

# Interpersonal Relations in the Theology of the Body

*Notes*

## Introduction

- A. It is an honor for me to be here. My task during this conference is to show why the theology of the body is important, why people should get excited about it.
- B. TOB is first of all “theology”, the study of God. But it is a way of looking at God in and through the human body, which is the sacrament, or external sign, of the person (a body-soul unity).
- C. TOB refers to the 129 catecheses between September 5, 1979 and November 28, 1984. John Paul II says that these catecheses could be called “Human Love in the Divine Plan” or “The Redemption of the Body and the Sacramentality of Marriage.”
- D. There are generally two triptychs in this work:
  - 1. JP II said, at the end of the catecheses, that there were two main breakdowns:
    - a. A study of Christ’s words, analyzed in the totality of the Gospel text:
      - i. Christ’s reference to “the beginning” in his discussion on the unity and indissolubility in marriage;
      - ii. Christ’s words concerning concupiscence as “adultery committed in the heart”;
      - iii. and what Christ said about the resurrection of the body.
    - b. The analysis of the sacrament based on Ephesians, which goes back to the “beginning” of marriage (Gen 2:24).
      - i. This involves virginity and celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven
      - ii. Sacramentality of marriage based on Eph 5:22-23
      - iii. A re-reading of the teachings of *Humanae Vitae* based on the redemption of the body and sacramentality of marriage.
- E. TOB was written to give new, more solid premises for the conclusions of *Humanae Vitae* (HV). This is one of the subject matters that has created all types of problems in the Church. It’s important for Catholics to understand the “why” behind the “what” and how the teaching of HV accords with who we are and who we should be. This accords with the second title, “The Redemption of the Body and the Sacramentality of Marriage.”
- F. The first title, though, shows the larger focus. “Human Love in the Divine Plan.” The main core of the teaching of HV is about Human Love. We’ve been made in the image and likeness of God who is love and called to love others as God has loved us and them. This penetrates every aspect of human life.
  - 1. JP II says in his last catechesis that the “theology of the body” goes beyond reflections on sexuality to include, for example, suffering and death. This obviously refers to large parts of the practice of medicine.
- G. So the TOB is a revolutionary way to look at theological anthropology, who we are in light of God. It totally transforms the way Catholics have traditionally looked at human sexuality, but it also has applications to all interpersonal relations.
- H. That’s what I’d like to focus on in this talk. To do a read through of TOB to flesh out those principles that point the way to how God from the beginning has called us to relate to each other with love as a foundation for what comes later not only on this panel but throughout this conference.

## I. The original unity of man and woman

- A. Man is created by God in the image and likeness of God, not in the image of creatures. This image involves sexual differentiation: “God created man in his image ... male and female he created them.” God pronounced the human person “very good.” **Genesis established a solid basis for metaphysics, anthropology and ethics**, which has importance for the theology of body.

- B. Christ goes back to the state of original innocence **and his words are normative for the theology of man and for the theology of body. We cannot understand man's present state without reference to his beginning.**
- C. Man's original solitude
1. God said: "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Gen 2:18). This "man" refers to the human person, and not just to the male.
  2. Man realized this on his own. He was different from God and the rest of creation. He was self-consciously in search of his identity and felt alone (another sign of self-knowledge).
  3. God's command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil provides man the **moment of choice and self-determination, of free will.**
- D. The original unity of man and woman
1. The meaning of original solitude (man-Adam) is substantially prior to the meaning of original unity (male-female).
  2. Woman's being made from Adam's rib shows a bodily homogeneity, of the same flesh and bone (Gen 2:23). Woman was previously defined as a helper fit for him. ... **Woman was for man and vice versa. Man discovers his own humanity through the other's help. This first and "original" emotion of the male in the presence of the female is noteworthy.**
  3. This original unity through masculinity and femininity overcame original solitude while affirming what constitutes the human person in solitude. Original solitude is the way that leads to the unity of the **communion of persons.**
  4. **"Communion" points to the existential help derived from the other. One exists "for" the other. Prior to the creation of a helper, man was alone because he is by nature a being "for" another. The communion of persons is formed by the double solitude of man and woman distinct from creation and from God, in their mutual help for each other, flowing from their self-knowledge (subjectivity) and self-determination (free choice). Sex is a constituent part of the person.**
  5. Gen 1 speaks of man created in the "image of God" but Gen 2 points to this communion of persons. **Man became the "image and likeness" of God not only through his own humanity, but also through the communion of persons. He is an image in the solitude of a Person who rules the world, but also, and essentially, as an image of a Trinitarian communion of Persons. This latter point is probably the deepest theological aspect that can be said about man and about the theology of the body.**
  6. In sum, the **body**, which through its own masculinity or femininity, right from the beginning helps both ("a helper fit for him") to find themselves in communion of persons, **becomes, in a particular way, the constituent element of their union**, when they become husband and wife.
- E. The unity and indissolubility of marriage
1. The unity of Gen 2:24, **"they become one flesh," is what happens in the conjugal act. The body allows the unity of persons when they submit their communion of persons to the blessing of fertility.** Every time man and woman unite in "one flesh," they rediscover the mystery of **creation**, as flesh and bones of each other, and call each other by name.
  2. **Becoming one flesh is a way to discover their own humanity, in original unity and duality of mysterious mutual attraction.**
  3. Choice establishes the conjugal pact. This choice presumes a mature consciousness of the body and the meaning of the body in the mutual self-giving of persons.
  4. Procreation is rooted in creation and reproduces its mystery.
- F. The meaning of original nakedness; meaning of shame
1. With the first sin, there was a radical change in the meaning of original nakedness.
  2. In shame, the human being experiences fear with regard to his "second self," and this is substantially fear for his own "self." But it also involves an "instinctive" need for affirmation and acceptance. It is a complex experience that both keeps human beings apart as well as draws them closer.
  3. **The original lack of shame points to the original depth in affirming what is inherent in the person that allows for true mutual interpersonal communion.** The "exterior" perception of physical nakedness corresponds to the "interior" fullness of seeing the other as God does, in his image, as "very good." *Nakedness signifies the original good of God's vision*, of the "pure" value of humanity as male and female, of the body and of sex.
- G. The nuptial meaning of the body
1. **Genesis allows us to ground an adequate anthropology in the theological context of the image of God in the "hermeneutics of the gift."**
  2. **Creation is itself a fundamental and "radical" giving by God**, in which the gift comes into being from nothingness. **Every creature bears within him the sign of the original and fundamental gift.**
  3. **God created the world as a gift to man, "for him."** Man is capable of understanding this gift which is creation. **But man waits for a being with whom he can exist in a relationship of mutual giving.** Both God and he recognize that it is not good for him to be alone; man realizes his essence only by existing "with someone" and

“for someone.” **The communion of persons means existing in a mutual “for”, in a relationship of mutual gift.** This is the fulfillment of man’s original solitude. This explains, too, man’s original happiness. This mutual gift happens through love.

