

Fr. Roger J. Landry  
The Theology of the Body in the Life and Ministry of Priests  
Clergy Convocation for the Archdiocese of Vancouver  
Harrison, British Columbia  
November 19-20, 2013

Conference 6: The Sacrament of Marriage: The Dimension of Covenant and Grace in Marriage

- Introduction
  - We finished yesterday our study of the first “triptych” of the TOB in which together in the School of John Paul II we pondered Christ’s words about the beginning, the present situation of our heart and our eschatological future so that we could discover the synthesis and program of the Redemption of the Body through Life according to the Holy Spirit in purity of heart.
  - Today we turn to the second triptych in which this Wojtylan theological anthropology is applied to the Sacrament of Marriage. This is one setting — but let’s be honest, one of the most popular and crucial settings — in which the program of the redemption of the body thanks to the grace of the Lord is meant to occur. John Paul II first discusses what the Holy Spirit taught us through St. Paul about the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage in the fifth chapter of the letter to the Ephesians. Then he turns to focus on the “sign” of marriage that is meant efficaciously to bring about this grace. Finally, he applies these insights specifically to the spirituality of a married couple and to the question of the morality of the regulation of births in marriage, in which he tries to reground the conclusion of HV with the more compelling premises flowing from the anthropology elucidated by Christ’s words in the first triptych. We’ll take each of those three parts of the second triptych of the TOB in turn today, continuing our same method of spending the first half of the conference on an overview of the text John Paul II gives us and the second half on some applications to our priestly life and work.
- Overview of the Covenantal Grace of Marriage
  - The text John Paul II uses is St. Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 5:
    - God’s Word — Eph. 5:21 Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. 24 Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, 27 so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind — yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” 32 This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. 33 Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.
  - Sacrament and Mystery
    - John Paul II calls Ephesians 5 the “crowning” of Christ’s words on the “beginning,” the human “heart” and the future resurrection. We must presuppose the theological truths concerning the redemption of the body in those texts for our interpretation of Ephesians. Ephesians speaks about the body, referring metaphorically to the body of Christ that is the Church and concretely to the human body, male and female, destined for unity in marriage. The meanings converge. The passage is crucial both for the mystery of the Church as well as the sacramental character of marriage
    - In the theology of the body, we see that the body is a sacrament, a “visible sign of an invisible reality,” that is spiritual, transcendent and divine. A sacrament is an efficacious sign

of grace, bringing about the grace it signifies. Ephesians helps to reveal woman and man to each and makes them aware of this lofty vocation (cf. GS 22).

- Mutual submission out of reverence for Christ
  - Ephesians grounds the relationship between spouses on reverence for Christ. The mutual relations of husband and wife should flow from their common relationship with Christ. “Reverence” is a true respect for holiness, the OT “reverential fear,” “piety” or “awe” of God.
  - Reverence for Christ should lead to mutual subjection, which he specifies: “Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord.” This does not mean the husband is “lord” over the wife, but that the wife should find in her relationship with Christ (the Lord of both) the motivation of the relationship with her husband. Husband and wife should be mutually subordinated to each other, flowing from Christian piety and expressed in love. Husbands are called to “love your wives, just as Christ loved the church.”
  - Love excludes every type of subjection in which the wife would be a slave or servant of the husband. Their community in marriage should be constituted by reciprocal donation of self, which has Christ as its source. Following and reverencing Christ, the spouses experience a new “fusion” of bilateral relations and conduct, in which there is constituted the true “communion” of the person.
- Image of love between Christ and his bride
  - Ephesians uses a “great analogy,” **Christ:Church :: husband:wife :: head:body**. The mutual relationship between the spouses is to be understood as an image of the relationship between Christ and the Church and the salvific mystery of Christ’s love is imaged in and can be most adequately expressed by analogy to conjugal love
  - Marriage corresponds to the Christian vocation only when it reflects Christ’s love for his Bride that the Bride attempts to reciprocate. In other words, it has to be redeeming love, a reflection of God’s love. This analogy is grounded in truth, that to some degree Christian marriage participates in the marriage between Christ and the Church. The analogy shows that marriage, in its deepest essence, emerges from the mystery of God’s eternal love for man, fulfilled in Christ’s spousal love for the Church. There is obligation involved for women, “to be subject to their husbands as the Church is subject to Christ” and for men to “love your wives, as Christ loved the Church.”
  - The union of the body with the head is organic, which leads to a biological union, inasmuch as the body lives by the head (and vice versa). Ephesians applies the analogy not just to Christ and the Church but to husband and wife, as if the married couple form one organic union in “one flesh.” Two distinct subjects become in a certain sense, in reciprocal relationship, a single subject. Even though Christ and the Church are distinct subjects, the Church is so essentially herself in virtue of union with Christ, that there is an organic union.
  - Ephesians 5:25-27 tells us that Christ loved the Church, gave himself up for her, to sanctify her by water and the word, to present her to himself in splendor, holy and unblemished. Christ’s love has sanctification as its purpose. The principle of sanctification is baptism, which comes from Christ’s self-giving redemptive love through which that same love acquires a spousal character. Every baptized person becomes a participant in Christ’s spousal love for the Church and his redemption. Baptism prepares Christ’s bride. There is also an eschatological perspective involved, in Christ’s purifying the Bride to present her without spot or wrinkle.
  - This love of Christ for the Church is the model for spousal love, a solicitation for the other’s welfare and holiness through self-giving, creative, disinterested love. “Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies” (v. 28). This shows that the uni-subjectivity in one flesh is intentional, not real: the wife’s body is not the

