

DRAFT OF A DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON CHASTITY, MARRIAGE, THE FAMILY, AND VIRGINITY

PREFACE

1. The Church, Model of Both States

All the Christian faithful constitute one great family which has arisen out of the at once virginal and spousal union of the Church with Jesus Christ, since never does the Savior cease by the word of life and the grace of the Holy Spirit to render his Bride, purchased by his blood, most chastely fruitful. For this reason, the Holy Synod has decided to extol and defend in a single dogmatic Constitution the nobility both of chastity in the unmarried and its most beautiful fruit, sacred virginity, and of chaste marriage and its heavenly fruit, the Christian family.

PART ONE: CHASTITY

2. Introductory Note

Since all that is about to be presented presupposes the divinely ordained differences between the sexes and their mutual relationship, a few things are said first about the origin and nature of sex and about man's dominion over his own body insofar as this serves the propagation of the human race.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE SEXES

3. The Origin and Nature of Sex

God himself "from the beginning made man male and female" (Mt 19:4),¹ and he blessed them, saying, "Increase and multiply" (Gn 1:28). When he had given this blessing, he saw that all that he had made was "very good" (Gn 1:31).² Thus it is that the things that in this respect are naturally found in man are also good and proper,³ as the Church has often stated in order to proclaim the sanctity and dignity of marriage. But after Adam's sin, they demand a proper modesty and protection (see Gn 2:25 and 3:7),⁴ but without any false or scrupulous shame. By the merits of Christ the bodies of those reborn have become temples of the Holy Spirit, which is why God can and should be glorified in human bodies also (see 1 Cor 6:19-20). It clearly follows, therefore, that things which pertain to sex should be considered and treated simply, reverently, modestly, and chastely.⁵ In affirming this original dignity of human sex, however, false over-praise should be avoided, as if it were precisely by making man male and female that God made them in his image⁶ or as if it were principally by sexual elements that man were man.⁷ For in this mortal life, although human sex also enjoys other human qualities, it is nevertheless primarily ordered towards marriage and its spiritual

and temporal goods, as Sacred Scripture teaches (see Mt 19:4),⁸ until that time is fulfilled when, as the Lord said, "at the resurrection they will neither marry nor be given in marriage" (Mt 22:30).

4. Man not the Absolute Lord of the Body

It should be noted that God alone is the absolute lord of man's life and of its integrity, particularly with respect to what makes man naturally capable of and associates him with God in the propagation of human life.⁹ Attempts to change one's sex, therefore, when this is sufficiently determined, are wicked; nor is it allowed, in order to save the health of the whole man, to mutilate his genital organs¹⁰ or to render them infertile, if there are other ways to provide for his health.¹¹ Nor in any case is or can there be a right to transplant into the human body the sexual organs of animals which produce the germinative cells of their own genus, or vice-versa;¹² nor also to try to unite the human germ cells of each sex in a laboratory, even if this is done without violating modesty and chastity and solely for the sake of scientific progress.¹³

NOTES

¹ See also Gn 1:27, "Male and female he created them;" Mk 10:6, "From the beginning of creation God made them male and female."

² See also Eccl 39:21, "All the works of the Lord are very good."

³ See the Council of Braga (561), nos. 11-12 (D 241-42): "If anyone says that *the formation of the human body is the work of the devil* and that the conception of children in their mother's womb is brought about through the activity of the devil, and for this reason does not believe in the resurrection of the body, as Manes and Priscillian said, A.S." (no. 12); and the following no. 13 (D 243): "If anyone says that *the creation of all flesh* is not the work of God but of bad angels, as Priscillian said, A.S."

⁴ But from the fact that God created man's sexuality, it is not licit to conclude, as some claim, that the sexual organs and functions are not to be covered over by a veil or modestly. St. Thomas writes (*Summa theol.*, II-II, q. 151, 1. 4): "The word *pudicitia* [modesty] comes from *pudor* [shame], which means *verecundia* [shyness]. Therefore modesty properly concerns the things which men are *more* shy about. But *men are most shy about* venereal acts, as Augustine said in *The City of God*, XIV.... Man is shy not only about venereal intercourse, *but also about all its signs*, as the Philosopher says in the *Rhetoric*, II. And therefore modesty *has properly to do with venereal matters*, and especially with *venereal signs* such as immodest looks, kisses, and touches."

