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The Theology of the Body in the Life and Ministry of Priests
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Conference 3: Christ's Appeal to the Human Heart

- Overview
 - In the second talk this morning, we entered into John Paul II's school on Human Love in the Divine Plan and pondered the significance of revelation about the human person before the Fall to understand ourselves and our vocation. This afternoon we're going to turn to what happened with the Fall and afterward. It's going to introduce the subject of sin and mercy, repentance and conversion.
 - These are ever timely topics. It is the main theme of the pontificate of Pope Francis. He proclaims it in his motto, which is the summary of his vocation story. He proclaimed it powerfully on his first Sunday as Pope, when he said that God never tires of forgiving us but that we tire of asking for forgiveness, and asked us to pray that we never tire of asking for what he never tires of forgiving. The real test of whether Pope Francis' popularity is going to prove to be a good thing or a distraction will be how many people are on Pope Francis' words about mercy. To talk about mercy is to talk about our need for mercy. It's to bring us all to examine our consciences in the light of God and to come to him. In the interview with Fr. Spadaro, he identified himself as a "sinner," but not just a sinner, but a "sinner upon whom the Lord has looked." "I am a sinner." He revealed that when they asked him, "Acceptasne?," "Do you accept (the papacy)?," he replied, "*Peccator sum, sed super misericordia et infinita patientia Domini nostri Jesu Christi confisus et in spiritu penitentiae accepto.*" "I am a sinner, but I trust in the infinite mercy and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I accept in a spirit of penance." Pope Francis wants to help the entire world to recognize that we are all sinners looked up with merciful love by God. He wants to help us all trust in the infinite mercy and patience of Jesus. It's that love that is meant to bring us to conversion.
 - John Paul II would write several times in his pontificate that it's not enough for us to say that "sin exists," but rather "I have sinned," that after the Fall we're not who God created us and wants us to be, but that he wants to help us experience conversion and redemption. The essence of the call to conversion was described by Cardinal Ratzinger in a December 2000 conference on the New Evangelization during the Jubilee Year. As we prepare to receive a great gift from Pope Francis on Sunday, an apostolic exhortation on the new evangelization entitled *Evangelii gaudium*, these words about the conversion that is sought in the new evangelization are particularly relevant:
 - After focusing on John the Baptist's call in the desert for us to convert and mentioning how Jesus made that same call his own in his first homily, all 19 words of it — "The time is fulfilled. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel" — Cardinal Ratzinger said: "The Greek word for converting (metanoete) means: to rethink – to question one's own and common way of living; to allow God to enter into the criteria of one's life; to not merely judge according to the current opinions. Thereby, to convert means: not to live as all the others live, not do what all do, not feel justified in dubious, ambiguous, evil actions just because others do the same; begin to see one's life through the eyes of God; thereby looking for the good, even if uncomfortable; not aiming at the judgment of the majority, of men, but on the justice of God – in other words: to look for a new style of life, a new life. All of this does not imply moralism; reducing Christianity to morality loses sight of the essence of Christ's message: the gift of a new friendship, the gift of communion with Jesus and thereby with God. ...
 - In this afternoon's conference, we're going to listen to Christ's call to conversion that Blessed John Paul II echoed in his TOB. The second part of the first triptych was entitled by John Paul II "Christ's Appeal to the Human Heart," and this afternoon Christ wants to appeal to your heart, to mine, so that God willing, through his mercy, we may eventually acquire a heart like his own.

- We begin with what John Paul II described in this second part and then we will apply it to our life and ministry as priests.
- John Paul II began with Jesus's words in the Sermon on the Mount
 - Matt. 5:27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
 - We first see that Christ interiorizes the law. This is key to the TOB.
 - The OT had already talked about desire: "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife." We are called to penetrate the full ethical and anthropological meaning of the statement to understand the general truth about man after the fall, which is key to the theology of the body
 - In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ fundamentally revises our way of following the commandments. He came not to abolish but to fulfill the law and the prophets. He calls us to the real meaning of the Law in general and to the commandment against adultery in particular. Christ takes the law within; he interiorizes it within conscience. It is no longer just a norm, but man becomes a subject of morality. The OT focused on the "act of the body," whereas Christ points beyond it to the interior justice of man's heart in every age. Man is called to find himself again interiorly, in his "heart," rediscovering the nuptial and generative meaning of his body.
 - Not just avoiding murder but anger, which gives rise to murder.
 - Not just not avoiding excessive retaliation, but praying for our persecutors and loving our enemies.
 - He calls us to a higher standard than the pagans, even than the most religious Jews.
 - Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.
 - The pagans love those who love them and do good to those who do good to them.
 - Our standard is to be perfected — to be *teleios*, fit, aligned to the purpose of our existence; it doesn't mean that we'll be free of any human imperfections! — as our Father in heaven is perfect.
 - Adultery is breach of one-flesh unity between man and woman, either physically or according to the heart. Flows from lust, through the sense of sight, as it did with David and Bathseba. Herod.
 - But this lust is not just in the eyes and imagination but deeper, something pointed out by St. John.
 - 1 John 2:16-17 describes the three forms of lust that are "not of the Father but of the world,"— lust of the flesh, of the eyes and the pride of life.. St. John presumes they are clear. These lusts are in the world through the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in man's heart. This is not the "world" created by God, which was good, but the world that results from man's breaking the covenant in his heart. Sin transforms the world into a source and place of lust. To understand it, we need to go back to the beginning, at the threshold of historical man. There will we understand the "lustful man" and explain his relationship to the human heart, which is so important for the theology of the body
 - In Gen 3:1-5, the human heart questions God's gift, of creation, of love, of the other, of himself as God's image. Taking the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is a fundamental choice against the Creator's will, motivated by the serpent to "be like God." Man casts God from his heart and cuts himself off from what "is of the Father" and becomes "of the world." Adam's and Eve's eyes were opened, they knew they were naked, and covered themselves. This shame before each other and God suggests the beginning of lust in man's heart. It shakes the foundations of their existence, and they began to fear God and tried to hide from him. Man tries to cover with the shame of his own nakedness the real origin of fear: his sin and alienation from Love and from the participation in the Gift. Man was deprived of the supernatural and preternatural endowment before sin and suffered the