husband's body, but must be loved like his own body. It's a question not of ontological unity but of unity through love. "He who loves his wife loves himself" (v. 28). Love makes the "I" of the other his own. The body is the expression of that "I" and the foundation of its identity.

- The great analogy of Ephesians leaves readers a profound sense of the "sacredness" of the human body, which, in analogy to the Church made holy by Christ, is called to be holy.
- This is the most important part and foundation of the whole text: "This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church" (v. 32). The mystery was hidden in God's mind but then revealed to man. It is "great," because **it is the central theme of the whole of revelation and its accomplishment.** The continuity of God's salvific initiative, in creation with marriage, and in salvation with Christ's self-giving love for the Church, constitutes the essential foundation for this great analogy. This great mystery is the basis for the sacramentality of the whole of Christian life and of Christian marriage. Sacrament" is synonymous with "mystery," hidden even after its revelation, but accepted in faith by man. The sacrament manifests the mystery in an efficacious sign which proclaims and accomplishes in man the call in Christ to holiness and to adoption
- In the OT, God's love for his people was presented according to the analogy of spousal love, especially in the prophets Isaiah, Hosea and Ezekiel, and in the Song of Solomon. Israel's infidelity and idolatry were considered as "adultery." God's love was compared to that which unites husband and wife in a marriage covenant. Is 54:4-10 says "your Maker is your husband," the "Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, "The Lord has called you like a forsaken wife," "for a brief moment I forsook you, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you." Isaiah leads us in the same direction as Ephesians, which far surpasses it. God's choice of Israel overcomes her "dishonor" of either virginity, widowhood, repudiation or infidelity. God's love for her is clear, everlasting and derives from his initiative alone. God is explicitly called the "spouse of the chosen people." God is not just a "creating" but a "redeeming" spouse.
- The analogy of spousal love between Christ and the Church allows us to penetrate the mystery revealed in the OT and NT. Christ's total and irrevocable gift of self on the part of God fulfilled the mystery. It is both personal (espousing us individually) and communal (espousing us as a people). The people as a whole become the espoused bride. Every concrete "I" should find himself in the biblical "we."
- The mystery also determines the way to understand the mystery, and hence, by analogy, the manner of understanding marriage itself. This is the second function of the great analogy, to help us understand the sacramentality of marriage. The invisible mystery hidden for ages in God became visible in the historical event of Christ. The great mystery of the relationship of Christ to the Church became the concretization of the mystery. The visible sign of marriage in the beginning is tied to the visible sign of Christ and the Church. God's eternal plan of love became the foundation of the whole sacramental order. Ephesians brought these two signs together and made of them one great sign, the great mystery or sacrament.
- Re-reading Genesis on basis of Ephesians 5
  - From the first cycle on Genesis, we saw man as the highest expression of the divine gift, which he bore within; in his likeness to God, he transcends the sign to its meaning, the conjugal significance of the body in the mystery of original innocence. Marriage was shown to be the primordial sacrament, a sign that effectively transmits visibly the invisible mystery hidden from eternity in God, the mystery of Truth, love and divine life.

