

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each of the following statements carefully, then place an "X" in the box following the word or phrase which best completes the statement. Mark only one box for each statement. Each correct answer is worth five points.

1. The sacramental grace of _____ transforms human conjugal love and unity and makes it divine conjugal love.
 Penance Holy Eucharist Matrimony Baptism
2. The friendship of married love is a total _____ for lifetime to the welfare of another person of the opposite sex.
 resignation sentence surrender self-dedication
3. It has been observed that the incidence of _____ in childless marriages is greater than in marriages with children.
 divorce happiness suicide working wives
4. Conjugal love is tender, thoughtful, exclusive, perpetual, creative, and _____
 satisfying selfless unselfish selfish
5. The norm for a wife's love for her husband should be the Church's _____
 love for Christ commandments canon law norm
6. The _____ theory of matter teaches that the body is something evil, a mere prison for the soul.
 communist Catholic Newtonian Manichean
7. Married love develops unity between two different _____
 bodies souls persons emotions
8. The Catholic Church teaches us that passion within the Sacrament of Matrimony is _____
 wrong right to be avoided lust
9. Looking after another's welfare, giving oneself to him, and thirsting for his happiness is _____
 silly sinful impossible true love
10. Sacrificial and redemptive love bring _____ to marriage.
 happiness children discord money
11. The _____ body and soul both yearn for, need, and are incomplete without each other.
 unmarried inter-penetrating empty lifeless

POSSIBLE SCORE

55

MINUS ERRORS X 5 _____

SUB-SCORE II _____

SUB-SCORE I _____

SUB-SCORE II _____

TOTAL SCORE _____

CUT ON DOTTED LINE

MARRIED LOVE

4

Love

ALTHOUGH THE modern world knows that "love makes the world go 'round," it is not sure what love is. If you examine the modern books written in the school of a false "realism," you would think that love is only to be discovered in mutual lustful desire.

Lust. In its preoccupation with sex and the "sexy," the modern world equates love and lust. Sex passion and lust are quite different. Passion belongs in marriage, but lust is passion out of line; it is sex appetite that no amount of experience or number of partners will ever satisfy.

Mere Romance. Fortunately (or unfortunately), there is another school which approaches the problem of love through romance. Here the song writers excel. They sing of emotional experience full of sweet thrill and deep sighs. Falling in love is a delicious experience that happens between two people whether they wish it to or not. They are helpless in its grip, as helpless as they would be in a disease which they "catch." An old popular song expresses it well: "The love bug will get you if you don't watch out!" Romance is good, but it is too ephemeral to be love.

Desire. A more careful analysis of love will discover a deeper idea in much modern thinking. If two people mutually desire to possess, to own each other, they are in love. If "you were meant for me and I was meant for you," then we are in love. If this were simply true, the ultimate sign of love would be "you are my absolute possession." The final test for such mutual desire would be an almost insane jealousy resenting the beloved's giving so much as a smile to anyone else. Mutual desire is helpful, but again, it is too grasping for true love.

WHAT LOVE IS

Giving. Bodily passions, emotional thrills, and mutual possession are all involved in married love. Yet no one of them, or all three together, truly explains the depths of love. True love is the desire and attempt to promote the welfare of somebody else. It pre-

EXAMINATION

supposes the giving of self. Love demands that I obtain happiness by giving happiness to another. It means that much as I love myself, I have found another self to love even more! If we understand the meaning of the word, disease, then we can say that love is a disease. *Dis* means *no*, *ease* means *rest*. Love is a disease in that it gives the lover *no rest* until he has promoted the full development of his beloved in every facet of his or her existence.

Devotion. Love may be roughly approximated to a common word we use—devotion. We are devoted to our parents, and to our friends. When we are so devoted we *cultivate* these friends. Secondly we *serve* them, and thirdly, we *support* them.

Cultivation. How carefully we cultivated the love of our parents when we were children! We tried to keep within the sound of mother's voice. If separated by illness or while away at school, we wanted to call her on the phone or write to her and receive letters! I can hardly say that I love someone if I never think about him, talk to him, or write to him.

Service. Secondly, we *serve* a beloved. A person in love works for his beloved. He attempts to supply all that his beloved needs. He helps or aids his beloved to achieve the fullness of perfection.

Support. Lastly, a lover *supports* his beloved. The word, "support," means to carry up, sustain, prop, or brace. A lover wants to keep his beloved from falling, not only physically but in any way. He wants to give his beloved strength and courage. He wants to provide shelter. He wishes to back or second his beloved's efforts. He wishes to put up with, to bear, or to endure, even the faults of his beloved.

Conjugal Devotion. Devotion can be given to parents and to friends but only in varying degrees, because all these friendships are part-time friendships. The friendship of married love, however, is a total self-dedication for a lifetime to the welfare of another person of the other sex.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CONJUGAL LOVE

Tender. Married or conjugal love, so different from all other loves and devotions, is *tender*. Here all the romantic thrills of "falling in love" fit in. We seldom feel very emotional about our country until some stranger attacks it. We often take our parents for granted except perhaps on Mothers' Day. The deepest love for the closest friend is hardly described in any other fashion than

