

KEY THEMES IN CHURCH TEACHING ABOUT MARRIAGE

[from *On Life and Love: A Guide to Catholic Teaching on Marriage and Family*, William Urbine and William Seifert, XXIII Publications, 1993]

1. Marriage is a human and divine institution.
2. God is present in the ordinary, daily experiences of marriage and family.
3. The family is the primary and formative community of persons.
4. The human person is a union of body and spirit; human sexuality develops within and is integral to this union; gender is the vehicle through which human persons relate.
5. Man and woman are equal in dignity and complement one another.
6. The development of family depends on the mutual exchange of love and support between spouses; the parent/child relationship is critical in the formation of persons and society.
7. The unitive and procreative aspects of marriage are inseparable; the unitive serves as the foundation for the generation of human community.
8. Covenantal (vs. contract) language is more expressive of the sacramental bond of love between spouses.
9. The domestic church is the originating source in which the love and faith of parents give birth to the life and faith of children.
10. Though her teaching tends to be normative, the Church is sensitive and responsive to diverse family conditions.
11. In the very nature of baptism there is the presence of the sacramental grace that enables a sacramental marriage and Christian family.
12. Marriage and family life have an apostolic character or mission that includes care and concern for society, political participation and advocacy.
13. Marriage and family life is ministry.