- Re-reading these truths on the basis of Ephesians, we can approach “the beginning” from the perspective of the mystery hidden in God. “God chose us in him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him” (Ephesians 1:3-4). God’s plans for man precede creation. Man was “chosen” from the beginning to be “holy and blameless” and to “adoption as sons through Jesus Christ.” God saw man as “very good.” Before sin, man bore the fruit of eternal election in Christ and was holy and blameless before God. This primordial holiness and purity was expressed in unashamed nakedness. This supernatural bounty was granted in consideration of the Son, whose incarnation and redemption would come later. Man’s supernatural endowment in the beginning — original justice and original innocence — came through election in Christ.
  - The body, in its visible masculinity and femininity, is the **sacrament of the person**, of his spiritual and divine endowment. It was the visible sign of the mystery hidden from eternity in God. Original innocence allowed man to discover in his body the holiness of the person. The nuptial meaning of the body through one-flesh union in marriage and communion of persons, is a central part of the primordial “sacrament of creation,” from which marriage is derived. Marriage through its procreative power continues the work of creation and expresses the salvific initiative of the Creator in the eternal election of man. Therefore, marriage, inserted in this global sacrament of creation, not only prolongs the work of creation in procreation, but also extends to further generations the same sacrament of creation, the supernatural fruits of man’s eternal election by the Father in the Son.
  - Original sin deprived marriage, as a primordial sacrament, of the supernatural efficacy that formerly belonged to it. But marriage never ceased being the figure of that sacrament we see in Ephesians 5. Marriage remained, however, the platform for the actuation of God’s eternal designs, preparing them for redemption. The “great mystery” referring to “Christ and the Church” indicates the continuity between the primordial sacrament of man’s originally being in supernatural grace and the new grace of the sacrament of redemption. Christ’s gift “for” the Church is also “to” the Church in nuptial love. The sacrament of redemption takes on the form of the sacrament of creation. This new gracing of man in the sacrament of redemption is a new actuation of mystery hidden in God in creation. It is a “new creation.” Original gracing gave man original innocence in justice; new gracing gives him “remission of sins,” where grace can abound “even more” (Rom 5:20).
  - The sacramentality of marriage is not merely a model and figure of the sacrament of Christ and the Church, but constitutes an essential part of the sacrament of Redemption with which the Church is endowed in Christ. Re-reading Jesus’ response to the Pharisees about marriage in light of Ephesians, we see the relationship of marriage with the whole sacramental order in the New Covenant. Marriage, as a primordial sacrament, is assumed and inserted into the integral structure and prototype of the new sacramental economy. **All sacraments find their prototype in marriage as the primordial sacrament.** But marriage is more than a model for them. Against the Pharisees, Christ declares marriage an integral part of the new order of salvific “signs” deriving from sacrament of redemption (the mystery of Christ and the Church), just as the original economy emerged from the sacrament of creation. Christ had limited himself to the one sacrament of marriage in creation. The new economy differs from the original; it is not directed to the man of justice and original innocence, but to the historical man of threefold concupiscence and the “desires of the flesh.” Marriage as a “great” Sacrament of the New Covenant is tied to the ethos of redemption, to a particular morality that should characterize the life of Christians, chosen and redeemed in Christ and the church.
- Re-reading Ephesians on the basis of marriage and other NT texts