lack of his original fullness of the image of God. The three forms of lust correspond to that loss, to that lack, to the deficiencies that came with sin.

○ Man of concupiscence

- Meaning of original shame
- Man's state after the fall differs greatly from before sin. There's a radical change in meaning of original nakedness.
 - Previously, nakedness represented full acceptance of the body in its personal truth.
 - The body was the expression of the person in visible world, which distinguished him from the rest and allowed him to confirm himself.
 - The body was a tangible verification of man's original solitude, which allowed for the mutual donation in communion.
 - The body was the unquestionable sign of the image of God.
 - Acceptance of the body was the acceptance of the visible world and the guarantee of his dominion over it (Gen 1:28).
 - Sin causes the loss of original certainty of the "image of God" expressed in the body, as well as man's confidence in the divine vision of the world.
 - The ground becomes "cursed" because of man, who only with "toil" and "sweat" will receive its produce.
 - The end of this toil is death — "you are dust and to dust you shall return."
 - Man's fear because of his nakedness express a sense of defenselessness, of insecurity before nature.
- There was a cosmic shame as well as shame within humanity, within the original communion of persons, within man himself. Man and woman hide their nakedness from each other; they hide their distinctive, visible masculinity or femininity. There was a sexual character to this shame relative to the other sex seen in their covering their sexual organs. There is a contradiction within man between his flesh and the Spirit, what St. Paul calls a war between his members and his mind (Rom 7:22-23). The body is no longer subject to the spirit and threatens the peace and unity of the person. This is the beginning of lust, which threatens self-control and self-mastery.
- The lustful man does not control his body as before the fall. He is no longer automatically master of himself. There is an interior imbalance, with a sexual character, evidenced in lust and in the covering of body parts. Man has a shame of his own sexuality relative to the other human being. The birth of shame in the human heart leads to the beginning of lust, the three-fold concupiscence of the body St. John describes. Man is ashamed of his body owing to lust or evil desire. Desire comes from a lack or necessity. Human lust is a desire for what was lost from the meaning of the body.
- Shame has a double meaning; it indicates the threat to the value of the human person and at the same time preserves this value interiorly. Lust and shame exist side-by-side and we can appeal to shame to guarantee those values which lust tries to take away. This is why Christ, in speaking of lust, appeals to the human heart.
- Lust shatters the man-woman relationship, causing them to hide their sexual differences from each other.
 - The body ceased to be the "trustworthy" substratum of the communion of persons.
 - Original purity, which allowed for full mutual communication through bodily self-donation and acceptance, disappears.
 - Their original difference changes from a call to communion to a source of mutual confrontation.
 - There is a loss in the certainty of the meaning of the human body as a call to communion.
 - Man lost the sense of the image of God in himself and this is manifested with the shame of the body.