4. **The body is the original sign of a creative donation and of the awareness of this by man and woman.** The male and female body is a witness to, a sacrament of, this gift. This is how sex enters the theology of the body. “This is my body given for you!”
  5. **The body has a “nuptial meaning,” the sign and means of this personal gift.**
  6. This procreative finality is part of the nuptial meaning of the body.
  7. Gaudium et Spes 24: Man is the only creature in the visible world that God willed "for its own sake," and man "can fully discover his true self only in a sincere giving of himself."
  8. Man and woman were revealed as created for the sake of the other and find each other only in giving of themselves to each other. **Man and woman have this original “nuptial” understanding of the body, that they are created for each other in love.**
  9. **The human body is created to express love through the gift and to affirm the other through existential self-giving “for [the other’s] sake.”** This causes man’s original happiness. The nuptial meaning of the body will remain after the fall, but will undergo many distortions, as it awaits the “redemption of the body.”
  10. The body has a nuptial meaning because the person has a **nuptial nature.**
  11. This nuptial meaning can be fulfilled in the vocation to marriage but also in making a gift of themselves for the kingdom of heaven.
- H. Mystery of man’s original innocence
1. **The fullness of the nuptial meaning of the body in its original nakedness is rooted in love.**
  2. Man’s original innocence is founded interiorly on his participation in the interior life of God himself in his holiness through an original benefaction of grace.
  3. The nuptial meaning of the body is discovered through original innocence.
  4. This original innocence is a particular “purity of heart” that preserves an interior faithfulness to the gift according to the nuptial meaning of the body.
  5. Mutual donation and acceptance (“welcoming”) creates the communion of persons. The giving and accepting interpenetrate, **so that the giving itself becomes accepting, and the acceptance is transformed into giving. The opposite of this would be a privation of the gift and a reduction of the other to an “object for myself,” an object of lust.**
  6. **Man entered the world with an ethos to his body, which is meant for self-gift in love.**
  7. The nuptial meaning of the body allows us to know who man and woman are and should be, and therefore how he should mold his activity.
  8. **Man is the highest expression of divine self-giving, and the nuptial meaning of the body is the primordial sacrament, which efficaciously transmits the invisible mystery of God’s Truth and Love.**
  9. Because man and the world constituted a sacrament of God’s truth and love, man and the world were holy. Man sensed this holiness in the nuptial meaning of body.
  10. After original sin, they lose the grace of original innocence, and the nuptial meaning of the body is obscured, but remains as a distant echo of original innocence through love.
- I. Biblical knowledge and procreation; motherhood
1. Conjugal union in one flesh is defined as knowledge, which is reciprocal.
  2. The individual person is known, not just the other sex. **Man comes to know himself and the full meaning of his body through this reciprocal knowledge, which is at the basis of the theology of the body.** The knowledge that was the basis of man’s original solitude (in knowing himself different from God and the rest of creation) is now at the basis of the unity of man and woman. Man confirms Eve’s name as “mother of all the living” (Gen 3:20).
  3. **The mystery of femininity is manifested and revealed completely through motherhood, although it is initially hidden. Woman stands before man as a mother. The mystery of man’s masculinity, the generative and “fatherly” meaning of his body, is also thoroughly revealed.**
  4. Man and woman know each other in the third, sprung from them both, which is a new revelation and discovery of themselves.
  5. There is a generative meaning to the body, which is connected to the nuptial meaning. Masculinity conceals within it the meaning of fatherhood; femininity that of motherhood. The theology of the body has its roots in this beginning.
  6. Adam and Eve are tempted to try to take possession of the other through a Biblical equivalent of eros that would not have been present before the Fall, in which there was **no possessiveness.** After the Fall, man and woman must arduously reconstruct the meaning of the disinterested mutual gift.

7. Man's sentence after the fall, "you shall return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Gen 3:19), shows that death hovers over the human experience of life. Eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil detached man from God and from the tree of life. **Life is not taken away, but given to man as a task in an ever-recurring cycle of conception, birth and death.** Life always overcomes death. **Knowledge always allows man to surpass his solitude and affirm his being in the other, and then together in the new being generated. Man, despite suffering, sinfulness and death,** continues to put "knowledge" at the "beginning" of "generation" and thereby participates in God's vision of man from the beginning as very good.
- J. Christ's answer about marriage: an integral vision of man
1. We discover man's true identity from the beginning in the mystery of creation in Christ within the mystery of redemption. **This is how we construct a theological anthropology and a theology of the body** from which the full Christian view of marriage and family emerge. **This is Christ's total vision of man to which we must return in our day in which it is obscured.**
  2. The beginning reveals to us the meaning and necessity of the theology of the body, which we see is a pre-scientific knowledge of the body in the structure of the personal subject. This understanding must be the basis of all modern science on human sexuality. **When the Word became flesh, the body entered theology (the science of God) and the incarnation and redemption became the definitive source of the sacramentality of marriage.**
  3. Christians, especially those with the vocation to marry, are called to make this "theology of the body" the content of their life and behavior. **They need to rediscover the nuptial and generative meaning of the body.** Christ leads man (male-female) in the sacrament of marriage along the path of the "redemption of the body" and the rediscovery of the body's dignity, meaning, and call to communion.

## II. Purity of Heart versus Concupiscence: Catechesis on the Sermon on the Mount.

- A. Christ interiorizes the law
1. In the Sermon on the Mount, **Christ fundamentally revises our way of following the commandments.** 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.**
- B. Lust as the result of the Fall, a breach in the covenant with God.
1. 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. These point to the truth about man and are important for the theology of the body.**
  2. 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 we will understand the "lustful man" and explain his relationship to the human heart, which is so important for the theology of the body.
  3. 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."**
  4. **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.**
  5. **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 the 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.**

6. 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.**
  7. **The lustful man does not control his body as before the fall. He is no longer automatically master of himself.**
  8. **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.**
  9. 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.** .
  10. **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.**
  11. Man’s heart will now lust and dominion will ensue. The fall led to division among man and woman. *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.
  12. 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.**
  13. **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.
  14. **After sin, femininity and masculinity ceased to be expressions aiming at interpersonal communion, remaining only objects of attraction.**
  15. The human body has “almost” (but not completely) lost the capacity of expressing the love of mutual self-donation.
  16. 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.
  17. 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.
  18. 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.”
  19. 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.**
  20. 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.**
- C. The ethos of the Gospel and the sin of adultery
1. Jesus refers to the “hardness of heart” which led Moses to allow divorce.
  2. **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.**
  3. **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.**
  4. **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.**

5. 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!** 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
  6. 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.
- D. Rediscovering the true ethical values
1. Christ’s statement aims at constructing the new ethos of the Gospel and the **rediscovery of those values lost by historical man.**
  2. **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.**
  3. **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.
  4. **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.
  5. 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.**
  6. 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. Besides lust, man senses a deep need to preserve the dignity, beauty and love of mutual relations in the body.
  7. 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.
  8. 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.
  9. 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.”**
  10. The new man can emerge **when the ethos of the redemption of the body dominates lust through self-mastery, by means of temperance (contenance of desires).**
  11. 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.**
  12. **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.
  13. **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).**
  14. **The type of purity of heart to which Jesus referred in the Sermon on the Mount is realized in life “according to the spirit.”**

