used in a similar manner to the word “until.” This child did not die; Jesus healed him (John 4:50). Thus, the statement in Matthew 1:18, which is quoted below, that Mary was with child “before” she and Joseph came together, doesn’t mean that they came together after she was with child. It simply means that she was pregnant without any sexual contact.

Matthew 1:18 “Now the generation of Christ was in this wise. When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost.”

It’s quite certain, therefore, that Matthew 1:25 and Matthew 1:18 do not contradict Mary’s perpetual virginity in any way. Protestants cannot legitimately claim that these passages constitute proof that Mary ceased to be a virgin. These passages do not prove her perpetual virginity, either. Her perpetual virginity is proven by other things in the Bible.

WHAT ABOUT THE “FIRSTBORN” SON – DOESN’T THAT IMPLY OTHER CHILDREN?

Luke 2:7 “And she brought forth her **firstborn** son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Matthew 1:25 “And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.”

“Firstborn son” is a legal title given to a first-born male child in a Jewish family: in other words, it is given to a male child who is also the first child.

God specifically commanded the Israelites to sanctify (i.e., set apart) their first-born sons for a special consecration and service to God. The title “first-born son” held additional importance because it entitled that child to a double portion of the inheritance (Deut. 21:17). **This title of “first-born son” was given to the child regardless of whether the woman had any other children after him.** As an example: “we can see this from a Greek tomb inscription at Tel el Yaoudieh (cf. “Biblica” 11, 1930 369-90) for a mother who died in childbirth: ‘In the pain of delivering my firstborn child, destiny brought me to the end of life.’” (Quoted in “Brothers and Sisters of Jesus,” by William Most)

In Exodus 13 and 34, we read about God’s prescription that the first-born be consecrated to Him. There was a ceremony for the “sanctification of the firstborn” (Exodus 13 and 34:20).

It's not as if they postponed the ceremony for the "first-born son" until after the woman had a second child.

Exodus 13:2,12 "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine... Thou shalt set apart all that openeth the womb for the Lord, and all that is first brought forth of thy cattle: whatsoever thou shalt have of the male sex, thou shalt consecrate to the Lord."

Thus, the statement that Jesus was the "first-born son" of Mary (Luke 2:7) does not in any way contradict Mary's perpetual virginity. It simply means that He was her first and male child. It says nothing about whether any came later.

WHAT ABOUT THE "BROTHERS" OF JESUS?

Non-Catholics often bring up the passages which mention the "brothers and sisters" of Jesus. First of all, it must be mentioned that never once are these "brothers" described as the children of Mary, Jesus' mother.

Mark 6:3 "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him."

Matthew 13:55 "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?"

In the original Greek the words used are *adelphoi* ("brethren") and *adelphae* ("sisters"). The words *adelphoi* and *adelphae* can refer to actual siblings. However, **the Bible also uses these words to describe people who are not brothers, but cousins or relatives or step brothers or close neighbors.**

THE BIBLE SAYS THAT ABRAHAM WAS LOT'S BROTHER, BUT HE WASN'T LITERALLY

Lot was Abraham's nephew. Abraham was his uncle (see Genesis 11:31; 14:12). Yet, the Bible twice describes Lot as Abraham's "brother." That's because the word "brother" doesn't necessarily mean a sibling. As stated above, it can mean a cousin or a relative or a step-brother or a close family friend.

Genesis 14:14 “Which when Abram had heard, to wit, **that his brother Lot** was taken...”

Lot was Abraham’s nephew	The Bible also calls him his “brother”
<p>Gen. 11:27 “Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.”</p> <p>Gen. 12:5 “And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son...”</p> <p>Gen. 14:12 “And they took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.”</p>	<p>Gen. 14:14 “And when Abram heard that his brother [Lot] was taken captive...”</p> <p>Gen. 14:16 “And also brought again his brother Lot...”</p>

Some Protestants attempt to respond to this by arguing that the Old Testament was not written in Greek, but Hebrew. Therefore, they say, the case of Lot doesn’t prove that *adelphos* can refer to a person who is not literally a brother. This is refuted by pointing out that while the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, it was famously translated into Greek by seventy scholars a few centuries before the coming of Christ. This famous translation is called the Septuagint.

This Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, is quoted about 300 times by the inspired writers of the New Testament. That means that the New Testament writers accepted the Septuagint. **In the Septuagint, the same Greek word *adelphos* is used to describe Lot as Abraham’s brother.** *Adelphos* is the singular form of *adelphoi*, the word used in the New Testament for the “brothers” of Jesus. Therefore, the Old Testament does use *adelphos* to describe someone who is not literally a brother.

But the point can also be proven from the New Testament. **In Acts 3:17 and Romans 9:3, we see that *adelphoi* (brothers) is used to describe people of the same nationality who are not siblings.** Consider these verses to be the death-blow to the Protestant argument in this regard.

Moreover, in Luke 10:29, Matthew 5:22 and Matthew 7:3, we see that *adelphos* (“brother”) is used for neighbor, not necessarily sibling.

BUT THERE IS A GREEK WORD FOR COUSIN, *ANEPSIOS*; IF THE BRETHREN OF JESUS WERE COUSINS, RATHER THAN BROTHERS, WHY WASN'T *ANEPSIOS* USED?

The Catholic Church teaches that Mary is ever-virgin and had no other children. The Catholic Church does not teach that all the “brethren” of Jesus were necessarily His cousins. They may have been extended relatives or close friends or people considered part of the family by marriage or law or homeland. For instance, in 2 Samuel 1:26, King David calls Jonathan his “brother.” Jonathan and David were not brothers or cousins. David had married Jonathan’s sister, Michal, the daughter of King Saul. So David married into the family.

The number of Jesus’ “brothers” (*adelphoi*) mentioned in the Bible seems to suggest that some of them were not even extended relatives, but considered part of the family in other ways. If even one or a few of them were not cousins, but more extended relatives or neighbors or close family friends, then the word *adelphoi* would have been used. **Therefore, the fact that the word for cousin was not used does not in any way prove that Mary had other children.**

EVIDENCE FROM MATTHEW 27:56 SHOWS THAT THE “BROTHERS” OF JESUS WERE NOT HIS SIBLINGS

Matthew 13:55 “Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? **And his brethren, James, and Joses,** and Simon, and Judas?”

James and Joses are two of the names given as “brothers” of Jesus. It can be shown, by the following points, that these were children of another woman and not siblings of Jesus. Please follow this carefully.

There were three women at the foot of the Cross: 1) the Blessed Virgin Mary (the mother of Jesus); 2) Mary the wife of Cleophas (who is said to be the Blessed Virgin Mary’s sister); and 3) Mary Magdalene.

John 19:25 “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus [1] his mother, and [2] his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and [3] Mary Magdalene.”

Mary, the wife of Cleophas, is also described as “the other Mary” in Matthew 28:1. The Bible tells us that James and Joses are the children of this Mary:

Matthew 27:56 “Among which was Mary Magdalene, **and Mary the mother of James and Joses**, and the mother of Zebedees children.”

Thus, James and Joses (who are called the “brothers” of Jesus) are not His siblings, but at least His cousins. However, they are probably not even first cousins. This is because Mary of Cleophas (the mother of James and Joses), who is said to be the “sister” of Jesus’ mother (John 19:25), is also named Mary. It’s extremely unlikely that two siblings in a Hebrew family would be given the same name. Most likely they were not sisters, but members of the same clan who were called “sisters” in the same way that James, Joses, Simon and Judas were called “brothers” of Jesus.

When the Holy Bible refers to James as the Lord’s brother, we also have direct evidence that James was many years older than Jesus as well as even older than Mary, which would prove that it is impossible that the Blessed Virgin Mary is James’ biological Mother, since he was even older than her, and this in turn would prove that the word for “brother” in the Bible referred to a family member or relative rather than a blood brother.

Here is what Josephus says in *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20:9:1:

“And now Caesar [Nero], upon hearing of the death of Festus, sent Albinus into Judea as procurator; but the king [Agrippa II] deprived Joseph of the high priesthood, and bestowed the succession to that dignity on the son of Ananus, who was also himself called Ananus... this younger Ananus, who, as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who were very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed; when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority.] Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrim of the judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others, and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned; but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens... they also sent to the king, desiring him to send to Ananus that he should act so no more, for that what he had already done was not to be justified: nay, some of them went also to meet Albinus... whereupon Albinus complied with what they had said, and wrote in anger to Ananus, and threatened that he would bring him to punishment for what he had done.”

Please note that although Josephus doesn't give the numerical date of 62 AD for the death of James the Lord's brother, he gives us the historical markers that allow us to know precisely what years to which he is referring. He tells us that Festus had just died, and we know he reigned from 59-62 AD. He tells us that the priest who was deprived of his office was Joseph Kabi, and we know he was high priest from between 61-62 AD.

Now to Epiphanius. He writes in *Panarion*, 78:14:5-6: "But James brother of the Lord and son of Joseph, died in Jerusalem, having lived twenty-four years, more or less, after the Savior's Ascension. He was ninety-six years old when he was struck on the head by a fuller with his club, flung from the pinnacle of the temple and cast down, he who had done no wrong knelt and prayed for those who had thrown him down, saying: Forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. Thus even Simeon, his cousin, the son Clopas, who was standing at a distance, said, "Stop, why are you stoning the just one? Behold, he is uttering the most wonderful prayers for you." And thus he was martyred."

Epiphanius says James (the Lord's brother) died "twenty-four years, more or less, after the Savior's Ascension," which, if Jesus ascended in 33 AD, this is "more or less" 24 years prior to 62 AD. (It is actually 29 years to 62 AD). He also says James was 96 when he died. If he was 96 when he died in 62 AD, then that means he was born about 33 BC (subtracting one year for no year "0"). If he was born in 33 BC, then obviously he couldn't be the son of Joseph and Mary, since they didn't even meet each other until about 30 years later. If anything, James (the "Lord's brother") would be a son of Joseph from a previous marriage, or adopted by Joseph. Joseph, as tradition holds, was much older than Mary, and thus he could easily have been married previously, and, after his wife died, he found Mary.

In fact, the stepchildren hypothesis was introduced by the apocryphal gospel of James, otherwise known as the Protoevangelium Jacobi, which says it is written by "James the brother of the Lord" (cf., Galatians 1:19), and is extant in ancient Greek and Syriac recensions. Origen refers to it as The Book of James, and it is also cited by Justin Martyr. The author claims that when Joseph was forty years of age, he married a woman named Melcha (some render it Escha or Salome). They lived together for forty-nine years and had six children, four sons and two daughters. The youngest son was James (i.e., "the Lord's brother"). At ninety-nine years of age, a year after his wife's death, Joseph received word that the priests were looking for a man of Judah to espouse Mary. Mary was only twelve to fourteen years old at the time. Joseph is said to be chosen by a high priest as her spouse in obedience to a miraculous sign (i.e., a dove coming out of his rod and resting on his head). This account was popular

among many Christians in the second and third century. Its depiction survives in Raphael's (d. 1520) painting *Espousals of the Virgin*. Other apocryphal works that contain purported details of Joseph's life are Pseudo-Matthew, The Gospel of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, The Story of Joseph the Carpenter, and The Life of the Virgin and Death of Joseph.

The question on why James is called the brother (Greek: adelphos) of the Lord, while Simeon son of Clopas is called the anepsios (cousin) can be simply answered by assuming that Simeon was the actual cousin of Jesus, while James was merely a member of Jesus' clan (that is, connected with James per Joseph).

All of this shows that none of the statements in the Bible about the brothers and sisters of Jesus disproves, in any way, the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Now we must look at the proof that Mary had no other children and that she was perpetually a virgin.

JOHN 19:26 PROVES THAT MARY HAD NO CHILDREN BESIDES JESUS

While dying on the Cross, Jesus entrusts His mother to the care of St. John the Apostle.

John 19:26-27 “When Jesus therefore had seen his mother and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother: **Woman, behold thy son.** After that, **he saith to the disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour, the disciple [John] took her to his own.**”

Scholars point out that this was a formal act of entrustment. Jesus entrusted His mother to St. John so that he would take care of her. If Mary had other children, as Protestants contend, Jesus would not have told St. John to take Mary for his mother. She would have been put into the care of one of his many “brothers.” The fact that Jesus entrusted Mary to St. John proves that she had no other children.

Protestants try to respond to this by arguing that Jesus’ “brothers” were not believers and that’s why Jesus entrusted her to St. John. However, that’s refuted by Acts 1:14. It indicates that Jesus’ “brothers” were believers. Jesus certainly knew that they were or would become believers and hence He would not have entrusted her to St. John if they were His siblings.

It’s also quite significant that when Jesus was found in the temple at 12 years old, there is no indication whatsoever that Mary and Joseph had other children (Luke 2:41-51). The indication is that He is an only child. He is also referred to as “the son of Mary”

(Mark 6:3), not as a son of Mary. Never once is Mary said to have had other children.

MARY'S RESPONSE TO THE ANGEL IN LUKE 1 INDICATES THAT SHE HAD TAKEN A VOW OF PERPETUAL VIRGINITY

Luke 1:30-34 “And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, **behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son**, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. **Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not man?**”

The angel appears to Mary and tells her that she will conceive and bring forth a son. Mary responds by saying: “How shall this be, seeing I know not man?”

The actual meaning is: *how shall this be since I am a virgin*. How shall this be? Mary understood how children were conceived. Her response only makes sense if she had taken a lifelong vow of virginity. She was asking how she could conceive while a virgin.

It should also be pointed out that Mary's engagement to Joseph doesn't contradict the notion that she had taken such a vow. Moral behavior at the time dictated that women committed to virginity have a male protector who would guard and respect the vow. That was Joseph's role.

IT'S UNIMAGINABLE THAT THE ARK OF THE NEW COVENANT WOULD HAVE SEXUAL CONTACT

We've already seen that the Bible clearly teaches that Mary is the Ark of the New Covenant. As the holiest creature on Earth and the vessel of the Most High, it's totally incongruous – completely out of keeping with the Ark's dignity and role – to think that she would have any sexual contact. To prepare the people for God's coming on Mt. Sinai, Moses said:

Exodus 19:14-15 “And Moses came down from the mount to the people, and sanctified them. And when they had washed their garments, he said to them: **be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives.**”

When David was on the run and needed bread from the priest, we read:

1 Samuel 21:4 “And the priest answered David, saying: I have no common bread at

hand, but only holy bread, **if the young men be clean, especially from women.**”

The Ark was created for a more sublime and sacred reason, and never would have sexual contact. Oza was struck dead for merely touching the Ark when he shouldn't have done so (2 Samuel 6:6-8).

EZECHIEL 44 AND THE PROPHECY ABOUT THE CLOSED GATE IS A PROPHECY OF MARY'S PERPETUAL VIRGINITY

Ezechiel 44:2 “And the Lord said to me: **This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall pass through it: because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it,** and it shall be shut.”

Here we see that the Lord shall pass through this gate, and no other man shall pass through it. This is a prophecy about the perpetual virginity of Mary. She is the closed gate, through whom the Lord comes. That's one reason why Mary has been called “the Gate of Heaven” in traditional Catholic writings.

THE PERPETUAL VIRGINITY OF MARY WAS FIRMLY BELIEVED IN THE ANCIENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Second Council of Constantinople, 553 A.D., Can. 6 “If anyone says that the holy, glorious, **and ever-virgin** is called God-bearer by misuse of language and not truly... let him be anathema.”

Some Protestants and most members of the “Orthodox” Church claim to honor the Second Council of Constantinople. It was the fifth ecumenical council. As we see here, it clearly taught Mary's perpetual virginity.

Pope St. Martin I, *Lateran Council, 649 A.D., Can. 3* “If anyone does not properly and truly confess in accord with the holy Fathers, that the holy Mother of God **and ever Virgin** and immaculate Mary in the earliest of the ages conceived of the Holy Spirit without seed, namely, God the Word Himself specifically and truly, who was born of God the Father before all ages, and that she incorruptibly bore [Him], **her virginity remaining indestructible even after His birth,** let him be condemned.”
(Denzinger 256)

The ancient Christian Church believed that Mary was perpetually a virgin. In the fourth century, St. Jerome, the father of biblical scholarship and the one who translated the Bible into Latin, defended this truth against Helveticus, a heretic who denied it. As mentioned already, even the first Protestants, including Luther, Calvin and Zwingli, accepted the perpetual virginity of Mary.

The perpetual virginity of Mary can be proven from the Bible. From the earliest biblical days adultery carried with it a sense of defilement, so that a woman who had performed the sexual act with another man, even if by force, was considered no longer fit to be visited by her husband (Genesis 49:4; 2 Samuel 20:3, re *ibid.* 16:21-22; Book of Jubilees 33:6-9; Epstein, *Marriage Laws in the Biblical Talmud*, p. 51).

The deuteronomic code teaches that a woman who is divorced by her husband and thereafter marries another man likewise cannot return to her former husband (Deuteronomy 24:1-4). As the Lord said through the prophet Jeremiah: "If a man put away his wife and she goes from him and becomes another man's wife, shall he return to her again, shall not the land (his wife's body) be greatly polluted?" (Jr 3:1; see Targum to Dt 24:1-4).

Betrothed

In Jewish Law a man betrothed to a woman was considered legally married to her. The word for betrothed in Hebrew is *Kiddush*, a word that is derived from the Hebrew word *Kadash* which means "holy" "consecrated," "set apart." Because by betrothal (as in Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:27), or marriage, a woman became the peculiar property of her husband, forbidden to others.

The Oral Law of *Kiddushin* (Marriages and Engagements) states; "The husband prohibits his wife to the whole world like an object which is dedicated to the Sanctuary" (*Kiddushin* 2b, *Babylonian Talmud*).

We know from the Gospel of Matthew 1:14 that Joseph the husband of Mary was a righteous man, a devout law-abiding Jew. Having noticed that Mary was pregnant and that he, her betrothed, had nothing to do with the pregnancy, Joseph had considered putting her away privately since he thought that he was not worthy enough to live with the Mother of God.

His decision to stay with her was made when an angel appeared to him in a dream, saying: "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife; for that which is conceived in her

is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:20-21). The angel does not use the phrase for marital union: "go in unto" (as in Genesis 30:3, 4, 16) or "come together" (Matthew 1:18) but merely a word meaning leading her into the house as a wife (paralambano gunaika) but not cohabiting with her.

For when the angel revealed to him that Mary was truly the spouse of the Holy Spirit, Joseph could take Mary, his betrothed, into his house as a wife, but he could never have intercourse with her because according to the Law she was forbidden to him for all time.

Marriage to the Holy Spirit

We also have to take into consideration that when Mary was told by the archangel Gabriel "Behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus" (Luke 1:31), he also added that this was to come about because "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the Holy one to be born shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

By stating it in those terms the archangel declared to Mary that God would enter into a marital relationship with her, causing her to conceive His Son in her womb, For "to lay one's power (reshuth) over a woman" (Targum to Dt 21:4) was a euphemism for "to have a marital relationship with her."

Likewise "to overshadow" (Luke 1:35) by spreading the "wing" or "cloak" over a woman was another euphemism for marital relations. Thus, the rabbis commented (Midrash Genesis Rabbah 39.7; Midrash Ruth Rabbah 3.9) that Ruth was chaste in her wording when she asked Boaz to have marital relations with her by saying to him "I am Ruth your handmaid, spread therefore your cloak (literally, "wing": kanaph) over your handmaid for you are my next-of-kin" (Ruth 3:9).

Tallith, another Aramaic-Hebrew word for cloak, is derived from tellal = shadow. Thus, "to spread one's cloak (tallith) over a woman" means to cohabit with her (Kiddushin 18b, see also Mekhilta on Exodus 21:8). Did not the Lord say to His bride Israel: "I am married to you" (Jr 3:14) and "your Maker is your husband"? (Is 54-5:5; Jr 31:32)? And what is more intimate than what the Lord said to His bride: "You developed, you grew, you came to full womanhood; your breasts became firm and your hair grew... you were naked... and I saw that you were now old enough for love so I spread my cloak over you... I gave you My oath, I entered into a

covenant with you and you became Mine, says the Lord God." (Ezekiel 16:7, 8)

Mary prohibited to Joseph

Having been enlightened by an angel in a dream regarding her pregnancy, and perhaps further by Mary concerning the words of the archangel Gabriel to her at the Annunciation, Joseph knew that God had conducted himself as a husband in regard to Mary. She was now prohibited to him for all time, and for the sake of the Child and Mary he could only live with her in an absolutely chaste relationship.

Joseph as celibate caretaker

As the recipient of the great revelation that what was conceived in the womb of Mary, his betrothed, was of the Holy Spirit and that the Child to be born was destined to save His people from their sins, surely Joseph knew that he was called to take care of Mary and her Child, the Messiah, for the rest of his life, which is why the angel told him to take Mary as his wife.

We may reasonable assume that Mary herself now shared with him all that the archangel Gabriel said to her. No less a Person than "the Son of God" (Luke 1:35) was to be entrusted to his care under the shelter of his humble home, now become the Holy of Holies.

Jewish tradition mentions that, although the people had to abstain from sexual relations with their wives for only three days prior to the revelation at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:15), Moses chose to remain continent the rest of his life with the full approval of God. The rabbis explained that this was so because Moses knew that he was appointed to personally commune with God, not only at Mount Sinai but in general throughout the forty years of sojourning in the wilderness. For this reason Moses kept himself "apart from woman," remaining in the sanctity of separation to be at the beck and call of God at all times; they cited God's command to Moses in Deuteronomy 5:28 (Midrash Exodus Rabbah 19:3 and 46.3).

Again, we may be sure that Saint Joseph remained celibate all his life because throughout his married years he was in daily attendance and communication with Jesus, the incarnate Word of God.

Objection: You are not right in teaching that specific acts of virtue increases our own or other people's chances of reaching heaven. There's nothing in the Bible that teaches this. My Bible does not even have the verse that teaches this: "*But this kind [of demon] is not cast out*

but by prayer and fasting.” (Matthew 17:21)

Answer: Not surprisingly, the word “fasting”, or worse, **the whole verse itself!** has been completely removed from many modern protestant translations. For instance, the following whole verse have been completely removed in the New International Version: “*But this kind [of demon] is not cast out but by prayer and fasting.*” (Matthew 17:21) **You will not find it at all in their translation. All in all, over 40 complete deletions of whole sentences is found in the New International Version (NIV)**, in addition to over 64,000 deletions of words such as: Godhead, regeneration, Calvary, remission, immutable, omnipotent, Comforter, Holy Ghost, Messiah, quickened, infallible, etc. It’s interesting to note that the same verse of Matthew 17:21 is also deleted from the Jehovah’s Witness “Bible”. In fact, many of the things missing in the Jehovah’s Witness “Bible”, such as references to the Godhead and The Trinity, have been completely omitted in the New International Version as well, such as 1 John 5:7, which reads: “*And there are three who give testimony in heaven, **the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these three are one.***” The bolded vitally important phrase is completely removed from both the New International Version and the Jehovah’s Witness “Bible”. This is one of the greatest verses testifying of the Godhead or Trinity. That is why the Jehovah’s Witnesses leave it out. They do not believe in the Godhead and they do not believe that Jesus is God. Why does the NIV leave it out...? It’s because the translation is satanically inspired by the same Antichrist spirit behind the Jehovah’s Witness cult. Reader, do you believe in the Godhead? Do you read the NIV translation? (or other protestant translations)? If so, then this deletion should offend you. That is why one must read the Catholic bible. For in addition to all of the above, all protestant versions are corrupted and mistranslated on many important passages, in addition to **missing seven entire books (the deuterocanonical books) from the biblical canon**. Even the King James version is not to be compared with the Douay-Rheims Catholic bible and are many times excluding the deuterocanonical books. **So if you are reading a protestant bible and love the bible you are missing seven entire books of the bible.**

DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE DISPROVING THE PROTESTANT BIBLE!

When we consider the fact that the early Christian Church unanimously accepted the Catholic canon of Holy Scripture up to the time of the Protestant revolt, only a heretic, fool or liar would ever dare to claim that the Christian Church accepted false biblical books for over 1500 years and that the Christian Church erred for 1500 years in this regard, or that God would allow non-Canonical books to be considered as canonical for over 1500 years throughout the

universal Christian Church. Here is some irrefutable evidence that the Catholic canon is the only true canon of scripture:

Matt. 2:16 – Herod’s decree of slaying innocent children was prophesied in Wis. 11:7 – slaying the holy innocents.

Matt. 6:19-20 – Jesus’ statement about laying up for yourselves treasure in heaven follows Sirach 29:11 – lay up your treasure.

Matt. 7:12 – Jesus’ golden rule “do unto others” is the converse of Tobit 4:15 – what you hate, do not do to others.

Matt. 7:16,20 – Jesus’ statement “you will know them by their fruits” follows Sirach 27:6 – the fruit discloses the cultivation.

Matt. 9:36 – the people were “like sheep without a shepherd” is same as Judith 11:19 – sheep without a shepherd.

Matt. 11:25 – Jesus’ description “Lord of heaven and earth” is the same as Tobit 7:18 – Lord of heaven and earth.

Matt. 12:42 – Jesus refers to the wisdom of Solomon which was recorded and made part of the deuterocanonical books.

Matt. 16:18 – Jesus’ reference to the “power of death” and “gates of Hades” references Wisdom 16:13.

Matt. 22:25; Mark 12:20; Luke 20:29 – Gospel writers refer to the canonicity of Tobit 3:8 and 7:11 regarding the seven brothers.

Matt. 24:15 – the “desolating sacrilege” Jesus refers to is also taken from 1 Macc. 1:54 and 2 Macc. 8:17.

Matt. 24:16 – let those “flee to the mountains” is taken from 1 Macc. 2:28.

Matt. 27:43 – if He is God’s Son, let God deliver him from His adversaries follows Wisdom 2:18.

Mark 4:5,16-17 – Jesus’ description of seeds falling on rocky ground and having no root follows Sirach 40:15.

Mark 9:48 – description of hell where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched references Judith 16:17.

Luke 1:42 – Elizabeth’s declaration of Mary’s blessedness above all women follows Uzziah’s declaration in Judith 13:18.

Luke 1:52 – Mary’s magnificat addressing the mighty falling from their thrones and replaced by lowly follows Sirach 10:14.

Luke 2:29 – Simeon’s declaration that he is ready to die after seeing the Child Jesus follows Tobit 11:9.

Luke 13:29 – the Lord’s description of men coming from east and west to rejoice in God follows Baruch 4:37.

Luke 21:24 – Jesus’ usage of “fall by the edge of the sword” follows Sirach 28:18.

Luke 24:4 and Acts 1:10 – Luke’s description of the two men in dazzling apparel reminds us of 2 Macc. 3:26.

John 1:3 – all things were made through Him, the Word, follows Wisdom 9:1.

John 3:13 – who has ascended into heaven but He who descended from heaven references Baruch 3:29.

John 4:48; Acts 5:12; 15:12; 2 Cor. 12:12 – Jesus’, Luke’s and Paul’s usage of “signs and wonders” follows Wisdom 8:8.