- Sexuality became an “obstacle” in the personal relationship of man and woman.
- Shame also brought with it an almost constitutive difficulty of identifying with one’s own body and with another through the body.
- This is the “second” discovery of sex, in historical man, subject to lust. The necessity of hiding before the other proves a fundamental lack of trust, a breakdown in the original communion. God describes this in saying of the woman “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you” (Gen 3:16). There is a breakdown in the joy of recognizing humanity in children as well as a new dominion in the male-female relationship. Woman will feel a lack of full unity with man, which is a type of inequality. This desire and dominion refer to the whole relationship, not just one-flesh union. The first mention of “husband” points to a fundamental loss in the original communion of persons, which was total and reciprocal, subordinated to the blessing of procreation. Man’s heart will now lust and dominion will ensue. The fall led to division among man and woman.
- Insatiability of the Union
 - *These words point to fact that man and woman will fail to satisfy the aspiration to realize in the conjugal union of the body the mutual communion of persons.* Man’s dominion seems to be the form of lust called “pride of life,” which changes essentially the structure of interpersonal communion. With the lust of the eyes and the flesh, it leads to making the human being an object.
 - Shame is not just in the body but in the spirit, in this insatiable “desire.” Shame reveals lust but can protect from the consequences of lust by covering up. Shame tries to keep man and woman in original innocence, protecting the nuptial meaning of the body from lust. There is still the desire for the other person, but the desire as well to protect from lust, which can direct desires to the satisfaction of the body rather than the communion of persons. For man, shame (fear), united with lust, becomes an impulse to “dominate” the woman. In the woman, lust leads her to seek the possession of the man as the object of her own desire and fosters his desire to dominate her.
- Corruption of the Spousal Meaning of the Body
 - The three forms of lust limit and distort the nuptial meaning of the body, the full awareness of the human being. The meaning of the body conditions the “way of living the body,” what man’s “heart” applies to the body. The “meaning” given to the body doesn’t change its essence, but is relevant to historical man’s morality. This is why Christ refers to the “heart.” Lust limits and distorts the body’s objective way of existing. Discovering what constitutes the distortion in the nuptial meaning of the body will allow us to describe what lust of the flesh involves.
 - After sin, femininity and masculinity ceased to be expressions aiming at interpersonal communion, remaining only objects of attraction. There was a certain coercion of the body limiting the expression of the spirit and the experience of exchange in the gift of the person. The human body has “almost” (but not completely) lost the capacity of expressing the love of mutual self-donation. This capacity is habitually threatened. The heart has become a battleground between love and lust. The more lust dominates the heart, the less there will be love, self-gift, and nuptial meaning. We need to keep the heart under control.
 - Since man can only discover himself in the sincere gift of himself, lust attacks this “sincere giving,” depriving man of the dignity of giving and depersonalizing him by making him an object for the other rather than someone willed for his own sake. Concupiscence makes the subjectivity of the person give way to the objectivity of the body. It reduces interpersonal relations to the body and sex and hinders the mutual acceptance of the other as a gift. It limits interiorly and reduces self-control, entailing the loss of the interior freedom of the gift, which is crucial for the nuptial meaning of the body. **The sacramental aspect of the human body as an expression of the spirit is obscured and becomes an object of lustful appropriation. Concupiscence does not unite, but appropriates; the relationship of gift becomes one of possession. This is what is meant by “he shall**

rule over you.” Often this appropriation happens to the detriment of the woman, who senses it more. Man originally was to be the guardian of the reciprocity of donation and its true balance in his original acceptance of femininity as a gift.

- As a consequence of lust, the body becomes almost a “ground” of appropriation of the other person, which entails a loss of the nuptial meaning of the body. One flesh union therefore acquires another meaning, that of possessing the other as an object. From possessing, the next step goes toward “enjoyment” and “use” of the other at my disposal. Concupiscence drives man toward possessing, enjoying and using the other as an object. This negates the nuptial meaning of the body, which is essentially disinterested.
- Lust shows above all the state of the human spirit, which is a battleground of lust and love. There is a constant danger of seeing, evaluating and loving in a bodily (concupiscent) way, rather than in accord with the law of the mind (cf. Rom 7:23). We have to keep this anthropological element in mind to understand completely the appeal made by Christ to the human heart.
- Commandment and Ethos
 - “Do not commit adultery”
 - Jesus refers to the “hardness of heart” which led Moses to allow divorce. This hardness in man’s interiority brought about a situation contrary to God’s original plan. The Sermon on the Mount proclaims the new ethos of the Gospel, which returns to the beginning. Jesus preaches it to historical man with his heart affected by the three forms of lust. Christ knows “what is in every man” (Jn 2:25). Christ was speaking to contemporaries as well as to us and to every human being individually.
 - The heart is affected by the three forms of lust, but this inner being of man also decides exterior human behavior. No study of human ethos can ignore the interior dimension
 - Over the centuries the authentic content of the Law was subjected to the weaknesses of the human will deriving from the threefold concupiscence. **Christ wants to recover the full meaning.** Fulfillment is conditioned by a correct understanding. In OT, monogamy was given up for sake of numerous offspring, even by the Patriarchs. This would condition the understanding of “thou shalt not commit adultery.” David and Solomon practiced real polygamy based on concupiscence. Adultery was considered the possession of another man’s wife, and polygamy was not considered adultery. Monogamy as the essential and indispensable implication of “thou shalt not commit adultery” hadn’t become conscious. **Christ wants to straighten out the errors of OT times.** OT law sanctioned polygamy or concubinage. In trying to combat sin, it actually socially legalized another form of it. Christ had to bring it back to its original sense beyond traditional and legal restrictions.
 - In OT, adultery is a sin because it constitutes the **breakdown of the personal covenant between man and woman.** It’s a violation of man’s right of ownership. Monogamy appears as the only correct analogy of monotheism understood in categories of the covenant. Adultery is the antithesis of nuptial relationship. The marriage covenant constitutes the foundation of one-flesh union, which is a regular sign of the communion of two people. **Adultery is a radical falsification of this sign.** It is a “sin of the body,” a violation of nuptial covenantal love and interpersonal communion. It is a violation of the conjugal “one flesh” union, which occurs when man and woman who are not husband and wife (monogamously) unite in one flesh. This is not a truthful sign nor a true union of the body.
 - Whoever looks to desire...
 - Christ talks about adultery committed in the heart, in contraposition to adultery committed in the body, shifting the meaning from the body to the heart. Christ speaks of the concupiscent, lusting man. The Wisdom tradition warned man against