### III. St. Paul's Teaching on the Human Body: Life according to the Spirit

- A. What life according to the spirit consists of
1. Paul uses "flesh" to coincide with the Johannine threefold lust, which often wins against the Spirit. "Flesh" refers in Paul to the man who is "interiorly" subjected to the "world," its secularism and sensualism. The Spirit wants the opposite of what the flesh wants. Life according to the Spirit is a synthesis and program.
  2. In Romans 8:5-10, this distinction between flesh and spirit is phrased in terms of justification. One who lives according to the Spirit sets the mind on the things of the Spirit, and Christ is alive in them.
  3. The contrast between life of the flesh and of the spirit is seen in **the works or fruits of each** (Gal 5:19-23). This is a contrast between the threefold lust and the ethos of redemption, which is the Spirit operating in man. Behind the fruits of the Spirit — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control — there is **moral virtue, choice, the effort of the will, and the help of the Spirit against three-fold lust**. They are more "fruit" of the Spirit's action than the "work" of man. Self-control is particularly important to our reflections.
  4. In St. Paul's list of works of the flesh, he lists specifically carnal sins (fornication, impurity, licentiousness, drunkenness, carousing) **as well as "sensual" sins (idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy)**. These are sins of the "spirit of man" coming from each of the three-fold lusts. **For St. Paul, following Christ, real purity comes from man's heart and concerns more than the sexual.**
  5. There is the call to **put to death the deeds of the body** by the Spirit in order to live (Rom 8:12-13). This is the same appeal Christ made to the human heart to control its desires. This is the indispensable condition to life according to the Spirit, which is the antithesis of death. Life according to the flesh, by contrast, involves the death of the Spirit. This is what is meant by a "mortal" sin. This is why St. Paul says those who do the works of the flesh will not inherit the kingdom (Gal 5:21).
  6. The whole law is fulfilled in the Gospel commandment of charity. **The new Gospel ethos appeals to man freely to choose this love. Paul, like Christ, stresses that freedom is for love. Christ set us free so that we might love freely.** This is the vocation to freedom, in which life according to the Spirit is realized. But the choice is ours: **"Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another"** (Gal 5:13). We can misuse freedom against the Spirit. **Living according to the flesh negates this use of freedom for which Christ set us free.** We return to the "yoke" of the three-fold lust. Man no longer is suited to the real gift of himself in freedom according to the nuptial meaning of his body.
- B. Purity of heart
1. In 1 Thess 4:3-5, **Paul calls man to holiness, which is the real purity of heart:** "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from unchastity; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like heathens who do not know God." He contrasts "holiness" to "uncleanness" (v. 7).
  2. **Purity is a virtue, or capacity, for self-control.** It must be rooted in the **will**, or as St. Thomas Aquinas says, in the **concupiscible appetite**.
  3. Purity also allows for controlling the body in "holiness and honor." This abstinence and control are mutually dependent; one is impossible without the other. It overcomes the flesh for the sake of the Spirit. **The Pauline notion of purity is right, complete and adequate. It is not just a virtue, but a fruit and manifestation of life according to the Spirit.**
  4. **St. Paul reveals the Christian virtue of purity as an effective way to become detached from the fruit of lust of the flesh in the human heart. According to Paul, purity is a "capacity" centered on the dignity of the person in relation to the (femininity or masculinity which is manifested in his or her) body. It is a fruit of life according to the Spirit. The moral dimension (virtue) and the charismatic dimension (the gift of the HS) are closely connected.**
  5. **The body is called to be the "temple" of the Holy Spirit** (1 Cor 6:19). Right before this, he says, "Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body." These sins are against the "holiness" and "honor" of the body. Such sins "profane" the body, and therefore the temple of the HS. Because of the indwelling of God in the person, man's body is not "his own." **The HS is another source of the dignity of the body and of the moral duty flowing from this dignity. In the redemption, Christ has imprinted on the body a new dignity, since the body with the soul has been admitted to union with the Person of the Son through the redemption of the body. Man was bought "with a price" (6:20). This brings about the duty of controlling one's body in holiness and honor.** The fruit

of redemption is the HS, who dwells in man and his body as in a temple. **The body is therefore not meant for “immorality” but “for the Lord” and “the Lord for the body” (6:13).**

6. **The indwelling of the HS in the temple of the human body bears fruit in the man who lives according to the Spirit. The gift of piety serves purity**, making the human subject sensitive to that dignity of the human body by virtue of creation and redemption. **This helps us to reverence God in the body and realize we are not our own.**
  7. Paul says, “So glorify God in your body” (v. 20).
  8. **Purity is the glory of the human body before God. The dignity of love in interpersonal relations glorifies God.** From purity flows beauty, which leads to simplicity, cordiality, and personal trust in love. **The connection of purity with love and purity-in-love with piety is a little known part of the theology of the body we will take up later.**
  9. In summary, this **purity of heart is the positive good** which is opened by the overcoming of desire (through the “negative” side of temperance). **It is the true freedom from lust.**
  10. St. Paul’s description of “life according to the Spirit” gives a complete image of Christ’s words on the purity of the heart. Christ’s words contain ethical and anthropological truth and hence are important for the theology of the body. They are realistic; they do not call man to the state of original innocence, but indicate to him the path to purity in the state of hereditary sinfulness through life according to the Spirit and the redemption of the body carried out by Christ. Purity of heart allows man to rediscover and realize the nuptial value of the body.
  11. The gift of piety allows man to treat his body as the temple of the Holy Spirit and experience the joy of mastering himself and giving himself to others.
- C. The role of the magisterium in teaching about the human heart
1. **Christ’s words to the human “heart” and to the “beginning” teach us about man and enable us to outline a theology of the body. Christ gives us a pedagogy of the body, from which this theology is derived. Man is called to follow it. God has assigned a task to the human body, to bring the person into loving communion of persons.** This theology is the best and fundamental method of the pedagogy of the body, because it focuses not just on biological processes, but on the body’s dignity and purpose. It is a “**spirituality of the body.**”
  2. **Biological understanding of the body can actually obscure the meaning of the body unless it is accompanied by this spiritual understanding.**
  3. The modern Church’s pronouncements understand, interpret and apply Christ’s teaching to present situations. *Gaudium et Spes (II,I)* and *Humanae Vitae* must be studied about the dignity of marriage and the family, and *reread according to the theology and pedagogy of the body found in Christ’s words*. GS talked about problems of polygamy, divorce, free-love, selfishness, hedonism and contraception. HV talked about the harm to women from contraception. To them, Christ speaks about the unity and indissolubility of marriage, and Paul about purity of heart and mastering the lust of the flesh. HV spoke about mastering our instincts by reason, free will, asceticism and the practice of periodic continence. The theology of the body — especially the dignity of persons, the relationship between ethos and eros, and purity of heart— is “*indispensable*” for understanding all that Paul VI wrote.
  4. The Gospel of purity of heart, yesterday and today, concludes this cycle of considerations.

## IV. Marriage and celibacy in light of the resurrection of the body

- A. Christ’s words on the levirate law and resurrection (Mt 22:24-30; Mk 12: 18-27; Lk 20:27-40 based on Deut 25:5-10)
  1. Christ gives the revelation of historical man’s body by going **first to the beginning, then to the heart, to the resurrection.** Christ’s words on the resurrection open up a new truth about man and clarify several other things:
  2. **Marriage and procreation constitute the “beginning” but not the eschatological future of man. They lose their raison d’être; at the eschaton,**
  3. The resurrection refers not just to the recovery of corporeity and integral human life of body and soul, **but to a completely new state of human life.**
  4. Man will become like or equal to angels not through disincarnation but through a **spiritualization** of his somatic nature and a new harmonious submission of the body to spirit. The spirit will fully permeate the body and the body will subordinate to it without opposition. This will be man’s perfect “realization,” when the primacy of the “spirit” will be achieved.
  5. There will also be a “divinization” of man’s humanity. The “sons of the resurrection” will be “sons of God.” **Participation in God’s interior life will reach its peak in man’s nature.**