John 5:18 – Jesus claiming that God is His Father follows Wisdom 2:16.

John 6:35-59 – Jesus’ Eucharistic discourse is foreshadowed in Sirach 24:21.

John 10:22 – the identification of the feast of the dedication is taken from 1 Macc. 4:59.

John 10:36 – Jesus accepts the inspiration of Maccabees as He analogizes the Hanukkah consecration to His own consecration to the Father in 1 Macc. 4:36.

John 15:6 – branches that don't bear fruit and are cut down follows Wis. 4:5 where branches are broken off.

And many more!

The inspired Scripture in 2 Tim. 3:16 that St. Paul is referring to included the deuterocanonical texts that the Protestants removed after the Christian Church had accepted it as Holy Scripture for 1500 years. The books Baruch, Tobit, Maccabees, Judith, Sirach, Wisdom and parts of Daniel and Esther were all included in the Septuagint that Jesus and the apostles used. The deuterocanonical books were reckoned as Scripture by the early Christians. As Protestant church historian J. N. D. Kelly writes, "It should be observed that the Old Testament thus admitted as authoritative in the Church was somewhat bulkier and more comprehensive [than the Protestant Bible]. . . . It always included, though with varying degrees of recognition, the so-called apocrypha or deuterocanonical books. The reason for this is that the Old Testament which passed in the first instance into the hands of Christians was . . . the Greek translation known as the Septuagint. . . . most of the Scriptural quotations found in the New Testament are based upon it rather than the Hebrew. . . . In the first two centuries . . . the Church seems to have accept all, or most of, these additional books as inspired and to have treated them without question as Scripture. Quotations from Wisdom, for example, occur in 1 Clement and Barnabas. . . Polycarp cites Tobit, and the Didache [cites] Ecclesiasticus. Irenaeus refers to Wisdom, the History of Susannah, Bel and the Dragon [i.e., the deuterocanonical portions of Daniel], and Baruch. The use made of the Apocrypha by Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian and Clement of Alexandria is too frequent for detailed references to be necessary" (Early Christian Doctrines, 53-54). Further, some New Testament passages clearly allude to passages in the deuterocanonals. (For instance, compare Hebrews 11:35 with 2 Maccabees 7.)

Some Protestants argue that *Sirach* and *2 Maccabees* are not inspired because the writers express uncertainty about their abilities. But sacred writers are often humble about their divinely inspired writings. See, for example, 1 Cor. 7:40 – Paul says he "thinks" that he has the Spirit of God.

The Protestants attempt to defend their rejection of the deuterocanonals on the ground that

the early Jews rejected them. However, the Jewish councils that rejected them (e.g., School of Javneh (also called “Jamnia” in 90 – 100 A.D.) were the same councils that rejected the entire New Testament canon. Thus, Protestants who reject the Catholic Bible are following a Jewish council that rejected Christ and the Revelation of the New Testament.

We can know that the Jewish community in general before the coming of Christ accepted the Catholic version of the Old Testament, for the Septuagint that Christ and the Apostles used, were produced by the Jews before Christ, and at that time, the followers of Judaism had not fallen into such a degradation and heresy concerning the meaning of Holy Scripture that we can see described in the Gospel.

When the Lord and His Apostles addressed Greek-speaking Diaspora Jews, they made use of the Septuagint, a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek — which many Jews (the vast majority, in fact) regarded as inspired Scripture. In fact, we find that the New Testament is filled with references to the Septuagint (and its particular translation of various Old Testament passages) as Scripture. It’s a strange irony that one of the favorite passages used in anti-Catholic polemics over the years is Mark 7:6-8. In this passage Christ condemns “teaching as doctrines human traditions.” This verse has formed the basis for countless complaints against the Catholic Church for supposedly “adding” to Scripture man-made traditions, such as the “merely human works” of the deuterocanonical books. But few realize that in Mark 7:6-8 the Lord was quoting the version of Isaiah that is found only in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament.

The Septuagint version of Scripture, from which Christ quoted, includes the Deuterocanonical books, books that were supposedly “added” by Rome in the 16th century. And this is by no means the only citation of the Septuagint in the New Testament. In fact, fully two thirds of the Old Testament passages that are quoted in the New Testament are from the Septuagint. So why aren’t the deuterocanonical books in today’s Jewish Bible, anyway? Because the Jews who formulated the modern Jewish canon were a) not interested in apostolic teaching and, b) driven by a very different set of concerns from those motivating the apostolic community. The fact is that after the birth of the Church on the day of Pentecost, the rabbis no longer had authority from God to settle such issues. That authority, including the authority to define the canon of Scripture, had been given to Christ’s Church. Thus, Church and synagogue went their separate ways, not in the Middle Ages or the 16th century, but in the 1st century. The Septuagint, complete with the deuterocanonical books, was first embraced, not by the Council of Trent, but by Jesus of Nazareth and his Apostles.

We will now consider what the Bible teaches about how holy men intercede with God.

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT MEN INTERCEDE WITH GOD –
MOSES HAD AN EXTRAORDINARY POWER OF INTERCESSION WITH GOD

Exodus 32:9-14 “**And the Lord said unto Moses**, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: **Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.** And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power... Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants... **And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.**”

Moses' intercession with God was so great that God even asked Moses to allow Him to destroy the Israelites. This must not be understood in the sense that the Almighty God can be or was constrained by any man, but rather that He was powerfully swayed and influenced by this man's close relationship with Him. Moses pleaded with Him not to destroy them, and God relented because of Moses. As we can see, not all men are equal before God. Not all men have the same intercessory power with Him. The intercession of extraordinary and saintly men is powerful and effective.

ABRAHAM HAD AN EXTRAORDINARY POWER OF INTERCESSION WITH GOD

We see another example of this in the case of Abraham:

Genesis 18:26-33 “**And the Lord said to him: If I find in Sodom fifty just within the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake.** And Abraham answered, and said: Seeing I have once begun, I will speak to my Lord, whereas I am dust and ashes. What if there be five less than fifty just persons? wilt thou for five and forty destroy the whole city? And he said: I will not destroy it, if I find five and forty. And again he said to him: But if forty be found there, what wilt thou do? He said: I will not destroy it for the sake of forty. [**And Abraham, because he had powerful intercession with God, bargained Him all the way to ten**] **What if ten should be found there? And he said: I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.** And the Lord departed, after he had left speaking to Abraham: and Abraham returned to his place.”

THE BIBLE SAYS THAT THE PRAYERS OF A MAN WOULD CAUSE GOD TO ACCEPT PEOPLE HE OTHERWISE WOULD NOT

The next example we will consider is one where the Bible says that the prayers of a man would cause God to accept people He otherwise wouldn't.

Job 42:7-10 "... the Lord said to Eliphaz... My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering: **and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly...** So [they] went, and did according as the Lord commanded them... **And the Lord also was turned at the penance of Job, when he prayed for his friends...**"

The Lord was turned at the prayers and penance of Job. The intercession and prayers of saintly men obtain graces and favors that the Lord will not always otherwise give. God said that He would only give this grace to Eliphaz if Job would pray for him.

GOD WOULD ONLY GIVE ISRAEL THE VICTORY IF MOSES (A MAN) HELD UP HIS HANDS

Another example of the intercession of holy men is found in Exodus 17. We read that Israel went out to fight against Amalec. God enabled Israel to have the victory as long as Moses held up his hands. However, if Moses let his hands down, Amalec would overcome the Israelites.

Exodus 17:11-13 "**And when Moses lifted up his hands, Israel overcame: but if he let them down a little, Amalec overcame.** And Moses' hands were heavy: so they took a stone, and put under him, and he sat on it: and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands on both sides. And it came to pass that his hands were not weary until sunset. And Josue put Amalec and his people to flight, by the edge of the sword."

This is another prime example of how sometimes God only grants certain things through the intercession of holy men.

THE LORD'S STATEMENT ABOUT THE INTERCESSION OF MOSES AND SAMUEL

Jeremias 15:1 “And the Lord said to me: If Moses and Samuel shall stand before me, my soul is not towards this people: cast them out from my sight...”

God says that even if Moses and Samuel stood before Him, He would still reject this people. This is quite revealing. The people described in this passage were so bad that not even the powerful intercession of the great servants of God, Moses and Samuel, could relax God’s anger against them. However, these words show us that the intercession of extraordinary servants of God, such as Moses and Samuel – who have built up a special credit or influence with Him – impacts how God deals with and looks at people, even if it didn’t make the difference in this particular case because of how bad the people were. The intercession of saintly men helps determine what God does for people and what He does to them, as we saw with the examples above.

WHAT ABOUT 1 TIMOTHY 2:5 JESUS IS THE ONLY MEDIATOR?

Before we cover more biblical evidence for the veneration and intercession of saints, we must consider an objection. One of the main objections that non-Catholics raise against praying to saints comes from 1 Timothy 2:5.

1 Timothy 2:5 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

Jesus is the only mediator between God and men, they say, so you can’t include saints or prayers to them. This objection is false for many reasons. Just because Jesus is the only mediator does not mean that others do not mediate as part of the one mediation of Christ. For example, in John 10:16 Jesus says that He is the one and only shepherd; but He appoints Peter to shepherd His sheep in John 21:15-17. Ephesians 4:11 also teaches that there are many pastors or shepherds. The point is that these other sub-shepherds all work under and by the institution of the one shepherd, Jesus.

Another example is that Jesus says He is the supreme judge. We read this in John 9:39 and in many other passages. Certain men of God, however, will also act on His behalf as judges in Heaven, even of angels. We read this in 1 Corinthians 6:2, Matthew 19:28, and elsewhere. Yes, Jesus is the unique mediator, because the mediator is the one who unites man to God. Jesus alone did this by His passion and death. We read this in 2 Corinthians 5:18. But that does not mean that within the one mediation of Christ there are not others who participate in His mediation. In fact, the Bible clearly teaches it.

IF YOU CANNOT PRAY TO SAINTS, THEN YOU CANNOT ASK OTHERS TO PRAY FOR
YOU – PERIOD

If Jesus' unique mediation excluded prayers to saints, then it would also exclude asking a fellow man to pray for you. There is no way around the logic of this argument. **For when you ask a fellow man to pray for you, instead of going to Jesus directly, you are asking another person to act as a mediator with Jesus for you. That's what Catholics do when they pray to saints.** Therefore, if prayers to saints are excluded by the unique mediation of Jesus, then asking others for prayers is definitely excluded as well.

Not only do most Protestants accept the concept of asking others to pray for them – thus contradicting their rejection of prayers to saints – but, in the New Testament, St. Paul himself repeatedly asks others for prayers.

Romans 15:30 “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye **strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.**”

Paul also tells others that he is praying for them.

Colossians 1:3 “... praying always for you...”

Paul even says that the prayers of others bestow gifts upon him.

2 Corinthians 1:11 “Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.”

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT PAUL'S SUFFERING INTERCEDES TO WIN GRACES FOR
PEOPLE

The Bible also says this about Paul's suffering:

Colossians 1:24 “[I] now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for his body, which is the church.”

This verse might be a shock to some non-Catholics who are not familiar with it. Paul says that

he fills up, for the Church, those things that are wanting or lacking in the sufferings of Christ. Now Christ's suffering was perfect and of infinite value; so what does this mean? What St. Paul means is that many sufferings are still wanting and needed for the members of the Church to work out their salvation, which was all made possible by Christ's sacrifice.

He is teaching that his sacrifices and his sufferings, in addition to his prayers, can intercede with God so that God gives others graces to convert or to remain faithful. Those people must still cooperate with the graces, but the efforts, prayers and sacrifices of members of the Church can help grant them. All of this confirms Catholic teaching on the communion of saints, and it refutes the Protestant misunderstanding of 1 Timothy 2:5.

THIS TRUTH IS ROOTED IN THE UNITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST, WHICH EXISTS AFTER DEATH

The fact that men can go to other men for prayers, and that the saints in Heaven can answer prayers and intercede, is rooted in the biblical teaching on the unity of the Body of Christ. There is a union among the members of the Church of Jesus. This union does not cease when true members die.

St. Paul says in Romans 8:38 and following that neither death nor life separates one from the love of Christ. Nor does it separate the true faithful who abide together in the Body of Christ, whether on Earth or in Heaven.

1 Cor. 12:12,21 "... all the members of that one body, being many, are one body... And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."

THE BIBLE SAYS THAT THE PRAYER OF A JUST MAN AVAILS MUCH

While the true members of the Church can assist each other by prayers, the prayers and intercession of saintly men is particularly powerful. That's exactly what we saw in the cases of Moses and Abraham. That's why we read:

James 5:16 "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. **The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**"

This is why prayers to saints – which have the purpose of calling for them to pray to God on

our behalf – are so effective.

THE BIBLE ALSO TEACHES THAT DECEASED SAINTLY MEN INTERCEDE

In Matthew 17, we see that Jesus, when He was transfigured before three of His apostles, appeared with Moses and Elias.

Matthew 17:2-3 “And [He] was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun... And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.”

This shows us that saints, even after death, are interested in Earthly affairs and are ready to intercede for us. For the spirits of the just men made perfect, as Hebrews 12 calls the saints, are among the cloud of witnesses with the angels in Heaven who help us.

Hebrews 1:14 “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

Psalms 91:11 “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.”

AFTER DEATH, THE PROPHET SAMUEL APPEARED TO KING SAUL

In 1 Samuel 28 (1 Kings 28 in the Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible), we see a clear example of a dead saint appearing to a man. This was the prophet Samuel, who had been dead for some time. He appeared to King Saul, and rebuked him for his disobedience to God.

1 Samuel 28:12-20 “And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice... And Samuel said to Saul... Because thou obeyed not the voice of the Lord, nor executed his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day... Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel.”

Remember, Samuel had been dead for some time.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION (OR APOCALYPSE) SHOWS US HOW THE PRAYERS OF SAINTS INTERCEDE IN HEAVEN BEFORE THE ALTAR OF GOD

The Book of Revelation or the Apocalypse also gives us a glimpse of how the saints and their

prayers intercede for men.

Revelation 8:3-4 “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, **that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints** upon the golden altar which was before the throne. **And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints,** ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.”

We see another example in Revelation chapter 5.

Revelation 5:8 “... elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, **and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.**”

PART 4. THE BIBLICAL AND APOSTOLIC FOUNDATION FOR PRIESTLY CHASTITY

The Holy Bible and the Popes, Fathers and Saints of the Catholic Church unanimously teach that all Bishops, Priests and Deacons of the Lord must be totally “chaste” and abstain from all sexual intercourse with their wives during all times

From the very beginning of the Christian Church, it was taught by the Bible and the Holy Apostles that all ministers of God had to remain in chastity even though they were married when they entered the clerical state. We see this both in the earliest Church councils, Apostolic Tradition as well as the teachings of the Popes, Saints and Fathers of the Church. It is also clear from the Bible that the Catholic teaching on priestly celibacy and that a minister of the Lord must live totally “**chaste**” (1 Tim 3:2) after becoming a minister and holy servant of Our Lord, is the only true teaching. This teaching, of course, refutes and destroys the protestant and eastern “orthodox” schismatic position on this matter.

Indeed, the fact that Holy Scripture teaches that all Bishops, Priests and Deacons are forbidden to get married again after their spouse have died, (1 Tim 3:12; Tit 1:5-6) shows us that Our Lord taught the Apostles that all priests must be completely chaste in order to become and work as a priest; for if this were not so, God would certainly have allowed a man who was a priest to marry a second time after his spouse died, but since we see that God directly forbids this, it is clear that God from the very beginning of the Church commanded all priests – married as well as unmarried – to live in perfect chastity, holiness and purity after their ordination. This is also exactly how the Apostles themselves lived according to the teachings, history and tradition of the Church. In truth, “*Let deacons be the husbands of **one wife**... ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee: If any be without crime, **the husband of one wife**...*” (1 Tim 3:12; Tit 1:5-6) Note, however, that the Church does not teach that only unmarried men can be accepted to the priesthood, but that both the married and unmarried are accepted as long as they vow to never have sex again. In the case of a married man, however, the man can only enter the priesthood if his wife agrees to it.

In the beginning, the Church allowed men to enter the priesthood who were already married since the very concept of chastity were practiced by so few at that time because the world had fallen into such a degraded state when Our Lord entered the world, but there was never any Church teaching that taught that it is allowed to perform the sexual act after one becomes a priest. In truth, we see that St. Peter himself declares in *The Gospel of Luke* that he and all the

Apostles “have left all things [which includes marital life], and have followed thee [Jesus],” and Jesus answering him: “*Amen, I say to you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, **or wife**, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, Who shall not receive much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.*” (Luke 18:28-30) Mark 10:29 records the same incident, but while “wife” is mentioned among the things “left,” no “wife” is found among the things gained. Thus Our Lord Himself in the context of St. Peter’s confession that he and the other Apostles had left “*all things*” for His sake, showed them that “*all*” really meant that they “*left house, or parents, or brethren, **or wife**, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake*”. In truth, “*If any man come to me [Jesus], and **hate not** his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, **yea and his own life also**, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*” (Luke 14:26-27) And so, “*The disciple is not above the master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.*” (Mark 10:24-25)

Jesus was celibate, and the priest stands in his place (“in persona Christi” as we call it). The Twelve Apostles left their spouses, if they were married, as well as all their property and possessions (cf. Matthew 19:27; Mark 10:28 and especially Luke 18:28–30), with Christ’s explicit approval. The apostle Paul set a personal example in this matter when he exhorted all to “be as I am,” that is, celibate. Indeed, contrary to many of our times who imagine or claim that the Apostles were married, the only one of the Apostles that is recorded to have been married at one time in his life, according to Holy Scripture, is Saint Peter, since his mother in law is mentioned in the holy text, but even in his case, there is no evidence that he lived as a married man during his ministry.

The Book of Exodus also shows us that God directly commanded the priests of the Old Law (which was the prophetic symbol and sign of the priesthood of the New Law) to “sanctify” themselves when they served the Lord, which, as we have seen in *The Book of Exodus*, meant that they had to be chaste (Exodus 19:10-22). And so important is this matter of priestly chastity to God, that Our Lord directly threatens to strike priests who refuse to follow His commandment concerning this matter: “He [God] said unto him [Moses]: Go down, and charge the people: lest they should have a mind to pass the limits to see the Lord, and a very great multitude of them should perish. The priests also that come to the Lord, let them be sanctified, [that is, chaste] lest he strike them.” (Exodus 19:21-22)

The sacrificial aspect of the Eucharistic liturgy and the real presence of Our Lord’s Body is directly taught by Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Apostles as we can read in Holy

Scripture and Sacred Tradition, and this is also one of the main reasons why the Church was united against all those who dared to contradict God's commandment for all clerics to be chaste. In truth, the dignity of the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord in the most Holy Eucharist demands that the priest is pure and chaste when he consecrates and partakes of the Sacrament. God also commanded the Jews in the Old Testament and the Old Law to perform a kind of rite similar to the Eucharistic liturgy in order for it to be a sign of the future Eucharist. For as we have already seen, all priests of the Old Law had to be totally chaste in order to be able to perform the rite of the Old Law and eat of the bread that signified the future Eucharist, "*If any one that is defiled shall eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which is offered to the Lord, he shall be cut off from his people.*" (Leviticus 7:20) The words "the flesh of the sacrifice" signifies Our Lord Jesus Christ's Holy Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity that is offered up for our sins as a "peace offering" in the Eucharist in order to appease the just wrath of God. This very flesh is also offered up by the priests of the Church every time they perform the Eucharistic liturgy of the Church.

Since the Old Law teaches that both the priests as well as the laymen must be completely clean from all sexual activity for three days in order to be able to receive the prophetic sign of the Eucharist, it is obvious that it is also the Lord's will for all to be completely chaste for a minimum of three days in the New Law (if not more by the grace of God) when they receive the real and actual Body of Our Lord. David said, "Now therefore if thou have any thing at hand, though it were but five loaves, give me, or whatsoever thou canst find. And the priest answered David, saying: I have no common bread at hand, but only holy bread, *if the young men be clean*, especially from women? And David answered the priest, and said to him: Truly, as to what concerneth women, we have refrained ourselves from yesterday and the day before, when we came out, and *the vessels of the young men were holy*. Now this way *is defiled*, but it shall also *be sanctified* this day in the vessels." (1 Kings 21:3-5)

A key biblical passage that proves that all who have sex are defiled comes from the book of Leviticus: "And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: The man that hath an issue of seed, shall be unclean.... The man from whom the seed of copulation goeth out, shall wash all his body with water: and he shall be unclean until the evening. The garment or skin that he weareth, he shall wash with water, and it shall be unclean until the evening. The woman, with whom he copulateth, shall be washed with water, and shall be unclean until the evening." (Verses 15:1-2,16-18).

In truth, the Old Law does not only forbid the reception of the figure and sign of the future Eucharist for three days for those who have had sexual relations, but it also teaches that even

those who have had a sensual or sinful dream during their sleep are banned from taking the Eucharist since they became defiled by the dream, thus showing us the height of purity and virtue that Our Lord and God expects from us when we are to receive (or in the case of priests, distribute) the most Holy Eucharist. “... *thou shalt keep thyself from every evil thing. If there be among you any man, that is defiled in a dream by night, he shall go forth out of the camp. And shall not return, before he be washed with water in the evening: and after sunset he shall return into the camp.*” (Deuteronomy 23:9-11)

The requirement of practicing chastity for three days before receiving the Word of God and the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament, is also a symbol and sign of the future Holy Eucharist which is truly God “come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai” (Exodus 19) and it concerns both the priests as well as the laymen and is found in the Old Testament Bible: “So, too, we read in the Old Testament that, when the Jewish people were about to approach Mount Sinai, it was said to them in the Lord’s teaching: ‘Be sanctified, **and be ready against the third day**, [to receive God’s Word] and come not near your wives,’ [Exodus 19:15] and: ‘if any man be defiled in a dream by night, let him not eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of salvation, lest his soul be cut off from his people.’ [Deuteronomy 23:10; Leviticus 7:20] If after defilement which happens to us even unwillingly [in the sleep] we may not communicate [receive the Eucharist] unless compunction and almsgiving come first, and fasting, too, if infirmity does not prevent it, who can say that there is no sin if we do such things intentionally when we are wide awake?” (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon 44*)

Exodus 19:9-11,14-15 “The Lord said to him [Moses]: Lo, now will I come to thee in the darkness of a cloud, that the people may hear me speaking to thee, and may believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people to the Lord. And he [God] said to him [Moses]: Go to the people, and sanctify them today, and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments. And let them be ready against the third day: for on the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. ... **And Moses came down from the mount to the people, and sanctified them. And when they had washed their garments, He said to them: Be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives.**”

In comparison to the Christian priests of the New Law, however, Jewish priests in the Old Law rarely served at the altar of sacrifice. But Christian priests are different since they must offer up the “peace offering” every day. In the Old Law – which was only a shadow of the New Law to come (Hebrews 10:1) – sexual relations rendered a man ritually unclean and that meant he could not participate in Israel’s cultic life for a prescribed period of time. The Old Law clearly

teaches that a person could not receive the shadow or sign of the future Eucharist unless one abstains from the sexual act for three days, and so, in the New Law it is obvious that the Bible teaches that all priests must be completely chaste since they are to perform the Eucharistic sacrifice every day.

The other sacraments of the Church, however, also implies transmitting Christ's Blood to other people, such as in the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance, which washes away the sins of the penitent by the help of the Blood of Our Lord. And so, since the priest must always supply the sacraments for the benefit of himself and his Church in order to alleviate the wrath of God, it is a biblical fact that a priest can never be allowed to exercise the sexual act after he becomes a priest.

In addition, The Old Testament and the Old Law prophesied the laws and practices of the future Christian Church, but all the predicted types and symbols of the Old Law, is always fulfilled in a greater way than the Old Testament type or symbol. If what was predicted was not substantially better and more holy than what was predicted, then it would make little sense to prophetically foretell something which is not even better than what people already had in the Old Law. Thus, this fact shows us that the priesthood of the New Law must be more virtuous and chaste since even the Old Law obligated the priests to remain chaste while they served the Lord.

Our Lord Himself stands as the primary sign and example for the necessity of a chaste priesthood. In truth, He is the High Priest and Example that we all must live and die with if we want to be saved. Our Lord lived and died completely chaste, and from beginning to end, tried to help and inspire his followers as well as everyone else to adopt the more meritorious life of chastity and virginity: "Having therefore a great high priest that hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God: let us hold fast our confession... Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly vocation, consider the apostle and high priest of our confession, Jesus: Who is faithful to him that made him, as was also Moses in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, by so much as he that hath built the house, hath greater honor than the house. For every house is built by some man: but he that created all things, is God." (Hebrews 3:1-4, 4:14)

Christ Our Lord, the High Priest, made the way clear for all priests of the Church by the example of his own life and suffering. The servant of Christ should not expect less than some suffering if he perfectly wants to follow Our Lord in this life. Just as Christ was glorified in eternity for his suffering, so also his sons, the priests, must follow him in suffering in order to

be glorified in eternity. There is no other way but the cross of Our Lord: *“And whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me, **cannot be my disciple.**”* (Luke 14:27) If Christ who suffered the most horrible torture imaginable is our example, is it strange that his special sons, the priests, should follow him in small penances and chastity that are as nothing compared to His suffering on the Cross? Not at all! In truth, anything else would have been completely unacceptable and directly inspired by the devil of voluptuousness and sensuality. For *“The disciple is not above his master: but every one shall be perfect, if he be as his master [Our Lord Jesus Christ].”* (Luke 6:40) Thus, *“Where the **forerunner** Jesus is entered for us, made a high priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech,”* (Hebrews 6:20) it obviously follows that his beloved sons, the priests, must follow Him in the way of penance and chastity in order to perfectly resemble the one and only High Priest – Our Lord Jesus Christ. In truth, *“So Christ also did not glorify himself, that he might be made a high priest”* (Hebrews 5:5).

Hebrews 7:11-28 “If then perfection was by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchisedech, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being translated [to the New Law], it is necessary that a translation also be made of the law. For he, of whom these things are spoken, is of another tribe, of which no one attended on the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprung out of Juda: in which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. And it is yet far more evident: if according to the similitude of Melchisedech there ariseth another priest, Who is made not according to the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an indissoluble life: For he testifieth: Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech.

“There is indeed a setting aside of the former commandment, because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: (For the law brought nothing to perfection,) but a bringing in of a better hope, by which we draw nigh to God. And inasmuch as it is not without an oath, (for the others indeed were made priests without an oath; But this with an oath, by him that said unto him: The Lord hath sworn, and he will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever.) By so much is Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And the others indeed were made **many priests**, because by reason of death they were not suffered to continue: But this, for that he continueth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood, Whereby he is able also to save for ever them that come to God by him; always living to **make intercession** for us.

“For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth

not daily (as the other priests) to offer sacrifices first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, in offering himself. For the law maketh men priests, who have infirmity: but the word of the oath, which was since the law, the Son who is perfected for evermore."