lust and about falling for beauty. Proverbs 6:25: “Do not desire her beauty in your heart.” It understood human psychology very well. Sirach 23:17-22 talked about the incessant fire that will consume a lustful man — his passions and then his heart, suffocating conscience — and that God sees everything, despite outward appearances of decency. Giving in to the passion doesn’t extinguish it, but makes it stronger until it kills man’s spirit

- God had prepared his people through prophets for Christ’s teaching on adultery and through wisdom literature for lust and “adultery in the heart.” Christ’s listeners were familiar with the wisdom tradition, but so would every man be who is familiar with lust. Christ stops before the internal act has become external. A look expresses the interior man, and *intueri sequitur esse* (look follows being). Lust is an experience of value to the body lacking “nuptial” and procreative significance. **Lust separates the body from its real meaning as the basis of communion.** Concupiscence is an interior separation from nuptial meaning of the body. Lust in the heart obscures the significance of the body and the person.
- Has committed adultery in the heart.”
 - Lust is “adultery committed in the heart.” It is a deception of the human heart in the perennial call to communion by means of mutual giving. Lust is not the perennial mutual attraction between man and woman, but reduces its significance. The mind and heart close down, and reduce all feminine (or masculine) values to the single value of sex as an object of gratification. A look can be lustful “knowledge” of the other, which the man uses. The woman ceases to have attraction as a person but only as an object to be used for man’s intentional (mental) gratification.
 - Christ, in speaking of the man who “looks lustfully,” notes not just man’s cognitive or psychological intentionality, but the intentionality of his existence. **It changes the intentionality of his life!** This deep change is meant by Jesus’ statement that he “has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” **The heart and the will are changed.** Cognitive intentionality is not yet slavery of the heart, but when the will follows, then lust dominates personal subjectivity and influences choosing and self-determination with regard to others. Man is consumed by its fire (Sirach) and loses the “freedom of the gift.” **Man’s original desire “for” the other is distorted; he becomes a “taker” of the other, no longer a “giver to and for” the other.** Mutual lust and use by man and woman do not correspond to the unity of “communion” but clash with it, pushing it toward utilitarian dimensions in which the other is merely an object to satisfy one’s own needs.
 - Christ’s statement aims at constructing the new ethos of the Gospel and the rediscovery of those values lost by historical man. Christ’s mention of adultery of the heart (not externally in the flesh) is more than metaphorical. While it would seem logically to apply only to desires for a woman who is not one’s wife (with whom you could commit adultery in the body), Christ goes deeper to the moral evaluation of desire in relation to the personal dignity of man and woman, whether one is married to her or not. Christ refers to lusting after a “woman” as adultery in the heart
 - Lust changes the intentionality of a woman’s existence “for” man, from a calling to communion to an object of the satisfaction of sexual need. The mutual “for” is distorted into utilitarianism. Even if he does not act on this exteriorly, he has already assumed this attitude in his heart. Man commits adultery in the heart with his wife when he treats her only as an object to satisfy instinct.
 - Christ wants the heart to be a place for the fulfillment of the law. The commandments must be kept in “purity of heart.” The severity of the prohibition against sin is shown by Christ’s figuratively speaking of “plucking out one’s eye” and “cutting off one’s hand” if they cause one to sin. This applies certainly to fighting what flows from the lust of the flesh. Christ wants to remove lust from the

relationship between man and woman so that, in purity of heart, the nuptial meaning of the body and the person can shine in mutual self-giving and sacramental unity. Christ is bearing within and teaching the mystery of the “redemption of the body.” We should have confidence in the salvific power of Christ’s words.