6. **Christ seems to reveal a new “nuptial” meaning to the resurrected body, the “virginal” meaning of being male and female. This involves an understanding of the “vision,” truth and love of heaven.** God’s self-communication to man involves this “vision” of the mystery of the Triune God, and will involve the content and “form” of man’s whole existence. **Man will participate in God’s life not through faith but through vision.**
  7. God created man male and female, **envisaging a unity through this duality** that he linked with procreation. Procreation will no longer be present in the future world, but Christ does not state that they will not be male and female. The meaning of male and female can be sought in creation, but in something other than marriage and procreation. Man’s original solitude revealed him as a person in order to “reveal” the communion of persons in the unity of the two. In both states, the person is in the image and likeness of God. The original (virginal) meaning of the body is for life in communion of persons. Marriage and procreation give concrete reality to that meaning in history. **In heaven, the nuptial meaning of the body will correspond to man’s being created in the image and likeness of God (personal) and realized in the communion of persons (communitarian).** This will be the fulfillment of man’s earthly life. The freedom of the gift of communion that comprises the communion of saints will be simple and splendid.
- B. The Pauline anthropology of the Resurrection
1. **Paul personally knew of the fact of Christ’s resurrection and of his resurrected body;**
  2. Paul contrasts the resurrected body — which is imperishable, glorious, full of power, incorruptible, spiritual — with the historical body, and the first Adam (beginning) with the Last Adam (Christ), who is a life-giving spirit (end). **Thereby Paul reproduces Christ’s synthesis about the beginning, about the human heart, and about the other world.** He mentions the creation of Adam (Adam’s becoming a living being) and the corrupting effects of original sin (perishable... weak... in dishonor... decay). Creation “groans in travail” (Rom 8:22) for the revealing of the sons of God, the liberation from decay and the glorious freedom of God’s children (Rom 5:19-21). **There’s the same hope as in childbirth: “we grow inwardly as we await adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies” (Rom 8:23). Paul announces the contemplation of this redemption in resurrection.**
  3. Paul writes using antitheses. In contrasting Adam and Christ, Paul shows the poles of the mystery of creation and redemption in which man’s life is in tension. We will one day bear the image of the “man of heaven,” the fulfillment of the “man of earth.” There is an inner potential in earthly man for this glorious incorruptible image of the second Adam. **Every man in the image of Adam is called to bear in himself the image of Christ.**
  4. Paul calls the earthly body weak, meaning not only perishable and subject to death, but that it is an animal body. The resurrected, spiritual body will be full of power, because it will be inherited from Christ. This antinomy refers to the whole of man, not just his body. This will be a restitution not to the beginning but to a new fullness. In earthly man, the “animal” (physical) body dominates; in heavenly man, the spirit prevails. This is not an anthropological (soul/body) dualism, but a basic antinomy (Spirit vs. flesh). This latter distinctly pervades all of Paul’s anthropology.

## V. Virginity or celibacy “for the sake of the kingdom”

- A. Christ’s words on the vocation to continence
1. **The exclusive donation of self to God in virginity and celibacy has deep roots in the theology of the body, in the beginning and in the resurrection of the body.** Christ’s reference to heaven indicates a life without marriage in which **man and woman find the fullness of personal gift and communion of persons through glorification in eternal union with God.** This is where celibacy for the sake of the kingdom is grounded. But there remains an essential difference between continence in this world and heavenly life.
  2. Continence is not in opposition to marriage. **Continence is not chosen because marriage is inexpedient but positively for the value of the kingdom.** Christ mentions that it is a gift, that the one to whom this precept was given should receive it. This is a counsel concerning some, not a command which binds all.
  3. Continence is an “exception” to the general rule of this life, in anticipation of the eschatological life without marriage. **It is not a question of continence *in* the Kingdom, but *for* the Kingdom.**
  4. There is no tradition in the Old Testament of celibacy or virginity, and it was considered a curse (as with daughter of Jephthah, Jdg 11:37). Marriage and procreation had consecrated significance in Abraham.
  5. **Christ presents the virginal meaning of the body to his disciples.** This was a decisive turning point.
  6. **There must be supernatural finality to continence,** otherwise we’re dealing with something else.
  7. **Continence for the kingdom is a charismatic, eschatological sign pointing to the resurrection when people will no longer marry and God will be everything to everyone. This is the eschatological “virginity”**

of the risen man, in whom we see the absolute and eternal nuptial meaning of the glorified body in union with God through the face to face vision of him, as well as the perfect intersubjectivity of the communion of saints.

B. Mary's and Christ's examples

1. **Christ was born of a virgin, from the virginal maternity of Mary.**
2. **Mary and Joseph are the first witnesses of a fruitfulness of the Spirit** — that which is conceived in her is of the HS (Mt 1:20) — not of the flesh.
3. Joseph and Mary were united in **perfect communion of persons in marriage** and at the same time continent for the Kingdom of heaven, which was fruitful in the HS.
4. Christ's disciples could understand his words only on the basis of his personal example. **Only slowly did they realize the spiritual fecundity from the HS in man who is continent for the sake of the Kingdom.**
5. **Christ shows continence is a particularly effective and privileged way to enter the kingdom. This has decisive meaning for the ethos and theology of the body.** Christ chose it for himself, not because it is "not expedient to marry," but "**for the kingdom.**"
6. This "for the kingdom" has both objective (the reality of the state) and subjective (motivational) importance. To be spiritually fruitful in the HS, continence must be willed and chosen through faith to identify with the truth and reality of that kingdom now. Such continence bears and participates in the dynamism of the redemption of the body and features a particular likeness to Christ.

C. Relationship between marriage and continence

1. God said "it is not good for man to be alone."
2. **Marriage and continence shed light on each other.** Man in the beginning was not only "dual" but "alone" before God with God, called to the communion of persons. **The call to continence preserves these truths.**
3. Continence is a second way of responding to man's original solitude toward an even fuller form of **intersubjective communion with others**, through the development of God's image and likeness in its Trinitarian meaning.
4. In the "historical" man who chooses continence voluntarily for the Kingdom, there is still the heritage of the threefold concupiscence. **He, like someone who is married, must subjugate sinfulness in his nature through the redemption of the body.**
5. Christ does not explicitly affirm the superiority of the "exceptional" vocation of continence for the Kingdom, although he establishes it implicitly. Paul talks about the "better" state of the choice of continence (1Cor 7:38).
6. Calling continence a "state of perfection" deals with all the counsels, corresponding to Christ's call to perfection (Mt 19:21). **Perfection in Christian life is measured by charity**, and individual married people can achieve higher states than individual, continent religious.
7. The values of marriage and continence interpenetrate each other. **Perfect conjugal love must be marked by faithful self-giving to Jesus the Bridegroom. Continence must express conjugal love in total gift of oneself to God. Both express the conjugal meaning of the body.**
8. **Continence must lead to spiritual "paternity" or "maternity" analogously to conjugal love.**

D. The kingdom of heaven

1. Christ spoke of the kingdom of heaven, or of God, as both "now" and "not yet," as present and future.
2. Christ himself doesn't explain explicitly why continence is helpful for the establishment of the kingdom. Everyone is invited to the kingdom and everybody is called to work for it.
3. The kingdom of Heaven is the definitive fulfillment of the aspirations of all men and of the goodness of God's bounty toward man.
4. To understand what it is for those choosing it in voluntary continence, we have to understand the nuptial relationship of Christ with the Church.
5. The disciples and then the whole Tradition will discover that the love which makes this renunciation possible is referred to Christ himself as the Spouse of the Church, the Spouse of souls, to whom Christ has given himself to the limit. **Continence for the kingdom is a particular response of love for the Divine Spouse, that has acquired the meaning of nuptial love**, reciprocating the nuptial love of the Redeemer. This giving of oneself is understood as renunciation but made above all out of love.
6. This analysis, first of marriage "from the beginning" then of continence for the Kingdom allows us to recall and **reread the nuptial meaning of the body in its masculinity and femininity. This nuptial meaning of the body is not reducible to animals' "sexual instinct," which neglects the interpersonal reality of human subjectivity.** In continence for the Kingdom, not only "sexual instinct" is involved but the "**freedom of the gift**" in mature knowledge of the nuptial meaning of the body. **Only in relation to the masculine and feminine "for-the-other" does voluntary supernatural continence find full motivation in response to the "gift" that is "received."** Man and woman can therefore — on the basis of the same personal disposition and same nuptial

meaning — **give themselves freely and totally to Christ**. This latter gift to Christ cannot be made without knowledge of the **nuptial meaning of one's life in masculinity or femininity**. If continence is based on anything less, it would not correspond adequately to Christ's words.