Married Love

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each of the following statements carefully. If a statement is true, mark an "X" in the box at the left labelled "true." If it is false, mark an "X" in the box at the left labelled "false." Each correct answer is worth three points.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| TRUE ↓ | FALSE ↓ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Married love, different from all other love, is absolutely exclusive. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Bodily passions, emotional thrills, and mutual possession are involved in and truly explain the depth of married love. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. The truly Christian marriage is a 50-50 proposition. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Physical union in marriage is not wrong, but it is something very holy and pleasing to God. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. The cultivation of married love must be like the cultivation of a friendship, which can be cut off at any time. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Sacraments and prayer are necessary to nurture the supernatural and even the natural character of marriage. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. In order to secure a lasting and genuine love, communication of mind and body, soul and emotions must be secured. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Through the Sacrament of Matrimony all actions performed in the state of sanctifying grace bring additional graces. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Marital intercourse means only the physical union of man and wife for the sole purpose of procreating children. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. The Church condemns the body as something bad, because of the evils that seem to proceed from it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Begetting and educating children is the natural work of married love. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. Absolute desire for the person loved to the exclusion of everything else is true love. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. Creativeness in love, either in fact or desire, is necessary for this love to live on. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. No power on earth can dissolve a valid sacramental and consummated bond of marriage. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. True love means loving the other person for his own sake, and not because he is useful or pleasing to the lover. |

CUT ON DOTTED LINE

POSSIBLE SCORE

45

NAME _____

MINUS

ERRORS X 3

ADDRESS _____

SUB-SCORE I

CITY _____ STATE _____

Communication. Grace builds upon nature. In pursuing the inspiring vision of the supernatural, a couple cannot safely forget all about the nature upon which it builds. All the qualities, elements, signs, and methods we have indicated for human married love must be taken into account. In order to insure oneness of love, there must be constant communication between the spouses; communication of body, and of feelings, communication of hopes, dreams, thoughts and ideas, communication of anxiety for virtuous growth, of spiritual insights, communication of recreational interests, of material goods and possessions, of earning a living or making a home; communication of social growth, communication in the education and development of the children which reflect their initial love. All of this communication could be reduced to the phrase, marital intercourse. Though this phrase has been restricted to mean only the physical unity of a man and a woman, from its derivation it means the flow back and forth of the two lives of a man and woman united in permanent love. It is the surrendering by two personalities of their bodies and souls, and even of their future lives, so that they may together, as one being, present themselves to the Godhead at the end of life with the triumphant words of Christ on their lips, "I (we) have accomplished the work that thou hast given me (us) to do (love)." (John 17:4.) Of this oneness, bodily union is but a symbol and enactment.

Cases for Discussion

What to do if your partner seems to be "playing around."

My husband has me worried. Last week I found signs of lipstick on his handkerchief and we had an awful quarrel. Now, he claims that he did this only to make me angry. I don't like to be suspicious, but I'm terribly upset. We have two young children and I'm worried about the future. Do you think he still loves me?

The decision to use rhythm should not be made lightly.

My husband and I are wondering about the advisability of using rhythm. We have had four children in fairly rapid succession and feel that a break of a year or two would prove beneficial for both our health and our finances. We've heard so many conflicting opinions that we're not sure what to do. Could you give us some advice?

"warm." But conjugal love should be deeply emotional, deeply thrilling, passionate. It should cry out, "Let people say we're in love!" However, it is important to remember that, though conjugal love frequently starts out with deep emotions, these emotions change and vary as the years go on. Too many young couples are afraid that they are falling out of love when, after several months or years of marriage, they no longer thrill to the very sight or sound of their beloved. Remember always that romantic enthusiasm is for love what tinder is for the fire. Tinder flares up and is bright and searing. Only if it is fed with logs will it glow with warmth through the night. Passion, too, burns furiously and helps build devotion, but only if it is fed with loving service will it develop the love which lasts through life.

Thoughtful. Married love is *thoughtful* in two ways. Married lovers are always thinking of each other in the little details that mean so much to each other—the birthday card, the carefully laid out shirt. Even more important, they are *implicitly* thoughtful of each other in that their love is the driving force which gives intention and direction to all actions. This is the characteristic of married love which makes a man a dependable worker in his office or factory, and which drives a woman to keep her home tastefully clean and her children neat and orderly. This is the characteristic of love which merits the saying, "Actions speak louder than words."

Exclusive. Married love, different from all other love, is absolutely *exclusive*. It cannot involve any other man or woman. It can brook no presence of any other man or woman. This does not mean that jealousy must rule. Conjugal love does not become jealous simply because it is calmly sure of its own exclusiveness and the exclusiveness of the partner's love. It seems rather doubtful that even a Mohammedan with several wives could write one love song about all of them. At very least, his song must be exclusive about the passion of the moment, even though he might not carry out his exclusive enthusiasm for life. By nature, love must adopt as its title, "You are the only one."

Perpetual. The love of a married couple must also be characterized by its *perpetuity*. No married lover, however pagan, wants his love to last for only two or three years. Search your love poems through and through. You will never find any expression of temporary or part-time love. The lover always protests that his love will last "forever and ever" and "until the end of time."