- Heart — Accused or Called?
 - Condemnation of the body?
 - Manichaeism distorted Christ’s words about adultery in the heart, because it considered matter, the body, sex and marriage evil. But Christ’s words must lead to an affirmation of the human body, which is essential for the proper ethos. Christ attacks lust, not the body. The body is a manifestation or sign of the spirit, i.e., a sacramental sign. The redemption of the body is not of an ontologically evil reality, but is of the clear sense of the nuptial meaning of the body and its interior mastery and freedom of spirit. The body and sexuality remain a “value not sufficiently appreciated” in man’s present historical state of fallen but redeemed nature. Christ’s words both “accuse” lust in the heart and “appeal to” the human heart to overcome it. The evil is lust, not the body. True victory over lust will come in rediscovering the true values of the object — the personal dignity of the body and of sexuality — rather than in considering the body evil as Manicheans do
 - The “heart” under suspicion?
 - The “masters of suspicion” — Ricoeur’s term describing Freud, Marx and Nietzsche — judged and accused the human “heart” by categories similar to the Johannine three forms of lust. Their thought continues to influence contemporary man. Nietzsche accused the human heart of “pride of life”; Marx of “lust of the eyes”; Freud, of “lust of the flesh.” Together they put the heart under continual suspicion, but the words of Christ do not allow us to stop here. Lust, although an important “coefficient” to understand man, is not the absolute criterion of anthropology and ethics.
 - **We cannot be content with a theological conception of “lust” as a category, but must get to the “man of lust” and how he must respond.**
 - **The ethos of redemption appeals to man to overcome lust and the continual “suspicion” and distrust of the human heart. Man is called to the redemption of the body, to realize the nuptial meaning of the body, to the interior freedom of the gift and the spiritual mastery of the lust of the flesh.**
 - Man is called to this by Christ’s words, but also from “inside” through the echo of man’s good “beginning.” The mystery of creation becomes the graced occasion of the mystery of redemption.
 - Besides lust, man senses a deep need to preserve the dignity, beauty and love of mutual relations in the body.
 - The meaning of the body is, in a sense, the antithesis of Freudian libido; the meaning of life is the antithesis of the interpretation of suspicion. Man is not just accused but called to rediscover the “heritage of his heart,” which is deeper than inherited sinfulness and lust in its three forms. Christ’s words — which are above all an appeal — reactivate that deeper heritage and give it real power in man’s life
 - Eros and Ethos
 - Eros was mentioned in the first cycle of catecheses. It is a Greek mythological term that passed to Platonic philosophy and then to literature. For Plato eros drags man toward what is good, true and beautiful. Commonly it refers to a mostly sensual attraction toward union of bodies. Is this the same perennial attraction as we find in Gen 2:23-25? This is important for discussion of “lust” in Sermon on the Mount. Psychology and sexology define lust as the subjective intensity of straining towards the object because of its sexual value. The intensity of sexual attraction extends dominion over man’s emotional sphere. From a psychological point of view, this is

eros in common language, which leads to “erotic” external manifestations. But “erotic” does not equal what “derives from desire” (serving to satisfy the lust of the flesh) for Christ, because that would involve a negative judgment on desire and attraction. In the larger sense, eros means mutual actions and behaviors through which man and woman approach each other to unite in one flesh. There is room for “ethos” in “eros,” according to Plato’s meaning (attracting toward true, good and beautiful), as well as for the theological content of Christ’s appeal to the human heart. This is the appeal to overcome the three forms of lust for what is true, good, and beautiful. This would be an **ethical eros**. Ethos opens us up to the full meaning of eros and prevents it from becoming lustful. Christ’s words are more than a prohibition, but a call to the deep and essential values this prohibition makes accessible and liberates, if we open our “heart” to them

- Some say that ethos removes spontaneity from eros, and hence the two should be divorced. But full and mature spontaneity flows from the perennial attraction of masculinity and femininity. Christ’s words call man to a deep and mature consciousness of his own acts and impulses. He calls man to correct conscience, to master his impulses as a guardian, to draw from impulses what is fitting for “purity of heart” and the nuptial meaning. This requires that man learn the meaning of the body and of masculinity and femininity in his heart and distinguish them from lust. Mature man is called “spontaneously” to respond to these deeper meanings with interior sensitivity, so that they not be lustful. But this spontaneity must flow through true self-control. This is a spontaneity the carnal man knows nothing about. Christ’s words lead to a true spontaneity, which doesn’t suffocate but frees and facilitates authentic human desires
- Interior man is the subject of the “new” ethos of the body Christ proclaims, new in comparison to the OT, to the historical man of lust, and therefore to every man. This is the ethos of the redemption of the body, which, with “adoption as sons” St. Paul presents as the eschatological fruit of Christ’s redemptive work.
- In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ speaks in the perspective of redemption in bringing man beyond the three forms of lust back to the beginning. Christ doesn’t call man back to the state of original innocence, but to the rediscovery of what is truly “human.” There is a connection between the beginning and the redemption, because Christ leads man to the fullness of justice. The new man can emerge when the ethos of the redemption of the body dominates lust through self-mastery, by means of temperance (continence of desires). This continence isn’t empty, but filled through self-mastery with nuptial meaning of body and perennial attraction of man and woman through masculinity and femininity toward communion. This self-mastery may seem “empty” at first, but man rediscovers eventually his own dignity. The human person learns to love truly. **Purity** is a requirement of love, and when the heart is pure, the man is pure, and he overcomes historical sinfulness and aspires to perfection through redemption of body. This purity is a reminiscence of original solitude in which the male was liberated through opening to the woman.
- Purity of heart must mark mutual relations between man and woman both within and outside of marriage. Lust is opposed to purity. The pure of heart shall see God. The heart is the source of purity and lust. Sins of the heart defile a man (cf. Mt 15:18-20: “What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a man.”). Man can be dirty (“impure”) and hence needs to be washed. In OT there were the ritual ablutions, which acquired religious meaning as ritual “purity.” But this was not moral purity, which comes from man’s heart, and not his hands, being cleaned. Moral good is manifestation of purity; moral evil, of impurity. Impurity is larger than concupiscence, but this is a specific type of it.