Douay Rheims Bible Commentary explains the words "*many priests*" in Hebrews 7:23, saying that: "The apostle notes this difference between the high priests of the law, and our high priest Jesus Christ; that they being removed by death, made way for their successors; whereas our Lord Jesus is a priest for ever, and hath no successor; but liveth and concurreth for ever with his ministers, the priests of the new testament, in all their functions. Also, that no one priest of the law, nor all of them together, could offer that absolute sacrifice of everlasting redemption, which our one high priest Jesus Christ has offered once, and for ever."

(Challoner) --- The words "*make intercession*" in verse 25 means that "Christ, as man, continually maketh intercession for us, by representing his passion to his Father" (Challoner) whose merit is applied to humanity by the priesthood and its distribution of the sacraments of the Church to the faithful. In truth, it is fitting that the priests of the New Law should not daily "*offer sacrifices first for his own sins, and then for the people's... For the [Old] law maketh men priests, who have infirmity: but the word of the oath, which was since the law, the Son who is perfected for evermore.*" (Hebrews 7:27-28)

From the very beginning, all the Councils, Popes, Saints and Fathers of the Church rejected the heretical and unbiblical teaching of those impure and selfish heretics and schismatics who reject the biblical Church teaching that all ministers must be totally chaste and that the high and pure office of being a minister of the Lord obligates a man to abstain from all sexual relations, even with a wife. There are many reasons why the Church teaches this doctrine.

First, it is an obvious fact of the Natural Law that the sexual act makes a person intoxicated and deprives people of the ability to reason, which are truly defects that inflict men after the fall of Adam and Eve, and which have made marriage infirm. *The Angelic Doctor* explains "**Now there is a loss of reason incidental to the union of man and woman, both because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time [as in the case of intoxication of drugs], as the Philosopher says (Ethic. vii, 11); and again because of the tribulation of the flesh which such persons have to suffer from solicitude for temporal things (1 Corinthians 7:28).** Consequently the choice of this union cannot be made ordinate except by certain compensations whereby that same union is righted, and these are the goods [procreation, sacrament and fidelity] which ***excuse*** marriage

and make it right.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1)

The fact that the current state of marriage after the fall is defective and infirm is something that most so called Christians totally reject or ignore, but anyone with even a little sense of decency knows in his heart that intoxication is truly an evil defect and a sign that something is wrong.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1, 5: “Whether certain blessings are necessary in order to excuse [marriage and sexual intercourse in] marriage? Wherever there is indulgence [as St. Paul states], there must needs be some reason for excuse. **Now marriage is allowed in the state of infirmity "by indulgence" (1 Corinthians 7:6).** Therefore it needs to be excused by certain goods... [and] the aforesaid [marital sexual] act does not differ from the act of fornication... But the act of fornication is always evil. **Therefore the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...**”

As a matter of fact, sensual lusts (both for the married and the unmarried people alike) actually “**gives rise to blindness of mind, which excludes almost entirely the knowledge of spiritual things, while dulness of sense arises from gluttony, which makes a man weak in regard to the same [spiritual] intelligible things.**” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II:II, Q. 15, Art. 3) Lust, in all its forms, is undoubtedly the greatest reason why people have a “blindness of mind” concerning spiritual things. The truth that lust is the most powerful of all human acts in inducing spiritual death, can even be understood from reason alone, since the sexual or lustful pleasure is the one pleasure of all who induces in man a kind of inability to reason. “...lust applies chiefly to venereal pleasures, **which more than anything else** work the greatest havoc in a man’s mind”. (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II:II, Q. 153, Art. 2) “And truly, the concupiscence of the flesh, beyond all other passions, doth greatly hinder us from being ready to meet Christ; whilst, on the other hand, nothing makes us more fit to follow our Lord, than virginal chastity.” (St. Robert Bellarmine, *The art of dying well*, Chapter IV)

This proves that lust and sexual pleasure is the biggest cause why people in the end are damned, and it also shows us about what sins one should speak about when one tries to convert a sinner or a heretic. And this of course also applies to married people and their sexual acts, and St. Augustine also confirms the fact that “he who is intemperate in marriage, what is he but the adulterer of his own wife?” by quoting the great St. Ambrose’s teaching concerning the necessity for married people to practice moderation in even their normal,

natural and lawful marital acts. Indeed, *Our Lady of Fatima* directly teaches that “**The sins of the world are too great! The sins which lead most souls to hell are sins of the flesh! ... Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God.”**

Spouses who overindulge in the sexual act are doing the exact same thing as gluttons, acting unreasonably and being attached to a fleeting pleasure, but as sexual pleasure is very similar to intoxication, a married man will always be forced to fight against the urge to overindulge in the sensual pleasures of the flesh, which directly proves that the Church’s teaching concerning clerical celibacy is grounded not only in Church teaching, but also in common sense and natural reason.

Sexual pleasure works very much the same as any pleasure in this world, but some good examples of pleasures that can be compared to it is the pleasure that people get from alcohol or drugs. Now, if a man has never taken drugs or alcohol he cannot know anything about their effects, and thus, he cannot desire these pleasures at all. The consequence of this lack of desire is that there is no desire to abuse either alcohol or drugs at all. Sexual pleasure affects a man in a similar way. If a man have not had a venue to act on his sexual desire, nor looked longingly and with desire on a woman, always choosing to turn his eyes down in humility every time a woman came near him, his sexual desire will remain more of an abstract or theoretical pleasure. But a man who marries a woman and starts having sexual relations with her (allowing his eyes to fixate on a woman with sensual desire) does not have this advantage of having sexual pleasure remain an abstract or theoretical pleasure, and consequently, the possibility of him getting tempted to commit sins of impurity with either his own wife or with some other woman, is immediately increased. And as always, the sensual fire almost always begins through the eyes when a person is not careful enough to control or consider where he or she is looking.

St. Peter also confirms that “carnal desires” “war against the soul” in the Holy Bible, thus showing us that lust in all its forms blinds our spiritual eyes and understanding: “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the soul.” (1 Peter 2:11) It is important to notice that St. Peter does not single out only sinful lust here, but instead, he tells us that “carnal desires” in general “war against the soul”. All sexual acts, even lawful ones, “war against the soul” since they all are intoxicating like a drug, or as St. Thomas Aquinas describes it, “**because the reason is carried away entirely on account of the vehemence of the pleasure, so that it is unable to understand anything at the same time... the marriage act also will always be evil unless it be excused...**” (*Summa Theologica, Supplement, Q. 49, Art. 1, 5*) The sexual pleasure is very similar to the effect of a strong drug, and drugs as we all know are

very easy to become addicted to by abusing them or overindulging in them. The stronger a drug is, the more is also our spiritual life hindered, and that is why the angelic life of chastity will always be more spiritually fruitful than the marital life according to the Bible and God's Holy Word. And so, it is clear that Holy Scripture infallibly teaches that marriage and the marital life is an impediment to the spiritual life, while the chaste and pure life "give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment." (1 Corinthians 7:35)

This is also why the Holy Bible urges people to remain unmarried and in a life of chastity since the married man "*is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: **and he is divided***" (1 Corinthians 7:33). St. Paul in the Bible also warns those who intend to marry and perform the marital sexual act that they "shall have tribulation of the flesh": "*But if thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned. And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have tribulation of the flesh. But I spare you.*" (1 Corinthians 7:28)

Indeed, even lawful sexual acts tempts a man to be "intemperate in marriage," and if a man gives in to this temptation and perform unlawful sexual acts with his wife, such as sensual kisses and touches "what is he but the adulterer of his own wife?" The more a person, whether married or unmarried, seeks or indulges himself with venereal pleasures in his life, the more detrimental in effect will this "blindness of mind" concerning spiritual things be, "since if one consent to them this increases the force of concupiscence and weakens the strength of the mind" and this proves that even the married must be very careful to never exceed the limits set by nature for the procreation of children.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 153, Art. 2: "**Venereal pleasures are more impetuous, and are more oppressive on the reason than the pleasures of the palate:** and therefore they are in greater need of chastisement and restraint, since if one consent to them this increases the force of concupiscence and weakens the strength of the mind. Hence Augustine says (Soliloq. i, 10): 'I consider that nothing so casts down the manly mind from its heights as the fondling of women, **and those bodily contacts which belong to the married state.**'"

St. Augustine, for example, explains that "in intercourse man becomes all flesh" (St. Augustine, *Sermons* 62.2) and that the sexual act degrades the masculine soul. "For I know that nothing so debases a man's soul as the charms of a woman and that bodily contact which is so much a part of having a wife." (St. Augustine of Hippo, *Soliloquies* 1.10) Thus, it is not hard to understand based on just these two arguments of St. Augustine why the Church

directly condemns the heretical teaching that ministers of God are allowed to have marital relations. Since the act of abstaining from the sexual act is highly extolled in Holy Scripture by the Holy Ghost and praised as a more meritorious and virtuous life, it is obvious why the Catholic Church teaches that all Her priests must abstain from all kinds of sexual acts.

Simply said, the pure Catholic priest who is wholly dedicated to serving God in mind and body – and that is not disturbed by the marital life nor by raising fleshly children – will always be more effective in saving and bringing sinners back from the clutches of the devil than those people who choose to live in a more sensual lifestyle. Since their life is exclusively dedicated to God and His Holy Church, they will be more closer to God than those who are married and have children. That is also exactly why almost exclusively all canonized saints in the Catholic Church have been either ecclesiastics, monks, nuns, virgins or ascetics. And the Holy Bible is clear on why this happens, since “He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband.” (1 Cor. 7:32-34)

Thus, we see that Holy Scripture itself teaches that the chaste servants of Christ are more “holy both in body and in spirit” and more “solicitous” for the things of the Lord than those who marry. As a result of this holiness, the pure servants of Christ will always be more effective in their prayers and intercessions for sinful souls, "snatching them out of the fire" (Jude 1:23) and in bringing the lost sheep back into the fold of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only will a man become more blessed in the afterlife if he chooses the angelic life of chastity, but he will also receive more spiritual gifts from Our Lord to the benefit of himself and others in this life since he has chosen to welcome Our Lord into his heart with a more perfect and pure love.

From *The Life of Fr. De Smet, Apostle of the Rockies*:

“[Pg 176] How is the phenomenal success of these missions to be explained? Many of the Indians possessed admirable natural virtues; they but needed to know Christianity to embrace it. Even the most degraded had preserved a high ideal of the greatness of the power of God. Blasphemy was unknown among them: not presuming to address the “Great Spirit,” they entreated their manitous to intercede for them. Superstition if you will, but beneath it was a religious sentiment which the missionary had only to

enlighten and direct. None held back through false pride or prejudice. Even the Sioux, the proudest of the Western tribes, compared themselves to children bereft of a father's guiding hand, and to the ignorant animals of the prairie, and with touching humility begged the missionary to "take pity on them."

"Such elevated, upright souls could, moreover, appreciate the chastity of the Catholic priesthood. With rare discernment, the Indian understood that, belonging as he does to all men, a priest cannot give himself to one person, and not for an instant did they hesitate to choose the Black Robe, who had consecrated his life to them, rather than the minister in lay dress, installed in a comfortable home with wife and children, devoted to the interests of his family, giving only the time that remained to distributing Bibles".

"[Pg 52] The Indians, meanwhile, were not overlooked. Dispossessed of their lands and driven west by the whites, they now found refuge and support in the Catholic Church. A considerable number of them, whose fathers had been instructed and baptized by the Jesuits, were well disposed toward Catholicity. **Protestant ministers made repeated attempts to gain their confidence, but were always coldly received.**" **"What had they to do," asked the Indians, "with married preachers, men who wore no crucifix, and said no rosary? They wanted only the Black Robes to teach them how to serve God.** They even went so far as to appeal to the President of the United States, asking that the married ministers might be recalled and Catholic priests sent in their place."

"[Pg 117] I was given the place of honor in the chief's tent, who, surrounded by forty of his braves, addressed me in the following words: 'Black Robe, this is the happiest day of our lives, for to-day, for the first time, we see in our midst a man who is near to the Great Spirit. These are the principal warriors of my tribe. I have invited them to the feast I have prepared for you, that they may never forget the great day.'"

"It seems strange that with the savages the fact of being a Catholic priest merited a triumphal reception for the lowly missionary, while in other times, and to men proud of their civilization, he would have been the object of suspicion. During the repast the great chief showered attentions on his guest, even to giving him a mouthful of his own food to chew, a refined usage among his tribe.

"At night, after the missionary had retired and was about to fall asleep, he saw the chief who had received him with so much honor, enter his tent. Brandishing a knife that gleamed in the light of the torch, he said: "Black Robe, are you afraid?" The missionary, taking the chief's hand, placed it on his breast and replied: "See if my heart

beats more rapidly than usual! Why should I be afraid? You have fed me with your own hands, and I am as safe in your tent as I would be in my father's house." Flattered by this reply, the Blackfoot renewed his professions of friendship; he had wished only to test the confidence of his guest.

"[Pg 86] Protestant ministers tried to compete with the Catholic priests; but between a salaried official who distributed tracts to inquisitive members of the tribe, and the missionary, devoted body and soul to their interests, the Indians did not hesitate to make a choice." They refused the most alluring offers from Protestants and came from all directions to ask for a Black Robe to show them the way to heaven.

"After five years' residence with the Otoes, the Protestant minister has not yet baptized one person, and the greater part of the Protestant missionaries who overrun the Indian Territory make no better showing."
(Letter of Father De Smet to Father Verhaegen, June, 1838)

In truth, one can accurately say that only the Catholic priest is entirely "solicitous" for the Lord's Church when he is compared to the other servants of all the other "Churches" and that he is the father to all in his congregation, his family being spiritual rather than fleshly and temporal. And because good, virtuous and pious priests, religious, monks and nuns of the Church are so effective in saving souls from hell and the devil's grip, the devil labors mightily to get them under his control. The Holy Fathers of the Church, as we have seen, also agree with the teaching of the Bible and the Apostles that the chaste are more spiritually advanced and wise, teaching that people who are pure and chaste are more apt to receive and understand the spiritual truths of God since they are not busy or distracted with the temporal concerns of this world.

We also see that the Holy Bible directly teaches that the meritorious penance and abstinence of a virtuous person directly effects and draws down graces to the benefit of other souls, contrary to what many protestants nowadays teach who claim that nothing we say or do can effect our own or other people's spiritual welfare. However, *The Gospel of Matthew* clearly shows us that a certain kind of demon can only be exorcised "by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21).

Matthew 17:14-20 "And when he [Jesus] was come to the multitude, there came to him a man falling down on his knees before him, saying: Lord, have pity on my son, for he is a lunatic, and suffereth much: for he falleth often into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered

and said: O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked him, and the devil went out of him, and the child was cured from that hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus secretly, and said: Why could not we cast him out? Jesus said to them: Because of your unbelief. For, amen I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, Remove from hence hither, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you. **But this kind is not cast out but by prayer and fasting.**”

Now, it is obvious that if a demon is successfully exorcised by the virtue and power of a good deed (in this case, by the mortification of the flesh for a charitable cause), it is also exorcised by a virtue of a higher and greater degree of merit, such as holy chastity. And so, it is a biblical fact that chastity and virginity in this life not only affects our own eternal blessedness and spiritual well-being in this life and in the next to come, but that it also affects and helps the spiritual well-being of our beloved brothers and sisters. “For there are two ways in life, as touching these matters. The one the more moderate and ordinary, I mean marriage; the other angelic and unsurpassed, namely virginity. Now if a man choose the way of the world, namely marriage, he is not indeed to blame; yet he will not receive such great gifts as the other. For he will receive, since he too brings forth fruit, namely thirtyfold [Mark 4:20]. But if a man embrace the holy and unearthly way, even though, as compared with the former, it be rugged and hard to accomplish, yet it has the more wonderful gifts: for it grows the perfect fruit, namely an hundredfold.” (St. Athanasius the Great, *The Letters of St. Athanasius*, Letter XLVIII, To Amun, c. 353 A.D.)

“How many men, therefore, and how many women, in Ecclesiastical Orders, owe their position to continence, who have preferred to be wedded to God; who have restored the honor of their flesh, and who have already dedicated themselves as sons of that future age, by slaying in themselves the concupiscence of lust, and that whole propensity which could not be admitted within Paradise! Whence it is presumable that such as shall wish to be received within Paradise, ought at last to begin to cease from that thing from which Paradise is intact [i.e., sexual intercourse].” (Tertullian, *On Exhortation to Chastity*, Chapter 13, c. 204 A.D.)

The chaste servant of Christ stands as a spiritual warrior against the temptations and deception of the world and the devil. His sword is his chastity and purity by which he slays the devil and acquires spiritual knowledge and grace for himself and his friends. “But so far is this true and spiritual knowledge removed from that worldly erudition, which is defiled by the stains of carnal sins... And therefore if you are anxious to attain to that never-failing

fragrance, you must first strive with all your might to obtain from the Lord the purity of chastity. **For no one, in whom the love of carnal passions and especially of fornication still holds sway, can acquire spiritual knowledge.** For "in a good heart wisdom will rest;" and: "He that feareth the Lord shall find knowledge with righteousness." [Prov. 24:33; Eccus. 32:20]." (Holy Abbot and Ascetic Nesteros (c. 420), From *The Conferences of John Cassian*, Conference 14, Chapter XVI)

Pope St. Damasus I (366-384) confirmed the teaching of the Holy Bible and the Holy Apostles on the necessity of a chaste priesthood, and declared that marital intercourse was incompatible with presiding at the Eucharistic sacrifice. Pope St. Siricius (384-399) who taught that "those who are in the flesh cannot see God" stated in A.D. 392 that "Jesus would not have chosen birth from a virgin, had he been forced to look upon her as so unrestrained as to let that womb... be stained by the presence of male seed." Pope St. Siricius also declared that the only persons worthy of serving at the altar were those who were forever free of "the stain" of intercourse. Pope St. Leo the Great (440-461) carried on this uninterrupted Apostolic Tradition. Thus deacons were to remain married, but they were instructed to avoid marital intercourse in order to grow in holiness. Referring to First Corinthians 7:29, Pope Leo declared: "Therefore, so that a spiritual bond may grow from the physical marriage, [deacons] may not send their spouses away and must live as though they had none, whereby the love of the married couple remains intact and the conjugal acts cease." (Pope Saint Leo the Great, *Epistles*)

Pope St. Leo the Great, *To Rusticus* (c. 442-459 A.D.): "Concerning those who minister at the altar and have wives, whether they may lawfully cohabit with them? Reply. The law of continence is the same for the ministers of the altar as for bishops and priests, who when they were laymen or readers, could lawfully marry and have offspring. But when they reached to the said ranks, what was before lawful ceased to be so. And hence, in order that their wedlock may become spiritual instead of carnal, it behoves them not to put away their wives but to "have them as though they had them not," whereby both the affection of their wives may be retained and the marriage functions cease." (*The Letters of St. Leo the Great*, Letter 167, Question III)

The Early Councils of the Church unanimously forbids Bishops, Priests and Deacons from having marital sexual relations with their wife

From the very earliest times, lustful and impure men have tried to reject or ignore the biblical, Apostolic and patristic teaching that all priests must be perpetually chaste. Because of this,

many councils of the Church through the ages have also been forced to reaffirm this dogmatic and infallible teaching of the Church. The first recorded council that confirmed this requirement of celibacy upon all clerics is *The Council of Elvira* that took place in c. 306-311 A.D. Canon 33 declared that married priests and bishops were obligated to permanently refrain from all marital sexual relations. It stated that “Bishops, presbyters, and deacons and all other clerics having a position in the ministry are ordered to abstain completely from their wives and not to have children. Whoever, in fact, does this, shall be expelled from the dignity of the clerical state.” This canon clearly ordered higher clerics to observe perfect continence with their wives under the pain of deposition from their ministry. Canon 27 of the same Council prohibited women living with ecclesiastics, except for a sister or a daughter who was a consecrated virgin: “A bishop or other cleric may have only a sister or a daughter who is a virgin consecrated to God living with him. No other woman who is unrelated to him may remain.”

From these primitive and important legal texts, it can be deduced that many of the ecclesiastics in the Spanish church were *virī probati*, that is, men who were married before becoming ordained deacons, priests or bishops. All, however, were obliged, after receiving Holy Orders, to renounce completely the use of marriage, that is to live in total continence.

Although some erroneously claim that Elvira was a departure from an earlier tradition which did not require married clerics to remain continent, the fact of the matter is that the council codified an already existing but unwritten rule of continence for all clerics. Indeed, in no way can one see in canon 33 a statement of a new law. *The Council of Elvira* was, on the contrary, a reaction to the extended lack of observance of a traditional and well-known obligation, to which at this time the Council confirmed and imposed a sanction to the biblical law concerning priestly chastity: either the delinquent ecclesiastics accepted the obligation of the law of continence (*lex continentiae*) by living their lives in perfect conformity to it or they became “expelled from the dignity of the clerical state.” The fact that the legislation of Elvira was pacifically accepted confirms that no juridical novelty was being introduced, but that it was concerned primarily with maintaining an already existing teaching of the Church. This is what Pius XI taught when, in his encyclical on the priesthood, he affirms that this written law implied a previous law and practice that “made obligatory what the gospels and the apostolic preaching had already shown to be something like a natural requirement”, thus showing us that this law of clerical celibacy came directly from Our Lord and the teaching of the Apostles as well as that it was taught by the many generations of Christians before the 4th century.

Pope Pius XI, *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii* (# 43), Dec. 20, 1935: “The earliest trace of a law

of ecclesiastical celibacy – based, however, on long established custom – is found in the 33rd canon of the Council of Elvira, held at the beginning of the fourth century when Christians were still being actively persecuted. This law only made obligatory what the gospels and the apostolic preaching had already shown to be something like a natural requirement.” (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 28 [1936] 25)

To suggest, therefore, that Elvira is the origin of the law of celibacy in the Church, and that there is, consequently, a discontinuity in the Church’s moral teaching concerning this matter between its introduction and what was the practice beforehand, is, for the reasons already given, a fundamentally erroneous conclusion. The persecution suffered by the early Church during the first three centuries made it difficult for it to write down most of its laws by convoking councils of Bishops and Priests, and just like in the case of many of the Church’s dogmas and doctrines, such as the Trinity, the Church only defined them when a greater necessity arose that needed it. Yet it is very unlikely that when the Church did begin to write down its laws in the fourth century, that it would have ignored its earlier, unwritten rules and composed brand new ones, especially one such as the Elvira canon, since, if such was the case, such laws would have deprived clerics of a long-established so-called “right” and if so, it is highly unlikely, as even reason itself dictates, *that no one would have objected to this if a new teaching concerning clerical celibacy would have sprung up without any earlier foundation*; and this fact is much more obvious since we are dealing with an issue that regards sensual pleasure, and most men in this world are directly intent on satisfying their sexual desire. Thus, even though this teaching denied priestly men their sensual appetites, there was no objections, which in a striking manner confirms the fact that all priests of the Church must be perpetually chaste and that this fact was well known and understood by the Church’s members of this time. It is therefore very clear that the tradition of clerical continence dates back to apostolic times.

The Council of Arles (314) also required clerics to observe perfect continence, citing ritual purity as the reason. Canon 29 reads, “Furthermore, with a care for what is worthy, pure and honest, we exhort our brothers [in the episcopate] to act in such a way that priests and deacons have no [sexual] relations with their spouses, given that they are engaged each day in the ministry. Whoever acts contrariwise to this decision will be deposed from the honor of the clerical state.” (*Corpus Christianorum*, 148.25)

The Synod of Neocaesarea (314-325) confirmed this ancient teaching of the Church that priests were obligated to remain free from the stain of marital sexual intercourse. “If a priest marry, he shall be removed from the ranks of the clergy; if he commit fornication or adultery,

he shall be excommunicated, and shall submit to penance.” (Canon 1)

The wording of these canons does not immediately suggest that an innovation is being introduced, and it would be an error in historical procedure to maintain beforehand that such was the case. The seriousness of the implications for the life of the clergy, the absence of justification for the strictness of the discipline and the canonical penalty attached, would suggest, on the contrary, that the Church authorities were concerned with the *maintenance* and not the introduction of this rule. The important papal decretals of the fourth century, which show the rule for the Universal Church — *Directa* (385) and *Cum in unum* (385-86) of Pope St. Siricius; *Dominus inter* of Pope St. Innocent I, and the Synod of Carthage (390) — were in fact emphatic that clerical continence belonged to immemorial, even apostolic, tradition (as we shall also see further down).

Pope St. Siricius, *Cum in unum*, A.D. 385: “**The question is not one of ordering new precepts**, but we wish through this letter to have people observe those that either through apathy or laziness on the part of some have been neglected. They are, however, matters that have been established by apostolic constitution, and, by a constitution of the Fathers.” (Cum in unum (Ad episcopos Africae); PL 13, 11 56a. P. Coustant, *Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum*, Paris, 1721, p. 562)

The writings of the Church Fathers are often explicit in considering the apostles as models of the priesthood. Yet those who might have been married were thought not to have lived other than in continence. (Cf. St. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata. III*, 6; Tertullian, *De Monogamia*, 8, 4; St. Jerome, *Apologeticum ad Pammachium*, Ep. 49(48), 2, 21; Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstratio evangelica*, 111, 4, 37; St. Isidore of Pelusium, Ep. 111, 176.)

In 325 A.D., *The First Council of Nicaea*, which was the first of the infallible and Ecumenical Councils in Church history, decreed in Canon 3 that a cleric is absolutely forbidden to keep a woman to live with him: “This great synod absolutely forbids a bishop, presbyter, deacon or any of the clergy to keep a woman who has been brought in to live with him, with the exception of course of his mother or sister or aunt, or of any person who is above suspicion.”

The pre-Nicaean acceptance of that arrangement for clerics was a clear indication that the clergy were expected to live in continence even with their wives. For instance, a leading participant in the Council of Nicaea, Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260-340), wrote: “It is fitting, according to Scripture, ‘that a bishop be the husband of an only wife.’ But this being understood, it behoves consecrated men [those in the priesthood], and those who are at the

service of God's cult, to abstain thereafter from conjugal intercourse with their wives."
(*Demonstratio Evangelica*, Book 1, Chapter 9)

Commentators on this passage confirm that it really is a law concerning clerical celibacy. *The Ancient Epitome of Canon III* explains that Nicea teaches that "No one shall have a woman in his house except his mother, and sister, and persons altogether beyond suspicion." Fuchs in his *Bibliothek der kirchenver sammlungen* confesses that this canon shows that the practice of clerical celibacy had already spread widely. And finally, Hefele explains that "It is very certain that the canon of Nicea forbids such spiritual unions, [of certain women living in the same house as a priest] but the context shows moreover that the Fathers had not these particular cases in view alone; and the expression *συνείσακτος* should be understood of every woman who is *introduced* (*συνείσακτος*) into the house of a clergyman for the purpose of living there. If by the word *συνείσακτος* was only intended the wife in this spiritual marriage, the Council would not have said, any *συνείσακτος*, except his mother, etc.; for neither his mother nor his sister could have formed this spiritual union with the cleric. The injunction, then, does not merely forbid the *συνείσακτος* in the specific sense, but orders that "no woman must live in the house of a cleric, unless she be his mother," etc. This canon is found in the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, Gratian's *Decretum*, Pars I., Distinc. XXXII., C. xvj.