Unselfish. All love, but especially conjugal love, must be *unselfish*. Notice that we do not say *selfless*. It is impossible in this life not to love ourselves. As we begin to realize all our emptiness and all our needs, we look around for the development of our potential and for those people who can fill out our needs. Very definitely we want to love ourselves and to be loved by others. Married love, then, definitely wishes to be filled out by a love of a spouse, but this is quite different from selfishness. Once a husband and wife are sure of the love of each other, they rest secure in this conviction. Selfishness, on the other hand, is an attempt merely to make the other person a servant of my needs without giving him anything in return. A proud, selfish person develops a kind of God-complex in which all around him are in existence merely to extend his own comfort. The selfish person says, "You are clever, so you can solve my doubts; you are rich, so you can pay my debts; you are physically beautiful so you can satisfy my passions; or even, you are virtuous and you can teach me goodness, but I am not at all concerned about your needs." The unselfish lover, on the other hand, accepts all these gifts from his beloved with humble gratitude, but in turn pours himself out to meet the needs of his beloved.

Many people say that marriage is a 50-50 proposition. This is not true. A person cannot give half of himself in marriage! He must give himself entirely without holding anything back. If this were not true, how would marriages endure when, through illness or fatigue, one were unable to give? How would one be able to bear faults and sins in the beloved? Strangely, only by such total dedication can any individual happiness be achieved. The calculating giver, the *mean* spirit, the man or woman who always asks, "What's in it for me?" never calls for a satisfying response, and never receives his fulfillment.

Creative. The last characteristic of married love is *creativity*. When a man and a woman pledge their mutual love for life in a valid marriage, they create a *bond* between them which can never really be dissolved. A judge can no more declare that this man and woman are no longer husband and wife than he could declare that a man and his child are no longer father and son. The relationship is a permanent one. We often say, "In the eyes of God, these two separated people are still married." Since things only exist as God sees and loves them, and if He sees and loves the union of this

fall into the ground and die, it remains alone. But if it die it brings forth much fruit. He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world, keeps it unto life everlasting." (John 12:24-26.) Our Lord says here, in no uncertain terms, that he who is looking merely for the development of his own life, who is not concerned with love and devotion to another, who does not place the love of God above all things, loses his life. Christ does *not* limit the loss of life to the *next world*. He indicates that such a person is empty, not fully living, even in this world. On the other hand He clearly indicates that the person who always places himself second, who actually hates his own appetites in order to promote the welfare of someone else, actually obtains his reward both in this life in full happiness, and in the next, in life everlasting

CULTIVATION OF LOVE

If natural and supernatural married love is what we say it is, then it is something which must be achieved by a lifetime of effort. Since the full unity of marriage is something very difficult to achieve, it must be worked on. No swimmer goes upstream by floating!

Meditation. To achieve supernatural Christian married love, which in turn will tend to heal the wounds of natural love, the young husband and wife must first *meditate* constantly upon their divine vocation to love. If marriage is something that just happened to them; if it is merely a sexual, romantic, or convenient institution, disaster will dog their footsteps. Once they have seen the vision, they must continue to meditate upon it lest they merit the accusation of St. James, that "he is like a man looking at his natural face in a mirror: for he looks at himself and goes away, and presently he forgets what kind of man he is." (James 1:23-24.)

Sacraments and Prayer. Secondly, since supernatural married love is one of the areas of supernatural living, the young couple must always keep close to the source of grace. This will demand *frequent confession and communion*. It will demand *daily prayer*. It will urge the type of *examination of conscience* which fastens upon the mutual duties of their state in life. It will urge a husband and wife to make frequent *acts of contrition* for their daily faults against each other in God. It will move them to be concerned about *mutual spiritual development* because they cannot live the love-life of God in Christian marriage without the God of love. It will goad them to constant and fresh efforts to start off again.

renewed love and appreciation to which they are called. (M. M. Philipon, *The Sacraments and Christian Life*. Newman Press, Westminster, 1952, p. 220.)

SACRIFICIAL AND REDEMPTIVE LOVE

Sacrifice. It takes little thought to realize that even in natural love there must be a great deal of sacrifice. To love another as one's self frequently will demand a forgetting of that self and of the various appetites which seem so strong at the moment.

Sacrifice proves love. A mother will test whether a child loves her by asking the child to sacrifice some sweet or goodie. She will ask that child, "Will you give Mommy a taste of your candy?" She asks, not because she really wants the sweet, but because she wants to test his love. Again, sacrifice in itself even *develops* love. A mother once said of the children, "The more you love them the more you do for them, and the more you do for them the more you love them!" Hard exercise wearies muscles, but only the weariness builds strength. Sacrifice strains love, but love only grows in the sacrifice.

If this is true for natural love, how much more true it must be for supernatural love. Christ Himself leads the way for all, and especially for married couples, when He ascends the cross. His love for men led Him to die for them. As St. Paul said, "Though He was by nature God, did not consider being equal to God a thing to be clung to, but emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave and being made like unto men." (Philippians 2:6-7.) Indeed, if married couples are to live the unity of Christ and His Church, they must also live His crucifixion. Just as He redeemed His spouse by His death, so must they frequently redeem each other.

Sometimes this redemptive love will be but a small thing, like enduring an angry word or inconsiderate action, a day of moodiness, or even a minor infidelity. How many alcoholics of long standing owe their conversion to a long-suffering sacrificial wife or husband? How many erratic women have been cured through the redemptive love of their husbands? Mere natural love could not be expected to sustain so much.

Happiness. And yet it is this sacrificial and redemptive love which brings happiness. The paradox of Christianity itself is that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20-35). The word "blessed" means both *happy* and *holy*. In another place Our Lord Himself says, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat

man and woman, it exists, whether they wish it to or not. Such unity has been the result of their creative love for each other ratified, approved, and made permanent by God Himself.