⁵ See Pius XI, Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*, Dec. 31, 1929, where there is much against a naturalism which takes no account of the fall "transmitted by the first parents to all their posterity." And especially with regard to girls, the Pontiff stated: "...but also in gymnastic games and exercises in which special care should be taken for Christian modesty, since it would be *highly indecent* to show or display themselves to the eyes of all" (D 2215); Pius XII, To Teachers from the Order of Discalced Carmelites (*AAS*, 33 [1951], 736): "The ancient Greeks and Romans, to be able to refer to things pertaining to chastity, used a particular word; *aidoia*, things to be in awe of, they called things which *must be treated reverently*."

⁶ There are those who maintain that God made man in his image *insofar as* he made him male and female. This is not a solitary statement, but is found among many people.

⁷ See Pius XII, To French Fathers on Pilgrimage to Rome, Sept. 18, 1951 (*AAS*, 43 [1951], 733): "This propaganda also threatens the Catholic people with a double scourge, not to use a stronger expression. In the first place, *it exaggerates beyond measure* the importance and meaning in life *of the sexual element*;" Pius XII, To the Participants in the Fifth International Congress on Psychotherapy and Psychology, April 13, 1953 (*AAS*, 45 [1953], 279): "These dynamisms may be *in* the soul,

in man, but they are not *the soul*, are not *man*."

⁸ See Pius XII, Address to Midwives, Oct 29, 1951 (*AAS*, 43 [1951], 849, 852): "In fact Holy Scripture says of God that he created man in his image and *created him male and female*, and willed, as we find it repeatedly stated in the holy Books, that 'a man shall leave father and mother and cleave to his wife and they shall become one flesh.' All this, then, is good and willed by God; but it must not be disjoined from the primary function of *marriage*, that is, the service of a new life.... *At present*, in fact, people (including some Catholics) are maintaining in words and writings the *need for autonomy*, the distinctive purpose and proper value of sexuality...*independently* of the goal of procreating a new life." To have some indication of the view of modern people, including Catholics, with regard to sexuality, see the publication *Esprit*, the issue on "Sexuality," Nov. 1960, pp. 1695-1962. N.B. The Constitution deliberately avoids saying that marriage is *the one and only purpose* of human sexuality.

⁹ Leo XIII, Letter, *Pastoralis officii*, to the Bishops of Germany and Austria (*Acta Leonis XIII*, XI, p. 284; D 1939): "...both of the divine laws, the one promulgated by the light of natural reason and the one in the divinely inspired Scriptures, strictly forbid anyone, except for a public reason, to slay or to wound, *except forced by necessity and for the sake of preserving health*;" Pius XI, Encyclical *Casti connubii*, Dec. 21, 1931 (*AAS*, 22 [1930], 565): "Public magistrates have no direct power over the bodies of their subjects.... Furthermore, *Christian doctrine establishes, and the light of human reason makes it most clear, private individuals have no other power over the members of their bodies than that which pertains to their natural ends; and they are not free to destroy or mutilate their members, or in any way to render themselves unfit for their natural functions, except when no other provision can be made for the good of the whole body*;" Pius XII, Talk to Doctors, May 21, 1948 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, X, p. 98): "The principle is inviolable. *God alone is the Lord of life and of the integrity of man, of his members, of his organs, of his powers, of those in particular which associate him with the work of creation*; Pius XII, Talk to the Medico-Biological Union of S. Luca, Nov. 12, 1944 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, VI, p. 186): "Man is not the proprietor, *the absolute lord of his body*, but only the one who has the use of it."

¹⁰ See the documents cited in the previous note.

