



## 2. Self-gift of spouses is *the* context for sexual activity

- a. Permanent, faithful, exclusive
  - Marriage is a partnership between one man and one woman that is characterized by a publicly made commitment in the form of a vow to exercise fidelity, permanence, and an openness to children.
  - The really safe sex is that which is done in the context of a vow of faithfulness. Human beings are capable of permanent, lifelong love.
  - Fidelity and permanence are geared at providing the context in which children thrive because they live with parents whose love thrives.
- b. Complete gift
  - Chastity, control over your sexual desires such that you act on them only in the context of lifelong, faithful, fruitful love, and with a full recognition of the dignity of your spouse, protects you and also produces great goods not only before marriage but in marriage.
  - Chastity while dating respects each person physically, emotionally, and spiritually. You should not promise with your body what you have not promised with your heart and will.
  - Chastity in marriage keeps you focused on the good of the other. Chastity means self-control such that you are always giving yourself freely – sharing all those sides of yourself – to that your spouse can give back freely. And that self-gift is really only fully given in sexual intercourse – an act in which both of your sexual organs are engaged.
  - In the context of that faithful, permanent union that is open to children and governed by Jesus, sex can be a symbol of and an instrument by which you can discover not just pleasure but healing, affirmation, and even true love.

## 3. Common Objection: Contraception

- a. Particular objection: Contraception should be morally acceptable. It's irrational and hypocritical to say natural family planning (NFP) is moral and contraception is not.
  - Objection:
    - Actions that have the same goal and circumstances have the same moral status (as good or bad).
    - Certain cases of using NFP and using contraception have the same goal and circumstances. (For example, assume the goal is unity of the spouses without procreation, and circumstances give serious reasons to postpone a child.)

- Therefore, certain cases of using NFP and using contraception have the same moral status. (So, if the Church thinks these cases of using NFP are OK, it should think the same for using contraception.)
- Response:
  - Part of what makes an action morally good or bad is what you are actually doing (the nature or “object” of the act). This is why we have moral principles like “the ends don’t justify the means.”
  - Abstaining is different from using contraception on a physical level because “to abstain” is not to engage in sex/reproductive sorts of acts, and to do something else instead. In contrast, to use contraception is to engage in sex/reproductive sorts of acts while also acting to prevent their natural end, their objective biological purpose.
  - Having sex during infertile periods is different from using contraception on a physical level because choosing the former is just to engage in a reproductive kind of act while, again, to use contraception is to engage in this sort of act while also acting to prevent its natural end.
  - Contraception does not preserve unity of spouses while blocking procreation. It blocks both.

b. Particular objection: Church teaching is unjust to women. Contraception empowers women to control their bodies, and it is just simply basic health care.

- Response:
  - Not every way that women can control their bodies – and are encouraged to control their bodies by our culture – is empowering. The Church is right. My body is a part of *me*, and respecting *me* includes respecting my body. That is empowering.
  - Contraception is not health care because it just modifies the body, without actually promoting health (like botox injections to counteract wrinkles, for example), it is not properly speaking health care. Health care aims at proper functioning of the body, not just modification of the body.

#### 4. Common Objection: Same-sex attraction

- a. General objection: Church teaching is wrong and/or unjust; people should be free to marry whomever they love even if they are of the same sex.
- b. Particular objection: The Church teach is not biblical. The prohibitions against homosexuality in Leviticus are like the cleanliness and dietary restrictions. When Christ fulfills the old law, these rules no longer apply; they do not bind contemporary Christians (or anyone else beyond the ancient Israelites).