- To the concupiscent man, God gave in marriage the sacrament of redemption. Marriage is a sacrament from the “beginning” but, on the basis of man’s “historic” sinfulness, it is a sacrament arising from the mystery of the “redemption of the body.” Marriage-as a sacrament born of the mystery of the redemption and reborn, in a certain sense, in the spousal love of Christ and of the Church-is an efficacious expression of the saving power of God who accomplishes his eternal plan even after sin and in spite of the threefold concupiscence hidden in the heart of every man, male and female. As a sacrament of God’s saving power, marriage exhorts man to dominate concupiscence, which will produce the fruit of unity and indissolubility
- Marriage, “a gift,” is not just a remedy for concupiscence, but it has an ethos, which penetrates eros in the heart of man and orders his passions. As a sacrament of the Church, man and woman are called to model their life together drawing from the “redemption of the body,” in chastity fitting for their state “according to the Spirit.” The consequent domination of egoistic gratification makes the “flesh” in this sacramental covenant the “substratum” of the indissoluble communion of persons. By life “according to the Spirit,” man and woman can find again the true freedom of the gift, united to the nuptial meaning of the body, and submitted to the blessing of procreation; by the same Spirit, they can discover their dignity as parents and the sanctity of life in which they participate in the mystery of creation. This new human life, conceived and born in conjugal love, can now enter the “freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom 8:21).
- The spousal significance of the body in masculinity and femininity is “newly created” by its insertion in Christ’s redemptive, self-giving love. The spouses must connect the spousal and “redemptive” significance of the body to understand the body’s full meaning.
- In celibacy for the Kingdom, the spousal and redemptive dimensions of love are reciprocally united in a way different from marriage. They make Christ’s spousal, redemptive love for the Church their own and give witness to the hope united to the redemption of the body.
- The “great sacrament” of Christ’s and the Church’s spousal and redemptive love is a new sacrament of man in Christ and in the Church. Marriage is organically inscribed in this sacrament of redemption, just as it was in the original sacrament of creation.
- Man should seek the meaning of his existence and the meaning of his humanity by reaching out to the mystery of creation through the reality of redemption. There we find the meaning of the human body and the person’s masculinity and femininity. The spousal meaning of the body is fulfilled in its redemptive significance, not only in marriage and in continence for the kingdom, but also in suffering and in birth and in death. Marriage as a sacrament remains a living and vivifying part of this saving process.
- Applications
  - Reverence for others based on purity of heart
    - Our interaction with God and others must be reverent.
    - More than anyone, we’re called as priests to see Christ in others, even in the most disfigured images.
    - This must lead to the way we treat others.
      - Certain people maybe easy, in some sense, to revere. It was easy to revere, in a theological sense, Blessed John Paul II and Blessed Mother Teresa. We have some parishioners who likewise radiate holiness and goodness and reverence for them is somewhat easy, both naturally and supernaturally.
      - But there are others who are hard to reverence. They get on our nerves. They behave in a way that makes it hard for us to see God or even good in them. But they are just as much in the image of God and it requires greater work on our part.

- Msgr. Livio Melina and the “lei” form. Greatest teacher. Most other professors used the “tu.” He always used the “lei,” the polite form. I once asked him why. He said because he wanted us to know that he respected us.
- Reverence is different than love but we can borrow many of the same predicates that St. Paul used to describe love in 1 Cor 13. Reverence is patient, kind, not jealous or boastful, arrogant, rude, irritable or resentful.
- How do we grow in reverence:
  - First, by the way we reverence God.
    - First, do we genuinely reverence him?
    - Do we recognize and treat him as the Creator of the World, as his divine majesty?
    - Do we speak to him and of him with reverence? One of the great things about the new translation of the Roman Missal is that it restores a truly sacred and reverent language, which is a start. We must use that language reverently, though, and help our people to do so.
    - Do we make truly reverent genuflections and bows? Do we couple those external signs with interior reverence? Do we ever kneel when we pray?
    - B16 on the importance of receiving Holy Communion reverently:
      - In talking about kneeling to receive Holy Communion, Pope Benedict said in a homily that truly adoring God helps us to reset our life toward God and sever our attachment to any false gods of our ego, work, family, sports teams, celebrities, etc. “We Christians kneel before the Blessed Sacrament because, therein, we know and believe to be the presence of the One True God. ... Kneeling in adoration before the Eucharist is the most valid and radical remedy against the idolatries of yesterday and today.” He also said that bending to adore the Lord teaches us how to bend down in love to wash others’ feet. “He who is able to *kneel* before the Eucharist, who receives the Lord's body cannot fail to be attentive, in the ordinary course of the days, to situations unworthy of man, and is able to *bend down personally* to attend to need, is able to break his bread with the hungry, share water with the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned.”
      - To kneel to receive the Lord is counter cultural. He wrote in a book on the liturgy, “It may well be that kneeling is alien to modern culture—insofar as it is a culture, for this culture has turned away from the faith and no longer knows the One before whom kneeling is the right, indeed the intrinsically necessary gesture. The man who learns to believe learns also to kneel, and a faith or a liturgy no longer familiar with kneeling would be sick at the core. Where it has been lost, kneeling must be rediscovered.”
      - In an interview in 2010, when he was asked about why he started having everyone receive Holy Communion on the tongue while kneeling, Pope Benedict said, “The idea behind my current practice of having people kneel to receive Communion on the tongue was to send a signal and to underscore the Real Presence with an exclamation point. One very important reason is that there is a great danger of superficiality. ... Where people think that everyone is just automatically supposed to receive Communion — everyone else is going up, so I will, too — I wanted to send a clear signal. I wanted it to be clear: Something quite special is going on here! He is here, the One before whom we fall on our knees! Pay attention! This is not just some social ritual in which we can take part if we want to.” It is rather the encounter with God.” And so he sought to made the change to communicate to both communicants and non-communicants alike a sense of the *sacred*. In kneeling, we decrease so that God may increase.