¹¹ See Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c.; Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, Feb. 22, 1940 (*AAS*, 32 [1940], 73); Pius XII, Talk to Doctors, May 21, 1948, l.c.: "...it is no less illicit...to dry up or to sterilize, *by means of an operation which no other motive justifies, the springs of life*;" Pius XII, Address to Midwives, Oct. 29, 1951, loc. cit., pp. 843ff: "*Direct sterilization, that is, one aimed either as means or as an end in itself at making procreation impossible, is a serious violation of the moral law and hence illicit. Even public authority has no right, under pretext of some 'indication,' to allow it and much less to prescribe it or to carry it out to the harm of the innocent. This principle is already stated in the above-mentioned Encyclical of Pius XI on marriage. Therefore, when, a decade later, sterilization is coming to be more broadly applied, the Holy See is constrained to declare expressly and publicly that direct sterilization, whether permanent or temporary, whether of the man or of the woman, is illicit in virtue of the natural law from which the Church herself, as you know, has no power to dispense*;" First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 493.

¹² Pius XII, Address to Moderators and Members of Italian Sodality for Corneal Offerings (*AAS*, 48 [1956], 460): "The transplanting of animal sexual glands into a man is to be rejected as immoral."

¹³ Pius XII, To Participants in the Second World Congress on Human Fertility and Sterility, May 19, 1951 (*AAS*, 48 [1956], 471): "On the subject of attempts at human artificial fecundation '*in vitro*,' let it be enough for us to observe that they must be rejected as immoral and absolutely illicit." Here the Constitution has in mind all those modern experiments being made to unite the vital human germ cells, even independently of an intention at artificial fertilization, but for other purposes. Many are waiting for the Church clearly to say that these experiments are in every hypothesis illicit, even if civil legislatures until now, as far as we know, are doing nothing; indeed materialists may take the occasion publicly to ridicule divine principles in the newspapers.

CHAPTER II: THE CHASTITY OF THE UNMARRIED

5. Chastity in the Unmarried

Every man has the serious but equally honorable duty to dominate his sexual impulses and feelings by the exercise of chastity by which, with the help of God's grace, the flesh and the senses are rightly subordinated to reason, by which man is raised to higher things, and, through reason illuminated by faith, to the law of the Gospel. Thus by chastity sexual relations and intercourse are so ennobled that they are worthy of man, created in God's image, and of the Christian. But the exercise of chastity differs in the unmarried and the married since only in the unmarried is continence linked with it; and in addition, while it ordinarily prepares the unmarried for marriage or for sacred virginity, for the married it is the splendor of marriage itself. For by divine ordination, revealed also in the law of nature, that man has a healthy sexual power does not give him the right to exercise it. That right is obtained only in a legitimate marriage and indeed within morally prescribed limits.¹ An unmarried man, therefore, has a serious duty to refrain from actions which, alone or with others, of their nature constitute perfect or imperfect use of his properly and specifically sexual power or which by free and conscious will are directed to such use.² The severe warning of the Holy Spirit through the Apostle should be remembered: "Do not be deceived: neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor the effeminate nor homosexuals...will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor 6:9-10).³ Indeed, even deliberate evil internal acts against chastity are severely forbidden by the Lord (see Mt 5:28; 15:18-19). Nor should it be said, especially today, that they cannot be avoided. For even the unmarried, if they humbly beg for and are helped by God's grace, are able to maintain chastity, as the Sacred Council of Trent already declared⁴ and the Church has always taught about them.⁵ No less today than in the past the teaching of the Apostle applies, even for young people: "The body is not for immorality but for the Lord.... Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?" (1 Cor 6:13, 19-20).⁶ "God did not call us to impurity but to holiness" (1 Th 4:7). While chastity is not the only nor the primary good in men's moral life, still without it the moral life cannot be whole; and no one can deny how important God considers the life of those who, even outside of marriage, keep themselves pure and immaculate in this world; for it is not without reason that, along with charity, modesty, continence, and chastity are also listed among the fruits of the Holy Spirit.⁷