Further, married love is creative in that it brings forth a new growth and development in the spouses. There are few married couples in the world today who can claim that they were fully mature when they entered the sacred state of wedlock. Looking back on a lifetime together, they can see signs of growth and development. It was love that made them reach maturity and responsibility. Under the impact of love they learned the skills necessary to support a family and keep a home. Again, married love can never allow spouses to be content with each other as they are. It strives always to develop the potential of a spouse to the full.

Just as the painter who falls in love with the sunset cannot help but try to capture this beauty on canvas, so husband and wife who start out their marriage in love, yearn for children. To see in their children varied combinations of the qualities they love in each other is one of the deepest joys of marriage. For conjugal love not to be creative in children (except by accident) is to render it incomplete. Look at the sadness of the couple who are childless through no fault of their own! Notice that among couples who divorce or separate the incidence of childlessness is high.

HOW TO LOVE

Truly. St. Thomas says that lovers must love *truly* for the sake of the beloved and not because the beloved is either *useful* or *pleasing* to the lover. A woman who marries a man because of his financial resources or because he is "a divine dancing partner," may soon discover that her love fails if his usefulness as a provider is ruined by depression or his pleasantness as a dancing partner fades with his age. A man who marries a woman because she will help him to "get ahead" or because she has a pleasing set of features may find his love depleted when he discovers her and her children a drag on his ambitions or her features tracked by the footsteps of time.

Ordinately. Married love demands that husband and wife love each other *ordinately*, that is, not as much or more than they love God. Since each of us comes from God and must return to Him, it is of great concern that spouses love each other in order to reach God. Spouses must, therefore, help each other to get to God.

Yet, many young couples love each other divinely. They say, and they may mean, that they *adore* each other. They have placed their human love over and against the love of God. They are even willing to forget their love of God altogether. Such a love would be disastrous. Since love is a spiritual thing and since all love is a mere finite imitation and participation in the love of God, to leave the love of God out of the picture is to destroy the very love itself. Though it is true to say, as Sacred Scripture does, "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar." For it is equally true to say that he who loves a spouse and hates God is also a liar.

Justly. Again, married love demands that the love be *just* and *holy*. No one can say he loves another person if he demands sin of any kind. A man who demands the use of contraception by his wife, a woman who drives her husband to unfair business practices in order to provide her tearful needs, says in action, (if not in words), that they do not care whether their beloved goes to hell or not. They want what they want when they want it!

Effectively. Love is also *effective*. It produces. It takes action. Notice how effective we are when we love ourselves. When we are cold, we look for warmth; when we are hungry, we try to reach food. When we are uncomfortable, we look for a more comfortable position. When we desire material things, we work for them. Love demands that we be equally effective for our beloved. It would be a queer anomaly for a woman to cook a meal for herself and tell her husband to get his own. It would take a poor husband indeed to earn a salary for himself and tell his wife and children to make their own way of life. Love demands that we be as effective for the well-being of our beloved as we are for our own needs. With St. John, we should say, "Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and in truth." (I John 3:18)

Perseveringly. *Perseverance* is most necessary in giving and receiving married love. Who is always and completely lovable? There are times when we despair of our own worth. At other times we actually almost despise ourselves. Why then should we be surprised that a spouse is not always lovable? Love is tested and proved in loving even without response. To love perseveringly we must also be *patient*. How patient we are with ourselves. We rationalize so many of our faults. We blame the weather. We excuse ourselves for some indisposition. We are surprised that anyone can expect us to be even-tempered at all times, and yet how

Now Christian love-making is not only a practice of the virtues of justice, chastity, religion and natural love, it is also a practice of supernatural charity in that the husband and wife love each other *in and for* God. This love merits an increase of sanctifying grace and a deeper happiness in Heaven!

Our Work. Yet, all is not said. However much we are divinified by grace, we are not taken from the effects of original sin. Our supernatural living is truly within us by grace, yet it is but a *seed*. God did not feel it wise simply to make us divine from the outside. He wanted this supernatural living to be, in some way, the work of our own hands. The seed of divine life which is grace we must plant and cultivate, weed and prune "in fear and trembling" lest, through our own fault, we prevent the harvest. Though it is "God Who gives the growth," it is for us to "plant" and "water." (I Corinthians 3:6.) If this is true for all of supernatural life, it is doubly true for the development of Christian married love. However deep and real the divine conjugal love pledged at the moment of "Wedding in Christ," it is but a seed to be developed.

Actual Grace in Marriage. Fortunately, as we go about Love's task, God still will not leave us alone without help. With the Sacrament of Matrimony comes the right not only to be *in love supernaturally* but to *do the supernatural works of love!* God gives to married couples the right to actual graces through the bond resulting from the Sacrament of Matrimony. If they keep alive their supernatural life by constant prayer and reception of the sacraments, they will find both the inspiration and the strength to achieve not only the natural unity but the divine unity of Christian marriage. How confident they can become in their love when they realize that when Christ says, "Without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5), He implies that *with Him* they can do *all things*, even love in a divine fashion!

Supernatural Remedies. When husband and wife look upon their own weakness, the many sins and infidelities of their lives, they could easily despair. When they face the many times they may have rejected both the love of God and the love of their married partner, they must be discouraged. But, again, God has not left them alone to flounder.

