The Sacrament of Marriage

What does it mean that marriage between two baptized people is a sacrament?
- Natural marriage vs. sacramental marriage

Do Catholics have to get married in a Catholic Church?

What about divorce and annulments?

What about same-sex “marriage”?

The Wedding Feast of Cana

“This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.”
John 2:11

“Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure -- for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints”
(Rev. 19:7-8)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

1660 - “The marriage covenant, by which a man and a woman form with each other an intimate communion of life and love, has been founded and endowed with its own special laws by the Creator. By its very nature it is ordered to the good of the couple, as well as to the generation and education of children. Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of a sacrament.”

Marriage

- Natural Marriage or Non-Sacramental Marriage – marriage of two unbaptized persons or a baptized and non-baptized
  - Covenant established by God with Adam and Eve
  - Permanent but can’t participate in sacramental grace because baptism is the gateway to all of the sacraments

- Sacramental Marriage – between two baptized persons
  - Christ raised marriage to the level of a sacrament
The Nuptial Blessing

O God, who consecrated the bond of Marriage by so great a mystery that in the wedding covenant you foreshadowed the Sacrament of Christ and his Church.

O God, by whom woman is joined to man and the companionship they had in the beginning is endowed with the one blessing not forfeited by original sin nor washed away by the flood.

What is a Sacrament?

❖ An outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace – Baltimore Catechism

❖ “The sacraments, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, are efficacious signs of grace perceptible to the senses.” Compendium to the Catechism

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

1661 “The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life.”

The Sacrament of Marriage

❖ Vocation to Holiness – A Sacrament of Service
  – Goal is to help each other become saints and to raise holy children
  – Not just by being annoying? :-) But by grace!
❖ It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church
❖ Commitment and Covenant
  – “I will never leave you or forsake you (Hebrews 15:5).”

Now, Lord, you know that I take this wife of mine not because of lust, but for a noble purpose. Call down your mercy on me and on her, and allow us to live together to a happy old age.” They said together, “Amen, amen.”

Tobit 8:7-8

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5:25-27
For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.* This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Ephesians 5:31-33

The Questions

❖ Free and Total - Have you come here to enter into Marriage without coercion, freely and wholeheartedly?
❖ Faithful and Permanent - Are you prepared, as you follow the path of Marriage, to love and honor each other for as long as you both shall live?
❖ Fruitful - Are you prepared to accept children lovingly from God and bring them up according to the law of Christ and His Church?

The Vows

- Minsters of the sacrament – the couple
- When? At the exchange of consent / vows
- Why do Catholics have to be married in the Catholic Church?
  - How can it be a sign of Christ’s love for the Church if the Church isn’t there?
  - If a Catholic attempts to get married outside of the Catholic Church, they still aren’t marriage (mortal)
  - Two non-Catholics can get married anywhere and it is presumed valid until shown otherwise

I ___ take you ___ to be my wife.
I promise to be faithful to you, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

CCC #1640

“Thus the marriage bond has been established by God himself in such a way that a marriage concluded and consummated between baptized persons can never be dissolved. This bond, which results from the free human act of the spouses and their consummation of the marriage, is a reality, henceforth irrevocable, and gives rise to a covenant guaranteed by God’s fidelity. The Church does not have the power to contravene this disposition of divine wisdom.”
**Indissolubility of Marriage**

Canon 1141 – A marriage which is ratified and consummated cannot be dissolved by any human power or by any cause other than death.

“To me you shall be sacred; for I, the Lord, am sacred, I who have set you apart from the other nations to be my own.” 
Leviticus 20:26

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**Pauline Privilege - 1 Cor. 7:12-14a**

To the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband.

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**Pauline Privilege - 1 Cor. 7:15-16**

But if the unbelieving partner desires to separate, let it be so; in such a case the brother or sister is not bound. For God has called us to peace. Wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? Husband, how do you know whether you will save your wife?

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**Pauline Privilege**

Canon 1143 § 1 In virtue of the pauline privilege, a marriage entered into by two unbaptised persons is dissolved in favour of the faith of the party who received baptism, by the very fact that a new marriage is contracted by that same party, provided the unbaptised party departs.