- Do we seek to give God our best? Are we satisfied with our living in a palace and God's living in a tent, as David once said? Or do we like the Curé of Ars try to do all we can to show our reverence for him to try to help the people revere him as well? Our vestments? Our tabernacle? Our decorations in Church?
- Blessed Mother Teresa: She was able to recognize and reverence Christ in the distressing disguises of the poor only by reverencing him for 3 hours a day in the Eucharist. Our prayer, when done reverently, should overflow into our reverence of others.
  - Second, by the way we reverence ourselves
    - This isn't narcissism.
    - The more we see humbly ourselves as sacred beings with all our weakness, as earthen vessels, the easier it is to see and reverence others.
  - Finally, by constantly looking for God and the good in others.
    - Marriages often begin to break down when they cease to "honor" each other, cease to praise each other for the good. They may love 90% of their spouse but they obsess about the 10% they don't. They cease to thank. They take for granted the good and begin to nag about the bad.
    - We can be the same way sometimes. We can focus on those who aren't there rather than those who are. We can focus on people's limitations rather than the gifts God has given them. We can basically begin to say, "what good are five loaves and two fish — all we have — for such a big crowd," failing to remember that anything united with God can bring about a great miracle.
- Mutual submission.
  - Just as husbands cannot "lord" it over brides, so we cannot "lord" over our parishes, our penitents, our parochial vicars, our altar servers, our consultative bodies and others.
  - This is the vice of clericalism about which Pope Francis has spoken out so emphatically. Clericalization means focusing fundamentally on the things of the clergy and, more specifically, the sanctuary, rather than bringing the Gospel to the world. "There's a problem, I have said before: The temptation to a clericalization. We priests tend to clericalize the laity. We do not realize it, but it is as if we infect them with our own disease. And the laity—not all, but many—ask us on their knees to clericalize them, because it is more comfortable to be an altar server than the protagonist of a lay path. We cannot fall into that trap — it is a sinful complicity. Neither to clericalize nor ask to be clericalized."
  - There must be a mutual submission out of love. If we're called to act in persona Christi capitis, then we must remember that he came to serve, not to be served, to give his life in ransom for others, and that we're called to do the same for their sanctification.
  - Some of us, we still have to be honest, are still infected with the spiritual cancer of clericalism, in which we think our priestly ordination entitles us to anything other than union with Christ on the way of the Cross. Like St. Gregory the Great, we're called to be good and faithful, "useless," servants of the servants of God.
  - On the other hand, the people must also learn their Christian identity by their own submission to us in the person of Christ. The Church is not a democracy. There's a trust in the identity, a submission to Christ through us, rather than a crucifixion of Christ. Some of us can be so supine so that, rather than helping the people to learn this holy submission out of love for Christ, we enable them to look at the Church as a democracy on Mt. Olympus where the pagan gods lived. We're able to inspire them to be submissive to Christ, however, by the way we serve the Church and our faithful at the same time as we're laying down our lives for them.
- Sanctification
  - "Christ's love has sanctification as its purpose," John Paul II said. So, too, our love must be geared toward the holiness of our people.
  - In Novo Millennio Ineunte, John Paul II said:

- “I have no hesitation in saying that all pastoral initiatives [Catholic dioceses, parishes, schools, hospitals, catholic social service agencies, prayer clubs, youth ministries, crafts guilds and more] must be set in relation to holiness. ... It is necessary therefore to rediscover the full practical significance of Chapter 5 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium, dedicated to the "universal call to holiness". The Council Fathers laid such stress on this point, not just to embellish ecclesiology with a kind of spiritual veneer, but to make the call to holiness an intrinsic and essential aspect of their teaching on the Church. The rediscovery of the Church as "mystery", or as a people "gathered together by the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit", was bound to bring with it a rediscovery of the Church's "holiness", understood in the basic sense of belonging to him who is in essence the Holy One, the "thrice Holy" (cf. Is 6:3).
- To profess the Church as holy means to point to her as the Bride of Christ, for whom he gave himself precisely in order to make her holy (cf. Ephesians 5:25-26). This as it were objective gift of holiness is offered to all the baptized. (Receiving Christ's nuptial gift). But the gift in turn becomes a task, which must shape the whole of Christian life: "This is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Th 4:3). It is a duty which concerns not only certain Christians: "All the Christian faithful, of whatever state or rank, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity"... to place pastoral planning under the heading of holiness is a choice filled with consequences. It implies the conviction that, since Baptism is a true entry into the holiness of God through incorporation into Christ and the indwelling of his Spirit, it would be a contradiction to settle for a life of mediocrity, marked by a minimalist ethic and a shallow religiosity. To ask catechumens: "Do you wish to receive Baptism?" means at the same time to ask them: "Do you wish to become holy?" It means to set before them the radical nature of the Sermon on the Mount: "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48).
- As the Council itself explained, this ideal of perfection must not be misunderstood as if it involved some kind of extraordinary existence, possible only for a few "uncommon heroes" of holiness. The ways of holiness are many, according to the vocation of each individual. I thank the Lord that in these years he has enabled me to beatify and canonize a large number of Christians, and among them many lay people who attained holiness in the most ordinary circumstances of life. The time has come to re-propose wholeheartedly to everyone this high standard of ordinary Christian living: the whole life of the Christian community and of Christian families must lead in this direction. It is also clear however that the paths to holiness are personal and call for a genuine "training in holiness", adapted to people's needs. This training must integrate the resources offered to everyone with both the traditional forms of individual and group assistance, as well as the more recent forms of support offered in associations and movements recognized by the Church.
- Holiness, however, doesn't just happen. A training is involved. He proposed six pillars for this training which we are called to help our people live. The TOB helps us in each of these pillars:
  - Grace
    - Both Creation
    - Life according to the Holy Spirit
  - Prayer
    - Really is theology on its knees.
    - Teaches us a method of meditation or “ruminatio” on all of salvation history not to mention Sacred Scripture.
  - Mass
    - Everything is geared toward receiving Christ's gift of himself and doing “this” in memory of him.
  - Confession
    - Exposes how the human heart has been changed by the experience of sin and points to the path of redemption so that the human heart can once again become pure.