Thus if they should have been unfaithful to each other or to their duties, no matter for how long, through penance they can always have recourse to this inexhaustible source of sacramental grace, to find in it the means of regaining sanctification through

Christ Loves the Church. How does Christ love the Church? He certainly loves it, and still loves it, *truly* for its own sake and not for His own. His apostles were not very *useful* to Him. They constantly confused His message. They were not very *pleasing* to Him; they were an uncouth uneducated group. Yet He loved them for their own development in life and love. He gave them clear, pure doctrine. He gave them the power of miracles. He granted them the ability to love His Father as He loved Him, in bringing them all to sanctity. He loved them in order to bring them to God. He loved them *perseveringly* with infinite *patience* and a *humility* that is astounding! He loved them *effectively* because He did everything for them, including giving His life for them. "He loved them even unto the death of the cross." "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13.) *This is the norm which a husband should have for his love towards his wife!*

Church Loves Christ. How does the Church love Christ? She loves Christ by being *utterly devoted* to Him. She tries to practice the virtue which will make Her worthy of the love of Her Beloved. She goes about the entire world trying to make converts to believe in and be devoted to Him. Through baptism She constantly presents to Him children. *This is the norm of a wife's devotion to her husband.*

Miniature Mystical Body. Besides being concerned that the norm or model of Christian love and devotion should be the love of Christ for the Church and the Church for Christ, St. Paul wanted Christian married couples to *re-live* that love and devotion. By the Sacrament of Matrimony a man and a woman, together with their children, are *constituted a miniature Mystical Body of Christ*. A husband is called to re-live Christ as Head of that body. A wife is called to re-live the Church as spouse, and the children are called to form the members of that divine community just as children of the Church are called to form the members of the Mystical Body of Christ. How staggering, how awesome, how magnificent the concept of Christian married love! Far from leaving out of account all the elements of natural conjugal love, far from ignoring the body, emotions, mind, and the heart, religious and social natures of the lovers, Christian married love gathers up all the natural elements, transforms and supernaturalizes them, and makes them participate in the divine love which is in the soul of the Incarnate Christ.

impatient we are with others and most impatient with those we love most. Someone has said that if a married couple would allow to each other three faults, the rest would be easy to live with. If the just man falls seven times a day, who can exist without fault?

Patience with another demands *humility* in oneself. If a man feels that his is the only way of thinking, the only way of doing things, if he arrogates to himself the omnipotence and omniscience of God, he will find it hard to be patient with a wife who sees differently. If a woman insists that her point of view is the only point of view on a given problem, her patience will soon be exhausted when her husband disagrees, and she will never give him the faith and confidence he needs to protect and direct his family, and to face an often hostile world outside.

THE WORK OF MARRIED LOVE—UNITY

Unity and Adjustment. Love desires nothing else than *unity*. Conjugal love demands that the couple constantly strive for married unity, a special kind of oneness found nowhere else. In order to achieve this unity (and it is never *fully* achieved in this life) we must be chary of a false idea of adjustment implicit in many modern marriage books. Adjustment, in this modern sense, can be interpreted as the discovery of a kind of common denominator between two different types of people into which both can fit. Such adjustment hints that each person's strength must somehow be whittled down and each person's weaknesses must somehow be strengthened. If one likes classical music and the other likes jazz, this kind of adjustment could only demand that both forget their differences and be content with semi-classical music.

Who wants an adjustment which is merely a kind of give and take, a kind of barter in which each gives up but neither grows? The word, "adjustment," comes from two Latin words, *ad*, towards, and *juste*, just or right; it means giving each other their rights in marriage. If love wants each person to grow to his or her full stature as man or woman, husband or wife, father or mother, then *unity* demands an attempt to achieve a kind of oneness built of the strength and full development of both, and not a unity by lopping off the differences. When hydrogen and oxygen meet to form water, it is not so much the filling out of each other's needs that is important (though this happens), it is the resultant new substance, water, which is valuable to us!

Unity—The Goal. To bring about the unity of two such different people as a man and a woman we must know what we are uniting and we must have some general idea of what the resultant unity will look like. Married love is an attempt to unite two human persons, one a man and the other a woman. The resultant unity is described by Christ Himself when He says:

But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female. 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' Therefore now they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder. (Mark 10:6-9.)

The Church, realizing the natural tendency of the young man and young woman to become one in the flesh, points out very strongly that this is not enough when She says in Her wedding exhortation, "You wish to be one in mind, one in heart, and one in affections." Really, the goal of married love is the unity of two different persons into one "person" (as nearly as this is possible), which "person" becomes *one principle of action, development, generation, and education.*

Elements of Unity

MAN IS a creature composed of body and soul and made to the image and likeness of God." This we learned in our catechisms long ago, but very frequently we do not make it practical and real for ourselves. Human beings have *bodily needs and senses, emotional feelings, thoughtful intentions, habits of love* deeply rooted in the will, *a social nature* which must be matured in the *religious love of God.* All these gifts, though they are equally and completely present in both sexes, are nevertheless marked and polarized, like positive and negative electricity, in a *man and a woman.* *All six of these elements, marked by masculinity or femininity in each case, must enter into the love unity to be achieved in the marriage union.* The characteristics with which masculinity and femininity affect the complete body-soul composite of the human being will be treated in another lesson. The physical love-making aspects will also be discussed elsewhere.