Similarly, *The Council of Carthage* (in 390) confirmed the same teaching concerning clerical chastity and decreed that higher clerics observe perfect continence because they act as mediators between God and man. They stressed particularly in Canon 3 the antiquity and apostolic origin of this law: "It is fitting that the holy bishops and priests of God as well as the Levites, i.e. those who are in the service of the divine sacraments, observe perfect continence, so that they may obtain in all simplicity what they are asking from God; what the Apostles taught and what antiquity itself observed, let us also endeavor to keep. The bishops declared unanimously: It pleases us all that bishop, priest and deacon, guardians of purity, abstain from conjugal intercourse with their wives, so that those who serve at the altar may keep a perfect chastity." Subsequent councils at Hippo (393) and Carthage (401 and 419) repeated these requirements.

At that time most, though not all, of the clergy were married men. They are directed by the African Synod to give up all conjugal intercourse, because of the fact that this would prevent them from properly carrying out their mediatory function. The import of the canon is that those who by consecration have now become sacred persons must in the future manifest by their lives this new reality by adopting the more perfect and blessed life of perfect chastity. The specific reasons for the continence they are asked to observe, is in order that they may be

effective mediators between God and man, and because of the commitment to service at the altar.

The ancient summary of Canon 3 above emphatically declared: “Let a bishop, a presbyter, and a deacon be chaste and continent.” As can be seen, *The Council of Carthage* declared obligatory continence to be “...what the apostles taught and what antiquity itself observed...”, thus showing us that the practice of clerical chastity is an ancient and apostolic teaching. In this context of historical study, the important study by author Christian Cochini should be noted: “*The Apostolic origins of priestly celibacy*” (original French version: *Origines apostoliques du célibat sacerdotale*, Lethielleux/Paris 1981).

St. Aurelius, Bishop of Carthage and patron to St. Augustine, was head of *The Council of Carthage* in A.D. 419 in union with “217 Blessed Fathers who assembled at Carthage”. They reaffirmed the previous Canon 3 in their own Canon 3, stating that: “When at the past council [of 390] the matter on continency and chastity was considered, those three grades, which by a sort of bond are joined to chastity by their consecration, to wit bishops, presbyters, and deacons, so it seemed that it was becoming that the sacred rulers and priests of God as well as the Levites, or those who served at the divine sacraments, should be continent altogether, by which they would be able with singleness of heart to ask what they sought from the Lord: **so that what the apostles taught and antiquity kept**, that we might also keep.” Canon 4 of the same Council also spoke of the different orders that should abstain from their wives: “It seems good that a bishop, a presbyter, and a deacon, or whoever perform the sacraments, should be keepers of modesty and should abstain from their wives. By all the bishops it was said: It is right that all who serve the altar should keep pudicity from all women.”

The ancient summary of Canon 3 of The Council of Carthage in 419 declared: “Let a bishop, a presbyter, and a deacon be chaste and continent. This canon is taken from Canon ii., of Carthage 387 or 390.” More specifically, the canon was probably referring to Canon 3 from the council held in Carthage in 390.

As we have seen, the law that was promulgated during the synod of 390 would remain valid and be officially inserted in the great legislative record of the African Church, the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiae Africanae*, compiled and promulgated in the Council of Carthage in 419 (in the time of St. Augustine). We also see in this law the biblical fact that we have already discussed, that is, that the prayer and spiritual intercession of a pure and chaste priest or ecclesiastic is better and more effective to help save souls than a priest or ecclesiastic who performs the marital act and is distracted by worldly cares, the keeping of a house, and wife,

and children, etc. Thus, “those who are in the service of the divine sacraments, observe perfect continence, so that they may obtain in all simplicity what they are asking from God...”

Codex Canonum Ecclesiae Africanae, A.D. 419: “Epigonius, Bishop of the Royal Region of Bulla, says: ‘The rule of continence and chastity had been discussed in a previous council. Let it [now] be taught with more emphasis what are the three ranks that, by virtue of their consecration, are under the same obligation of chastity, i.e., the bishop, the priest, and the deacon, and let them be instructed to keep their purity.’”

“Bishop Genethlius says: ‘As was previously said, it is fitting that the holy bishops and priests of God as well as the Levites, i.e., those who are in the service of the divine sacraments, observe perfect continence, so that they may obtain in all simplicity what they are asking from God; what the apostles taught and what antiquity itself observed, let us also endeavor to keep.’”

“The bishops declared unanimously: ‘It pleases us all that bishop, priest, and deacon, guardians of purity, abstain from [conjugal intercourse] with their wives, so that those who serve at the altar may keep a perfect chastity.’” (*The Apostolic Origins of Priestly Celibacy* by Christian Cochini, pages 4-5)

In saying that “in certain provinces it is permitted to the readers and singers to marry”, Canon 14 of the *Council of Chalcedon* (451) suggests that, in other provinces, not only bishops, priests, deacons and subdeacons, but even those in the lower or minor orders of readers and singers were at that time not permitted to marry.

In Gaul in the middle of the 5th century, a synod of sixteen bishops held a council at Orange in 441 under the presidency of St. Hilary of Arles, that made an explicit public declaration of the commitment to continence, emphasizing the duty of celibacy for those belonging to the clerical state, especially deacons and widows, forbidding married men to be ordained as deacons, and digamists, that is, those who contract a second marriage after the death of their spouse, to be advanced beyond the sub-diaconate. (cf. *First Council of Orange* (441), c. 8, 21. CC 148,84). This was to prevent excuses of ignorance of the obligation which previously had been implicit in the reception of orders. The wife (who in the Gallic Church was termed a *presbytera*, *diaconissa*, *subdiaconissa* or even *episcopia* according to the status of her husband) was to live as a ‘sister’ in a brother-sister relationship. (cf. Girona (517), c. 6. H.T. Bruns, *Canones Apostolorum et Conciliorum saeculorum IV-VII*, Berlin, 1839,11, 19. Clermont (535), c. 13. CC 148 A, 108. Tours (567), c. 13. *Ibid.*, 180-1). Her rights were

protected as ordination could not go ahead without her agreement. Her promise to live in continence was also an impediment to future marriage.

Continent cohabitation expressed trust in the nobility of human love to combine marital affection with the values of the consecrated clerical state. St. Paulinus of Nola (d. 431) and St. Jerome (ca. 417) indicate a warm spirituality for those embracing this new life. (cf. *Ep. 44*. CSEL 29,372-7. *De Septem Ordinibus Ecclesiae*. PL 30,1 59c-d.) However, because of the real possibilities of incontinence, total physical separation would be recommended (*Arles IV A.D. 524*) or even sometimes required (*Toledo III A.D. 589*). A return to conjugal relations, after all, was considered to be as serious a sin as adultery (cf. Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum*, I, 34), the cleric being punished by reduction to the lay state.

In Gaul in the early sixth century, councils held under the reforming and energetic St. Caesarius of Arles (c. 468-542) reaffirmed legislation for the restoration of priestly celibacy, a discipline which had suffered as a result of the Visigoth invasions during the previous century. *The Council of Agde* held in 506, in Gaul, in the South of France under the presidency of St. Caesarius of Arles, had 47 genuine canons that dealt with such subjects as clerical celibacy, the canonical age for ordination, the relations of a bishop and his diocesan synod, church property, public peace, and the religious obligations of the faithful. The same council also forbade subdeacons to marry, and such synods as those of Orléans in 538 and Tours in 567 prohibited even those already married from continuing to live with their wives.

In 541 *The Fourth Synod of Orleans* ordered that “the bishop must treat his wife as his sister” and added that “the people must not respect but scorn the priest who cohabits with his wife, for in the place of being a doctor of penitence he is a doctor of libertinage.” Again, we see that the priest’s job in the eyes of the Church is to practice penitence, and to thus draw down a shower of grace for himself as well as for his flock, and that all priests who perform the marital act “in the place of being a doctor of penitence he is a doctor of libertinage.” Meeting in 583, *The Synod of Lyon’s* first canon decreed that married priests could not live together with their spouses. In 589 *The Synod of Toledo* issued canon 5, that also was a declaration that married clerics may not live with their wives.

Indeed, so fervent were the early church to hinder Her clerics from performing the marital act, that in 530 the Emperor Justinian declared null and void all marriages contracted by clerics in Holy Orders, and the children of such marriages to be spurious by ordering that the children of priests, deacons and subdeacons who, “in disregard of the sacred canons [of clerical continency], have children by women with whom, according to sacerdotal regulation,

they may not cohabit”, or according to another translation: “they are not permitted to have relations” be considered illegitimate on the same level as those “procreated in incest and in nefarious nuptials” (*Code of Justinian*, 1.3.44). As for bishops, he forbade “any one to be ordained bishop who has children or grandchildren” (*Code of Justinian*, 1.3.41).

The *Breviatio Ferrandi* was a digest of Church legislation in Africa assembled about 550 which reaffirms earlier norms of priestly celibacy. In summary the main points were as follows:

- bishops, priests and deacons were to abstain from relations with their wives;
- any priest who got married was to be deposed; if he commits the sin of fornication he is to do penance;
- in order to safeguard the reputation of ministers of the Church and to help them observe chastity, clerics were not to live with women other than close family relations.

It is worth noting that this was a period of merciless persecution for the Church in North Africa when the Vandals invaded and eliminated the leaders of many of these Christian communities (cf. Cochini, *Apostolic Origins of Priestly Celibacy*, pp. 324-26).

The *Third Council of Toledo* (589) was convoked to remedy abuses that had penetrated the clergy arising from the Arian heresy. Bishops, priests and deacons, returning to the Catholic faith after abandoning Arianism, no longer considered continence an obligation of the priestly state. So called matrimonial “rights” had reasserted themselves and, therefore, although Arianism had been officially defeated at the *Council of Constantinople* in 381, the negative effects of this heresy, as far as priestly chastity was concerned, were still being felt two centuries later. Canon 5 of Toledo III renewed the traditional discipline, indicating the sanctions which attended its infraction.

Third Council of Toledo, Canon 5, A.D. 589: “It has come to the knowledge of the Holy Council that bishops, priests, and deacons, who were once heretics but returned to Catholicism, still gave in to carnal desire and united with their wives; so that it does not happen again in the future, we have ordered as follows, which had already been decreed by previous canons: that it not be permitted to these [clerics and their wives] to lead a common life favouring incontinence, but that while keeping conjugal fidelity toward each other, they watch to what is mutually beneficial to them both and not

share the same room. With the help of virtue, it would be even better that the cleric find for his wife a new home, so that their chastity enjoy a good witnessing before both God and men. But if, after this warning, someone prefers to live in incontinence with his wife, let him be considered a lector; as to those who are still subject to the ecclesiastical canon, if they live in their cells, contrary to the elders' orders, in the company of women apt to raise suspicions harmful to their reputation, let those be struck with severe canonical penalties." (Cochini, *Apostolic Origins of Priestly Celibacy*, p. 331)

The reader will be interested in reading the answer on this point made by King Henry VIII (1491-1547), to the letter sent him by the German ambassadors. For those who don't know, King Henry VIII was the apostate King of England who created his own sect (the Anglican sect) after the Catholic Church and the Pope would not grant him a divorce with a right to remarry. (This letter is found in full in the Addenda to the Appendix at the end of the seventh volume of Burnet's *History of the Reformation* (London. Orr & Co., 1850, p. 148).

Note that even the apostate king himself upheld the ancient church tradition of clerical celibacy; although his own sect later came to contradict it: "Although the Church from the beginning admitted married men, as priests and bishops, who were without crime, the husband of one wife, (out of the necessity of the times, as sufficient other suitable men could not be found as would suffice for the teaching of the world) yet Paul himself chose the celibate Timothy; but if anyone came unmarried to the priesthood and afterwards took a wife, he was always deposed from the priesthood, according to the canon of the Council of Neocaesarea (315) which was before that of Nice (325). So, too, in the Council of Chalcedon (451), in the first canon of which all former canons are confirmed, it is established that a deaconess, if she give herself over to marriage, shall remain under anathema, and a virgin who had dedicated herself to God and a monk who join themselves in marriage, shall remain excommunicated. ... No Apostolic canon nor the Council of Nice contain anything similar to what you assert, viz.: that priests once ordained can marry afterwards. And with this statement agrees the Sixth Synod (Third Council of Constantinople in 649), in which it was decreed that if any of the clergy should wish to lead a wife, he should do so before receiving the Subdiaconate, since afterwards it was by no means lawful; nor was there given in the Sixth Synod any liberty to priests of leading wives after their priesting, as you assert. Therefore from the beginning of the newborn Church it is clearly seen that at no time it was permitted to a priest to lead a wife after his priesting, and nowhere, where this was attempted, was it done with impunity, but the culprit was deposed from his priesthood."

Hence if a priest were at any time to attempt to marry, he would be attempting to do that

which from the earliest times of which we have no record, and which no priest has ever been allowed to do, but which always has been punished as a grave sin of immorality.

The *Directa* and *Cum in unum* decretals of Pope St. Siricius

Among the many statements of the early Church on the topic of sexual continence and celibacy, the *Directa* and *Cum in unum* decretals of Pope St. Siricius (c. 385) stands out among them all, since it directly confirmed that clerical sexual abstinence was an apostolic practice that must be followed by the ministers of the universal church.

In the *Directa*, the Pope dealt with clerics (deacons, priests, and bishops) that were still living with their wives and having children. Priests were justifying this by referring to the traditions of the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament. Pope St. Siricius was emphatic that clerical continence belonged to immemorial, even apostolic, tradition. He declared that the priests of the Old Law had been under a duty to observe temporary continence when serving in the Temple, but that the coming of Christ had brought the old priesthood to completion, and by this fact the duty of temporary continence had become an obligation to *perpetual* continence.

Pope St. Siricius (384-398) epistle “*Directa ad Decessorem*” was promulgated in the year 385 A.D. This epistle dealt with the Celibacy of the Clergy, and it **excommunicated all priests who dared to defile themselves with sexual acts with their wives, and prescribed that they all were banned from celebrating the heavenly mysteries of Our Lord:**

Pope St. Siricius, *Directa* (# 7), February, A.D. 385: “Let us talk now about the very holy clerical Orders. As your Charity advises us, we see that in your provinces they are trampled underfoot and confused, with great prejudice to the honor due to religion. It has come to the point where we must say with Jeremiah: “*Who will turn my head into a fountain, and my eyes into a spring for tears, so that I may weep all day, all night for all the dead out of the daughter of my people?*” (Jer 8:23) ... We have indeed discovered that many priests and deacons of Christ brought children into the world, either through union with their wives or through shameful intercourse. And they used as an excuse the fact that in the Old Testament—as we can read—priests and ministers were permitted to beget children.

“Whatever the case may be, if one of these disciples of the passions and tutors of vices thinks that the Lord—in the law of Moses—gives an indistinct license to those in sacred Orders so that they may satisfy their passions, let him tell me now: why does [the Lord] warn those who had the custody of the most holy things in the following

way: *"You must make yourselves holy, for I am Yahweh your God"* (Lev 20:7).

Likewise, why were the priests ordered, during the year of their tour of duty, to live in the temple, away from their homes? Quite obviously so that they would not be able to have carnal knowledge of any woman, even their wives, and, thus, having a conscience radiating integrity, they could offer to God offerings worthy of his acceptance. Those men, once they had fulfilled their time of service, were permitted to have marital intercourse for the sole purpose of ensuring their descent, because no one except [the members] of the tribe of Levi could be admitted to the divine ministry.

“This is why, after having enlightened us by his coming, the Lord Jesus formally stipulated in the Gospel that he had not come to abolish the law, but to bring it to perfection; this is also why he wanted the beauty of the Church whose Bridegroom he is to shine with the splendor of chastity, so that when he returns, on the Day of Judgment, he will find her without stain or wrinkle (Eph 5:27), as his Apostle taught [Apostolic Tradition]. It is through the indissoluble law of these decisions that all of us, priests and deacons, are bound together from the day of our ordination, and put our hearts and our bodies to the service of sobriety and purity; may we be pleasing to our God in all things, in the sacrifices we offer daily. *"People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God"*, says the Chosen Vessel. *"Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you"* (Rom 8:8-9).

“But those, who contend with an excuse for the forbidden privilege, so as to assert that this has been granted to them by the Old Law, should know that by the authority of the Apostolic See they have been cast out of every ecclesiastical office, which they have used unworthily, nor can they ever touch the sacred mysteries, of which they themselves have deprived themselves so long as they give heed to impure desires. **And because existing examples warn us to be on our guard for the future should any bishop, priest, or deacon be found such,** which henceforth we do not want let him now understand that every approach to indulgence is barred through us, because it is necessary that the wounds which are not susceptible to the healing of warm lotions be cut out with a knife.” (St. Siricius 384-398, The Primacy of the Roman Pontiff, From the epistle *"Directa ad decessorem"* Feb. 10, 385, On The Celibacy of the Clergy; Denzinger 89)

The circumstance leading the Roman Pontiff to write about clerical continence, as this document shows, was the news coming from Spain: many clerics belonging to major Orders in those provinces went on living with their wives and having children. He was distraught by such news because they were grave violations of what was the indisputable teaching of the

Church. Hence his intervention, the purpose of which was not to promulgate new regulations, but to reinstate those that should never have been broken. Siricius also learned from Himerius that those clerics were attempting to justify their behavior through Scripture, which is why he also uses Scripture. Some people are saying that the Old Testament, in particular the rules of Leviticus, authorized marriage for the Levites. Yes, indeed, he retorts, but married priests were under the obligation of temporary continence when serving in the temple. Now the priesthood of Christ brought the old priesthood to perfection. And by this very fact the obligation of continence became an obligation to perpetual continence. If the priests of the Old Law had to abstain periodically from intercourse with their wives “so that, with a conscience radiating integrity, they could present to God offerings worthy of his acceptance”, as Pope St. Siricius affirms, the ministers and priests of Jesus Christ in the New Law who offer sacrifice daily, a sacrifice far superior to that of the Old Law, can only be pleasing to God through perfect and perpetual chastity.

According to Wikipedia: “The *Directa*... became the first of a series of documents published by the Magisterium that claimed apostolic origin for clerical celibacy and reminded ministers of the altar of the perpetual continence required of them. It is known that the First Ecumenical Council which took place at Nicaea included in its legislation a discipline of the priesthood known as clerical ‘continence’ or celibacy. This was the requirement of all priests and bishops to refrain from sexual contact with their wives or with any other woman. Thus, for a married man to become a priest, his wife had to agree to abstain from all sexual relations. This discipline added to the legislation of various councils, particularly the Council of Elvira, the date of which cannot be determined with precision, but believed to have been in the first quarter of the fourth century, in Spain.”

In the *Cum in unum* decretal, sent to the different ecclesiastical provinces in 386, Pope St. Siricius refers to the various Pauline texts (cf. Tit 1:15; 1 Tim 3:2; 1 Cor 7:7; Rom 8:8-9) as the scriptural foundation for the Church’s teaching on ecclesiastical celibacy, and in doing so gives an authoritative interpretation of the Pauline phrase, *unius uxoris vir*, or *unius uxoris virum* “a husband of one wife” found in 1 Timothy 3:2. Besides, Pope St. Siricius himself later presented the norms of this text at the Council of Rome of A.D. 386. If Timothy and Titus are to choose bishops, priests or deacons among “men married once only”, this does not mean that after ordination they can continue with their conjugal life.

Here the Pope first formulated an objection that the expression *unius uxoris vir* of 1 Timothy 3:2, some said, specifically guaranteed the bishop the right to use marriage after sacred ordination. Pope St. Siricius answered by giving the stipulation’s correct interpretation: “He

(Paul) was not speaking of a man who might persist in the desire to beget children (*non permanentem in desiderio generandi dixit*); he was speaking about continence which they had to observe in future (*propter continentiam futuram*).” It is thus interpreted as a requirement to guarantee the future continence that the candidate for orders will be asked to practice. In other words, a man who had remarried after his first wife died could not be considered as a candidate for ordination, since the fact of his remarriage would indicate an inability to live the life of perpetual continence required of clerics in major orders. This fundamental text was repeated a number of times subsequently. For the decretal *Cum in unum* of Pope Siricius, cf. Ep. V. c. 9 (PL 13, 1161 A); it is also found in the African Council of Theleptis (A.D. 418): Conc. Thelense (CCL 149, 62): French trans.: Cochini, op. cit., p. 32; see also the two letters of Pope St. Innocent I (A.D. 404-405) to the bishops Victricius of Rouen and Exuperius of Toulouse: Ep. II, (PL 20, 476 A. 497 B; Cochini, op. cit., pp. 284-286). Africa, Spain and the Gauls thus take direction as indicated by the Popes.

The legislation of Pope St. Siricius in 385 and 386, and the canons of the Council of Carthage (390), claim apostolic origin for the *lex continentiae* (law of continence). It is worth noting that these are not the claims of mere individuals but are the view of those who carried hierarchical responsibility in the Church. In Carthage it was the unanimous view of the whole African episcopate which declared “*ut quod apostoli docuerunt, et ipsa servavit antiquitas nos quoque custodiamus*” (what the Apostles taught and what antiquity itself observed, let us also endeavour to keep). In Rome Pope St. Siricius was conscious of placing himself in the line of the same living tradition with his predecessors as bishops of the See of St. Peter.

The Fathers and Early Writers of the Church confirms that priests must be completely chaste

The Fathers of the Church also insisted that clerics remain chaste. Theologically, in the first four centuries of the Church’s history, the validation of clerical continence is grounded on the Pauline teaching, linking it to the perpetual availability for service at the altar and a greater freedom for prayer. Being permanently in God’s presence, and because of the importance given to prayer, praise and adoration, the minister of the New Covenant ought not to care for the things of the world nor have the leisure needed to fulfill the responsibilities of married life.

In his treatise, *On the Duties of the Clergy* (c. 391), St. Ambrose of Milan (340-397) vehemently rejected the idea that married clerics should be allowed to have conjugal relations just because the priests of the Old Testament did. To the married clergy who, “in some out-of-the-way places”, claimed, on the model of the Old Testament priesthood, the right to father

children, he recalled that in Old Testament times even lay people were obliged to observe continence on the days leading to a sacrifice, and commented: “If such regard was paid in what was only the figure, how much ought it to be shown in the reality!” (*De officiis ministrorum* or *On the Duties of the Clergy*, I, 258). Yet more sternly he wrote: “He [Saint Paul] spoke of one who has children, not of one who begets children.” “habentem filios dixit, non facientem” (St. Ambrose, *Epistle LXIII*, 62; *Ep. extra coll*).

One can clearly see in the writings of St. Ambrose that the requirement that priests, whether married or celibate, should be continent was the established law of the Church. Priests “should live in a state of perpetual continence” since they served at the altar all their lives. Ambrose admonished his priests to “continue in a ministry which is unhampered and spotless, one which should not be profaned by conjugal intercourse.” (*On the Duties of the Clergy*, I, 50)

The *Didascalia Apostolorum*, written in Greek in the first half of the 3rd century, mentions the requirements of chastity on the part of both the bishop and his wife, as well as the requirement that he brings up his children in the fear of God, when it quotes 1 Timothy 3:2-4 as requiring that, before someone is ordained a bishop, enquiry be made “whether he be chaste, and whether his wife also be a believer and chaste; and whether he has brought up his children in the fear of God”.

The specific tradition of the Church also confirms that the Apostles lived in this way. St. Clement of Alexandria (150-215) who thus lived very near in time to the Apostles, taught that the Apostles, after their calling by Our Lord to the ministry, took their wives with them not as women with whom they had marriage relations, but as sisters in purity and honesty: “But the latter [the Apostles], in accordance with their particular ministry, devoted themselves to preaching without any distraction, and took their wives with them not as women with whom they had marriage relations, but as sisters, that they might be their fellow-ministers in dealing with housewives. It was through them that the Lord’s teaching penetrated also the women’s quarters without any scandal being aroused.” (*The Stromata* or *Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter VI, Section 71)

When we come to the question of what was the practice of Our Lord Jesus Christ’s first followers in this matter of clerical chastity, there would likewise be but little if any reasonable doubt. For while of the Apostles we have it recorded only of Peter that he was a married man, we have it also expressly recorded that in his case, as in that of all the rest who had “forsaken all” to follow Our Lord, the Lord himself said, “Every one that hath forsaken houses, or

brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, ***or wife***, or children, or lands, for my name's sake shall receive an hundred fold and shall inherit eternal life." (Matt. 19:29; Lk. 18:29) Mark 10:29 records the same incident, but while "wife" is mentioned among the things "left," no "wife" is found among the things gained.

St. Jerome, referred in *Against Jovinianus* to marriage prohibition for priests when he argued that Peter and the other apostles had been married, but had married before they were called and subsequently gave up their marital relations (*Aduersus Jovinianum* I, 7. 26 (PL 23, 230C; 256C).

There can be no doubt that St. Paul in his epistles allows and even contemplates the probability that those admitted to the ranks of the clergy will have been already married, but distinctly says that they must have been the "husband of one wife," (1 Tim. 3:2 and 12; Titus i., 6) by which all antiquity and every commentator of gravity recognizes that digamists (more than once married) are cut off from the possibility of ordination, but there is nothing to imply that the marital connexion was to be continued after ordination. For a thorough treatment of this whole subject from the ancient and Patristic point of view, the reader is referred to St. Jerome. (Cf. *Hieron, Adv. Jovin. Lib. I. Confer also the In Apolog. pro libris Adv. Jovin.*) We will be quoting only a few passages from St. Jerome further down.

Commenting on the "husband of one wife" clause, Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260-340) writes: "It is fitting, according to Scripture, 'that a bishop be the husband of an only wife.' But this being understood, it behooves consecrated men, and those who are at the service of God's cult, to abstain thereafter from conjugal relations with their wives." (*Demonstratio Evangelica*, I, 9)

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313-386), in his *Catechetical Lectures* XII:25, writes: "For it became Him who is most pure, and a teacher of purity, to have come forth from a pure bride-chamber. For if he who well fulfils the office of a priest of Jesus abstains from a wife, how should Jesus Himself be born of man and woman? "For thou," says He in the Psalms, "art He that took Me out of the womb" (Psalm 22:9; 21:10). Mark that carefully, He that took Me out of the womb, signifying that He was begotten without man, being taken from a virgin's womb and flesh. For the manner is different with those who are begotten according to the course of marriage."

Several popes of the patristic era also issued decrees upholding clerical continence. Pope St. Siricius (384-99), who wrote the earliest extant papal legislation on this matter, insisted that bishops, priests, and deacons must practice perpetual rather than periodic continence since

they must be ready to say the liturgy or perform the sacraments at any time. He affirmed that continence had an eschatological dimension, “pointing to the completion of the kingdom, to a time when marriage will be no more.” Similarly, Pope Leo I (440-61) upheld the rule that married clerics observe continence after ordination while Pope St. Gregory I (590-604) prohibited bishops from ordaining subdeacons who would not vow to live in perpetual chastity. The decrees of these popes show two things. The first is that clerical continence, or celibacy defined in its broad sense, was the law and practice of the universal Church and was not just a law of some of the local churches. The second is that some clerics were not obeying the law. Even at this early time in the Church’s history, it was becoming apparent that clerical continency was of apostolic origin.