- Still has to be in the Catholic Church

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**Dissolving Non-Consummated Marriages**

Canon 1142 A non-consommated marriage between baptised persons or between a baptised party and an unbaptised party can be dissolved by the Roman Pontiff for a just reason, at the request of both parties or of either party, even if the other is unwilling.
Matthew 19:4-6

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

Divorce

And he said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." (Mark 10:11-12)

Divorce

To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband) -- and that the husband should not divorce his wife. To the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. (1 Corinthians 7:10-12)

Divorce

❖ A valid, ratified and consummated marriage cannot be dissolved by anything except death
❖ Catholics are required to get married in the Catholic Church for it to be considered a valid marriage
   – Otherwise, they are separated from the sacraments
❖ One who gets divorced and remarried cannot receive the sacraments until in a valid union or separate from the sinful living situation
   – Objectively in a state of adultery

Annulments

❖ Catholics don’t believe in divorce
   – The state doesn’t have the power to dissolve a union established by God
❖ It is possible that there was a road block that kept God from joining the couple together
   – So in His eyes, they were never married
   – Example: shotgun wedding, green card wedding
❖ The Catholic Church has an annulment process to find out if there was a road block
   – If obtained, a person is free to marry in the Church

Pitfalls

❖ Distractions & Dissipation – relationships need time
❖ Impurity – distorted vision of a spouse and the marriage
❖ Unforgiveness and Score Keeping
   – Conditional love
❖ Hidden Permission to Bail Out
❖ Idolatry - “you complete me...”
How to Restore to the Sacred

❖ Confession – Be reconciled to God
❖ The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass
❖ Daily Prayer Together
❖ Purity – Honor one another’s dignity & Openness to the Holy Spirit, the Lord & Giver of Life
❖ Retreats – go away to a holy place
❖ Spiritual Reading - “Life Giving Love” by Kimberly Hahn

Revelation 19:6-9

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure” -- for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

Announcements

❖ Breaking Open the Word – Please attend
  – During Sunday 9:00am Mass
  – For unbaptized and baptized non-Catholics
  – Will be including “Scrutinies” starting 3rd Sunday of Lent
❖ PAPERWORK!!!! ASAP!
  – Please don’t let your sacraments be delayed because you didn’t get your paperwork in. That would make the baby Jesus cry.
❖ Easter Vigil Practice – Saturday April 10th at 10:00am
  – Mandatory for catechumens, candidates and sponsors

Questions?

Gay Marriage: Why Not?

❖ Are Catholics for Marriage Equality?
❖ What is Marriage?
❖ Why should government care about marriage?
❖ Responding to popular arguments
  – Who are you to tell others they can’t love each other
  – It doesn’t affect you
  – It’s discrimination, denying people the right to marry
❖ Social Consequences for Redefining marriage
❖ Questions and Answers
What This Talk Is Not

• Not an appeal to religious authority, like the Bible or the Catholic Church
  – Faith and reason do not contradict, but that is not the point of this talk
  – These will be arguments from reason
• Not an argument from the historical law of the United States
  – Positive laws made by the State can be wrong
  – We will discuss arguments from natural law and reason, which are the basis for civil law

Are Catholics for Marriage Equality?

• While a great slogan (=), it presumes what needs to be proven, i.e. it begs the question
  – Assumes marriage is simply a romantic relationship devoid of gender
• Yes, everyone is in favor of marriage equality
  – That all marriage are treated equally
  – That each person has equal access to marriage
  – Marriage is a fundamental right that the State cannot justly take away
• We disagree on what makes a marriage
  – What is the law equally protecting?

What is Marriage?

• How you define marriage will point to what arrangements can be described as marriage
  – Also need to be able to distinguish between marital and non-marital relationships
  – E.g. intense relationship between beings -> a person could marry a tree
    ○ Lots of relationships can be described as intense, close, or important (siblings, parent/child, best friends)
  – E.g. affectionate emotional relationship -> a person could marry an animal
    ○ Again, lots of relationships are affectionate and emotional

• Gay marriage view – marriage is an intense emotional and romantic bond between two consenting adults committing to care for each other, which may or may not involve children
  – Saying gender is irrelevant to marriage
  – Also saying procreation and children are not an intrinsic part of marriage
  – It is just about the emotional relationship of adults
• Questions
  – Will this draw the necessary distinctions between other relationships, including those still seen as immoral?

What is Marriage?