Since a human person is composed of body and soul, it would be nothing short of an insult to the God who fashioned this interpenetrating composite to despise any element. Since we are bound

down through the centuries. Christ solved this problem by establishing the sacraments. The sacraments are methods of giving and increasing divine life in us. Baptism brings us to birth in Christ. Confirmation, the sacrament of spiritual adolescence, brings us to spiritual adulthood. Holy Communion feeds divine life and increases it to full stature. Penance heals the divine life in us which is wounded or even destroyed by sin. Extreme Unction prepares that life in us for the brilliant and sudden awareness of God's presence which is our passage from life on earth into eternity. Holy Orders makes a man a divine mediator, another Christ before the judgment seat of God.

Sacramental Grace of Matrimony. Matrimony transforms human conjugal love and unity and makes it divine conjugal love, divine conjugal unity.

The sacrament of marriage is the imprint of God on the souls of the married couple, not merely in order to deify their life in general, but in order to deify their union. . . . By the sacrament of marriage God becomes as it were a third party in the intimacy of married life. Man and wife are united in God: this last expression can be interpreted in a very strict sense, for the action of the sacrament being an unique divine action in the souls of each of them, and sacramental grace being a reality in their souls, one can truly state that they have something in their souls which really unites them, which constitutes a principle of unity, and that this unifying reality is a divine action. The sacrament of marriage is thus in a sense a deifying of the conjugal union, a means of translating into action the unity and the divine character which God imposes in the sacrament. (LaClercq, *Marriage a Great Sacrament*, Clonmore and Reynolds, Ltd., Dublin, pages 29-30.)

Because of this divinity in a Christian marriage, however beautiful the natural conjugal love we have explained on the previous pages, this is not enough for Christian conjugal love. Christian husbands and wives are called to love each other much more deeply, much more really, much more perfectly than the most perfect natural lovers. You will recall that St. Paul said "Wives be subject to your husbands as to the Lord . . . Husbands love your wives as Christ loves His Church. (Cf. MARRIAGE IN CHRIST.)

Christian Norm for Conjugal Love. It is not so much the subjection of women to their husbands that St. Paul is interested in. It is not even the love that husbands should have for their wives that interests him. It is, above all, the *norm* of devotion and love that they should have for each other that concerns him. Wives are to be devoted to their husbands as the Church is to Christ. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the Church.

that once again he might be on a supernatural level, able to love God not only above all things, but also as He loves Himself. "But where the offense has abounded, grace has abounded yet more." (Romans 5:20.) With the great St. Augustine we can cry, "Oh happy fault that merited such a Redeemer!" By the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ we have been redeemed or bought back from the bondage of sin, from the influence of the devil, from storms of our mutually warring desires, from enmity with God. By Christ's redemption we have been restored to grace.

SANCTIFYING GRACE

What is sanctifying grace? Sanctifying grace is that reality within a person which raises him to a supernatural, really a *divine*, level. It is not merely a cloak which surrounds his inherent disorganization and makes him look organized; it is something within him which transforms him and makes him something else. The tungsten in a light bulb is a cold, dark metal, but with the surge of electrical current it is the source of light. If the electric bulb could be given current *from within* which was its very own, and if it could glow by itself, this would form a faint image of how sanctifying grace transforms the human being from within and makes him capable of performing God-like acts.

Take another example, the story of Pinocchio. Pinocchio, a puppet, is merely an articulated bundle of sticks. If we were to pull out all the pins which allow the puppet to move, we would reduce him to a bundle of uncorrelated pieces of wood. This is somewhat similar to what original sin has done to us. We have become disintegrated and left a prey to the war of mutually opposite desires. But if, through some miracle, Pinocchio could be put together again in his nature as a puppet, and then made to be a "real live boy," then Pinocchio would become supernatural. Not only is he made a working puppet, but he is raised from his nature as a puppet to the nature of a human being. By the miracle of grace not only have we been restored to an integrated nature, but we have been raised to the level of the divine!

SACRAMENTAL GRACE

The problem facing the redemption, which happened at the point of time when Christ died, is how to apply it to all Christians

"to love our neighbor as ourselves" and a husband and a wife are pre-eminently neighbors, we must also love and reverence every element of his or her personality.

BODILY UNITY

On practically every level of the human composite there are errors of thinking. Many Christians approach the body with a *Manichaeian* tinge in their thinking. Almost unconsciously, many feel that God had nothing to do with making the body, but that God merely made the soul. Then, when He was not looking, the devil came along and stuffed the soul into its body, and the soul has been helplessly imprisoned ever since! They feel that every human ill comes from the body itself and that the body is evil. Almost as harmful is the *Victorian* thinking, which, though it admits that there is a body, tries to pretend that it is not there! Worse than either, in practical result, is the doctrine that the body *is not there*—that the body is an hallucination and only spirit truly exists.

At the other pole of thought are the modern materialistic pagans who refuse to admit that there is anything other than the body. To them, the body is a mechanism for pleasurable sensation, to be wine and dined, titillated and stimulated. They even measure the electrical impulses that go along with pleasure and pain and insist that twitches, such as reflexes and sneezes, are all there are. All these approaches fail in that they do not love the human being *as he is* with *all* his faculties. Sometimes the Church itself is accused of some of these errors because so many who listen to her condemn the *abuses* of the body naively (and falsely) suppose that She condemns the body itself.

The inter-penetrating body and soul both yearn for, need, and are incomplete without each other. Even the separated soul which has gone to heaven after death yearns for its body, mouldering in the grave, as an essential constituent of the person. The mind cannot think without the body since the body provides, through the senses, the raw material from which the mind draws its ideas.