- E. St. Paul's treatment of virginity and marriage
1. Paul says that one who chooses continence does "better" because "the time is already short... and this world is passing away." Paul uses his own experience "I wish that all were as I myself am" (1Cor 7:7).
  2. Paul's comments about the transient character of the temporal world prepares the ground for his teaching on continence for the Kingdom: "The unmarried person is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord." This is parallel to "eunuch... for the kingdom." The affair of the Lord is the establishment of the kingdom. The kingdom is the "better part" that Mary chose (Lk 10:41) and that disciples should "seek first" (Lk 12:31).
  3. The unmarried can totally dedicate his mind, toil, and heart to the kingdom, to the whole world, to the Church (which is Christ's kingdom). Paul wishes we were all like him in this. The anxiety itself is a gift of the Lord. "To please the Lord" is a synthesis of holiness, and is a motivation for continence. Christ said, "I always do what is pleasing to him (the Father)" (Jn 8:99). To be "anxious" about the Lord's affairs is to please him, as Christ did at 12 being found in the temple]. It has love as its foundation. Man always tries to please the person he loves.
  4. Paul mentions "each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind, and one of another" (v. 7). Those who live marriage receive a "gift" from God, as do the continent for the Kingdom.
  5. He reminds everyone that "the form of this world is passing away." The kingdom of God, and not the world, is man's eternal destiny. **This is the theology of great expectation**. Marriage is tied to the "form of this world." The Christian must live marriage in view of this definitive vocation. **The continent lives already in great expectation, according to this definitive vocation**; this, by "pleasing the Lord" and being "anxious" about His affairs, is why he does "better"
- F. Mystery of body's redemption as basis of teaching on marriage and voluntary continence
1. In Rom 8, Paul says "we groan inwardly as we await... the redemption of the body" and the "revelation" of the "**glorious liberty of the children of God**." The redemption of the body is the object of hope, planted in the proto-evangelium (Gen 3:15). This **hope of salvation has its anthropological dimension in man's redemption, but also a cosmic dimension, redeeming the whole of creation. Christ revealed man to himself by making him aware of his sublime vocation** (GS 22).
  2. To understand all that "the redemption of the body" implies, **we need an authentic theology of the body**. The constitutive elements are found in what Christ says about "the beginning" and the indissolubility of marriage, about concupiscence and the "human heart," and in what he says about the resurrection. **Christ is speaking to man about man, who is "body" (male and female) created in the image and likeness of God, subject "historically" to concupiscence and called to redemption**.
  3. We await the redemption of the body, which is the **eschatological victory over (bodily) death**.
  4. **But this bodily redemption is not just an eschatological victory over death, but a moral victory over sin, the overcoming of concupiscence**. In daily life, man must draw from this mysterious bodily redemption in overcoming the three-fold concupiscence, in marriage and in continence for the Kingdom. **This participation in redemption in this world in the human heart and in human actions fills us with the great eschatological hope of the fullness of redemption**.
  5. Christ's words help us to discover and strengthen the bond between the dignity of the human being and the nuptial meaning of the body and thereby put into practice the mature freedom of the gift in indissoluble marriage or continence for the Kingdom. In each, Christ reveals man to himself and makes him aware of his "sublime vocation," inscribed in him through the mystery of the redemption of the body.

## VI. The Sacramentality of Marriage based on Ephesians 5:22-33

- A. Introduction to the Letter to the Ephesians
1. Eph 5:22-33 is a "crowning" of Christ's words on the "beginning," the human "heart" and the future resurrection.
  2. Ephesians speaks about the body, referring metaphorically to the body of Christ which 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.
  3. **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.
  4. The essential content of the letter has two principle guidelines:
    - a. the mystery of Christ expresses the divine plan for man's salvation, realized in the Church;
    - b. the Christian vocation as the model of life of the baptized **corresponds to the mystery of Christ and God's plan for man's salvation**.

- B. Reverence for Christ is the basis of the relationship between spouses
1. Husbands and wives are called to be **“subject to one another out of reverence for Christ”** (5:21). “Reverence” is a true respect for holiness, the OT “reverential fear,” “piety” or “awe” of God.
  2. Reverence for Christ should lead to mutual subjection. 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.”
  3. **Love excludes every type of subjection in which the wife would be a slave or servant of the husband.**
  4. **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.**
- C. The three analogies
1. Ephesians uses a “great analogy,” **Christ:Church :: husband:wife :: head:body.**
  2. **The salvific mystery of Christ’s love is imaged in and can be most adequately expressed by analogy to conjugal love**
  3. **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. 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.**
  4. Christ is head as “Savior of his body,” the Church. “Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her” (Eph 5:25). **Through a total self-giving of himself in love Christ formed the Church as his body and continually builds her up, becoming her head.**
  5. 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.**
  6. **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).**
  7. **Love makes the “I” of the other his own.** The body is the expression of that “I” and the foundation of its identity. This is reciprocal. The “I” morally becomes the “you” and vice versa.
  8. **“Nourishment” and “care” bring scholars to think about the Eucharist, by which Christ in spousal love nourishes the Church in becoming “one flesh” with her.**
  9. 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.**
- D. The great mystery of Christ’s spousal love
1. Ephesians cites Gen 2:24 about leaving father and mother to be joined to his wife in one flesh in order to present the mystery of Christ with the Church from which the unity of spouses is derived. 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.
  2. 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.
- E. Rereading the “beginning” on the basis of Ephesians
1. 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 which effectively transmits visibly the invisible mystery hidden from eternity in God, the mystery of Truth, love and divine life.
  2. 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” (Eph 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.
  3. **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.**

4. **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.
  5. **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 Eph 5.** Marriage remained, however, **the platform for the actuation of God’s eternal designs, preparing them for redemption.**
  6. 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.**
  7. This sacrament of redemption is the definitive fulfillment of the mystery hidden from eternity in God. **Original gracing gave man original innocence in justice; new gracing gives him “remission of sins,” where grace can abound “even more” (Rom 5:20).**
  8. **The sacrament of redemption is a permanent dimension of the life of the Church.**
  9. **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.**
  10. All sacraments find their prototype in marriage as the primordial sacrament. But marriage is more than a model for them. **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.
  11. **We understand the original sacramentality of marriage (the primordial sacrament) on the basis of the sacrament of creation;** we understand the sacramentality of the Church (of the union of Christ with the Church) on the basis of the Sacrament of Redemption in analogy with the conjugal union of husband and wife. **This renews the salvific content of the primordial sacrament.** This is crucial to understand the sacramentality of the Church as well as the sacrament of marriage.
- F. Rereading Ephesians on the basis of marriage and other NT texts
1. This ethical dimension is developed in the Sermon on the Mount about lust and adultery in the heart.
  2. **Christ gives as a duty to men and women to protect each other’s dignity and their own dignity, to protect the “sacrum” of the person seen in the “body.”**
  3. **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.”**
  4. Examining Ephesians 5 on the basis of St. Paul’s writings in 1 Corinthians and the Romans, **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.”**
  5. 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.
  6. Examining Ephesians 5 on the basis of Christ’s words on the resurrection, we know that marriage does not pertain to the eschatological reality of heaven. **Marriage, the primordial sacrament reborn in the spousal love of Christ and the Church, does not pertain eschatologically to the redemption of the body, but does in this world give a hope and an ethos of the redemption as well as a participation in that redemption, by doing the will of the Father (1Jn2:17) and dominating concupiscence.**
  7. **Ephesians links the redemptive and spousal dimensions of love, fusing them into one. In the sacrament of marriage, Christ’s redemptive and spousal love permeates the couple’s life.** 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.**
  8. 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.**
  9. **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.