St. Epiphanius of Salamis (c. 315-403), born in Palestine and consecrated bishop of Constantia in Cyprus, condemns all forms of encratism (the "Encratites", which means the "self-controlled", were an ascetic 2nd century sect who forbade marriage and counseled abstinence from meat) but the Saint nonetheless insists that priests themselves are required to live continently, as regulated by the apostles. Priestly continence is observed, he maintains, wherever the ecclesiastical canons are adhered to, human weakness and the shortage of vocations being inadequate reasons for clergy to contravene the law of the Church.

St. Epiphanius, the monk-bishop well known for his “zeal for the monastic life” and who had close ties with the Church of Rome, was thus in agreement with the other Fathers who promoted priestly continency for clerics, including subdeacons: “Holy Church respects the dignity of the priesthood to such a point that she does not admit to the diaconate, the priesthood or the episcopate, nor even to the subdiaconate, anyone still living in marriage and begetting children. She accepts only him who if married gives up his wife or has lost her by death, especially in those places where the ecclesiastical canons are strictly attended to.” (*Panarion*, 59, 4; cf. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Celibacy of the Clergy", Vol. 3, 1908). St. Epiphanius, Father of the Church, further wrote: “It is the Apostles themselves who decreed this law [of celibacy].” (*Panarion*, 48, 9; cf. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Celibacy of the Clergy", Vol. 3, 1908)

Similar evidence of the existence in the 4th-century East, as in the West, of a law of clerical continence that was considered to be canonical is found in Epiphanius’ *Expositio Fidei*, 21.

In *Against Vigilantius* (406), St. Jerome condemned bishops who refused to ordain unmarried men as deacons, pointing out that this contradicted the practice of the churches of Egypt and Rome, which ordained only unmarried men or married men who had taken a vow

of continence:

“What would the Eastern Churches do? What would (those of) Egypt and the Apostolic See do, they who never accept clerics unless they are virgins or continent men, or if they had had a wife, (accept them only) if they give up matrimonial life...” (*Adversus Vigilantium*, 2)

He also said:

“What do the churches of Egypt and the Orient do? They choose clerics who are virgins or continent; and if they have a wife, they cease to be husbands.” (*Adversus Vigilantium*, 2)

St. Jerome states a well-known fact: a married man was not ordained unless the two spouses had mutually consented to a life of perpetual continence.

Similarly, in *Against Jovianius* (393) he upheld the superior dignity of celibacy and virginity. Here he argued that allowing clerics to have conjugal relations would mean that marriage was on par with virginity, but since the latter was clearly superior, it could not be lawful for priests to touch their wives:

“Nor did they lay down rules for continence, nor hint at virginity, nor urge to fasting, nor repeat the directions given in the Gospel to the Apostles, not to have two tunics, nor scrip, nor money in their girdles, nor staff in their hand, nor shoes on their feet. And they certainly did not bid them, [Matthew 19:21] if they wished to be perfect, go and sell all that they had and give to the poor, and "come follow me." For if the young man who boasted of having done all that the law enjoins, when he heard this went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions, and the Pharisees derided an utterance such as this from our Lord's lips: how much more would the vast multitude of Gentiles, whose highest virtue consisted in not plundering another's goods, have repudiated the obligation of perpetual chastity and continence, when they were told in the letter to keep themselves from idols, and from fornication, seeing that fornication was heard of among them, and such fornication as was not "even among the Gentiles." But the very choice of a bishop makes for me. For he does not say: *Let a bishop be chosen who marries one wife and begets children; but who marries one wife, and has his children in subjection and well disciplined.* **You surely admit that he is no bishop who during his episcopate begets children. The reverse is the case— if he be**

discovered, he will not be bound by the ordinary obligations of a husband, but will be condemned as an adulterer. Either permit priests to perform the work of marriage with the result that virginity and marriage are on a par: or if it is unlawful for priests to touch their wives, they are so far holy in that they imitate virgin chastity. But something more follows. A layman, or any believer, cannot pray unless he abstain from sexual intercourse. **Now a priest must always offer sacrifices for the people: he must therefore always pray. And if he must always pray, he must always be released from the duties of marriage.** For even under the old law they who used to offer sacrifices for the people not only remained in their houses, but purified themselves for the occasion by separating from their wives, nor would they drink wine or strong drink which are wont to stimulate lust. That married men are elected to the priesthood, I do not deny: the number of virgins is not so great as that of the priests required. Does it follow that because all the strongest men are chosen for the army, weaker men should not be taken as well? All cannot be strong.” (St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus*, Book I, Section 34, A.D. 393)

In his *Letter to Pammachius*, Ep. 48.10 (c. 393), St. Jerome further wrote: “A mother before she was wedded, she remained a virgin after bearing her son. Therefore, as I was going to say, the virgin Christ and the virgin Mary have dedicated in themselves the first fruits of virginity for both sexes. The apostles have either been virgins or, though married, have lived celibate lives. Those persons who are chosen to be bishops, priests, and deacons are either virgins or widowers; or at least when once they have received the priesthood, are vowed to perpetual chastity. Why do we delude ourselves and feel vexed if while we are continually straining after sexual indulgence, we find the palm of chastity denied to us? We wish to fare sumptuously, and to enjoy the embraces of our wives, yet at the same time we desire to reign with Christ among virgins and widows. Shall there be but one reward, then, for hunger and for excess, for filth and for finery, for sackcloth and for silk? Lazarus (Luke 16:19-25), in his lifetime, received evil things, and the rich man, clothed in purple, fat and sleek, while he lived enjoyed the good things of the flesh but, now that they are dead, they occupy different positions. Misery has given place to satisfaction, and satisfaction to misery. And it rests with us whether we will follow Lazarus or the rich man.” (*The Letters of St. Jerome*, Letter 48, To Pammachius, Section 21)

St. Jerome, one of the Four Great Western Doctors of the Church, also testified: “Priests and deacons must be either virgins or widowers before being ordained, or at least observe perpetual continence after their ordination... If married men find this difficult to endure, they should not turn against me, but rather against Holy Writ and the entire ecclesiastical order.”

St. Jerome, *To Pammachius* (c. 393 A.D.): “See my express declaration that marriage is allowed in the Gospel, yet that those who are married cannot receive the rewards of chastity so long as they render their due one to another. If married men feel indignant at this statement, let them vent their anger not on me but on the Holy Scriptures; nay, more, upon all bishops, presbyters, and deacons, and the whole company of priests and levites, who know that they cannot offer sacrifices if they fulfill the obligations of marriage.” (*The Letters of St. Jerome*, Letter 48, To Pammachius, Section 10)

So, while some priests did break their vow of celibacy the Church never approved of that. It was considered a disgrace for a man that was married before he became a priest to beget children with his wife after ordination.

Also consider that all of the most important figures in the church were celibate, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, John the Baptist, (Peter after his ordination) Paul, and the rest of the Apostles in accordance to the Tradition of the Church, etc.

Pope St. Innocent I (401-417 A.D.) wrote in the same vein: “This is not a matter of imposing upon the clergy new and arbitrary obligations, but rather of reminding them of those which the tradition of the Apostles and the Fathers has transmitted to us.”

St. John Chrysostom (c. 347-407), adds: “If then “he who is married cares for the things of the world” [1 Corinthians 7:33], and a Bishop ought not to care for the things of the world, why does he say the husband of one wife? Some indeed think that he says this with reference to one who remains free from a wife. But if otherwise, he that has a wife may be as though he had none [1 Corinthians 7:29]. For that liberty was then properly granted, as suited to the nature of the circumstances then existing. ... “Having his children in subjection with all gravity” [1 Timothy 3:4]. This is necessary, that an example might be exhibited in his own house. For who would believe that he who had not his own son in subjection, would keep a stranger under command? “One that rules well his own house” [Ibid]. Even those who are without say this, that he who is a good manager of a house will be a good statesman. For the Church is, as it were, a small household, and as in a house there are children and wife and domestics, and the man has rule over them all; just so in the Church there are women, children, servants. And if he that presides in the Church has partners in his power, so has the man a partner, that is, his wife. Ought the Church to provide for her widows and virgins? So there are in a family servants, and daughters, to be provided for. And, in fact, it is easier to rule the house; therefore he asks, “if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the

Church of God?" [1 Timothy 3:5]" (*Homily X on First Timothy*, 1 Timothy 3:1-7)

St. Augustine participated in the Council of Carthage (419) where the general obligation to continence for major clerics had been repeatedly affirmed and traced back to the apostles and to a constant tradition. In his treatise *De conjugii adulterinis* (396) he asserted that even married men who were unexpectedly called to enter the ranks of the major clergy, and were ordained, were obliged to continence. In this they became an example to those laymen who had to live separated from their wives and who therefore were more liable to be tempted to commit adultery (no. 2, 22: PL, 40, 486).

Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais (died c. 414), of the Libyan Church, knew that he is expected to live in continence with his wife if made a priest-bishop (*Epistle* 105 ca. 410) (he was still a layman at the time of his ordination), and Palladius the historian reports that a synod presided over by St. John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople in the year 400, condemned Antoninus, Bishop of Ephesus, for doing what was forbidden by the 'holy laws' including resuming common life with his wife: "after separating from his married wife, he had taken her again" (*The Dialogue of Palladius concerning the Life of St. John Chrysostom*, chapter XIII). In his note on this phrase, the translator Herbert Moore says: "According to the 'Apostolic Canons', only the lower orders of clergy were allowed to marry after their appointment to office; the Council in Trullo ordered that a bishop's wife should retire to a convent, or become a deaconess; that of Caesarea, that if a priest marries after ordination he must be degraded. For Antoninus to resume relations with his wife was equivalent to marriage after ordination. It was proposed at the Council of Nicaea that married clergy should be compelled to separate from their wives... though it was generally held that the relations of bishops with their wives should be those of brother and sister."

Church laws and writings of this era not only affirm the requirement of clerical continence, even if it was not always followed in practice, they also reflect a sophisticated theology of the priesthood. Ritual purity requires only periodic abstinence, which was sufficient for the priests of the Old Testament, who offered animals in sacrifice to God. However, since the priests of the New Testament offer the Holy Victim, Jesus Christ, in sacrifice to the Father, they are, as St. Ambrose pointed out, called to a more radical and perfect purity than that of their Hebrew predecessors. Furthermore, the holiness of the clerical office demanded absolute purity. Their daily ministry included not only the Mass, which was offered every day in many places, but also the administration of the sacraments and the practice of praying constantly on behalf of the Church. Finally, celibacy gave an eschatological dimension to the priesthood, pointing to the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Tertullian at the beginning of the third century, reminds the clergy that monogamy (marriage with only one person at a time) is not only the teaching of the Church but also a precept of the Apostle (*Ad uxorem*, 1, 7, 4 (CCL 1, 381)). It thus dates back to apostolic times. Furthermore, he insists on the fact that, in the Church, not a few believers are not married, that they live in continence and that some of them belong to 'ecclesiastical orders' (*De exhort. cast.*, 13, 4 (CCL 2, 1035)). Now, the men and women who live like this, Tertullian goes on, "have preferred to marry God" (*Deo nubere maluerunt*); (*Ibid.*, cf *Ad uxorem*, 1, 4, 4).

While Tertullian commented with admiration upon the number of those in sacred orders who have embraced continence, Origen seems to contrast the spiritual offspring of the priests of the New Law with the natural offspring begotten in wedlock by the priests of the Old (*In Levit. Hom. vi*, no. 6).

Other testimonies to be taken into special account include Origen (d. ca. 253) (*23rd homily on Numbers*, *6th homily on Leviticus*), Ephraem Syrus (*Carmina Nisibena*, 18 and 19 (ca. 363)), and the Syriac *Doctrina Addei* (ca. 400).

Origen (c. 185-254), *Homily 23 on Numbers 28:1-29:39, 3:1-2*: "Since therefore we have the laws for feasts in hand and the present words concerns this subject, let us diligently investigate the order of the feasts in order to be able to conclude from these orders and from the rite of sacrifices how each one can prepare a feast for God by his own actions and by his holy manner of life. Well, the first feast of God is the one called "perpetual." (cf. Num 28:6) For a command is given concerning these morning and evening sacrifices, which are offered perpetually and without any interruption whatsoever. Thus, when he commands the rites of the feasts, he does not come first of all and immediately to the Passover feast, nor to the feast of Unleavened Bread, nor to that of Tabernacles, nor to the others about which commandments are given; but he has recorded this one first, in which he commands a perpetual sacrifice to be offered. The reason for this is so that each one who wants to be perfect and holy may know that it is not merely now and then that one must celebrate a feast for God, but at other times, there is no need to celebrate a feast. On the contrary, always and perpetually the just person should celebrate the feast day. For the sacrifice that is commanded to be offered perpetually, both in the morning and in the evening, indicates this, that in the law and the prophets, which point to the morning time, and in the teaching of the gospel, which points to the evening time, that is, to the evening of the world, it points to the coming of the Savior, it persists with a perpetual intention. So it is of these kinds of

feasts that the Lord says: "And you will observe my feast days." Thus it is a feast day of the Lord, if we offer him a sacrifice perpetually, if "we pray without intermission," (1 Thess 5:17) so that "our prayer may ascend like incense in his sight in the morning, and the lifting up of our hands may become an evening sacrifice to him." (Ps 141:2) So this is the first celebration of a perpetual sacrifice, which must be fulfilled by worshipers of the gospel in this manner that we have explained above.

"... I fear to say something that is given to be understood based on the apostolic sayings, least I seem to cause grief in some people. For if "the prayer of the just is offered like incense in the sight of God, and the lifting up of hands is his evening sacrifice," (cf. Ps 141:1-2) but the apostle says to those who are married: "Do not deprive one another, except by consent for a time, that you may be free for prayer, and again be unto this very thing," (1 Cor 7:5) it is certain that the perpetual sacrifice is impeded in those who serve conjugal needs. This is why it seems to me that the offering of a perpetual sacrifice [such as in the priesthood and the religious life] belongs to that one alone who has pledged himself to perpetual and continual chastity."

Origin, *Homily 6 on Leviticus*, 2-3: "But let us see, perhaps, since we said in the preceding this kind of clothing (Lev 6:10-11; 16:4) was seen as a sign of chastity, where they seem either to cover the thighs or to restrain the kidneys and loins (Eph 6:14), I say, perhaps, not always in those, who then [in the Old Law] were priests, does it say these parts are restrained. For sometimes concessions were granted concerning the posterity of the race and the succession of offspring. But I would not introduce such an understanding for the priests of the Church [in the New Law], for I see something else suggested in the mystery.

"For in the Church, the priests and teachers can beget sons [in a spiritual sense], just as that one [St. Paul] who said, "My little children, for whom I am again in travail until Christ is formed in you." (Gal 4:19) And again in another place he says, "Although you have myriad teachers in Christ, but not many fathers. For I begat you in Christ Jesus for the gospel." (1 Cor 4:15) Therefore, these teachers of the Church, in procreating such generations, sometimes use the binding of the thighs and abstain from begetting [spiritual] generations, since they find such hearers in whom they know they could not have fruit [by their preaching]. Finally, also in the Acts of the Apostles, it is related concerning some of these that "we could not speak the word of God in Asia." (cf. Acts 16:6) That is, they had put on the tight covering and preserved themselves that they not beget sons, for certainly these were such hearers in whom both the seed would die and could not have offspring. Thus therefore, the priests of the Church, when they see incapable ears or when they encounter counterfeit hypocritical hearers, let them

put on "the apron," let them use "the thigh covering," (cf. Exod 28:42)..."

St. Ephrem the Syrian (c. 306-373), *The Nisibene Hymns*, Hymn XVIII: "1. O thou who art made priest after thy master, the illustrious after the excellent, the chaste after the grave, the watchful after the abstinent, thy master from thee has not departed; in the living we see the deceased: for lo! in thee is his likeness painted; and impressed upon thee are his footprints, and all of him shines from all of thee. *R., Blessed be He Who in His stead has given us thee!*

"2. The fruit wherein its tree is painted, bears witness concerning the root. Hitherto there has not failed us, the savour of his sweetness. His words thou showest forth in bodily act, for thou hast fulfilled them in deed. In thy conversation is painted his doctrine, in thy conduct his exposition, in thy fulfilment his interpretation. *R., Blessed be He Who has made thy lustre to excel!*

"... 12. That he should purge his mind, and cleanse also his tongue; that he should purify his hands, and make his whole body to shine; this is too little for the priest and his title, who offers the Living Body. Let him cleanse all himself at all hours; for he stands as mediator, between God and mankind. *R., Blessed be He Who has cleansed His ministers!*"

St. Ephrem the Syrian, *The Nisibene Hymns*, Hymn XIX: "1. Thou who answerest to the name of Abraham, in that Thou art made father of many; but because to Thee none is spouse, as Sarah was to Abraham,—lo! Thy flock is Thy spouse; bring up her sons in Thy truth; spiritual children may they be to Thee, and the sons be sons of promise, that they may become heirs in Eden. *R., Blessed be He Who foreshowed Thee in Abraham!*

"2. Fair fruit of chastity, in whom the priesthood was well pleased, youngest among Thy brethren as was the son of Jesse; the horn overflowed and anointed Thee, the hand alighted and chose Thee, the Church desired and loved Thee; the pure altar is for Thy ministry, the great throne for Thy honour, and all as one for Thy crown. *R., Blessed be He Who multiplied Thy crowning!*

"3. Lo! thy flock, O blessed one, arise and visit it, O diligent one! Jacob ranged the flocks in order; range Thou the sheep that have speech, and enlighten the virgin-youths in purity, and the virgin-maids in chastity; raise up priests in honour, rulers in meekness, and a people in righteousness. *R. Blessed be He Who filled Thee with understanding!*

"... 13. Hearken to the Apostle when he saith, to that virgin whom he had espoused; I am jealous over you with jealousy, with a jealousy verily of God, not of the flesh but of the spirit. Be jealous therewith thou also in pureness, that He may know

what she is and whose she is. In thee may she cherish, and in thee may she love, Jesus the Bridegroom in truth. *R., Blessed is he whose zeal is holy!*

“14. As are her masters, so are her manners: for with the teacher that lags a laggard is she, and with him that is noble, excellent is she. The Church is like unto a mirror, for according to the face that gazes into it, thus does it put on the likeness thereof. For as is the king so also his host, and as is the priest so also his flock; according as these are it is stamped on them. *R., Blessed be He Who stamped her in His likeness!*

“15. Without a testament they departed, those three illustrious priests; who in Testaments used to meditate, those two Testaments of God. Great gain have they bequeathed to us, even this example of poverty. They who possessed nothing the blessed ones, made us their possessions; the Church was their treasure. *R., Blessed is he who possessed in them his possessions!*”

In the East, this tradition of exalting virginity over marriage was exemplified by St. John Chrysostom: “Marriage was not instituted for wantonness or fornication, but for chastity.” He also said: “**That virginity is good I do agree. But that it is even better than marriage, this I do confess.** And if you wish, I will add that it is as much better than marriage as Heaven is better than Earth, as much better as angels are better than men.” (*The Faith of the Early Fathers*, Vol. 2: 1116)

In this context of exalting chastity, St. Athanasius the Great in his *Apologia ad Constantium* 33 (c. 357) writes: “The Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, having become man for our sakes, and having destroyed death, and delivered our race from the bondage of corruption, in addition to all His other benefits bestowed this also upon us, that we should possess upon earth, in the state of virginity, a picture of the holiness of Angels. Accordingly such as have attained this virtue, the Catholic Church has been accustomed to call the brides of Christ. And the heathen who see them express their admiration of them as the temples of the Word. For indeed this holy and heavenly profession is nowhere established, but only among us Christians, and it is a very strong argument that with us is to be found the genuine and true religion.”

Tertullian, speaking of women who, instead of choosing a husband, have preferred a virginal life: “They prefer to be wedded to God. To God their beauty, to God their youth (is dedicated). With Him they live; with Him they converse; Him they "handle" by day and by night; to the Lord they assign their prayers as dowries; from Him, as oft as they desire it, they receive His approbation as dotal gifts. Thus they have laid hold for themselves of an eternal gift of the

Lord; and while on earth, by abstaining from marriage, are already counted as belonging to the angelic family.” (CCL 1, 377; *Ad uxorem*, 1, 4); and speaking about virgins, he says that they are “brides of Christ” (*De virg. vel.*, 16, 4: “Nupsisti enim Christo, illi tradidisti carnem tuam, illi sponsasti maturitatem tuam,” (CCL 2, 1225); *De res.*, 61, 6: “virgines Christi maritae” (CCL 2, 1010).

The reforms of the Middle Ages

Although it has already been proven that absolute and perpetual priestly chastity is a biblical, apostolic and patristic teaching that cannot be denied by any Christian, the Catholic Church from the time of Christ had to confirm this teaching from time to time since impure factions of heretics or fallen away Catholics tried to reject or neglect this teaching in order to live out their unlawful lusts.

From the fifth century through the eleventh century, the Catholic Church firmly held to its law that all clerics in major orders were to observe perfect continence after ordination. In fact, over the course of these centuries, the Church actually increased its restrictions on married clerics. In 567, the *Second Council of Tours* ruled that any priest found in bed with his wife would be excommunicated for a year, and reduced to the lay state. In 653 the *Council of Toledo* prohibited clerics from having any type of public relationship with their wives or concubines. When the Frankish Church held its first reform synod in 743, it forbade any priest or deacon to live in the same house with any woman, including his wife. The Irish Penitentials of the sixth century, which were one of the earliest collections of disciplinary norms on clerical life of the middle ages or the medieval period, imposed strict penalties upon clerics who committed fornication or who engaged in conjugal activity after ordination. Similar ordinances for Anglo-Saxon lands could be found in penitential books of the eighth century. Bishop Chrodegang of Metz (d. 766) issued the *Regula canonicorum*, which required that his cathedral clergy, or canons, live in a community governed by a rule similar to those of religious orders. This practice, which was eventually adopted by many other dioceses, provided a practical alternative to the existing custom of allowing married clerics to live with their wives, making it easier for priests to live celibately.

It is therefore true to say that, during those centuries of crisis for clerical morals, the Church never lost sight of the ancient tradition concerning the law of celibacy. From her memory she constantly affirmed the prohibition of marriage for clerics in major orders and the duty of a vow of perpetual continence for those married before ordination, even at times when these laws were being flagrantly violated. Apart from evidence in the collections of disciplinary

norms, this commitment is also attested to by the efforts of regional councils and diocesan synods. In France, for example, the Council of Metz (888) forbade priests to keep a woman in their homes; the Council of Rheims (909), noting the decadence in clerical conduct as regards continence, urged that association with women should be forbidden, and also cohabitation with them, both norms being related to the precept of continence. In Germany, the Council of Mainz (888) recalled that the prohibition on cohabitation with women prohibited cohabitation even with a wife living in continence whom the cleric had previously married, that is, it confirmed the prohibition of canon 3 of the Council of Nicea (325); the Council of Rheims (909), noting the decadence in clerical conduct as regards continence, urged that association with women should be forbidden, and also cohabitation with them, both norms being related to the precept of continence. This tendency was taken up by the 11th-century Gregorian Reform, which aimed at eliminating what it called “Nicolaitism” (the widespread violation of clerical celibacy and the practice of priests being married or having a mistress or concubine). It was one of the twin evils to be overthrown in the eyes of the reform movement of 11th century Rome, inspired by Pope St. Gregory VII. (The second evil practice was simony.)

In 893, the ‘Statutes of Riculph, Archbishop of Soissons and his bishops’ state: “Neither bishop, priest, deacon, nor any cleric shall have a woman in his house...” Indeed, during the following centuries, the decrees of the Catholic Church on this matter maintained the biblical and apostolic teaching of clerical celibacy when compared to other “Churches” who tried to reject or ignore this teaching of the Church. In some dioceses, men could not receive Orders unless they made a formal vow of perfect chastity first. In the late ninth and early tenth centuries, several councils prohibited clerics from living with any women, including their wives.

Sadly, in the Middle Ages, abuses of clerical celibacy arose, which incited a strong reaction from the Church. *The Synod of Augsburg* (952), and the local *Councils of Anse* (994) and *Poitiers* (1000) all affirmed the rule of celibacy. In 1009, the Church *Council of Egham* in England cautioned: “We beg and admonish all ministers of God, especially priests, to cultivate chastity... They must surely know that a priest must not have a wife...”

The Council of Pavia (1022), which was convened by Pope Benedict VIII and St. Henry II, Holy Roman Emperor, mandated strict celibacy, banning clerical marriage and forbidding clergy to live with any women, including their wives. Clerics refusing to separate from their wives, including bishops, were to be laicized (to be deprived of their clerical ministry, although they remain ordained priests forever). *The Council of Burgess* (1031) ordered the

wives of clerics to leave the towns where their clerichusbands lived. They also struck a blow against the hereditary priesthood by declaring that any children fathered after ordination were illegitimate and, therefore, ineligible to receive Orders. During the pontificate of Pope St. Leo IX (1049-54), synods in Rome and Mainz banned clerical marriage. Pope Victor II (1055-1057) continued Leo's policy and on 4 June 1055 anathematized clerical marriage and unchastity. Pope Nicholas II (1059-61) convened a synod at the Lateran, which ordered the laity not to attend Masses said by priests who were living with their wives or concubines and which ordered the excommunication of clerics who had not yet complied with Leo IX's directives. More importantly, the synod established the College of Cardinals and vested it with the authority to elect popes. By stripping the Holy Roman Emperor and his nobles of their power to appoint popes, this synod ended the most egregious example of lay investiture and greatly increased the power and authority of the papacy.

Nicholas II also made effective use of his legates, Cardinal Humbert of Silva, Archdeacon St. Hildebrand of Rome, and the indomitable monk, St. Peter Damian, in enforcing the decrees of his councils. Humbert crusaded tirelessly against clerical incontinence or "nicolaitism," which had been condemned as a heresy in 1059. At the pope's behest, Damian, who was also the Cardinal of Ostia, wrote several works that praised celibacy and that condemned unchaste clerics and their consorts. St. Hildebrand used his authority as the Archdeacon to reform the clergy of Rome and he also made trips abroad on behalf of the pope. Nicholas held other councils that repeated the decrees of the synod of 1059 and he wrote an encyclical on celibacy.

Nicholas II was succeeded by Alexander II (1061-73), who had to contend with the claims of the anti-pope Honorius II, and who did little to advance his predecessor's agenda on clerical chastity. When Alexander died, Archdeacon St. Hildebrand was elected pope and took the name Gregory VII (1073-1085). The new bishop of Rome wasted no time in restarting the engine of reform. Although his bitter struggle over lay investiture with Emperor Henry IV took up much of his energy and ultimately resulted in his exile from Rome in 1080, Pope St. Gregory VII effectively combated clerical marriage up until then. He held several synods at the Lateran, including one in 1074, which required all clerics to make a vow of celibacy upon ordination and which prohibited lay people from attending Masses or receiving the sacraments from unchaste clerics. The synod of 1078 put the burden of enforcing clerical chastity upon the bishops, who would be suspended if they tolerated the behavior of unchaste clerics. The pope even enlisted the aid of abbots and nobles in bringing reluctant bishops to heel.

