

## **OCIA – Symbolon Lessons 17 & 18: A Love That Lasts (Marriage)**

### **Opening Prayer: Ephesians 5:25-33**

*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. So [also] husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “For this reason a man shall leave [his] father and [his] mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband.*

### **(1 Cor 13:1-7)**

*Now I will show you the way which surpasses all others. If I speak with human tongues and angelic as well, but do not have love, I am but a noisy gong, a clanging symbol. If I have the gift of prophesy and, with full knowledge, comprehend all mysteries, if I have faith great enough to move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give everything I have to feed the poor and hand over my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

*Love is patient; love is kind. Love is not jealous, it does not put on airs, it is not snobbish. Love is never rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not prone to anger, neither does it brood over injuries. Love does not rejoice in what is wrong but rejoices with the truth. There is no limit to love’s forbearance, to its trust, its hope, its power to endure.*

- **Song: Where Charity and Love Prevail**

- **Pope Saint John Paul II:**

“Man cannot live without love...His life is senseless if love is not revealed to him. If he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own. If he does not participate intimately in it.”

- **Catechism References for Further Reflection:**

- God is Love: CCC 2331

*“God is love and in himself he lives a mystery of personal loving communion. Creating the human race in his own image . . . God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the vocation, and thus the capacity and responsibility, of love and communion.” (FC 11)*

- Love as Vocation: CCC 2392

*“Love is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being” (FC 11).*

- Chastity: CCC 2337-2339 (GS 17)

- Sexuality: CCC 2333-2335, 2360-2362 (FC22, MD 6)

- Fecundity of Marriage: CCC 2366 (HV 11,12)

- Regulation of Procreation: CCC 2368 (GS 51)

- **Questions for Discussion:**

- How does the “world”, and specifically our culture, portray “love”?
- What’s the difference between “eros” and “agape” love?
- What did they mean in the video when they referred to “loving” versus “using” others?
- Last week we discussed that a vocation is a calling. Do you agree that “Love is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being?”
- The video points out that the Church does not teach that human sexuality is bad; but rather that it is a great gift God has given us that must be used properly within the context of marriage. How does that differ from how the “world” views this great gift? How has that worked out?
- What did they mean in the video when they said premarital relations and cohabitation shouldn’t be thought of as going too far, but rather of not going far enough? What do you think of that?
- What tools does the Church provide to help us live this teaching? What difference might it make in our lives if we strive to live this and other challenging teachings?

- **Weekly Gospel Reading:** Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (Lk 2:22-32)

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph took Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, “*Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord, and to offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,*” in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying: “Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

*(FC) – Familiaris consortio, The role of the Christian family in the modern world. St. John Paul II*

*(GS) – Gaudium et spes, Pastoral constitution on the Church. Vatican II*

*(MD) – Mulieris dignitatem. St. JOHN PAUL II*

*(HV) – Humanae vitae, On the regulation of birth. St. Paul VI*

- **Final Prayer**