- St. Paul does not use the Johannine categories of the three types of lust, but he does share a contrast between what is “of the Father” and “of the world,” in the opposition between “flesh” and the “Spirit” (meaning Holy Spirit). The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit (Gal 5:16). “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit” (Rom 8:5). The type of purity of heart to which Jesus referred in the Sermon on the Mount is realized in life “according to the spirit.
 - Application (Re-reading)
 - Sermon on the Mount.
 - Interiorization of the Law. Not just external behavior but our desires. *Idem velle, idem nolle*.
 - Live by Christ’s standards, not pagans, not even Jews. Real holiness.
 - Story of “problem” at neighboring parish. “A holy priest has moved in.”
 - Problems of St. John Vianney and jealousy.
 - Many priests don’t strive for holiness. They don’t want to be fanatics. They may be “good men,” but they’re not godly.
 - Beatitudes
 - Biggest contrast to the world.
 - We are called, like Pier Giorgio Frassati, to become men of the beatitudes, the face of the beatitudes, because Christ is poor in spirit, meek, pure of heart, peacemaker, mourns, hungers and thirsts, merciful, persecuted.
 - Orientation of our life
 - Lust changes our fundamental direction from a giver to a taker, from a lover to a consumer.
 - We see it with our people. No surprise that when they lust they also become selfish in so many other ways.
 - Are we fundamentally for others? Are we willing to die so that they may live?
 - Ratzinger: Saint Augustine comments on the text Jn 21:16 in the following way: ‘Tend my sheep,’ means suffer for my sheep. A mother cannot give life to a child without suffering. Each birth requires suffering, is suffering, and becoming a Christian is a birth. ... We cannot give life to others without giving up our own lives. The process of expropriation indicated above is the concrete form (expressed in many different ways) of giving one’s life. And let us think about the words of the Savior: "... whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel’s will save it..." (Mk 8:35).
 - Are we all in? Story of Ananias and Sapphira.
 - Three-fold lust in priestly life
 - When we commit adultery in the heart, we do so not merely with the person lusted after but also against God.
 - Lust of the flesh
 - Cheating on our vocation.
 - Pornography is a real problem with priests.
 - NAC stories of the sabbatical program.
 - Stories even of bishops’ movie choices at a Washington hotel in the early 1990s.
 - We have to confront this reality. It’s real.
 - The scandals go beyond those with minors!
 - How many more priests need to be busted for what they have on their computers?
 - The reality is nothing is ever hidden.

- St. John Vianney story about man hiding behind his cart on Sunday morning because he was working instead of planning to come to Mass. “You can hide from me, my friend, but not from God.” Likewise, we can’t hide from God.
- At the same time, it’s not even hidden from others. Every website we visit is recorded by our computer or cell phone companies and almost assuredly by security agencies like the NSA and their equivalents. If some computer genius really wanted to create some havoc in the Church, he’d be able to access the websites some of us view and put them out there for all to see.
- We need to be candid about this and confront it and help each other get help if they need it. This lust can lead us to all types of other, even worse, sins that wound others, wound ourselves, wound the Church, wound our Lady and would God most of all. This lust changes the intentionality of our existence and makes us takers rather than givers, predators rather than protectors, consumers of others rather than other Christs. And the same type of lust also impacts so many of the people to whom we minister who likewise have become addicted to lust.
- But it’s not the only form of concupiscence.
- Lust of the eyes
 - Materialism.
 - Some of us do pretty good for ourselves. Just take a look at the average waistline, the average car, the average accommodations, the average amount of vacation time and destinations.
 - Pope Francis has been talking about the types of cars we drive. In July he said, “It hurts me when I see a priest or a nun with the latest model car. . . . A car is necessary to do a lot of work, but please choose a more humble one. If you like the fancy one, just think about how many children are dying of hunger in the world.”
 - There is an increase in the amount of priests who have been caught embezzling. One priest in Florida, who stole more than one million, gave an interview in which he said that he thought he was entitled to it.
 - We cannot serve two masters and sometimes we’re serving mammon. We can convince ourselves we’re not, because we could be making more elsewhere, but we’re far from “poor in spirit” who find our real treasure in the kingdom.
 - Greater temptation for us as secular priests to worry about tomorrow, to build grain bins in the form of 401ks and so much more. We obviously have to do some of this in order to be good stewards, but sometimes some of us can accuse ourselves of trying to build up our kingdom rather than the Lord’s.
- Pride of life
 - Control. Dominate. Lord it over others. Be served rather than to serve.
 - Want to be in the center.
 - Want adulation, thanks, recognition.
 - Far from being a “useless servant” who has only done what is required.
 - *Corruptio optimi pessima*. Devil will come after us.
- Insatiability
 - The goods sought after by the three-fold lust can never satisfy us.
 - Only God can. *Solo Dios basta!*
- Obviously there’s an antidote in the evangelical counsels.
 - Chastity against lust of the flesh
 - Poverty against lust of the eyes
 - Obedience against pride of life.
 - Redemptoris Donum 9:

- We can discover the bases of the economy of Redemption by reading the words of the first letter of St. John: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the world, love for 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 of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."
- Religious profession places in the heart of each one of you, dear brothers and sisters, the love of the Father: **that love which is in the heart of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world. It is love which embraces the world and everything in it that comes from the Father, and which at the same time tends to overcome in the world everything that "does not come from the Father."**
- It tends therefore to conquer the threefold lust. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life" are hidden within man as the inheritance of original sin, as a result of which the relationship with the world, created by God and given to man to be ruled by him, **was disfigured in the human heart in various ways.**
- In the economy of the Redemption the evangelical counsels of **chastity, poverty and obedience constitute the most radical means for transforming in the human heart this relationship with "the world":** with the external world and with one's personal "I"--which in some way is the central part "of the world" in the biblical sense, if what "does not come from the Father" begins within it. Against the background of the phrases taken from the first letter of St. John, it is not difficult to see the fundamental importance of the three evangelical counsels in the whole economy of Redemption.
 - Evangelical chastity helps us to transform in our interior life everything that has its sources in the lust of the flesh;
 - evangelical poverty, everything that finds its source in the lust of the eyes;
 - and evangelical obedience enables us to transform in a radical way that which in the human heart arises from the pride of life.
 - We are deliberately speaking here of an overcoming as a transformation, for the entire economy of the Redemption is set in the framework of the words spoken in the priestly prayer to the Father: "I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but to guard them from the evil one."
 - The evangelical counsels in their essential purpose aim at "the renewal of creation": "the world," thanks to them, is to be subjected to man and given to him in such a way that man himself may be perfectly given to God
- In Vita Consecrata, John Paul II said that the evangelical counsels respond to the modern problems of hedonism, materialism, and exaggerated autonomy.
 - Chastity
 - **VC 88.** (The challenge of consecrated chastity) The <first challenge> is that of a <hedonistic culture> which separates sexuality from all objective moral norms, often treating it as a mere diversion and a consumer good and, with the complicity of the means of social communication, justifying a kind of idolatry of the sexual instinct. The consequences of this are before everyone's eyes: transgressions of every kind, with resulting psychic and moral suffering on the part of individuals and families. The <reply> of the consecrated life is above all in the <joyful living of perfect chastity> as a witness to the

power of God's love manifested in the weakness of the human condition. The consecrated person attests that what many have believed impossible becomes, with the Lord's grace, possible and truly liberating. Yes, in Christ it is possible to love God with all one's heart, putting him above every other love, and thus to love every creature with the freedom of God! This testimony is more necessary than ever today, precisely because it is so little understood by our world. It is offered to everyone—young people, engaged couples, husbands and wives and Christian families—in order to show that <the power of God's love can accomplish great things> precisely within the context of human love. It is a witness which also meets a growing need for interior honesty in human relationships. The consecrated life must present to today's world examples of chastity lived by men and women who show balance, self-mastery, an enterprising spirit, and psychological and affective maturity.[224] Thanks to this witness, human love is offered a stable point of reference: the pure love which consecrated persons draw from the contemplation of Trinitarian love, revealed to us in Christ. Precisely because they are immersed in this mystery, consecrated persons feel themselves capable of a radical and universal love, which gives them the strength for the self-mastery and discipline necessary in order not to fall under the domination of the senses and instincts. Consecrated chastity thus appears as a joyful and liberating experience. Enlightened by faith in the Risen Lord and by the prospect of the new heavens and the new earth (cf. Rv. 21:1), it offers a priceless incentive in the task of educating to that chastity which corresponds to other states of life as well