## G. The language of the body

1. **Without consummation, the marriage is not yet constituted in its full reality. The sacramental words can only be fulfilled by means of conjugal intercourse, determined from the beginning by the Creator, in leaving father and mother, cleaving to each other and becoming one flesh** (cf. Gen 2:24). We focused above on the grace; now we focus on the sign.
2. The sacrament of marriage is contracted by the words of the newlyweds **that, intentionally, they have decided to be from now on the one for the other and with the other.**
3. For the sacramental sign to be constituted, **the reality must correspond to the words.** Their words would not constitute the sign unless **they corresponded to the person and the awareness of the body** (masculine and feminine), essentially the same as “in the beginning.”
4. It is determined by the **“language of the body,” in which man and woman express the reciprocal gift of masculinity and femininity in one flesh as the basis of the conjugal union of persons.**
5. **The language of the body is not just the substratum but the constitute element of the personal communion.** Man and woman become for each other a mutual gift in their masculinity and femininity, discovering and reciprocally expressing the significance of the body irreversibly for life.
6. The language of the body. The prophets presupposed the “objective” dimension of language, in which man and woman, by free choice, become “one flesh.” But there is also a subjective sense in which they allow the body to speak for itself. Ezekiel used the symbol of Jerusalem’s adultery (Ezek 16 and 23), saying she “played the harlot” with any passerby. **In these passages, the body speaks a “language” of which it is not the author.** Its author is the person with the everlasting vocation to the communion of persons. Man cannot express this language of personal existence and vocation without the body. By means of this “language of the body,” the prophets express the spousal depth of the Covenant and all that is opposed to it, of good and evil, fidelity and adultery.
7. The prophet’s “language of the body,” like any language, is not just moral, but the expression of **categories of truth and falsity. The body speaks the truth through fidelity and conjugal love, and lies when it commits “adultery.” This is not substituting ethical with logical categories. Truth is a correspondence between what is said and reality.**
8. **The essential element for marriage as a sacrament is the “language of the body” in its aspects of truth, which constitutes the sacramental sign.** In pronouncing the words, the newlyweds set themselves in the line of the “prophetism of the body.”
9. **The person reads the meaning of the language of the body in its spousal significance.** Their “prophetic” proclamation of matrimonial consent both announces and causes the fact that from now on, before God, the Church and society, they are husband and wife.
10. **Man is the author of the language of the body; and he re-reads “in truth” this language in discovering the spousal significance of the body.** The spouses need to ensure that the sign originating in the language of the body is continually “re-read” in truth, remaining organically linked to conjugal morality. **In the truth of the sign, there is the procreative significance of the body, paternity and maternity.**
11. **The original visible sign of the newlyweds in contracting marriage needs to be continually completed by the “prophetism of the body” throughout their conjugal life. Their bodies will speak “for” and “on behalf” of each of them, in the authority of their persons, carrying out the conjugal dialogue proper to their vocation in the language of the body, continually re-read in truth.** They’re called to form their life together as a communion of persons on the basis of that language.
12. The spouse’s body language is called to speak “prophetically” the truth which has been reread and live according to this truth. **Otherwise, he is guilty of a lie and falsifies the language of the body. There are “true” and “false” prophets.** Spouses are called to be “true” in bearing witness in their body language to spousal and procreative love. We base all of this on what we have analyzed before concerning the key words of Christ and the individual dimensions of the theology of the body.
13. **The three-fold concupiscence doesn’t destroy the capacity to reread continually in truth the language of the body, but it causes many errors in rereading the language. These errors give rise to sin.**

## H. The Song of Songs

1. The considerations on *Humanae Vitae*, premised on the Song of Songs (SSongs) and the Book of Tobit, will constitute **in the Pope’s opinion the “crowning” of everything he has said.**
2. This aspiration born of love on the basis of body language is a search for integral beauty and purity. We see eros as the form of love at work in the energies of desire and in the subjective certainty of mutual, faithful and exclusive belonging. But we also see the restlessness of “eros,” which is asymptotic and needs to be self-controlled. The person cannot be fully appropriated and mastered by another. In re-reading this body language, man and woman conclude that the fullness of their belonging is found in the mutual gift in love that never dies (“stern as death”).

## I. The Book of Tobit

1. Tobiah and Sarah find themselves in a situation in which good and evil compete against each other, something that was unperceived in the “abstract” poem SSongs. The truth and power of love are shown in placing oneself between the forces of good and evil; love is ready to do everything so that good may conquer. Tobiah’s and Sarah’s love is not expressed in poetic words, but by their choices and actions in body language, especially prayer.
  2. Tobiah’s prayer — which is first of all praise and thanksgiving, then supplication — **situates the language of the body on the objective and essential terms of the theology of the body. Their conjugal pact expresses and realizes the mystery originating in God, in God’s original covenant with the human race in eternal Love. They respond to God, asking for his mercy and the grace to live faithfully to a happy old age. They ask to be able to respond to love.** Both together form this sign of marriage.
  3. **Through the one and the other the “language of the body”, reread in the subjective dimension of the truth of human hearts and in the “objective” dimension of the truth of living union, becomes the language of the liturgy.**
- J. Rereading Ephesians on the basis of the language of the body
1. **We find in Ephesians 5 a “mystical” language of the body.**
  2. **The liturgical language of this sacramental sign signifies not just the coming-into-being of the marriage, but also its whole duration as a sacred, sacramental reality, rooted in creation and redemption.** The liturgical language assigns to both man and woman love, fidelity, indissolubility, unity and conjugal honesty through the “**language of the body.**”
  3. **It also gives them as a duty all the “sacrum” of the person and the communion of persons in this language. In this sense, liturgical language becomes body language, a series of acts and duties that form the “spirituality” or “ethos” of marriage.**
  4. **The language of the body is an uninterrupted continuity of liturgical language. The mutual “reverence for Christ” and “respect” to which the spouses are called is the spiritually mature form of mutual attraction going back to Genesis.**
  5. **This spiritual maturity of attraction is the gift of piety (fear of the Lord).** Paul’s teaching on chastity as “life according to the Spirit” (Rm 8:5) allows us to interpret that “respect” as a gift of the HS. **Ephesians seems to indicate chastity “out of reverence for Christ” as a virtue and a gift.**
  6. **Through the virtue and gift, the mutual attraction of masculinity and femininity spiritually matures, dissociates from concupiscence, and discovers the freedom of the gift, united to femininity and masculinity in the true spousal significance of the body.**
  7. This liturgical language — of the sacrament and the mystery — becomes in their common life the “**language of the body” in depth, simplicity and beauty.**
  8. **Through the continual expression of the sacramental sign of marriage in the language of the body, man and woman encounter the great “mystery” and transfer the light (truth and beauty) of that mystery to the language of the practice of love, fidelity and conjugal honesty. In this way, conjugal life becomes liturgical (an act of worship).**

## VII. Reflections on *Humanae Vitae* based on the redemption of the body and the sacramentality of marriage

- A. *Humanae Vitae* and the language of the body.
1. We will re-read *Humanae Vitae* in light of these reflections and illustrate and examine one of its passages. HV 11 says in any use of marriage, there must be no impairment of its natural capacity to procreate; HV 12 adds that there is an inseparable connection established by God between the unitive and procreative meanings inherent to the marriage act. This passage is central and connected to the sacramental sign. **This sign is based on the “language of the body” reread in truth, in which spouses commit themselves to be faithful, to love and honor each other all their days, not just at their wedding but throughout their marriage. HV focuses on the moment in which spouses become “one flesh” (Gen 2:24); this is the moment when the “language of the body” must be re-read in truth, which is indispensable for their acting in truth.**
  2. HV 12 founds this inseparable connection in the **fundamental structure of the marriage act**, in the laws written into man’s and woman’s nature for the generation of new life. We are dealing with a **norm of natural law.**
  3. The marriage act simultaneously (1) unites husband and wife in closest intimacy and (2) makes them capable of generating new life. This two-fold meaning and the inseparable connection between them, must be read simultaneously. **This is the “language of the body” in truth that gives rise to the moral norm.** It is a re-

reading of the **ontological truth** of the conjugal act, which then enters into the subjective and psychological dimension and influences their moral choices.