Gregory VII's motives were threefold. First and foremost, they were moral, since he rightly

considered that clerical marriage was adultery. Secondly, they were material – a celibate clergy would not have possessions to pass on to their children and thus property would be inherited by the Church. Thirdly, they were political: a celibate clergy would be subject only to the Pope and would therefore not have dealings with the world.

During the struggle to gain control over the priesthood, Pope St. Gregory VII finally gave his ultimatum in 1074 by declaring that no man could be ordained without first pledging himself to celibacy: “The Church cannot escape from the clutches of the laity unless priests first escape from the clutches of their wives.” (Citing the authority of St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:33-34). Thus, if a married clergyman did not separate from his wife, he was to be deposed. After this ultimatum other synods and local councils passed similar legislation. By the year 1080, when St. Gregory VII was forced into exile, strict clerical celibacy was becoming the accepted practice throughout the Catholic Church. In 1089 Pope Urban II (1088-1099) ordered that married priests who ignored the celibacy laws was to be imprisoned for the good of their souls and that all clerics who continued to live with their wives were to be removed from office. If, after being warned by a bishop, clerics did not comply, the pope gave secular rulers permission to make slaves of clerical wives. In 1095, the *Council of Piacenza* passed a resolution outlawing the marriage of priests. Pope Callistus II (1119-1124) presided over the First Lateran Council which decreed that clerical marriages were invalid, fought simony and concubinage of the clergy, ended the lay investiture crisis, and decreed that it was adultery for bishops to forsake their see for marriage.

These decrees culminated in the reforms of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which reaffirmed the holy law of clerical celibacy as the undisputed law and practice of the Catholic Church. Although Pope St. Gregory VII (1073-85) is credited with carrying out the reforms that effected this change, the popes and councils who preceded him laid the groundwork of his program, which also included ending the abuses of simony and lay investiture.

Still, the Gregorian programme for reform was not without opposition. The opponents of reform presented their own arguments, not only at the practical but also at the theoretical level. Their main argument was a scriptural one drawn from the Old Testament, which not only allowed priests to marry but mandated marriage to perpetuate the priestly caste. They also drew on the episode of Paphnutius whom, they claimed, opposed the idea of requiring absolute continence from married clerics at the Council of Nicea (325). As for the East, the Greek ecclesiastical historians Socrates (c. 380-439) and Sozomen (c. 400-450), who wrote a century after the event, reported that the First Council of Nicaea considered ordering all married clergy to refrain from conjugal relations, but the Council was dissuaded by

Paphnutius of Thebes. As the story goes, he is alleged to have risen during the Council to protest any plan to impose a discipline of total continence on married clerics, suggesting that it be left to the decision of the particular Churches. The argument runs that his advice is supposed to have been accepted by the assembly. The well-known Church historian, Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260-340), who was present at the Council and sympathetic to the Arians, does not make any reference to this episode. It is first recorded by the 5th century Greek historian Sozomen. There are several arguments against the authenticity of this episode, but the most telling one is that the Eastern Church itself, which should have had a great interest in it, either did not know of it or, because the Eastern Church leaders were convinced that it was false, did not have a record of it in any official document it used. None of the polemical writers on clerical celibacy made use of it, nor did the Council of Trullo (691) refer to it. And given the polemical tone of Trullo it would have served its purpose well to have referred to it if it was true. The story of Paphnutius was used against the Gregorian reform, and this was why Pope St. Gregory VII, at the Synod of Rome in 1077, condemned the episode as one of the two most important falsifications used by the opponents of the reform (cf. Cholij, *Clerical Celibacy in East and West*, pp. 78-92, and Stickler, *The Case for Clerical Celibacy*, pp 62-65). This means that the historical value of the Paphnutius incident at Nicea is rejected by Rome.

Subsequent Later Reforms and the History and Reason Behind the Great Western Schism

St. Peter Damian (1007-1072), Doctor of the Church and cardinal-bishop of the diocese of Ostia, Italy, said that, since the Virgin Mary delivered the infant Jesus, only virgin priests ought to bring Him forth on the Eucharistic altar (Peter Damian, *On the Dignity of the Priest*). Damian taught that any married priest who had marital intercourse with his wife “became impure and his impurity contaminated every liturgical action he performed, sullied the sacred vessels that he touched, and defiled the sacred words that he spoke.” (Peter Damian, *Against the Intemperate Clerics*, Chapter 4). While some who refuse to accept the Church’s teaching in this regard might object that St. Peter the Apostle himself was married, (although there is nothing in the Bible or Tradition that says that he performed the marital act after his ordination) Peter Damian affirms St. Jerome’s condemnation of forbidden sexual activity of the clergy, declaring that, “Peter washed away the filth of marriage with the blood of his martyrdom.” (St. Peter Damian, *On the Perfection of Bishops*)

In truth, Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself tells us in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* that St. Peter Damian’s teaching is perfectly right in this regard and that the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul was conformed to how they lived and how much they loved their flesh in this life: “Peter

and Paul died for the sake of righteousness, although Peter died a more painful death than Paul, for he loved the flesh more than Paul; he also had to be more conformed to me through his painful death since he held the primacy of my church. Paul, however, inasmuch as he had a greater love of continence and because he had worked harder, died by the sword like a noble knight, for I arrange all things according to merit and measure. So, in God's judgment it is not how people end their lives or their horrible death that leads to their reward or condemnation, but their intention and will." (Our Lord speaking to St. Bridget, *The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 3, Chapter 19)

Peter Damian showed that married priests betrayed their high calling because "they lived as married men, amid the reek and screams of sniveling brats, side by side with a smirking, randy wife, [and] bedeviled by daily temptations to unclean thoughts, words, and deeds." (St. Peter Damian, *Against the Intemperate Clerics*, Chapter 7)

Cardinal Humbert, one of St. Peter Damian's contemporaries, was Pope St. Leo IX's apostolic delegate to the Eastern Church in Byzantium (present-day Istanbul). Condemning the Eastern Church for allowing the impurity of a married priesthood, Humbert depicted the Eastern Rite priests in these words: "Young husbands, just now exhausted from carnal lust, serve the altar. And immediately afterward they again embrace their wives with hands that have been hallowed by the immaculate Body of Christ. That is not the mark of true faith, but an invention of Satan." Because of various reasons (in addition to the impious practice mentioned above by Cardinal Humbert), on 16 July 1054, during the celebration of the liturgy, Humbert excommunicated his host, Eastern Patriarch Michael, by placing a Papal Bull of excommunication of the Patriarch on the high altar of the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia. Michael reciprocated by "excommunicating" Latin Church leaders for permitting "irregularities" such as prohibiting the marriage of priests. The tragic split between the Eastern "Orthodox" Church – which is a sensual, condemned and heretical sect as we have seen from the Bible and Apostolic Tradition – and the Western (and Eastern) Catholic Church, which is the one and only true Christian Faith, dates from that year, and it has never been healed since that time. So because of the Eastern Schismatics' obstinacy and inordinate love of this fleeting fleshly pleasure, in addition to their other obstinate rejections of various other doctrines of the Catholic Church, they have sadly denied and rejected Christ and the faith in the process.

The reforms of the eleventh century were finalized in the twelfth century by the Ecumenical and infallible *First Lateran Council* (1123), which proclaimed that after a cleric was ordained a subdeacon, deacon, or priest, he could not validly marry or live with his wife, and that the marriages of all higher clerics were invalid. The First Lateran Council was held

during the pontificate of Pope Callistus II, and was “for various important matters of the church”, as Callistus himself says in the letter of convocation. Canon 7 declared: “We absolutely forbid priests, deacons or subdeacons to live with concubines and wives, and to cohabit with other women, except those whom the Council of Nicaea permitted to dwell with them solely on account of necessity, namely a mother, sister, paternal or maternal aunt, or other such persons, about whom no suspicion could justly arise.” Canon 21 declared that any marriages contracted of clerics and the chaste servants of Christ were void: “We absolutely forbid priests, deacons, subdeacons and monks to have *concubines* or to contract *marriages*. We adjudge, as the sacred canons have laid down, that marriage contracts between such persons should be made void and the persons ought to undergo penance.”

At the *Synod of Clermont* in 1130 Pope Innocent II decreed that marital intercourse was incompatible with holy men and their holy actions. The pope said that: “since priests are supposed to be God’s temples, vessels of the Lord and sanctuaries of the Holy Spirit... it offends their dignity to lie in the conjugal bed and live in impurity.”

Repeating the decrees of the First Lateran Council, the Ecumenical *Second Lateran Council* (1139) decreed in Canon 6: “We also decree that those who in the subdiaconate and higher orders have contracted marriage or have concubines, be deprived of their office and ecclesiastical benefice. For since they should be and be called the temple of God, the vessel of the Lord, the abode of the Holy Spirit, it is unbecoming that they indulge in marriage and in impurities.” Canon 7: “Following in the footsteps of our predecessors, the Roman pontiffs Gregory VII, Urban, and Paschal, we command that no one attend the masses of those who are known to have wives or concubines. But that the law of continence and purity, so pleasing to God, may become more general among persons constituted in sacred orders, we decree that bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, canons regular, monks, and professed clerics (*conversi*) who, transgressing the holy precept, have dared to contract marriage, shall be separated. For a union of this kind which has been contracted in violation of the ecclesiastical law, we do not regard as matrimony. Those who have been separated from each other, shall do penance commensurate with such excesses.”

Thus the infallible decrees of the *First* and *Second Lateran Councils* made it clear once and for all—and especially to those contraveners in the Christian world that opposed and still oppose the Apostolic and Biblical teaching of clerical celibacy in the New Testament and in the New Law—that this teaching indeed was true and biblical and that henceforth, all clerics had to remain perfectly chaste if they wished to be spotless and lawful and pure ministers of Our Lord Jesus Christ. While it has already been proved that all deacons, priests and bishops of

the Church must live totally and perpetually chaste from the time of their ordination and that this is indeed the teachings of the Bible and the Apostles, from that time onward, the law and practice of the Church concerning strict celibacy was made more firm.

And later legislation, found especially in the *Quinque Compilationes Antiquae* and the Decretals of Gregory IX, continued to deal with questions concerning married men who were ordained legally. In 1322 Pope John XXII insisted that no one bound in marriage—even if unconsummated—could be ordained unless there was full knowledge of the requirements of Church law. If the free consent of the wife had not been obtained, the husband, even if already ordained, was to be reunited with his wife, exercise of his ministry being barred. Accordingly, the assumption that a wife might not want to give up her marital rights may have been one of the factors contributing to the eventual universal practice in the Latin Church of ordaining only unmarried men.

One further word on the canonical legislation of the Middle Ages. On various occasions, in penitential books, it is said that for a married priest to go on having sexual relations with his wife after ordination would be an act of unfaithfulness to the promise made to God. It would be an *adulterium* since, the minister now being married to the Church, his relationship with his own wife “is like a violation of the marriage bond” (Stickler, *L'évolution... (ut supra)*, p. 381). This weighty accusation against a lawfully wedded man only makes sense if something is left unexpressed because it is well-known, i.e., that the sacred minister, from the moment of his ordination, now lives in another relationship, also of a matrimonial type — that which unites Christ and the Church in which he, the minister, the man (*vir*), represents Christ the bridegroom; with his own wife (*uxor*) therefore “the carnal union should from now on be a spiritual one”, as St. Leo the Great said. (*Ep. ad Rusticum Narbonensem episc. Inquis. III: Resp.* (PL 54, 1204 A): «*ut de carnali fiat spirituale coniugium*».)

Conclusion

The universal law of clerical celibacy confirmed by the Council of Nicaea applied, and still applies, to the Eastern Church as well as the Western. It is noteworthy that at that Council, the Easterners (Greeks) made up the overwhelming majority. Previously, the *Council of Neo-Caesarea* (c. 314) had reminded all Eastern clerics in major orders of the inviolability of this law under pain of deposition: “If a presbyter marry, let him be removed from his order.” (Canon 1) And of course, we must not forget to cite earliest canon law on the subject: “None of the clergy, except readers and singers may marry after ordination.” (*The Apostolic Canons*, Canon 26)

We may then take it for a general principle that in no part of the ancient Church was a priest allowed to contract holy matrimony; and in no place was he allowed to exercise his priesthood afterwards, if he should dare to enter into such a relation with a woman.

The Eastern Church began at a late date to violate its own law of celibacy. *The Quinisext Council* of 692, also called *Council in Trullo*, which St. Bede the Venerable (673-735) called “a reprobate synod,” breached the Apostolic Tradition concerning the celibacy of clerics by declaring that “all clerics except bishops may continue in wedlock” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Council in Trullo, vol. 4, 1908). This reprobate synod taught: “Nor shall it be demanded of him at the time of his ordination that he promise to abstain from lawful intercourse with his wife...” (Canon 13) The popes refused to endorse the conclusions of the Council in the matter of celibacy, and the Eastern Church planted the seeds of its schism.

It is abundantly clear that the fathers in *The Quinisext Council* thought the discipline they were setting forth to be the original discipline of the Church in the matter, and the discipline of the West an innovation, but that such was really the case is an innovation itself.

Thomassinus (1619-1695), French theologian and Oratorian, treats this point with much learning, and I shall cite some of the authorities he brings forward. Of these the most important is St. Epiphanius (c. 310-403), bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, of whom we have already cited some verses before, who as a Greek would be certain to give the tradition of the East, had there been any such tradition known in his time. I give the three great passages:

“It is evident that those from the priesthood are chiefly taken from the order of virgins, or if not from virgins, at least from monks; or if not from the order of monks, then they are wont to be made priests who keep themselves from their wives, or who are widows after a single marriage. But he that has been entangled by a second marriage is not admitted to priesthood in the Church, even if he be continent from his wife, or be a widower. Anyone of this sort is rejected from the grade of bishop, presbyter, deacon, or subdeacon. The order of reader, however, can be chosen from all the orders these grades can be chosen from, that is to say from virgins, monks, the continent, widowers, and they who are bound by honest marriage. Moreover, if necessity so compel, even digamists may be lectors, for such is not a priest, etc., etc.” (Epiph. *Exposit. Fid. Cath.*, c. xxi)

“Christ taught us by an example that the priestly work and ornaments should be communicated to those who shall have preserved their continency after a single

marriage, or shall have persevered in virginity. And this the Apostles thereafter honestly and piously decreed, through the ecclesiastical canon of the priesthood.” (Epiph. *Hæresi.* 48, n. 7)

“Nay, moreover, he that still uses marriage, and begets children, even though the husband of but one wife, is by no means admitted by the Church to the order of deacon, presbyter, bishop, or subdeacon. But for all this, he who shall have kept himself from the commerce of his one wife, or has been deprived of her, may be ordained, and this is most usually the case in those places where the ecclesiastical canons are most accurately observed.” (Epiph. *Hæresi,* 59, n. 4)

Nor is the weight of this evidence lessened, but much increased, by the acknowledgment of the same father that in some places in his days the celibate life was not observed by such priests as had wives, for he explains that such a state of things had come about “not from following the authority of the canons, but through the neglect of men, which is wont at certain periods to be the case.” (*Ibid.* ut supra.)

The witness of the Western Fathers, although so absolutely and indisputably clear on this subject already, yet one more passage from St. Jerome should be quoted: “The Virgin Christ and the Virgin Mary dedicated the virginity of both sexes. The Apostles were chosen when either virgins or continent after marriage, and bishops, presbyters, and deacons are chosen either when virgins, or widowers, or at least continent forever after the priesthood.” (*Hieron. Apolog. pro. lib. adv. Jovin.*)

It cannot be more clearly stated. And there is a reason for the tradition. The main reason why clerical celibacy is doctrinal and not disciplinary, is because the cleric in major orders, by virtue of his ordination, contracts a marriage with the Church, and he cannot be a bigamist (the crime of marrying a person while one is still legally married to someone else). As our fathers in the Faith still explain it, these clerics are virgins in order to be true disciples and ministers of Christ, a virgin consecrated to His Spouse. St. Jerome, in his treatise, *Adversus Jovinianum*, bases clerical celibacy on the virginity of Christ. Thus as early as 306 the Council of Elvira in Spain imposed sanctions on virgins who had been unfaithful to their consecration to God and their vow of virginity. At the same time the Council of Ancyra (314) declared that consecrated virgins who marry were guilty of bigamy, since they were espoused to Christ. In 364 the civil law, under Valens, declared that anyone who married a consecrated virgin was subject to the death penalty. Canon 16 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451) states that: “It is not lawful for a virgin who has dedicated herself to the Lord God, nor for

monks, to marry; and if they are found to have done this, let them be excommunicated.” St. Peter Damian adds: “No one can be ignorant of the fact that all the Fathers of the Catholic Church unanimously imposed the inviolable rule of continence on clerics in major orders. The Body of the Lord in the sacrament of the altar is the same as the one carried by the immaculate hands of the Virgin at Bethlehem. To be able to touch It, it is necessary to have pure hands, sanctified by perfect continence.”

This is also why there is a connection between *monogamous* marriage (the state or practice of having only one husband or wife over a period of time) on the one hand and *continence* on the other. Tertullian speaking clearly about this invokes the example set by Christ who, according to the flesh, was not married and lived in celibacy (he was not, therefore, “a husband of one wife”); yet, in the spirit, “he had one bride the Church” (*De monog.*, 5,7 (CCL 2, 1235)). This doctrine of Christ’s spiritual marriage to the Church, here inspired by the Pauline text of Ephesians 5:25-32, was common in early Christianity; Tertullian saw this spiritual marriage as one of the main theological bases for the law of monogamous marriage: “because Christ is *one* and his Church is *one*” (*De exhort. cast.*, 5, 3 (CCL 2, 1023); hence, Tertullian goes on, the law of single marriage is also founded on ‘*Christi sacramentum*’). But it does not follow from this that Tertullian had already made the connection between this doctrine and the formulae *unius uxoris vir* or *unius yin uxor* of the Pastoral Letters (*1 Timothy*; *2 Timothy*; *Epistle to Titus*), where monogamous marriage is explicitly referred to.

Besides, Ephesians 5:25-32 dealt not precisely with monogamous marriage but, in principle, the relationship of every Christian marriage with the *covenant*. Here Paul is speaking of *all* married members of the Church. When, referring to Genesis 2:24, the Apostle says that husband and wife “will be one flesh” (v. 31), he is justifying the use of marriage for them. The formula *unius uxoris vir* of the Pastoral Letters, however, is not used for all married men but only for *ministers* of the Church (this fact has been too little noted); yet subsequently it came to be regarded as the biblical basis of the law of continence for clerics. This is the point that still needs to be cleared up.

With St. Augustine we take a step forward. He, having taken part in the deliberations of the African synods, was certainly aware of the ecclesiastic law (based on divine law) governing the ‘continence of clerics’ (St. Augustine speaks of this in the *De coniugiis adulterinis*, II, 20, 22: «*solemnus eis proponere continentiam clenicorum*» (PL 40, 486)). But how does Augustine then explain the stipulation *unius uxoris vir* which is used by Paul for married clerics? In *De bono conjugali* (written in about A.D. 420), he advances a theological explanation for it, and asks himself why polygamy was accepted in the Old Testament, whereas “in our own age, the

sacrament has been restricted to the union between *one man* and *one woman*; and consequently it is only lawful to ordain as a minister of the Church (*ecclesiae dispensatorem*) a man who has had one wife (*unius uxoris virum*)." And here is Augustine's answer: "As the many wives (*plures uxores*) of the ancient Fathers symbolized our future churches of all nations, subject to the one man, Christ (*uni viro subditas Christo*), so the guide of the faithful (*noster antistes*, our bishop), who is the husband of one wife (*unius uxoris vir*) signifies the union of all nations, subject to the one man, Christ (*uni viro subditam Christo*)." (*De bono coniugali*, 18, 21 (PL 40, 3 87-388))

In this text, where we find the formula *unius uxoris vir* being applied to the *bishop*, the whole accent falls on the fact that he, 'the man', in his relations with his 'wife', symbolizes the relationship between Christ and the Church. An analogous use of the phrase 'man and wife' occurs in a passage of *De continentia* (c. 418-420): "The Apostle invites us to observe so to speak three pairs (*copulas*): Christ and the Church, husband and wife, the spirit and the flesh" (*De continentia*, 9, 23 (PL 40, 364)). The suggestion these texts offer us for interpreting the stipulation *unius uxoris vir* applied to the (married) minister of the sacrament is that he, as minister, not only represents the second pair (husband and wife) but also the first: henceforth he personifies *Christ* in his married relationship with the *Church*. Here we have the basis for the doctrine which was later to become a classic one: *Sacerdos alter Christus*. Like Christ, the priest is the Church's bridegroom. From this, it has become abundantly clear that, for married ministers, their ordination implied an invitation to live in continence thereafter.

At the *Council of Trent*, the discussions of the theological commission led to the approval of the following canon by the Fathers of Trent on November 11, 1563. *The Council of Trent* (1545-1563) considered the matter and at its twenty-fourth session decreed that marriage after ordination was invalid: "If any one saith, that clerics constituted in sacred orders, or Regulars, who have solemnly professed chastity, are able to contract marriage, and that being contracted it is valid, notwithstanding the ecclesiastical law, or vow; and that the contrary is no thing else than to condemn marriage; and, that all who do not feel that they have the gift of chastity, even though they have made a vow thereof, may contract marriage; let him be anathema: seeing that God refuses not that gift to those who ask for it rightly, neither does He suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able." (Session 24, Canon 9, A.D. 1563)

It also decreed, concerning the relative dignity of marriage and celibacy: "If any one saith, that the marriage state is to be placed above the state of virginity, or of celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or in celibacy, than to be united in matrimony; let him be anathema." (Canon 10)

In relation to the Apostles who were married before being called by Christ, all the theologians affirmed unhesitatingly that afterwards they gave up conjugal life with their wives in line with their own declaration: “We have left everything and followed you...” (Matthew 19:27).

So not only would it be a violation of Sacred Tradition to blot out a constant teaching decreed for 2,000 years to be absolutely obligatory, but also one must recognize that clerical celibacy is to be seen not merely as of ecclesiastical institution, but part of what is more broadly known in Catholic moral theology as “divine positive law,” initiated by Christ and His Apostles. That is, it is not merely disciplinary in nature, as many assert.

Against the long-standing tradition of the Church in the East as well as in the West, which excluded marriage after ordination, the “reformer” Zwingli married in 1522, Luther in 1525, and Calvin in 1539. And against what had also become, though seemingly at a later date, a tradition in both East and West, the married Thomas Cranmer was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1533 (Cranmer was not yet a priest when he entered into marriage; he was also a widower before his ordination). Once his appointment was approved by the pope, Cranmer declared Henry’s marriage to Catherine “void”, and four months later “married” him to Anne Boleyn; thus was the seeds of the Anglican schism sown.

Barely nine months after the king’s death Convocation voted in December 1547 to abolish the laws which made the marriages of clerks in Holy Orders null and void *ab initio*, and a Bill to this effect was passed in the House of Commons in the 1548-49 session. All such marriages hitherto contracted, involving as many as eight or nine thousand clerics, were rendered good and lawful by the same Bill. Three years later a second Act was passed which legitimated the children born of such unions. In 1553 the new code of Canon Law for the Church of England condemned as heresy the belief that Holy Orders were an invalidating impediment to marriage.

Following the elimination of celibacy in different countries, it is not surprising that many priests, diocesan as well as religious, abandoned their obligations. Sadly this was often the prelude to the abandonment of the faith as well.

As Stickler incisively comments in *The Case for Clerical Celibacy*, pp. 50-51: “This demanding commitment, which involves a life of constant sacrifice, can only be lived out if it is nourished by a living faith, since human weakness is a constant reminder of its practical implications. It is only through a faith that is constantly and consciously sustained that the supernatural

reasons underlying the commitment can be truly understood. When this faith grows weak, the determination to persevere fades; when faith dies, so does continence.” He goes on to point out that “a constant proof of this truth is to be found in the various heretical and schismatic movements that have arisen in the Church. One of the first institutions to be attacked is clerical continence. Therefore we should not be surprised that one of the first things that was rejected by the heretical movements that broke away from the unity of the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century – Lutherans, Calvinists, Zwinglians, Anglicans – was in fact clerical celibacy.” (*ibid.*, p. 51) It is also significant that the Old Catholics, when they seceded after Vatican I, abolished celibacy and reverted to a married clergy.

The revolutionary dimension of the opposition to celibacy at first evinced a political response from many civil authorities. The emperors Charles V (1519-56), Ferdinand I (1558-64) and Maximilian II (1564-76) all counselled a mitigation of the law at different stages during the Council of Trent. Humanists like Erasmus advised the same course. A change was admissible, even desirable they said, if it did not touch on the substance of the faith.

Some theologians and bishops rowed in with the humanists and were prepared for any accommodation which did not undermine their flawed and false understanding of what “the essentials of the faith” is. Still, the majority of bishops, convinced of the doctrinal and ascetical arguments for celibacy, refused to be railroaded into change. Since many of the priests who were living in compromised situations were already committed to heterodox theological positions, the bishops judged that a change in the law of celibacy would do little to win back these men to orthodoxy. They were also convinced that tolerating marriage for priests would completely undermine the radical reform of the clergy which was necessary if they were to become exemplary ministers of Christ.

Despite powerful political pressures Rome refused to legislate for a compromise solution. Priests who desired to be readmitted to the ministry could do so only on condition that they separated from their concubines and showed an authentic spirit of repentance. These were the dispositions which were offered to Germany. Through Cardinal Pole, Rome made a similar arrangement with England during the period of the Catholic restoration under Mary (1553-58) to facilitate those married priests who wanted to return to orthodoxy. From 1917, all cases of dispensation from the impediment of marriage were reserved to the Holy See. But those receiving dispensation were not authorized by that fact to continue with marital relations. (cf. B. Ojetti, *Commentarium in Codicem Iuris Canonici*, Rome/P.U.G., 1930), 11, pp. 103-109; M.C. a Coronata, *Compendium Iuris Canonici* (Turin/Rome, Marietti, 1949 III, pp. 327-8; F. Capello, *Summa Iuris Canonici* Rome/P.U.G. 1951, II, pp. 277-8.)