Bodily Expression. Nor can the intelligent creature *express* himself without the body. The body is the soul's means of action. The artist, the physician, the carpenter, are not merely minds which conceive. They are hands which carry out the conception. Only through the body can the soul utter itself. The body expresses the anguish and joy, anger and love, supplication and triumph of the

person. It vibrates with emotions, ideas, and affections. Even when there are no words, we can see the joy of a dancing girl, the sadness of a tearful face, the greed of an avaricious man, the anger of a scowl, the lust in a leer.

Words. The soul also expresses itself in *words*. It forces the body to develop speech, to put the words together in meaningful sentences. And when mere words are inadequate, the voice uses intonations, rhythm, and cadences to help express what words alone cannot.

Gestures. When words and intonations are no longer sufficient, *gestures* are added. We wring our hands in anxiety; we fold them in supplication; we fall to our knees in petition; we lift our voices in joy; we dance for sheer excitement; we caress and kiss in love.

Lastly, the whole body becomes in a way the *image* of the soul, the sign which conveys to the outside world something of the personal mystery. The soul molds its body and stamps its own history on it. How we walk and act and speak lets the world know what we are. If we surrender ourselves to our instincts, we write the fact on our flesh. If we master and direct them, our body projects this spiritual glow. Nor does the body find it easy to lie. The very existence of the machine known as a lie detector indicates this.

Communion. The supreme dignity of the body lies in that it provides the means by which two persons can enter into communion with each other. Two *souls* can never touch directly. They can meet only through the body. This is true in the handshake between friends, the kiss of a mother and a child, but is most completely true of the marital embrace.

Far from being an act in which two people merely satisfy their passions together, marital love-making is designed by God Himself to symbolize and achieve the total self-dedication of one entire person to another. Love experience can be a union that is given in purity, generosity, and fidelity, and if so, the body itself is spiritualized by its service to the love which ennobles it. Love-making should not be an action or a group of actions, not a gymnastic, not a technique of mutual pleasure, but a *language* which expresses unity and achieves the unity it expresses.

If, on the other hand, physical union is merely the satisfying of instinct without generosity; if it is a mutual attraction which involves no permanence in love; then not only is the body not ele-

beings are not in a natural state but in a supernatural state. They are called not only to love God above all things through their natural intelligences and wills, but also to love God with the same love with which He loves Himself!

When Adam and Eve placed themselves ahead of God, they lost the supernatural helps to achieve this divine kind of loving, and not only did they lose this supernatural possibility of loving God, but also the special remedies He had given them for their weaknesses. Every man and woman born into the world since that time carry these same wounds. No longer is a human being, with all his various and apparently opposing appetites, integrated at the start of life. These appetites pull and strain against each other. Though original sin does not vitiate man in his nature—it does not make him evil in himself—it does allow him to tend downward from his own personal integration and away from the love of God which he should have above all things. In conjugal love this means that man and woman naturally tend to fall into the pitfalls of emotional repression or emotionalism, the pitfalls of cold mental calculation or the despising of mental effort, the pitfalls of whims or cold hard voluntarism, the pitfalls of exaggerated individualism or communism. Looking at the evils, sins, and crimes about us; looking at the marital disasters that strew the road of marriage; horrified at the high incidence of divorce and separation; a married person can cry with St. Paul:

For I am delighted with the law of God according to the inner man, but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and making me prisoner to the law of sin that is in my members. Unhappy man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death? (Romans 7:22-24.)

Christian Married Love

ALTHOUGH ORIGINAL sin has made the accomplishment of supernatural life impossible for us, and the world about us is full of the wreckage caused by the “cussedness” of human nature, God has not left us to struggle despairingly alone. With infinite mercy He sent His own Son down upon earth to wed human nature in the Incarnation. In this wedding, Christ has redeemed human nature. Not only has He given man the strength to put all his tumultuous desires together, but He has won for him grace so

SOCIAL UNITY

Man's social nature also leads him into many errors all the way from individualism to socialism; from exaggerating the importance of the individual to melting the individual into the community. And here again a true social awareness of both man and wife is most important. Not only must they develop each other's social natures, but conjugal love demands that they, *as a family with children*, take their place as a fundamental unit in the society about them. It is not enough for a man to insist that his wife's place is in the home while he hardly ever enters it, nor would it be enough for him to join her in the home and abdicate his obligations to the community at large. It would be equally wrong for the wife to enter community projects to the detriment of her home and family, or to complain that she needs help to such an extent as to force the man to leave the political and social life of his community. True love can only urge not only the social development of parents and children, but their advancement in the social area together and as a family.

All these unities, unity of body, emotions, mind, heart, religion, and social awareness, have tremendous impact upon one another. Two people who are having difficulties adjusting on the physical level will find it hard to think together. A husband and wife who are not concerned for this spiritual development of each other will not be able to express much unity emotionally. A man and wife who are not anxious to develop habitual methods of virtue will not achieve, generally speaking, a satisfactory sexual union.

Original Sin

THE UNITY to be achieved in marriage certainly seems very complex, and complex it is. Complex also are the different *aberrations* of love, the *characteristics* of conjugal love and even the *techniques*. Successful married love, therefore, is extremely difficult by its very nature, and it becomes even more difficult when we see that fallen human beings are prone to all the errors and disasters that we have suggested.