- Listening to the Word of God.
  - Based on Sacred Scripture.
  - We don't just listen but we "read" anew, re-reading passages on the basis of the unity of Scripture..
- Sharing the Word of God
  - The word is meant to be put into action. We're called to be living exegetes or commentaries.
  - As Pope Benedict wrote in *Verbum Domini*, The saints are those "who have truly lived the word of God," who "let themselves be shaped by the word of God through listening, reading and assiduous meditation." "The Holy Spirit who inspired the sacred authors is the same Spirit who impels the saints to offer their lives for the Gospel. In striving to learn from their example, we set out on the sure way towards a living and effective hermeneutic of the word of God." They are the ones whose lives were "good soil" that received the seed of the word of God and bore fruit 30, 60 or 100-fold
- This was a huge point for JP II: He beatified 1,338 and canonized another 482 men and women boys and girls, more than all his predecessors combined in the five previous centuries.
- But we can only give what we have. In order to catalyze holiness in others, we need to be seeking it ourselves. God's objective holiness doesn't depend on our subjective holiness — that's what the principle of *ex opere operato* means — but at the same time, as Dom Chautard reminded us in his great work *The Soul of the Apostolate*, it is much harder for a parish to become holy if the pastor is not seeking to live a holy life himself.
- This was a huge point for Blessed John Paul II. Encouraging his brother priests to holiness was the great wishes of Pope John Paul II, something he not only spoke about but tried to model. He expressed it in *Gift and Mystery*:
  - GM: When the Second Vatican Council speaks of the universal call to holiness, in the case of the priest we must speak of a special call to holiness. Christ needs holy priests! Today's world demands holy priests! Only a holy priest can become, in an increasingly secularized world, a resounding witness to Christ and his Gospel. And only thus can a priest become a guide for men and women and a teacher of holiness. People, especially the young, are looking for such guides. A priest can be a guide and teacher only to the extent that he becomes an authentic witness! My now long experience, amid so many different situations, has confirmed my conviction that priestly holiness alone is the soil that can nourish an effective pastoral activity.
- Spousal reality of the priesthood
  - We are called to love as Christ loved the Church and gave his life to make her holy by water and the word.
  - The priest is called to be not just a Good Shepherd who gives his life for his sheep, but a husband who gives his life for his bride.
  - The priestly life is one of spousal love. Without it, he is lost. It's crucial to get this.
  - Ecclesial sponsality in Christ the bridegroom.
    - Priests are spoken for. We're not bachelors.
    - This is important for the all male priesthood as well as for the discipline of priestly celibacy. The more we live this sponsality in intentional and practical ways the less these are issues.
    - One of the reasons, I believe, for the constant push for "priests to get married" (or more precisely for married men to be ordained) is because this sponsality of the priesthood, this nuptial dimension of his priesthood, is often not recognized, and this is because often it is not lived.
  - Christ gave himself for the Church. Priests are called to love the Church in this way as well, laying down their lives to make them holy, "killing ourselves," so to speak, to help them become saints. Do our people sense this love from us? Or do we behave sometimes as mercenaries, people hired to serve them between certain hours, on certain days, and when we punch the time clock we're off

duty, even if someone has died and needs a funeral, even if someone needs to be anointed, even if the people will have no access to a Mass?

- Priest's spousal love for bride: not just any people, but a particular people. Many priests are in an unhappy ecclesiastical marriage because of a lack of commitment.
- Priestly stability is important. Curé of Ars would have never accomplished what he did in Ars if he had only be there for a six year assignment.
- The recent scandals show us in an ugly way what happens when this breaks down. Sex-abuse crisis is a demonstration, at various levels, that something was awry. Something remains awry. Larger than the sexual abuse of minors. We know that there are shepherds who are lost sheep and who occasionally lead their people from the fold as well. As I've mentioned, there are, unfortunately, some priests who are committing adultery against God, against their parish, and sometimes against sacramental marriages. They're doing with porn, with women, with men, with themselves. Sometimes these may be sins of weakness; on other occasions, they're part of a real lifestyle that doesn't have even the desire for repentance. It's important for us to be sincere about these things and name them, without exaggerating them. This is one of the reasons why the TOB is so important, not just to know but to live. Clergy sex abuse of minors is about as close to the antithesis of the living the TOB as one could possible get, using one's position to consume the defenseless and the innocent. Violations of chastity for a priest are always adulterous and in fact incestuous.
- Unity in the Church
  - We see in Ephesians that the Church is Christ's Body, Christ' Bride. This points to the unity between them.
  - St. Paul fought so hard for unity in early Church.
    - Saul, why do you persecute me?
    - One faith, one Lord, one baptism.
    - Problems in Corinth, with Kephas, Apollo, Paul. We, though many members, are one body.
  - We need to be agents of unity. To fight for this.
  - The family is being ripped apart because we don't look at each other as family. We look at each other as strangers. See this with immigration in the United States — we'd never want to deport our blood brothers and sisters. We see this in criticism — we'd never want to humiliate our brothers and sisters publicly.
  - We priests must set a high standard for remembering always that we're dealing with people who are our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- St. Paul called on all husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the Church, laying down his life to make her holy by water and the word. If he were speaking to priests, he'd be able to say, "Brother Priests, love the Church, love your parish, love your people as Christ loved the Church, laying down his life to make her holy. Purify her by the sacraments. Purify her by the Word of God. So as together with Christ to present her holy and immaculate before the Father at the eternal wedding banquet. Christ never calls us to any task without promising all the graces we need in order to accomplish it. Let's count on those graces. Christ's love has sanctification as its purpose and that is also the purpose of his love for us and through us for his beloved people.