The decrees and reforms of the Council of Trent were not immediately followed in all Catholic nations but with time they did bring about a general observance of the law of celibacy, thanks in no small measure to their provisions for the better training of the clergy. The “Enlightenment” brought fresh assaults against clerical celibacy and after the First Vatican Council, the Old Catholics, as already noted, separating themselves from Rome, abolished the rule. Despite the pressures on the Catholic Church to relax the law of celibacy, it has always resisted. Pope Benedict XV declared, in his Consistorial Allocution of 16 December 1920, that the Church considered celibacy to be of such importance that it could never abolish it: “We once more affirm, solemnly and formally, that this Apostolic See will never in any way lighten or mitigate the obligation of this holy and salutary law of clerical celibacy, not to speak of abolishing it.” (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 12 (1920), p. 585)

In the early nineteenth century an association was formed in Germany to advocate a change in the law, but Gregory XIV rejected this move in his encyclical *Mirari Vos* (1834). Fourteen years later Pius IX defended the discipline in his *Qui Pluribus*. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Modernism provoked a new attack on the law of celibacy, but its effects were limited, due largely to the decisive measures taken by St. Pius X. In his Apostolic Exhortation on the Priesthood, *Haerent animo*, published on August 4, 1908 to mark the Golden Jubilee of his ordination, the pope refers to celibacy as “the fairest jewel of our priesthood.” Pope Pius XI, in his detailed encyclical on the priesthood, *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii*, reaffirmed St. Pius X’s appropriateness of the Church’s teaching on clerical celibacy, where he refers to celibacy as “the most precious treasure of the Catholic priesthood.”

As always, since lustful men tried to deny and reject the biblical and apostolic teaching on clerical chastity, Pope Pius XI, in *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii* (#’s 40-43), of Dec. 20, 1935, had to reaffirm the Church’s position once again concerning this matter: “It is impossible to treat of the piety of a Catholic priest without being drawn on to speak, too, of another most precious treasure of the Catholic priesthood, that is, of chastity; for from piety springs the meaning and the beauty of chastity. Clerics of the Latin Church in higher Orders are bound by a grave obligation of chastity; so grave is the obligation in them of its perfect and total observance that a transgression involves the added guilt of sacrilege. ... In the Old Law, Moses in the name of God commanded Aaron and his sons to remain within the Tabernacle, and so to keep continent, during the seven days in which they were exercising their sacred functions. But the Christian priesthood, being much superior to that of the Old Law, demanded a still greater purity. The law of ecclesiastical celibacy, whose first written traces pre-suppose a still earlier

unwritten practice, dates back to a canon of the Council of Elvira, at the beginning of the fourth century, when persecution still raged. This law only makes obligatory what might in any case almost be termed a moral exigency that springs from the Gospel and the Apostolic preaching. For the Divine Master showed such high esteem for chastity, and exalted it as something beyond the common power; He Himself was the Son of a Virgin Mother, *Florem Matris Virginis*, and was brought up in the virgin family of Joseph and Mary; He showed special love for pure souls such as the two Johns – the Baptist and the Evangelist. The great Apostle Paul, faithful interpreter of the New Law and of the mind of Christ, preached the inestimable value of virginity, in view of a more fervent service of God, and gave the reason when he said: "He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God." All this had almost inevitable consequences: the priests of the New Law felt the heavenly attraction of this chosen virtue; they sought to be of the number of those "to whom it is given to take this word," and they spontaneously bound themselves to its observance. Soon it came about that the practice, in the Latin Church, received the sanction of ecclesiastical law. The Second Council of Carthage at the end of the fourth century declared: "What the Apostles taught, and the early Church preserved, let us too, observe." [Council of Carthage, Canon 3 A.D. 390]"

Indeed, the Son of God Himself in *The Revelations of Saint Bridget* also reveals to us that the Apostles "had every intention of remaining chaste, and living continently in every way" at the time of Pentecost, which was in the very start of the Church, which shows us that the necessity of priestly chastity was well known to the Apostles at the very start of the Church at the time of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles and their few followers in the shape of tongues of fire.

Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to Saint Bridget, saying: "I who am speaking with you am he who on a day like today sent my Holy Spirit to my apostles and disciples. He came to them in three ways: first, as a forceful wind; second, as fire; third, in the shape of tongues. He came to them through closed doors, for they were alone, and they had three good qualities. First, they had every intention of remaining chaste, and living continently in every way; second, they possessed outstanding humility; third, all their desire was for God, for they desired nothing but him. They were like three clean but empty vessels—therefore the Holy Spirit came and filled them. He came like a forceful wind, for he filled their every joint and limb with divine delight and solace. He came like fire, for he so set their hearts aflame with the fire of divine love that they loved none but God, feared none but God. Third, he came in the shape of tongues, for, just as a tongue is inside the mouth without harming it but, rather, helping it to speak, so too

the Holy Spirit was inside their souls, making them desire nothing but me and making them eloquent with divine wisdom. By his power, as if it were functioning as a tongue, they spoke the whole truth.

“Thus, because these vessels were empty of desire, it was fitting that the Holy Spirit should come to them. Indeed, he cannot enter those people who are already filled and full. Who are ‘filled’ if not those who are full of all sin and filth? Such people are like three foul vessels. The first is full of stinking human excrement with a stench so foul that no one can bear to smell it. The second is full of the most disgusting semen with so bitter a taste that no one can bear to sip it. The third is full of diseased blood and pus so repulsive that no one can bear to see it. Likewise the wicked are full of worldly ambition and greed that stinks to me and my saints worse than human excrement. What are all temporal things if not excrement? The wretches find pleasure in this foul excrement that will soon disappear. The second vessel contains ***excessive lust*** and ***unchastity*** in every deed. This is as bitter to my taste as semen. I cannot endure such people; still less can I enter into them with my grace. How can I, true purity, enter into such impure beings? How can I, the fire of true love, inflame those whom the base fire of lust inflames? The third is their pride and arrogance. This is like diseased blood and pus. It corrupts people both within and without in their pursuit of the good, removes God’s given grace and renders them repulsive to God and neighbor. Someone filled with that cannot be filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit.” (*The Revelations of Saint Bridget*, Book 6, Chapter 36)

The conspiracy against the perpetual chastity of the Bishops, Priests and Clerics of the Church by the enemies of the Church and purity is revealed by the Popes of the Catholic Church

Since most people on this earth are impure, selfish and lustful, there currently exists a conspiracy against clerical chastity. Indeed, there have always been lustful men, and thus, there have always been heretics who have tried to pervert or reject this biblical teaching of clerical celibacy, but today this conspiracy is much more powerful and influential since almost all in the world are controlled by their sensuality. The Eastern “Orthodox” and the Protestants are prime examples of this, for both of these sects allow their believers to divorce and remarry even during the lifetime of their spouse, which is a mortal sin of adultery according to Our Lord in the Holy Scripture who says that “*he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery*” (Matthew 19:9). Both the Eastern “Orthodox” and the Protestants also allow their “ministers” to perform sexual relations, which is directly condemned by the Holy Bible and Apostolic Tradition, as we have seen. It is a fact of history that the impure and

lustful protestants “carried away by the enticements of pleasure” are especially guilty of this conspiracy against clerical chastity since (as we have seen) they reject both the Holy Bible as well as the Church’s teaching on this matter in order to satisfy their abominable and unlawful sexual desires.

Pope Gregory XVI condemned this “conspiracy against clerical celibacy” that were made by the lustful through the direct inspiration of their father, the Devil, in his encyclical *Mirari Vos*, which also firmly condemned modernism and exposed the insidious plans of the heretics to pervert the Church and society: “Now, however, We want you to rally to combat the abominable conspiracy against **clerical celibacy**. This conspiracy spreads daily and is promoted by profligate philosophers, some even from the clerical order. They have forgotten their person and office, and have been carried away by the enticements of pleasure. They have even dared to make repeated public demands to the princes for the abolition of that *most holy discipline*. But it is disgusting to dwell on these evil attempts at length. Rather, We ask that you strive with all your might to justify and to defend the law of clerical celibacy as prescribed by the sacred canons, against which the arrows of the lascivious are directed from every side.” (Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* (#11), August 15, 1832)

Pope Pius IX carried on this papal tradition of confirming the reality of this conspiracy against clerical celibacy in his encyclical *Qui Pluribus*, where he showed very clearly that the evil people behind this conspiracy “make men fly in terror from all practice of religion, and they cut down and dismember the sheep of the Lord” (#17) and that as “a result of this filthy medley of errors which creeps in from every side, and as the result of the unbridled license to think, speak and write, We see the following: morals deteriorated,” (#18) and once morals is lost, faith is lost, and sin abounds and spirals out-of-control producing the resultant evil fruits. In truth, as “Augustine was wont to say ‘When all restraints are removed by which men are kept on the narrow path of truth, their nature, which is already inclined to evil, propels them to ruin.’” (Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* #14)

Pope Pius IX, *Qui Pluribus* (#’s 16-18), November 9, 1846: “**The sacred celibacy of clerics** has also been the victim of conspiracy. Indeed, some churchmen have wretchedly forgotten their own rank and let themselves be converted by the charms and snares of pleasure. This is the aim too of the prevalent but wrong method of teaching, especially in the philosophical disciplines, a method which deceives and corrupts incautious youth in a wretched manner and gives it as drink the poison of the serpent in the goblet of Babylon. To this goal also tends the unspeakable doctrine of Communism, as it is called, a doctrine most opposed to the very natural law. For if this

doctrine were accepted, the complete destruction of everyone's laws, government, property, and even of human society itself would follow.

“To this end also tend the most dark designs of men in the clothing of sheep, while inwardly ravening wolves. They humbly recommend themselves by means of a feigned and deceitful appearance of a purer piety, a stricter virtue and discipline; after taking their captives gently, they mildly bind them, and then kill them in secret. They make men fly in terror from all practice of religion, and they cut down and dismember the sheep of the Lord. To this end, finally—to omit other dangers which are too well known to you—tends the widespread disgusting infection from books and pamphlets which teach the lessons of sinning. These works, well-written and filled with deceit and cunning, are scattered at immense cost through every region for the destruction of the Christian people. They spread pestilential doctrines everywhere and deprave the minds especially of the imprudent, occasioning great losses for religion.

“As a result of this filthy medley of errors which creeps in from every side, and as the result of the unbridled license to think, speak and write, We see the following: morals deteriorated, Christ's most holy religion despised, the majesty of divine worship rejected, the power of this Apostolic See plundered, the authority of the Church attacked and reduced to base slavery, the rights of bishops trampled on, the sanctity of marriage infringed, the rule of every government violently shaken and many other losses for both the Christian and the civil commonwealth. Venerable brothers, We are compelled to weep and share in your lament that this is the case.”

Indeed, since the devil knows that all the chaste, pure and humble servants of the Lord are more spiritually wise as well as more effective and powerful in helping to save souls, (as we have seen from the Holy Bible and Tradition), the Devil also labors mightily to get them under his control in order to make them fall away from religion and purity since he knows that much more people will be damned if he can remove the holy and good examples of virtuous priests and churchmen. Pope Pius IX and Gregory XVI expressly warned about this in their encyclicals, and now, today, we have all sorrowfully seen this, in fact, become prophetically fulfilled to the letter, especially when one considers the great evils of the Vatican II hierarchy, its sexual perversions, pedophilia and innumerable other sexual abuse scandals. Indeed, when even those people who should represent holiness and stand as the highest moral example to the world refuse to adopt a good and virtuous lifestyle and are unimaginably impure, then one can know with a certainty that the whole world and its “morals” has fallen into the complete control of the Devil. Indeed, the Vatican II sect's sex abuse scandals and their handling of it is just another proof that shows why they are not the Catholic Church but the end times “Whore of Babylon” prophesied in the Bible that would lead souls astray by her filth and impurities.

In an interview with Sr. Lucia of Fatima, (the visionary who foretold that the Miracle of the Sun would occur on the 13th of October in the year 1917 – and that was witnessed by approximately 70,000 people – is undoubtedly one of the greatest miracles ever given from Heaven in Catholic history outside of the Resurrection) Father Agustin Fuentes who, at the time, was the postulator of the Cause of Beatification of the two little Seers, Francisco and Jacinta, revealed Our Lady's words that was given in a revelation to Sr. Lucia, which prophesied that the widespread apostasy and sensuality that now fills the world would soon occur in even more widespread terms (than what was already happening in their time), even among those people who dare to call themselves chaste servants of Our Lord or by the name of Catholic:

“I bring you a message of extreme urgency: the Holy Father has permitted me to visit Lucia. She received me sadly. She was very thin and quite afflicted. Upon seeing me she said: "Father, our Lady is very unhappy because they have not taken her message of 1917 seriously. Neither the good nor the bad have paid any attention to it. The good continue their way without preoccupying themselves with it, they do not heed Her celestial requests. The bad walk through life swollen with perdition, not taking into account the punishment that threatens them. Believe me, Father, God will chastise the world very soon. Think, Father, about all the souls who will fall into Hell. This will happen because no one prays, because they do not do penance.

“All this is the reason why the Blessed Virgin is sad. Father, tell everyone that our Lady has, frequently, announced to me that many nations will disappear off the face of the earth. Russia is the scourge chosen by God to punish mankind [with war and communism], if we, through prayer and the sacraments, do not obtain the grace of their conversion. **Tell them, Father, tell them that the devil has begun a decisive battle against our Lady, because what most afflicts the Immaculate heart of Mary and the Sacred heart of Jesus is the fall of the souls of religious and priests. The devil knows that when religious and priests fail in their beautiful vocations they carry along with them many souls into hell.**

“And now, precisely, is the moment to stop the chastisement of Heaven. We have at our disposition two very efficacious means of doing this: prayer and sacrifice. The devil does everything he can to distract us and take away our liking for prayer; we shall save ourselves or condemn ourselves together. Furthermore, Father, it is now necessary to tell the people that they should not wait for a call to penitence and to prayer from the Holy Father, nor from the Bishops, nor the pastors, nor the Superiors. It is the right

moment for them to use their own initiative in fulfilling good and holy works and reform their lives as the Holy Virgin desires.

“The devil desires to strengthen himself through consecrated souls; he tries to corrupt them so he can deceive others into a final impenitence. He uses many tricks even the ruse of suggesting tardiness in entering a religious life. The results are a sterility of interior life and a coldness among the laity keeping them from renouncing pleasures and from offering a total immolation of themselves to God.”

“Tell them, Father, that two things are the basis of the sanctification of Jacinta and Francisco, the sorrow of our Lady and the vision of Hell. It is as if our Lady were between two swords: On one side She sees humanity obstinate and indifferent facing the announced chastisements and on the other side She sees how we profane the Sacraments and ignore the punishment which is coming ever nearer and nearer, remaining incredulous, sensuous and materialistic. Our Lady has said: "We are on the border of the last times."

“Our Lady has told me three times: First: She has affirmed that the devil has begun a decisive battle, that is to say, from which one or the other will win or lose. We are with God or we are with the devil. Second: She repeated to me that the last remedies given to the world are the Holy Rosary and the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Third: She told me that other means of salvation have been despised by men many times. In Her anguish She offers us the last anchor of salvation which is Herself (perhaps the other means were Her numerous apparitions, signs of tears, messages of various seers scattered throughout the world).

“Our Lady has also said that if we will not listen and continue to offend God, we will not be pardoned. Father, it is urgent to understand this terrible reality, we do not wish to frighten souls, but it is an urgent call to humanity.

“Since the Blessed Virgin has given such a great remedy as the Rosary, there does not exist a single material, spiritual, national or international problem that cannot be solved through the Holy Rosary and our sacrifices. To pray the Rosary with love and piety will console Mary and erase the numerous tears of Her Immaculate Heart.”

(Taken from the "Messaggero del Cuore di Maria" No. 8-9 August–September, 1961, Rome, Italy)

The Life of St. Teresa of Jesus, by Teresa of Avila herself confirms the fact that the chaste servants of God will not only strengthen their own chances of reaching heaven but that they will help “many others also” into heaven, which says a lot about why the devil concentrates so much to bring down consecrated and chaste souls from the height of purity and blessedness

that they inhabit: “He [God] showeth great mercy unto him to whom He gives the grace and resolution to strive for this blessing [the religious life] with all his might; for God withholds Himself from no one who perseveres. He will by little and little strengthen that soul, so that it may come forth victorious. I say resolution, because of the multitude of those things which Satan puts before it at first, to keep it back from beginning to travel on this road; for he knoweth what harm will befall him thereby—he will lose not only that soul, but many others also. If he who enters on this road does violence to himself, with the help of God, so as to reach the summit of perfection, such a one, I believe, will never go alone to Heaven; he will always take many with him: God gives to him, as to a good captain, those who shall be of his company.”

Galatians 5:16-25 **“I say then, walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit: and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary one to another: so that you do not the things that you would.** But if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, **uncleanness, immodesty, luxury [lust]**, idolatry, witchcrafts, enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. **Of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the Kingdom of God.** But the fruit of the Spirit is, charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, **modesty, continency, chastity.** Against such there is no law. **And they that are Christ’s, have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences.** If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

The presence of the Kingdom of Christ on the earth and in the heart of men can in no more drastic way be proved to the world than by observing the establishment of perpetual virginity and monastic life. St. John Chrysostom describes this redemptive-historical movement, and its expression in human sexuality, with the beautiful illustration of a mother bird and her nestlings (*Hom. XIII in Jn.*; PG 59.88; *Hom. XXI in Jn.*; PG 59.128). Initially, the mother rears her young. Then, she nudges them into the air, escorting them from the nest. If they are too weak, they are permitted to remain in the nest until they are able to gather sufficient strength to fly off with security. Christ, the mother bird, has come to escort us all from the nest of the world. Those who remain in the nest do so because of their “plodding nature,” and “deep sleep,” and because they are “attached to worldly things” (*Virg., XVII. 2.18-20*; SC 125, p. 150). Those who are truly noble “quit the nest with great ease and fly high in the air and skim the heavens” (*Virg., XVII. 2.20-22*; SC 125, p. 150).

Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary revealed in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* the truth that clerical celibacy has always been the will of God since the beginning of the New Law

Contrary to the many lustful heretics of today's world, Our Lord and Our Lady revealed to St. Bridget in her Revelations that it "seemed very abominable and hateful to all the heavenly court and to me [the Blessed Virgin Mary]" that the priests of the New Law who touched the Holy Eucharist should have wives or be contaminated by the sexual act, adding that the Popes are banned from allowing priests to marry, and that if any Pope at any time would dare to change this eternal law, "God will condemn him to a sentence as great" that literally defies human understanding.

Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke, saying: "I honored the priests [in the New Law] with a sevenfold honor, as it were, on seven steps. On the first step, they should be my standard-bearers and special friends by reason of the purity of their mind and body, for purity is the first position near to God, whom nothing foul can touch nor adorn. **It was not strange that marital relation was permitted to the priests of the [old] law during the time in which they were not offering sacrifice, for they were carrying the shell, not the nut itself. Now, however, with the coming of the truth and the disappearance of the figure, one must strive all the more fully for purity by as much as the nut is sweeter than the shell.** As a sign of this kind of continence, first the hair is tonsured, so that desire for pleasure does not rule over spirit or flesh." (*The Revelations of St. Bridget*, Book 4, Chapter 58)

Comparing the priests of the Old and New Law, Our Lady also revealed that although many of the priests in the New Law for a long time observed matrimony according to the Old Law through their misunderstanding of God's will in the New Law, this practice of theirs was in fact hated and abominable before all the heavenly court and to God: namely, that Christian priests with their defiled hands touched and handled the New and Immaculate Sacrament of the Most Holy Body of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

The Revelations of St. Bridget, Book 7, Chapter 10: "It happened that a person who was absorbed in prayer heard then a voice saying to her: "O you to whom it has been given to hear and see spiritually, hear now the things that I [the Mother of God] want to reveal to you: namely, concerning that archbishop who said that if he were pope, he would give leave for all clerics and priests to contract marriages in the flesh. He thought

and believed that this would be more acceptable to God than that clerics should live dissolutely, as they now do. For he believed that through such marriage the greater carnal sins might be avoided; and even though he did not rightly understand God's will in this matter, nonetheless that same archbishop was still a friend of God.

“But now I shall tell you God's will in this matter; for I gave birth to God himself. You will make these things known to my bishop and say to him that circumcision was given to Abraham long before the law was given to Moses and that, in that time of Abraham, all human beings whatsoever were guided according to their own intellect [according to natural reason] and according to the choice of their own will and that, nevertheless, many of them were then friends of God. But after the law was given to Moses, it then pleased God more that human beings should live under the law and according to the law rather than follow their own human understanding and choice. It was the same with my Son's blessed Body.

“For after he instituted in the world this new sacrament of the Eucharist and ascended into Heaven, the ancient law [the Old Law that had just been abrogated] was then still kept [and observed by them]: namely, that Christian priests lived in carnal matrimony [according to the Old Law]. And, nonetheless, many of them were still friends of God because they believed with simple purity that this was pleasing to God [in the New Law]: namely, that Christian priests should have wives and live in wedlock just as, in the ancient times of the Jews, this had pleased him in the case of Jewish priests. And so, this was the observance of Christian priests for many years.

“But that observance and ancient custom seemed very abominable and hateful to all the heavenly court and to me, who gave birth to his body: namely, because it was being thus observed by Christian priests who, with their hands, touch and handle this new and immaculate Sacrament of the most holy Body of my Son. For the Jews had, in the ancient law of the Old Testament, a shadow, i.e., a figure, of this Sacrament; but Christians now have the truth itself – namely, him who is true God and man – in that blessed and consecrated bread.

“After those earlier Christian priests had observed these practices for a time, God himself, through the infusion of his Holy Spirit, put into the heart of the pope then guiding the Church another law more acceptable and pleasing to him in this matter: namely, by pouring this infusion into the heart of the pope so that he established a statute in the universal Church that Christian priests, who have so holy and so worthy an office, namely, of consecrating this precious Sacrament, should by no means live in the easily contaminated, carnal delight of marriage.

“And therefore, through God's preordinance and his judgment, it has been justly ordained that priests who do not live in chastity and continence of the flesh are cursed

and excommunicated before God and deserve to be deprived of their priestly office. But still, if they truthfully amend their lives with the true purpose of not sinning further, they will obtain mercy from God.

“Know this too: that if some pope concedes to priests a license to contract carnal marriage, God will condemn him to a sentence as great, in a spiritual way, as that which the law justly inflicts in a corporeal way on a man who has transgressed so gravely that he must have his eyes gouged out, his tongue and lips, nose and ears cut off, his hands and feet amputated, all his body’s blood spilled out to grow completely cold, and finally, his whole bloodless corpse cast out to be devoured by dogs and other wild beasts. Similar things would truly happen in a spiritual way to that pope who were to go against the aforementioned preordination and will of God and concede to priests such a license to contract marriage.

“For that same pope would be totally deprived by God of his spiritual sight and hearing, and of his spiritual words and deeds. All his spiritual wisdom would grow completely cold; and finally, after his death, his soul would be cast out to be tortured eternally in hell so that there it might become the food of demons everlastingly and without end. Yes, even if Saint Gregory the Pope had made this statute, in the aforesaid sentence he would never have obtained mercy from God if he had not humbly revoked his statute before his death.”

COMMON OBJECTIONS

Objection: The Church does not teach that a priest or a deacon must remain chaste after their ordination since the *Quinisext Council* in A.D. 692 declared that they were allowed to continue in the normal marital state.

Answer: The erroneous and fallible *Quinisext Council* (A.D. 692), also called *Council in Trullo*, which was mainly an eastern council presided over by eastern authorities, is the council the Eastern “Orthodox” Churches mainly bases their authority and false conclusion on regarding conjugal relations by priests and deacons married before ordination. Indeed, even though this fallible council clearly contradicted the ancient, unanimous, constant, teaching tradition of the Church and the Bible on the necessity of priestly celibacy before or after ordination in the New Law and the New Testament (as has been clearly documented above), this council nevertheless also claimed apostolic credentials for its repudiation of this ancient teaching of the Universal Church:

The Quinisext Council, Canon 13, A.D. 692: “Since we know it to be handed down as a

rule of the Roman Church that those who are deemed worthy to be advanced to the diaconate or presbyterate should promise no longer to cohabit with their wives, we, preserving the ancient rule and apostolic perfection and order, will that the lawful marriages of men who are in holy orders be from this time forward firm, by no means dissolving their union with their wives nor depriving them of their mutual intercourse at a convenient time. Wherefore, if anyone shall have been found worthy to be ordained subdeacon, or deacon, or presbyter, he is by no means to be prohibited from admittance to such a rank, even if he shall live with a lawful wife. Nor shall it be demanded of him at the time of his ordination that he promise to abstain from lawful intercourse with his wife... But we know, as they who assembled at Carthage [in 390] (with a care for the honest life of the clergy) said, *that subdeacons, who handle the Holy Mysteries, and deacons, and presbyters should abstain from their consorts according to their own course [of ministration]. So that what has been handed down through the Apostles and preserved by ancient custom, we too likewise maintain, knowing that there is a time for all things and especially for fasting and prayer. For it is meet that they who assist at the divine altar should be absolutely continent when they are handling holy things, in order that they may be able to obtain from God what they ask in sincerity.* If therefore anyone shall have dared, contrary to the apostolic Canons, to deprive any of those who are in holy orders, presbyter, or deacon, or subdeacon of cohabitation and intercourse with his lawful wife, let him be deposed. In like manner also if any presbyter or deacon on pretence of piety has dismissed his wife, let him be excluded from communion; and if he persevere in this let him be deposed.”

This canon shows that by that time there was a direct contradiction between the teaching of the East and West about the legitimacy of conjugal relations on the part of clergy lower than the rank of bishop who had married before being ordained.

The canon also mistakenly claims that the canon of the late-4th-century Council of Carthage excluded conjugal intercourse by clergy lower than bishops only in connection with their liturgical service or in times of fasting. The Council of Carthage (390), however, made no such distinctions and excluded such intercourse perpetually and made no distinction between bishops, priests and deacons. In fact, the canon decreed that higher clerics observe *perfect continence* because they act as mediators between God and man. They stressed particularly the antiquity and apostolic origin of this law:

The Council of Carthage (390): “It is fitting that the holy bishops and priests of God as

well as the Levites, i.e. those who are in the service of the divine sacraments, observe perfect continence, so that they may obtain in all simplicity what they are asking from God; what the Apostles taught and what antiquity itself observed, let us also endeavor to keep. The bishops declared unanimously: It pleases us all that bishop, priest and deacon, guardians of purity, abstain from conjugal intercourse with their wives, so that those who serve at the altar may keep a perfect chastity." (Canon 3)

There have been no changes since the Quinisext Council in the teaching of the Eastern "Orthodox" Church, which for bishops, priests, deacons, and subdeacons excludes marriage after ordination, but allows, except for periods before celebrating the Divine Liturgy, conjugal relations by priests and deacons married before ordination, and requires celibacy and perpetual continence only of bishops. This Council, of course, was never approved by the Catholic Church.

Pope Sergius I, who was of Syrian origin, rejected the council, preferring, he said, "to die rather than consent to erroneous novelties". Meanwhile, in Visigothic Spain, the council was ratified by the Eighteenth Council of Toledo at the urging of the king, Wittiza, who was, of course, condemned by later chroniclers for his decision. It is also interesting to note that this false council was the last of the councils of Toledo held in Visigothic Spain before the Moorish invasion in 711. The council was held probably around 703. Fruela I of Asturias reversed the decision of Toledo sometime during his reign (757-768). The Eastern "Orthodox" churches hold this council to be part of the Fifth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils, adding its canons thereto. In the West, Bede calls it (in *De sexta mundi aetate*) a "reprobate" synod, and Paul the Deacon calls it an "erratic" one. The Catholic Church has never accepted the council as authoritative or ecumenical.