4. In stressing that this norm belongs to the “natural law,” Paul VI says it is in accord with reason. Even though it doesn’t appear explicitly in Scripture, it is contained in Tradition and is in accordance with sum total of doctrine revealed in the Bible (HV 4); **not just its essential premises and general character, but the full context we find in speaking of the “theology of the body.”**
  5. Hence the moral norms belong not only to the natural moral law, but to the moral order revealed by God, especially in biblical anthropology, which has great importance in ethics. **Thus it is reasonable to look to the “theology of the body” to found the truth of the norms that concern two people becoming “one flesh.”** As a norm of the natural law, the teaching of HV concerns all men; because of the confirmation the reasonable norm finds in the theology and ethos of the body, it concerns Christians even more. That is why we will re-read it here.
  6. The whole biblical background — called the theology of the body — **confirms the truth of the norm and prepares us to consider more deeply the practical and pastoral aspects of the problem.** JP II notes that those who say HV didn’t take into account concrete difficulties don’t understand **pastoral origin of document, nor the word pastoral, which recognizes that the only true good of the human person consists in discovering and fulfilling God’s plan.**
- B. True meaning of responsible parenthood in GS and HV
1. In harmonizing married love with responsible transmission of life, GS 51 says **good intentions are not enough. There is the need for criteria drawn from the nature of the person and action that respect the total meaning of mutual self-giving and human procreation in true love through the practice of chastity.**
  2. The couple must arrive at these judgments before God, not simply following their own fancy but ruled by a conscience conformed to God’s law (which protects and fulfills married love) and the magisterium, which authentically interprets that law.
  3. HV makes these premises concrete. Paul VI is guided by the “integral” (rather than partial) concept of man and conjugal love. **Responsible parenthood involves discovering the biological laws of the human person, the domination of reason and will over innate drives and emotions, and the prudent and generous decision to have a large family or, respecting the moral law, to choose to have no more children for an indefinite now. ... It involves keeping priorities straight toward God, themselves, their families and human society. It’s not acting “arbitrarily,”** but according to God’s creative intention and his divine plan manifested in the “intimate structure of the conjugal act” and the “inseparable connection of the two meanings” of it.
- C. Periodic continence versus contraception
1. HV distinguishes between morally licit and illicit regulation of fertility. It is morally licit to take advantage of “recourse to infertile periods” if there are **“reasonable grounds for spacing births, arising from the physical or psychological conditions of husband or wife or from external circumstances”** (HV 16).
  2. **HV says there is an essential ethical difference between contraception and periodic continence; one rightly uses a facility provided by nature; the other obstructs the natural development of the generative process.**
  3. **Paul VI notes that in each case couples may have acceptable reasons for intending to avoid children, but the means they choose to employ must also be moral.**
  4. **The theology of the body** — which is not a theory, **but a specific, evangelical Christian pedagogy of the body derived from the Bible, especially the Gospels** — responds to the question about man’s true good as a person, male and female, and what corresponds to man’s true dignity in married life.
  5. The essence of the Church’s doctrine here consists in **maintaining the adequate relationship between the “domination of nature” (HV 2) and the “mastery of self,”** (HV 21) which is indispensable for man. Modern man often transfers the methods proper to dominating nature to dominating the self, but man needs self-mastery, which is “natural” and corresponds to his constitution. **“Artificial” contraception destroys the constitutive dimension of the person, depriving him of his subjectivity and making him an object of manipulation.**
  6. **The human body is not merely an organism of sexual reactions, but the means of expressing the entire person through the “language of the body,” which should “prophetically” express the truth of the sacrament of marriage and the “eternal plan of love.”** HV brings this truth to its logical, moral, practical and pastoral consequences.
  7. **Man and woman are called to be witnesses and interpreters of the eternal plan of love, as a minister of the sacrament which “from the beginning” was constituted by the sign of the “union of flesh.”** The sacrament is constituted by consent and perfected by conjugal union; man and woman are called to **express the mysterious language of their bodies in all truth.**



8. **Through gestures, actions and reactions, the person speaks through the body. Especially in becoming one flesh, man and woman reciprocally express themselves in the measure of the truth of the human person. Insofar as he is master of himself, man can freely “give himself” to the other. This is essential for the body language of conjugal union.**
  9. **Expressed in body language, the conjugal act signifies not only love, but potential fecundity; to try artificially to separate the two is illicit, because both pertain to the intimate truth of the act and one is activated with and by means of the other. The conjugal act deprived of the procreative component of its interior truth ceases also to be an act of love. Such an act involves a bodily union that does not correspond to the interior truth and dignity of personal communion; the language does not speak the truth of self-mastery, reciprocal gift and the reciprocal acceptance of the other person. This violation of the interior order of conjugal union and the order of the person is the essential evil of the contraceptive act.**
  10. Responsible fertility involves the ethically right and lawful regulation of fertility. **This means the couple first fully value the blessings of family life and secondly acquire self-mastery. This persevering self-discipline helps them fully develop their personalities and helps the family.**
  11. **Conjugal chastity is manifested in the self-mastery of periodic continence. This is a case of living according to the Spirit (Gal 5:25) and apply it to periodic continence.**
  12. Even though the timing of continence comes from “natural rhythms,” **the continence itself is a moral virtue, which leads to a virtuous character. It is not just a “technique” but an ethics.**
  13. This begins with admitting that one is not master of life, but minister of the Creator’s design (HV 13).
  14. Concerning the immediate motivation, HV 16 describes “reasonable grounds... arising from the physical or psychological condition of husband or wife, or from external circumstances.”
  15. **The virtuous character of periodic continence is not determined by fidelity to an impersonal “natural law” but by fidelity to the Creator, the source and Lord of the order manifested in the law. To reduce the teaching of HV to mere biological regularity is to misinterpret it. This regularity is an expression of the order of nature created by divine providence.**
  16. **Morally correct regulation of fertility consists in rereading the language of the body in truth, especially the “natural rhythms immanent in the generative functions.” The body speaks even with the internal structures of the organism and contributes to the dialogue of husband and wife called as persons to communion in “union of the body.” The language of the body isn’t aimed at “reducing ethics to biology” but in re-reading what the body says about the real good and true dignity of the person and following it at the cost of a precise self-denial (HV 21).**
  17. **The use of infertile periods can be an abuse if the couple, for unworthy reasons, seeks in this way to avoid having children.**
  18. *Periodic continence is more than an adequate “method” for acting, but the “method” tied to the ethical dimension proper to it. By considering the “natural method” only as a method, divorced from its ethical dimension, people get confused. To understand HV, we have to understand both the method and its ethics together.*
  19. For this ethics, we have to consider **self-mastery and continence**, without which we won’t achieve the moral or anthropological truth of the topic, which is rooted deeply in the theology and pedagogy (teaching) of the body.
- D. The spirituality of the couple based on HV
1. HV calls couples to a spirituality, to seeing their questions and problems within the context of God’s law and grace, calling them to respond in love and freedom to their Christian vocation confirmed and made more explicit by the sacrament of marriage, in which they seek holiness and bear witness to Christ and to this loving, joyful holiness in the world. **Their love for each other is inseparably united to the cooperation they give to God’s love (HV 25).**
  2. In showing the moral evil of the contraceptive act and the internal framework of the “honest” practice of fertility regulation, **HV creates the premises for a Christian spirituality — taken from biblical sources — of the conjugal vocation, of parenthood and the family.**
  3. **The theology-pedagogy of the body constitutes the essential nucleus of conjugal spirituality.**
  4. **HV is marked by Christian realism, not only of challenges but of spiritual “powers” (graces) that can guide them with faith and hope to the fulfillment of their evangelical vocation. The most essential and fundamental “power” is the love poured into our hearts by the HS, which allows them to build their whole life according to the truth of the “sign” of the sacrament. Couples are called to implore this divine help in prayer, draw grace and love from the Eucharist and overcome their sins in Reconciliation. These are the infallible and indispensable means for forming the Christian spirituality of married and family life.**
  5. **Love** subjectively is a power or capacity of the human soul to participate in that love with which God himself loves in the mystery of creation and redemption.