The picture that we have so far drawn of conjugal love and unity is a natural goal for every man and woman who marry, whether they are Christian or not. But in Christian thought human

vated, but the soul itself is debased and degraded and reduced to the level of the carnality and animality which motivated the union. True conjugal love-making is, then, not something to be merely endured, nor something to be lusted after, but a means of total self-surrender in love for both the husband and the wife.

Virtue. So often couples feel that their physical union, however much anticipated, is merely a concession to their own weakness, a mere sop to their lack of self-control. This is not true. Far from being something always and at all times wrong, but somehow justified in marriage, love experience is so meaningful, sacred, and mysterious, that it can be expressed only within marriage. It is always and at all times forbidden outside of marriage. Solitary sin is wrong because it uses the body for self-satisfaction rather than to express the soul in its yearning for love-unity. Premarital unchastity is sinful because it "acts out" a permanent self-dedication without the real permanence of a love ratified by God in a valid marriage.

Far from being a mere concession to weak human nature, love-making in a valid marriage is by nature *holy* and *virtuous*. In meeting each other's needs in the marital act, the couple practices the *virtue of justice*, because they are obliged by contract to give to a married partner what was contracted for on the day of marriage. Love-making is a practice of the natural *virtue of love* in expressing the love of well-wishing. It is an exercise of *chastity* since chastity is the virtue which controls and directs the use of the body according to God's law. It is an exercise of the virtue of *religion* since it should be reverently accepted as the gift of God, and referred back to Him as its source and end. (The rights and wrongs of the marital embrace are presented in CHASTITY IN MARRIAGE.)

EMOTIONAL UNITY

However, a man and a woman are not only two bodies, they are also emotional beings. They have feelings, and these feelings can and should be expressed. Here again we have many errors. We have those who insist that all feeling and emotional expression are beneath the human being. Then we have the sentimentals who believe that nothing but sentiment matters. Both groups are terribly wrong. To follow either extreme will lead to neurosis.

All human emotions are fundamentally good and should be expressed in proportion to the situation. Affection, dependence, desire, fear, anxiety, shame, sadness, joy, laughter, humor, are all good emotions if they rise at the proper occasion. Yet, something is wrong with the person who expresses them without the stimulus. A woman who cannot cry when she is sad, a man who cannot become indignant when he sees injustice in the world, is not fully a woman or a man. Yet, if the woman is always dissolved in tears and the man "blows a fuse" at the slightest provocation, they are equally undeveloped.

Love demands that husband and wife forward the emotional nature of each other. The characteristic masculine and feminine emotions should be fully expressed and fully encouraged in each other, but they should never be allowed to degenerate into mere emotionalism. Powerful is the emotional strength of a good marriage which is built upon the good strong emotions of both man and woman.

UNITY OF MIND

Not only does the human person have a body and a set of emotions, he also has a soul with its own faculties of mind and will. A husband and wife must unite by *thinking* together. In this unity, too, we have many vagaries. Some people pride themselves on being sheer intellects! They claim that their love is purely "platonian," whatever that may be. They marry for an intellectual companionship and brilliant intellectual conversation. Some marry simply to carry on their name or to pass on the torch of life from generation to generation. Such people are all calculation.

On the other hand, we have people who do not think at all. They "feel" that a certain thing is true or false, or right or wrong. They despise discussion, hate knowledge, ignore logic. They say in effect, "Don't confuse me with the facts, my mind is made up."

Married love demands that two people try to unfold the mental growth of each other. Conjugal love urges husbands and wives to encourage each other's interests in the world about them. It leads them to constant stimulating discussions and mutual communication on all the levels of knowledge that are open to them depending on their background of education and interests. "And they lived happily ever after," may be the epitaph of courtship, but it should be not the end but the beginning of a lifetime of growth together.

LOVE UNITY

Though love itself is the central action of the will, there are many actions which flow from this love and tend to set themselves up in patterns we call virtues. Some people despise these patterns and act always upon impulse. They are erratic and unpredictable and do not set up habitual modes of action which keep them functioning even when they are "not in the mood." Other people devote themselves to a cold impersonal "duty" which seems almost devoid of intelligent love. They become automatons whose actions will not be changed by the needs of a beloved. Still others use their wills simply to get what they want when they want it. To such persons, a spouse becomes merely a method of satisfying needs. On the other hand, a weak partner can become so wanting in self-regard that he or she will become attached to the other like a parasite or clinging vine. Without will or wish of their own, such partners flee from the awesome obligation of constantly choosing, the chief characteristic of a human being.

Constant love demands that husband and wife try to unfold the masculine and feminine virtues which are so natural to each. Far from hindering the man from his masculine virtues of strict justice and planning prudence, a loving woman will gladly follow the lead of her husband in these decision-making areas. On his side, far from despising a woman's natural temperance, long-suffering and detailed courage, a devoted husband will himself humbly draw strength from her virtues. Mutual concern for a unity of virtuous living is part of married love.

RELIGIOUS UNITY

All the other unities of marriage are consecrated and given direction by religious unity. Even in a natural state, man is called out of nothingness to return himself to God, and this direction must unify all his other activities, including that of conjugal love.

Still again, we have the caricatures of religion all about us. There are men and women who despise their dependence upon God as being a mere myth invented to prop up those who are too weak for living! Others develop a kind of *religiosity* which substitutes for human responsibility and abdicates human obligation. Conjugal love demands that each spouse attempt to promote the welfare of the other towards the goal of service to God. They are to proceed hand in hand as one principle of spiritual cooperation.