• Traditional View – marriage is a permanent, exclusive, monogamous, comprehensive union between one man and one woman ordered towards the good of the spouses and the procreation and raising of children
  – The view held by every civilization until now
  – In this view, same sex marriage is impossible just as temporary marriages or polygamy is impossible
• Gay marriage view – marriage is an intense emotional and romantic bond between two consenting adults committing to care for each other, which may or may not involve children

Example

• James and Stephen raising an 8 year old child
  – Lived together for the past 10 years
  – Committed to being there for each other
  – They are in each other’s wills
  – If one is in the hospital, the other is going to be there
• What if James & Stephen are brothers raising their deceased sister’s child? Or best friends?
  – Does their lack of romance and sex mean they shouldn’t have the same rights as a gay couple?
  – State withholds benefits because of no sex?
  – What is so different about sex that it can set a class of bonds apart from the spectrum of non-sexual relationships? In gay marriage view – nothing
Problems with Gay Marriage View

- Why only 2? Nothing about an emotional, romantic relationship necessitates only two
  - Polygamy and polyamory are a logical result
- Why permanent? Emotions change
  - Advocates for wedlease vs. wedlock
- Why exclusive or monogamous? People can have desires and emotions for other people
  - Advocates for monogamish and open marriages
- How do you then prohibit incest?
  - You can’t, if they are consenting adults
- Result: the destruction of marriage because there is no limiting principle, just preference
  - Seems arbitrary then for the state to be involved
  - Reduces marriage to contract law & subjective desires

Traditional View of Marriage

- Traditional View – marriage is a permanent, exclusive, monogamous, comprehensive union between one man and one woman ordered towards the good of the spouses and the procreation and raising of children
  - Rooted in Natural Law – laws written into our nature, discoverable by reason regarding actions that lead to human flourishing and fulfilment
  - In all acts but one, humans are self-sufficient
  - Only in the act of procreation does it take 1 male and 1 female to join in a single biological act
- Loving making and life making are the same act

Traditional View of Marriage

- Why permanent? Because it involves this type of union can create new life that is permanent
  - With every child, 1 man and 1 woman were involved
  - Children have a right to be raised in a stable home by their mother and father
- Why exclusive?
  - 1 woman and 1 man are involved in the 1 life giving, love giving act
- Why monogamous / faithful? Otherwise fatherless children will be created
  - Men can be fertile all of their lives
  - Infidelity can lead to lack of permanence

Argument from Morality

- How do we know things are morally right or wrong?
  - Some say – majority opinion, consequentialism, or that there isn’t an objective morality – i.e. relativism
  - Natural law - laws written into our nature, discoverable by reason regarding actions that lead to human flourishing and fulfilment
  - People cannot be reduced to their sexual desires, we’re free & don’t have to act on them
  - Just because I desire something, doesn’t mean it is good for me (like drugs, alcohol, reckless driving)
  - Are certain sexual actions immoral? Why?

Argument from Morality

- Should certain relationships not become sexual? Would that be wrong?
  - Why is incest wrong? Because kids come from parents and there is a difference between familial love and romantic love
  - It is destructive to the family unit which depend on moral structure
  - It violates the natural order
- Why is adultery or polyamory wrong?
  - The love giving act is also the life giving act and is only between two people and can produce children that deserve to be cared for by their parents
  - Is it not just about the agreement of the adults

Argument from Morality

- Homosexual actions are immoral because they also violate the natural order
  - Body is made to work with the opposite sex in this one life giving, love giving act
  - The desires and the body are not in sync
  - Desires can change, increase or decrease, but the body and gender cannot change
  - Thus homosexual acts go against the unity of the life giving, love giving act, against the connection between babies and bondin
- Law teaches and is a rule of action, therefore the law should not enshrine and promote immoral actions by calling them marriage
  - Doing so educates citizens to think wrongly about marriage
Why Should the State Care?

- Why does the state exist? To promote the common good, i.e. the social conditions that allow people to flourish
  - The state is concerned about marriage because of what it produces:
    - Vulnerable humans that need to be protected, raised, provided for and educated
    - The state has an interest in making sure new citizens can flourish and taken care of
    - A stable, married mom and dad provide for the child
    - Otherwise, the state has to get involved to provide

- But if marriage isn’t tied to children and is only about consenting adult romantic relationships, why should the state be involved?
  - It shouldn’t
  - That is just contract law – a person wanting to make a deal with another person to do certain things

- The state has an interest in the continuation of the human race and the stability and morality of its citizens

Responding to Arguments

- Who are you to tell others they can’t love each other, don’t judge
  - Civil society depends on moral norms guiding human actions on what is good and what is bad
  - Love includes doing what is best for the other
- It doesn’t affect you, stay out of it
  - The law teaches what actions are acceptable
- It’s discrimination, denying people the right to marry
  - That presumes the liberal view of marriage
  - Everyone has the same access to marry an available member of the opposite sex capable of marriage

Social Consequences

- Labeling of those opposed to gay marriage as haters
  - When it is placed on the level of a civil right, opposition is seen to be creating two separate classes of humans
- Confusion of children – the law teaches

- Persecution of religious freedom
  - This is already happening
  - To provide services for an event, like a gay wedding, shows support for that event
  - Adoption industry, bakery, tavern, etc.

Questions?