

Reflections - 10 years

Father Nicolas Schwizer

187 - December 1st, 2016

The Sacrament of Matrimony

Through the Sacrament, **matrimony** becomes an effective sign of love and unity, a sign of Christ and the Church. Matrimony becomes a sprout on the vine soon to be fruitful.

Matrimony is a **sign** as far as it is called to love in the same form, with the same intensity in which Christ loves his Church. It is called to be united as the body and the head as the vine and the sprouts.

It can only be an **effective** sign because it participates in this “mystery” of love and unity between Christ and the Church. Then matrimony itself is transformed into a source of graces which enables the spouses to carry out to the fullness their conjugal love in order to overcome the crises and lovingly bear the crosses in order to be good parents to their children.

From there follows that the Sacrament of matrimony possesses a sanctifying function for the spouses and through them for the entire family and society. The relationship between the man and the woman in matrimony, the nuptial consent, is not only an image of the relationship between Christ and his Church, but is a **true representation** of the same. This is where we incorporate matrimony into the supernatural order and for which we find ourselves with the realization of matrimony as Church in miniature.

Matrimony is a **great Sacrament** because it represents like no other, in true and unique form, the relationship which exists between Christ and the Church.

The **effect of the Sacrament** of matrimony is **permanent**, it is not lessened at the moment it is received, but lasts the entire married life and will be, more or less, fruitful according to the measure in which one is predisposed to receive said grace. Christ himself lives, loves and builds Christian matrimony.

Also sexuality and the marriage relationship participate in this supernatural world and are a help on the way to sanctity. Of course, as long as they are always united in an affective and spiritual love, respecting one another.

Matrimony is a **sacrament of the laity**. At least as far as it is in reference to the Roman Church, matrimony can only be received by the laity. On the other hand, the fact that it is a Sacrament for the laity also means: it is about the only Sacrament administered by laity (when we as married partners say our “yes” to one another, we are administering the Sacrament). Matrimony as Sacrament of laity constitutes the notable illustration of the universal priesthood (the priest is the witness to this Sacrament).

This affirmation is very important for our lay spirituality. In the first place, she wants to be a matrimonial and family spirituality. The Holy Father also accentuates this perspective through various encyclicals.

The Sacrament of matrimony also has a **social function**. It is a “Sacrament of edification,” in the Church as in society. The man receives his genetic code inherited by his parents, he receives an education in which values and life habits are transmitted and the family is transformed into the germinal cell of the entire society and of the Church.

With the development of psychology, we know well today of this social value of the family, but often we are not consistent with it in our acting and we dedicate too little time and reflection on the education of our children.

In this secularized world which evermore distances itself from Christ, matrimony transforms itself into a sign and way of God’s love to understand and to live that profound covenant of love between Christ and his Church: that faithful, exclusive, permanent, total and fruitful love.

Today, for many youths, fidelity has become an unreachable truth and in its essence they question the institution of marriage. Faith in Jesus Christ, in his grace which sanctifies us, is the power which our youths and marriages need on their way towards sanctity.

If you wish to subscribe, comment on the text or give your testimony, write to: pn.reflexiones@gmail.com Translation: Carlos Cantú, Schoenstatt Family Federation, La Feria, Texas USA 1012206 cantu_carlos@hotmail.com