6. Concupiscence tries to detach the “language of the body” from the truth, and love battles to strengthen it. **True love is also a moral virtue, oriented toward the fullness of good**, and therefore safeguards the inseparable connection between the conjugal act’s two meanings, personal communion and responsible parenthood.
7. Love is a higher power that the spouses receive from God in their matrimonial consecration to coordinate their life together. **The power of love correctly unites the two meanings and excludes in theory and in practice any contradiction between them.** There may be a tension or difficulty (coming from concupiscence), but not a contradiction, as many allege. **Love is not able to be realized in body language unless concupiscence is overcome.** Real love is linked by nature with **chastity in self-mastery and (periodic) continence.** HV develops this biblical truth about conjugal and family spirituality, but to be clearer, we need a deeper analysis of the virtue of continence and its significance for the truth of body language in married life.
8. **Continence** is part of the virtue of temperance and consists in **the capacity to dominate, control and direct drives of a sexual nature and their consequences in the psychosomatic subjectivity of man. When it is a constant disposition of the will, it is a virtue.** For man to succeed in mastering sexual and sensual impulse, desire and concupiscence, must learn self-control through concrete **practice.**
9. This continence, or self-mastery, is a fundamental condition for **the truth of the reciprocal body language and for the couple to “defer to one another out of reverence for Christ.”**
10. Continence doesn’t battle concupiscence of the flesh alone, **but in concert with prudence, justice, fortitude and charity;** therefore, it not only resists concupiscence (which makes the person blind to higher values), but opens the person to the values of the nuptial significance of the body and the freedom of the gift in interpersonal communion and to the power of love. **Continence therefore allows the person to perceive, love and practice the language of the body, enriching, purifying, simplifying and deepening the couple’s mutual dialogue.**
11. Conjugal **chastity** — more than continence — **protects the importance and dignity of the conjugal act in relation to its procreative meaning, but safeguards its dignity as an expression of interpersonal union,** revealing the other possible “manifestations of affection” that can express this communion.
12. **Continence, rather than causing inner tensions for man, is the only way to free man from such tensions.** It strives spiritually to express body language truthfully in “manifestations of affection.” There are two reactions, “excitement” and “emotion,” which appear joined, but can be differentiated with regard to their “object.” Excitement is corporeal and sensual, and tends toward the conjugal act which includes the possibility of procreation; emotion responds to and is caused by the other person as a whole, and does not per se tend toward the conjugal act (and its potentially procreative meaning), but toward “manifestations of affection” in which the spousal meaning of the body is expressed.
13. Continence is not principally the ability to “abstain” through self-mastery, but the ability to direct **respective reactions and keep “excitement” and “emotion” in balance,** so that there is a balance in body language between the communion of intimate union and the acceptance of responsible parenthood. **Continence directs the line of excitement toward its correct development and love of emotion toward “pure” and disinterested interior intensification.**
14. **The fundamental element of married spirituality is the HS’s gift of love poured into their hearts. This love is united to chastity, which, manifesting itself as continence, orders married life interiorly. Chastity orders “manifestations of affection.”**
15. There cannot be a true communion of persons through “one flesh” union except through the HS, who “gives life.” The HS helps the couple pray and benefit from the sacraments, especially Penance.
16. **Chastity** is a virtue connected with the **gift of piety** that helps them adhere to each other out of reverence for Christ. This gift of piety makes them sensitive to the mystery of their vocation in creation and redemption and for the two-fold meaning of the conjugal act in reverencing the personal dignity of the other. **The gift of reverence helps to appreciate the “natural cycles of fertility” and the body language this bespeaks.** There is also the gift of salvific **fear**, which does not want to degrade the sign of the divine and fights against concupiscence of the flesh. Only by living “in the Spirit” can the Christian spirituality of married and family life become interiorly true and authentic.
17. **The gift of piety,** love and chastity mold the couple’s spirituality to protect the dignity of the body language of the act and its procreative potential within God’s plan as well as protect the dignity of the other person.
18. **The antithesis of conjugal spirituality is the contraceptive practice and mentality, which greatly harms man’s interior culture.** Concupiscence interiorly **constricts the mutual freedom of the gift manifested in the spousal meaning of the body.**
19. **Respect for God’s plan frees the person from reducing the other “I” to a mere object.** They grow in appreciation for the “visible” and “invisible” beauty of femininity and masculinity and for the disinterested gift of the other. Through this spiritual identification with the other in “affectionate manifestations,” each helps the other remain faithful and chaste, guided by respect for what is created by God. **This is the interior climate suitable**

- for **personal communion**, in which “responsible” procreation rightly matures. They then live in interior harmony, the interior truth of the “language of the body,” which speaks inseparably truth and love.
20. Familiaris Consortio in 1981 appealed to theologians to elaborate more completely the **biblical and personalistic aspects of HV’s doctrine** in both the formulation of questions and the search for adequate answers, **which is the methodological direction of the theology of the body**.
    - a. The analysis of the Bible places the **doctrine on the foundation of Revelation**, which is crucial for theological development, which is based on a continual restudying of the deposit of Revelation.
    - b. The questions posed by man through the intense development of philosophical anthropology (especially resting on ethics) mirror the theological and ethical questions of HV.
    - c. **The analysis of personalistic aspects of the doctrine is crucial, because real progress must be on the basis of the “person”** — what is good for man as man and what corresponds to his essential dignity — and not “things.” Man’s development must be “ethical” and not just “technological.”
  21. The catechesis dedicated to HV constitutes **only one part of the redemption of the body and the sacramentality of marriage**. The questions relevant there, however, permeate all the reflections and respond to contemporary questions. **The catechesis on HV is not “artificially added,” but is organically and homogenously united with the rest. While chronologically at the end, it’s conceptually also at the beginning.** Familiaris Consortio fully confirmed the doctrine of HV.
  22. **The most important and essential moment in these reflections is the conclusion that to face, formulate and answer the questions raised by HV, we need to find the biblical-theological sphere alluded to in the “redemption of the body and the sacramentality of marriage.”** Here we find the answers to the perennial questions in the conscience of man and to the questions of the modern world concerning marriage and procreation.