The Holy Bible teaches that only St. Peter (among all the other apostles) was given the keys to the kingdom of heaven, which thus means that him and his valid successors are the only ones who can make infallible proclamations in the Church, and this of course excludes the *Quinisext Council* from being an ecumenical and authoritative council since the Pope never approved of it.

Matthew 16:18-19 "And I [Jesus] say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**"

WHY THE EASTERN ORTHODOX POSITION, WHICH IS SCHISMATIC AND HERETICAL ACCORDING TO CATHOLIC TEACHING, IS COMPLETELY ILLOGICAL AND FALSE

Jesus Christ gave the keys to the Kingdom to St. Peter (Mt. 16), and gave him jurisdiction over his flock (John 21:15-17). St. Peter was the Bishop of Rome, and his followers (i.e., the members of the Church in Rome) elected his successor, or he appointed his own successor as the Bishop of Rome and head of the universal Church. This process continued through the ages, with the pope being able to change the process of election (such as by instituting a college of cardinals) if he so decided, since the pope has supreme authority in the Church from Christ (Mt. 16). All individuals not elected in this fashion (e.g., one who was elected after the Bishop of Rome had already been chosen in the tradition thus described, or one who was appointed by an outside source, such as an emperor, after the pope had already been chosen, or one who was elected as a non-member of the community, such as a manifest heretic) wouldn't be true popes, but (logically) antipopes. This logical framework holds true for all of history, and has allowed one to see which are the true popes and which are not – even if at some of the most difficult periods of Church history, such as the Great Western Schism, ascertaining the facts to correctly apply these principles was difficult enough that some mistakes were made by certain individuals.

I have thus described the consistent, logical framework of the succession of the authority given to St. Peter by Jesus Christ to the popes down through the ages. This shows that the Catholic Faith is consistent. (The authority given to St. Peter and his successors is the backing of the dogmatic councils; this is the authority which anathematizes those who deny the dogmatic councils' teaching.)

ILLOGIC AT THE HEART OF EASTERN “ORTHODOXY”

On the other hand, **Eastern “Orthodoxy,” since it rejects the supreme authority of the Bishop of Rome and considers all bishops equal, cannot even put forward a framework or criteria by which one could logically distinguish those councils which it says are dogmatic and binding, from those which it says are false and heretical. Ephesus II (the heretical monophysite council in 449) had almost exactly the same number of bishops as Constantinople I (150 bishops).** Eastern “Orthodoxy” would say one must accept Constantinople I under pain of heresy, while one must reject Ephesus II! But if we apply the principles of Eastern “Orthodoxy,” the two councils are on the same level, both being backed by the authority of equal bishops. Unless there is a

supreme bishop to make one council binding, it's a farce to say that one council is definitely dogmatic while the other *with the same number of bishops* is definitely heretical! Equal vs. Equal results in a draw....

Furthermore, if Christ said He would be with His Church all days until the end of the world (Mt. 28), why did the Church suddenly stop having councils in 787? Doesn't it strike as a bit ridiculous that many other councils were held after 787, which the Eastern "Orthodox" arbitrarily reject as "not accepted by the Church," *even though these councils which they reject had more bishops than those which they accept?* What about the Council of Florence (1438-1442), which saw reunion of the East with the Catholic Church when **Patriarch Joseph of Constantinople accepted Florence, the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, and Florence's teaching against all who would deny it?** How on Earth could one *logically* say that Florence was not accepted "by the Church," while other councils were? What are the criteria? I've asked many Eastern "Orthodox" this very question and received no answer simply because they have none. Whatever criteria they pick to use as the justification for accepting a particular council as dogmatic, and rejecting another council as non-dogmatic, can be used against them to prove that, on that very basis, they would have to accept later Roman Catholic councils.

Yes, Eastern "Orthodoxy" cannot logically hold any council to be dogmatic and binding, as one will see if one honestly and deeply think about it. **In Eastern "Orthodoxy" there is nothing which backs the anathemas of Ephesus or another council other than the word of bishops, who are equal to other bishops who many times taught the opposite.** According to the Eastern "Orthodox" position, if the "Church" spoke at Constantinople I because 150 bishops came to it and pronounced authoritatively on faith, then the "Church" spoke at many other false councils in the early Church which had similar numbers of bishops! It is inescapable, therefore, that according to the Eastern "Orthodox" position the Church of Christ has defected (i.e., officially fallen into error) many times at the various false councils. This contradicts the promises of Christ that the gates of Hell cannot prevail and that God would be with His Church always (Mt. 16). Eastern "Orthodoxy" is an illogical farce, which rejects the clear teaching of Scripture and the fathers on the Papal Primacy, and which causes those who accept it to truly wind up believing in no dogma at all. That's why Pope Leo XIII says those who reject one dogma reject all Faith. Because of the fact that Eastern "Orthodoxy" does not – and cannot – *really* believe in any dogmatic councils (as shown above) is why it's so appealing to so many: *it provides the comfort of Protestantism, yet the appearance of ancient tradition, at the same time the feel of liturgical piety, with the illusion of hierarchical authority.*

Matthew 16:17-18 “And I say to thee: **That thou art Peter: and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.** And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.”

Our Lord made St. Peter the first Pope, entrusted to him His entire flock, and gave him supreme authority in the Universal Church of Christ.

John 21:15-17 “**Jesus saith to Simon Peter:** Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. **He saith to him: Feed my lambs.** He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. **He saith to him: Feed my lambs.** He saith to him a third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he had said to him the third time: Lovest thou me? And he said to him: Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee. **He said to him: Feed my sheep.**”

Regarding the objection that papal infallibility wasn't established until the Council of Trent, that's not correct. It was defined as a dogma at Vatican I in 1870, but the truth of it was believed since the beginning. We find the promise of the unfailing faith for St. Peter and his successors referred to by Christ in Luke 22.

Luke 22:31-32 “And the Lord said: Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have all of you, that he may sift you as wheat: **But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:** and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren.”

Satan desired to sift all the Apostles (plural) like wheat, but Jesus prayed for Simon Peter (singular), that his faith fail not. Jesus is saying that St. Peter and his successors (the popes of the Catholic Church) have an unfailing faith when authoritatively teaching a point of faith or morals to be held by the entire Church of Christ.

Pope Pius IX, Vatican Council I, 1870, *ex cathedra*: “**SO, THIS GIFT OF TRUTH AND A NEVER FAILING FAITH WAS DIVINELY CONFERRED UPON PETER AND HIS SUCCESSORS IN THIS CHAIR...**”

Pope Pius IX, Vatican Council I, 1870, *ex cathedra*: “... **the See of St. Peter always**

remains unimpaired by any error, according to the divine promise of our Lord the Savior made to the chief of His disciples: **‘I have prayed for thee [Peter], that thy faith fail not...’**”

And this truth has been held since the earliest times in the Catholic Church.

Pope St. Gelasius I, epistle 42, or Decretal de recipiendis et non recipiendis libris, 495: “Accordingly, **the see of Peter the Apostle of the Church of Rome** is first, **having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor anything of this kind** (Eph. 5:27).”

The word “infallible” actually means “cannot fail” or “unfailing.” Therefore, the very term Papal Infallibility comes directly from Christ’s promise to St. Peter (and his successors) in Luke 22, that Peter has an unfailing Faith. And it was also believed in the early Church, as we see here. Though this truth was believed since the beginning of the Church, it was specifically defined as a dogma at the First Vatican Council in 1870.

To read more about how the Bible condemns and destroys the teachings of the Eastern “Orthodox” church, please read this article: [Eastern “Orthodoxy” Destroyed](#)

Also see:

- [The Early Church Fathers on the Primacy of the Roman Catholic Church](#)
 - [MORE QUOTES ON THE SAME SUBJECT](#)
- [The Bible Teaches That Jesus Made St. Peter the First Pope](#)
- [Specific Catholic teaching against Protestant and Schismatic Sects](#)

Interestingly enough, it is also very important to notice that it was almost exactly during the time of the erroneous and fallible *Quinisext Council* that the Muslims started to gain a real foothold in their wars against the Eastern Byzantine Empire as well as in their attempts to occupy Spain. As we already have seen in the *The Book of Judith*, (*Judith 15:11*) *The First Book of Kings*, (*1 Kings 21:2-5*) and *the Book of Deuteronomy* (*Deuteronomy 23:9-11*) from the Holy Bible, military success is directly and intimately connected to the virtue of chastity; and it is highly probable that this teaching of the Eastern “Orthodox” Church that rejected the necessity of priestly celibacy and purity was the very teaching that angered God and left them

to the wrath and control of the Muslim infidels. This is not to say that there were not other problems with the eastern church during this time as well as after it, but this teaching of a chaste priesthood is, as we have seen, very dear to God, and it is thus obvious that their rejection of the Church's teaching concerning this matter played a great role in why God allowed the infidel Muslims to gain a victory over them. Over and over in the Old Testament, we see that God punished a rebellious nation, and God likewise punishes such nations in the New Testament time when justice requires it. But not only the eastern Byzantine Empire was attacked by the Muslims at this time, but also Spain who had chosen to allow the novelty of an impure priesthood. As a perfect fulfillment and sign of God's vengeance over those nations who try to defile the holy priesthood of Our Lord and God with impure sexual relations, Our Lord also allowed Spain to be struck with the scourge of the Saracen or Muslim, since in Visigothic Spain, the *Quinisext Council* was ratified by the Eighteenth Council of Toledo at the urging of the king, Wittiza.

Even in the time of St. Ambrose in the 4th century, lustful priests had begun to disobey the clear teaching of the Bible and Apostolic Tradition concerning the necessity for a completely chaste priesthood. St. Ambrose, in his work *On the Duties of the Clergy* tells us that "in some out-of-the-way places" some priests had begun to defile themselves with sexual intercourse already in the 4th century: "**But ye know that the ministerial office must be kept pure and unspotted, and must not be defiled by conjugal intercourse; ye know this, I say, who have received the gifts of the sacred ministry, with pure bodies, and unspoiled modesty, and without ever having enjoyed conjugal intercourse.** I am mentioning this, because in some out-of-the-way places, when they enter on the ministry, or even when they become priests, they have begotten children. They defend this on the ground of old custom [of the Old Testament Law], when, as it happened, the sacrifice was offered up at long intervals. However, even the people had to be purified two or three days beforehand, so as to come clean to the sacrifice. As we read in the Old Testament, [Exodus 19:10] they even used to wash their clothes. If such regard was paid in what was only the figure, how much ought it to be shown in the reality! Learn then, Priest and Levite, what it means to wash your clothes. You must have a pure body wherewith to offer up the sacraments." (*On the Duties of the Clergy*, Book 1, Chapter 50, Section 258, A.D. 391)

Objection: Saints Peter, Paul and Barnabas is confirmed by Paul himself to have had women with them during their travels. This proves that God does not approve of priestly or clerical chastity since the Apostles was not living in complete chastity.

1st Corinthians 9:3-7 "This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not

have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brethren of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?"

Answer: The word “*Wife*” in the English translation is more rightly translated in the Greek as, “*a woman, a sister.*” It cannot be deduced from this text that the Apostles were married, nor is there a single text in the whole New Testament that affirms that any of the Apostles were married during their ministry, or that anyone of them performed the marital sexual act during this time, although we do know that St. Peter, for one, was married at one time during his life since the Gospels mentions his mother in law (cf. Mk 1:29-31; Mt 8: 14-15; Lk 4:38-39). There is no evidence in the New Testament, however, that indicates that St. Peter’s wife was living during the time of Jesus’ ministry as well as after it when the Apostles started to minister to the nations, spreading the Christian Faith. Concerning the more right translation of the Greek as “*a woman, a sister*” the Gospels mention certain women as accompanying our Lord and his disciples, providing for them out of their resources and ministering to them (cf. Lk 8:1-3; 23:55). To meet their material needs some Apostles counted on the help of women, but Saints Paul and Barnabas did not avail of this right. A more correct translation shows us the correct meaning of this passage.

1st Corinthians 9:5-6 “Have we not power to carry about *a woman, a sister*, as well as the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to do this? (*Douay Rheims Bible*)

Douay Rheims Bible Commentary explains verse 5 in further detail: “*A woman, a sister*: Some erroneous translators have corrupted this text by rendering it, a sister, a wife: whereas, it is certain, St. Paul had no wife (chap. 7 ver. 7, 8) and that he only speaks of such devout women, as, according to the custom of the Jewish nation, waited upon the preachers of the gospel, and supplied them with necessaries.”

According to a prominent tradition among the Church Fathers, Paul speaks, not of marriage, but of his right to be helped by a traveling female assistant (the word translated “wife” can also be translated “woman”). Precedent for such an arrangement can be traced back to the ministry of Jesus (Lk. 8:1-3).

Haydock Commentary: “Ver. 5. It appears certain, from the testimony of the fathers,

that St. Paul was not in the state of wedlock. St. Jerome informs us that the apostle is here speaking of such holy women who, according to the Jewish custom, supplied their teachers with the necessaries of life, as we see was done to Christ himself. It is evident from ancient records that this was a very prevalent custom in Judea, and therefore a cause of no scandal; but to the Gentiles this custom was unknown, and therefore lest it might prove a cause of scandal to any, St. Paul did not allow any woman to follow him as a companion. Tertullian denies, with St. Augustine and St. Jerome, that St. Paul is here speaking of his wife.”

Finally, note the context: Paul is not talking about marriage, but about receiving monetary compensation and help with daily chores and needs in return for his evangelizing work. As a note says in the Knox version, “‘Sister’ does not imply any relationship, physical or spiritual; it only means that the woman was a Christian. St. Paul is not claiming credit here for avoiding the society of women; he only claims credit for living at his own expense, when other apostles supported not only themselves, but the women who waited on their needs, out of offerings made by the faithful.” See also Luke 18:25-30 and Matthew 19:12 for further background. Thus, this biblical passage (1st Cor. 9:5-6) does not show that the Apostles or their successors were allowed to perform the marital act during their life as priests. The teaching of clerical celibacy, as we have seen, was taught from the very start of the Church by Our Savior Himself as well as the Bible, the Holy Apostles and the Fathers of the Church.

The specific tradition of the Church also confirms that the Apostles lived in chastity. St. Clement of Alexandria (150-215) who lived very near in time to the Apostles, taught that the Apostles, after their calling by Our Lord to the ministry, took their wives with them not as women with whom they had marriage relations, but as sisters in purity and honesty: “But the latter [the Apostles], in accordance with their particular ministry, devoted themselves to preaching without any distraction, and took their wives with them not as women with whom they had marriage relations, but as sisters, that they might be their fellow-ministers in dealing with housewives. It was through them that the Lord’s teaching penetrated also the women’s quarters without any scandal being aroused.” (*The Stromata or Miscellanies*, Book III, Chapter VI, Section 71)

When we come to the question of what was the practice of Our Lord Jesus Christ’s first followers in this matter of clerical chastity, there would likewise be but little if any reasonable doubt. For while of the Apostles we have it recorded only of Peter that he was a married man, we have it also expressly recorded that in his case, as in that of all the rest who had “forsaken all” to follow Our Lord, the Lord himself said, “Every one that hath forsaken houses, or

brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake shall receive an hundred fold and shall inherit eternal life." (Matt. xix. 29; Lk. xviii. 29) Mark 10:29 records the same incident, but while "wife" is mentioned among the things "left," no "wife" is found among the things gained.

St. Jerome, referred in *Against Jovinianus* to marriage prohibition for priests when he argued that Peter and the other apostles had been married, but had married before they were called and subsequently gave up their marital relations (*Aduersus Jovinianum* I, 7. 26 (PL 23, 230C; 256C).

In his *Letter to Pammachius*, Ep. 48.10 (c. 393), St. Jerome further wrote: "The apostles have either been virgins or, though married, have lived celibate lives. Those persons who are chosen to be bishops, priests, and deacons are either virgins or widowers; or at least when once they have received the priesthood, are vowed to perpetual chastity." (*The Letters of St. Jerome*, Letter 48, To Pammachius, Section 21)

And in his *Letter XXII, To Eustochium* (A.D. 384), St. Jerome says the following concerning virginity,

"... I will say it boldly, though God can do all things He cannot raise up a virgin when once she has fallen. He may indeed relieve one who is defiled from the penalty of her sin, but He will not give her a crown. Let us fear lest in us also the prophecy be fulfilled, "Good virgins shall faint." Notice that it is good virgins who are spoken of, for there are bad ones as well. "Whosoever looketh on a woman," the Lord says, "to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." So that virginity may be lost even by a thought. Such are evil virgins, virgins in the flesh, not in the spirit; foolish virgins, who, having no oil, are shut out by the Bridegroom.

"... Do you wish for proof of my assertions? Take examples. Sampson was braver than a lion and tougher than a rock; alone and unprotected he pursued a thousand armed men; and yet, in Delilah's embrace, his resolution melted away. David was a man after God's own heart, and his lips had often sung of the Holy One, the future Christ; and yet as he walked upon his housetop he was fascinated by Bathsheba's nudity, and added murder to adultery. Notice here how, even in his own house, a man cannot use his eyes without danger. Then repenting, he says to the Lord: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight." Being a king he feared no one else.

"... It is hard for the human soul to avoid loving something, and our mind must of necessity give way to affection of one kind or another. The love of the flesh is overcome by the

love of the spirit. Desire is quenched by desire. What is taken from the one increases the other. Therefore, as you lie on your couch, say again and again: "By night have I sought Him whom my soul loveth." "Mortify, therefore," says the apostle, "your members which are upon the earth." Because he himself did so, he could afterwards say with confidence: "I live, yet not I, but Christ, liveth in me." He who mortifies his members, and feels that he is walking in a vain show, is not afraid to say: "I am become like a bottle in the frost. Whatever there was in me of the moisture of lust has been dried out of me." And again: "My knees are weak through fasting; I forget to eat my bread. By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin."

"... Some one may say, "Do you dare detract from wedlock, which is a state blessed by God?" I do not detract from wedlock when I set virginity before it. No one compares a bad thing with a good. Wedded women may congratulate themselves that they come next to virgins. "Be fruitful," God says, "and multiply, and replenish the earth." He who desires to replenish the earth may increase and multiply if he will. But the train to which you belong is not on earth, but in heaven. The command to increase and multiply first finds fulfillment after the expulsion from paradise, after the nakedness and the fig-leaves which speak of sexual passion. Let them marry and be given in marriage who eat their bread in the sweat of their brow; whose land brings forth to them thorns and thistles, and whose crops are choked with briars. My seed produces fruit a hundredfold. "All men cannot receive God's saying, but they to whom it is given." Some people may be eunuchs from necessity; I am one of free will.

"... In paradise Eve was a virgin, and it was only after the coats of skins that she began her married life. Now paradise is your home too. Keep therefore your birthright and say: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul." To show that virginity is natural while wedlock only follows guilt, what is born of wedlock is virgin flesh, and it gives back in fruit what in root it has lost. "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a flower shall grow out of his roots." The rod is the mother of the Lord--simple, pure, unsullied; drawing no germ of life from without but fruitful in singleness like God Himself. The flower of the rod is Christ, who says of Himself: "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys." In another place He is foretold to be "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands," a figure by which the prophet signifies that He is to be born a virgin of a virgin. For the hands are here a figure of wedlock as in the passage: "His left hand is under my head and his right hand doth embrace me.

"... I praise wedlock, I praise marriage, but it is because they give me virgins. I gather the rose from the thorns, the gold from the earth, the pearl from the shell. "Doth the plowman plow all day to sow?" Shall he not also enjoy the fruit of his labor? Wedlock is the more honored, the more what is born of it is loved. Why, mother, do you grudge your daughter her virginity? She has been reared on your milk, she has come from your womb, she has grown up in your bosom. Your watchful affection has kept her a virgin. Are you angry with her because

she chooses to be a king's wife and not a soldier's? She has conferred on you a high privilege; you are now the mother-in-law of God. "Concerning virgins," says the apostle, "I have no commandment of the Lord." Why was this? Because his own virginity was due, not to a command, but to his free choice. For they are not to be heard who feign him to have had a wife; for, when he is discussing continence and commending perpetual chastity, he uses the words, "I would that all men were even as I myself." And farther on, "I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I." And in another place, "have we not power to lead about wives even as the rest of the apostles?" Why then has he no commandment from the Lord concerning virginity? Because what is freely offered is worth more than what is extorted by force, and to command virginity would have been to abrogate wedlock. It would have been a hard enactment to compel opposition to nature and to extort from men the angelic life; and not only so, it would have been to condemn what is a divine ordinance.

"... In those days, as I have said, the virtue of continence was found only in men: Eve still continued to travail with children. But now that a virgin has conceived in the womb and has borne to us a child of which the prophet says that "Government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called the mighty God, the everlasting Father," now the chain of the curse is broken. Death came through Eve, but life has come through Mary. And thus the gift of virginity has been bestowed most richly upon women, seeing that it has had its beginning from a woman. As soon as the Son of God set foot upon the earth, He formed for Himself a new household there; that, as He was adored by angels in heaven, angels might serve Him also on earth. Then chaste Judith once more cut off the head of Holofernes. Then Haman - whose name means iniquity - was once more burned in fire of his own kindling. Then James and John forsook father and net and ship and followed the Savior: neither kinship nor the world's ties, nor the care of their home could hold them back. Then were the words heard: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." For no soldier goes with a wife to battle.

"... In the same strain, the apostle writes: "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married careth for the things of the world how she may please her husband." (Letters of St. Jerome, *Letter XXII, To Eustochium*)

St. Jerome in his "Against Jovinianus" continues to explain the perfection of chastity. He writes,

“Among other things the Corinthians asked in their letter whether after embracing the faith of Christ they ought to be unmarried, and for the sake of continence put away their wives, and whether believing virgins were at liberty to marry. And again, supposing that one of two Gentiles believed on Christ, whether the one that believed should leave the one that believed not? And in case it were allowable to take wives, would the Apostle direct that only Christian wives, or Gentiles also, should be taken? Let us then consider Paul’s replies to these inquiries.

“Let us turn back to the chief point of the evidence: "It is good," he [St. Paul] says, "for a man not to touch a woman." If it is good not to touch a woman, it is bad to touch one: for there is no opposite to goodness but badness. But if it be bad and the evil is pardoned, the reason for the concession is to prevent worse evil. But surely a thing which is only allowed because there may be something worse has only a slight degree of goodness. He would never have added "let each man have his own wife," unless he had previously used the words "but, because of fornications." Do away with fornication, and he will not say "let each man have his own wife." Just as though one were to lay it down: "It is good to feed on wheaten bread, and to eat the finest wheat flour," and yet to prevent a person pressed by hunger from devouring cow-dung, I may allow him to eat barley.

“Does it follow that the wheat will not have its peculiar purity, because such an one prefers barley to excrement? That is naturally good which does not admit of comparison with what is bad, and is not eclipsed because something else is preferred. At the same time we must notice the Apostle’s prudence. He did not say, it is good not to have a wife: but, it is good not to touch a woman: as though there were danger even in the touch: as though he who touched her, would not escape from her who "hunteth for the precious life," who causeth the young man’s understanding to fly away. "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk upon hot coals and his feet not be scorched?" As then he who touches fire is instantly burned, so by the mere touch the peculiar nature of man and woman is perceived, and the difference of sex is understood, Heathen fables relate how Mithras and Erichthonius were begotten of the soil, in stone or earth, by raging lust.

“Hence it was that our Joseph, because the Egyptian woman wished to touch him, fled from her hands, and, as if he had been bitten by a mad dog and feared the spreading poison, threw away the cloak which she had touched. "But, because of fornications let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband." He did not say, because of fornication let each man marry a wife: otherwise by this excuse he would have thrown the reins to lust, and whenever a man’s wife died, he would have to marry another to prevent fornication, but "have his own wife." Let him he says have and use his own wife, whom he had before he became a believer, and whom it would have been good not to touch, and, when once he became a follower of Christ, to know only as a sister, not as a wife unless fornication should

make it excusable to touch her. "The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife."

"The whole question here concerns those who are married men. Is it lawful for them to do what our Lord forbade in the Gospel, and to put away their wives? Whence it is that the Apostle says, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." But inasmuch as he who is once married has no power to abstain except by mutual consent, and may not reject an unoffending partner, let the husband render unto the wife her due. He bound himself voluntarily that he might be under compulsion to render it. "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer." What, I pray you, is the quality of that good thing which hinders prayer? which does not allow the body of Christ to be received? [Here St. Jerome refers to the biblical teaching from the Book of 1st Kings 21:4 which teaches that one are to remain chaste for three days before receiving the Eucharist.] So long as I do the husband's part, I fail in continency. The same Apostle in another place commands us to pray always. If we are to pray always, it follows that we must never be in the bondage of wedlock, for as often as I render my wife her due, I cannot pray.

"The Apostle Peter had experience of the bonds of marriage. See how he fashions the Church, and what lesson he teaches Christians: "Ye husbands in like manner dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered." Observe that, as St. Paul before, because in both cases the spirit is the same, so St. Peter now, says that prayers are hindered by the performance of marriage duty. When he says "likewise," he challenges the husbands to imitate their wives, because he has already given them commandment: "beholding your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

"You see what kind of wedlock he enjoins. Husbands and wives are to dwell together according to knowledge, so that they may know what God wishes and desires, and give honor to the weak vessel, woman. If we abstain from intercourse, we give honor to our wives: if we do not abstain, it is clear that insult is the opposite of honor. He also tells the wives to let their husbands "see their chaste behavior, and the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit." Words truly worthy of an apostle, and of Christ's rock! He lays down the law for husbands and wives, condemns outward ornament, while he praises continence, which is the ornament of the inner man, as seen in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit. In effect he says this: Since your outer man is corrupt, and you have ceased to possess the blessing of incorruption characteristic of virgins, at least imitate the incorruption of the spirit by subsequent abstinence, and what you cannot show in the body

exhibit in the mind. For these are the riches, and these the ornaments of your union, which Christ seeks.

“But you will say: "If everybody were a virgin, what would become of the human race"? Like shall here beget like. If everyone were a widow, or continent in marriage, how will mortal men be propagated? Upon this principle there will be nothing at all for fear that something else may cease to exist. To put a case: if all men were philosophers, there would be no husbandmen. Why speak of husbandmen? There would be no orators, no lawyers, no teachers of the other professions. If all men were leaders, what would become of the soldiers? If all were the head, whose head would they be called, when there were no other members? You are afraid that if the desire for virginity were general there would be no prostitutes, no adulteresses, no wailing infants in town or country. Every day the blood of adulterers is shed, adulterers are condemned, and lust is raging and rampant in the very presence of the laws and the symbols of authority and the courts of justice. Be not afraid that all will become virgins: virginity is a hard matter, and therefore rare, because it is hard: "Many are called, few chosen." Many begin, few persevere. And so the reward is great for those who have persevered.” (*Against Jovinianus*, Book 1, Section 7, A.D. 393)

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