○ Poverty

- **VC 89.** (The challenge of poverty) <Another challenge> today is that of a <materialism which craves possessions>, heedless of the needs and sufferings of the weakest, and lacking any concern for the balance of natural resources. The <reply> of the consecrated life is found in the profession of <evangelical poverty>, which can be lived in different ways and is often expressed in an active involvement in the promotion of solidarity and charity. How many Institutes devote themselves to education, training and professional formation, preparing young people and those no longer young to become builders of their own future! How many consecrated persons give themselves without reserve in the service of the most disadvantaged people on earth! How many of them work to train future educators and leaders of society so that they in turn will be committed to eliminating structures of oppression and to promoting projects of solidarity for the benefit of the poor! Consecrated persons fight to overcome hunger and its causes; they inspire the activities of voluntary associations and humanitarian organizations; and they work with public and private bodies to promote a fair distribution of international aid. Nations truly owe a great deal to these enterprising agents of charity, whose tireless generosity has contributed and continues to contribute greatly to making the world more human

○ Obedience

- **VC 91.** (The challenge of freedom in obedience) The <third challenge> comes from those <notions of freedom> which separate this fundamental human good from its essential relationship to the

truth and to moral norms.[227] In effect, the promotion of freedom is a genuine value closely connected with respect for the human person. But who does not see the aberrant consequences of injustice and even violence in the life of individuals and of peoples to which the distorted use of freedom leads? An effective <response> to this situation is the <obedience which marks the consecrated life>. In an especially vigorous way this obedience reposes the obedience of Christ to the Father and, taking this mystery as its point of departure, testifies that there is <no contradiction between obedience and freedom>. Indeed, the Son's attitude discloses the mystery of human freedom as the path of obedience to the Father's will and the mystery of obedience as the path to the gradual conquest of true freedom. It is precisely this mystery which consecrated persons wish to acknowledge by this particular vow. By obedience they intend to show their awareness of being children of the Father, as a result of which they wish to take the Father's will as their daily bread (cf. Jn. 4:34), as their rock, their joy, their shield and their fortress (cf. Ps. 18:2). Thus they show that they are growing in the full truth about themselves, remaining in touch with the source of their existence and therefore offering this most consoling message: "The lovers of your law have great peace; they never stumble" (Ps. 118:165).

- Lust disorders our relationship with God, with others, with ourselves
 - Hide ourselves from God.
 - Cease to pray. No surprise as a consequence of sin, especially when we aren't regular penitents.
 - Or just go through the motions.
 - Need to expose ourselves before the Lord, take off the masks, the fig leaves in confession.
 - Alienate ourselves from others, afraid others will take advantage of us
 - Withdraw. No longer live in communion.
 - Think others will take advantage of us. Even paranoid on occasion.
 - Within ourselves
 - Soul and body. St. Paul's experience of concupiscence. Don't do what we should, do what we shouldn't.
 - Rom 7: 14 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold into slavery to sin. 15 What I do, I do not understand. For I do not do what I want, but I do what I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I concur that the law is good. 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 18 For I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh. The willing is ready at hand, but doing the good is not. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want. 20 Now if [I] do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 21 So, then, I discover the principle that when I want to do right, evil is at hand. 22 For I take delight in the law of God, in my inner self, 23 but I see in my members another principle at war with the law of my mind, taking me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 Miserable one that I am! Who will deliver me from this mortal body? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, I myself, with my mind, serve the law of God but, with my flesh, the law of sin.
- Corruption of nuptial meaning
 - Start to use others, either for pleasure or some other purpose.
 - There is nothing uglier than a manipulative priest! A priest who just uses others. Lay people feel it, especially the wealthy, when they're looked at only because of their big pockets.

Beautiful women feel it when a priest's eyes are caught looking at their body parts rather than looking at them with the love of Christ.

- Call to purity of heart
 - Particularly directed toward his priests, who are called to love with the love of the heart of Christ.
 - St. John Vianney said the “priesthood is the love of the Heart of Jesus.”
 - B16 at beginning of year for priests: ““How can we fail to remember that the gift our priestly ministry springs directly from this heart?...”
 - This was why the Pope had wanted to inaugurate the Year for Priests on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which marked “the mystery of the heart of a God who is moved and pours out his love on all humanity...He does not give up in the face of ingratitude and not even in the face of rejection by the people He has chosen.” We are part of God's persevering love for the world.
 - The Holy Father continued, “In the heart of Christ, the essential nucleus of Christianity is expressed... and given to us: The love that has saved us helps us to live already in the eternity of God...His divine heart calls to our hearts: it invites us to come out of ourselves, to abandon our human securities to trust ourselves in Him and following his example, make of ourselves a gift of unrestrained love.”
 - Heart transplant like with St. Margaret Mary Alacoque.
- How this call is acted upon will be the subject of our next conference on Redemption of the Body through Life According to the Holy Spirit.