6. The Defense and Care of Chastity

If chastity, which is so important to God, is really to be preserved, it must be loved effectively and be humbly and vigilantly guarded, defended, and promoted by apt natural and especially by supernatural means.⁸ Human nature itself helps in this, through a certain innate shame, which develops and assists if it is imbued with a Christian spirit. That opinion must not be followed, therefore, which thinks that immodest acts, that is, acts which by their nature promote sexual desire, must be considered indifferent.⁹ *A fortiori*, that aberration must be rejected according to which such acts against modesty are recommended so that, by directly seeking and attaining lustful pleasure in

them, a person may better preserve chastity and avoid the sin of consummated and perfect lust.¹⁰ No less condemned is that other extreme which adduces various reasons of the natural order and even invokes religion itself and morality in order to defend and spread a veritable cult of nudity, which neglects men's condition after Adam's sin (see Gn 2:25; 3:7).¹¹ As for so-called "sexual initiation,"¹² this Sacred Synod is ready to recommend modest and Christian education and instruction in matters sexual in accord with individual conditions and needs. Indeed it blames parents who out of excessive shame or false modesty neglect or take this serious obligation lightly or who, thinking themselves incapable of it, entrust it to people who are not fit for it. On the other hand, it must reject that sort of education which is given to boys and girls together, without any moderation, immodestly, and without consideration of religion.¹³ With supreme loathing, furthermore, the Sacred Synod knows how many and how great are the detestable onslaughts today against chastity, by which in countless manifestations of today's culture, even if under the pretext of play, recreation, science, art or praiseworthy beauty, souls redeemed by the blood of Christ are in fact constantly and almost everywhere, even within the family, being encouraged and even handed over to evil.¹⁴ It urges all, therefore, to arm themselves against such dangers by prayer, fasting, the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, and devotion to the Virgin Mary. They should also flee what are called near occasions.¹⁵ For how can they honestly pray, "Lead us not into temptation" (Mt 6:13), if they freely seek temptations? Mindful of the Lord's words against those who scandalize, the Church has the right and duty to repudiate those who give scandal and especially the public corruption of sexual morality.¹⁶ And civil authority also must guard and defend morality by appropriate and effective means,¹⁷ especially by assisting the efforts of all, individuals or groups, to foster public morality, including cases where it is being harmed by writings, radio programs, television, or other instruments of human culture.

7. Some Errors are Condemned

They are seriously opposed to the Church's teaching who maintain that even in a healthy man, almost everything, including religious, moral, and even supernatural matters, are to be explained a priori by sexuality, with the further accusation that shepherds of souls are to be considered unworthy and incapable of their office if they do not know these and other modern claims.¹⁸ It is also an error not to wish to acknowledge internal sins against chastity or to measure external sin itself by new, e.g., psychoanalytical, criteria, opposed to the teachings of the Church.¹⁹ Quite false are the views which harmfully insinuate that actions which the traditional ethics of the Church considers opposed to chastity are instead demanded by nature itself or by a healthy development of the human person.²⁰ The worst is to maintain that the most shameful love for persons of the same sex is the prerogative of a higher culture.²¹ This Sacred Synod furthermore declares to be most pernicious the errors of those according to whom, if you believe it, precisely and above all in the area of chastity, there never or hardly ever are subjectively and seriously evil acts, especially in the time of youth or among habitual, occasional, and recidivist sinners, on the grounds that they are presumed to lack sufficient freedom; or indeed that such actions are inevitable.²² This error even reaches the point of maintaining that it is permitted to lead someone to such objectively seriously evil acts when they are only and at most material sins.²³ Finally the Sacred Synod rejects as harmful the errors that maintain that the

Church by its teaching on chastity and modesty harms a healthy and vigorous education of the young. These views are directly aimed at God, since God himself says through the Apostle: "Immorality or any impurity... must not even be mentioned among you, as is fitting among holy ones" (Eph 5:3).

NOTES

¹ Pius XII, in Address, May 19, 1956 (*AAS* 48 [1956], 472), where there is a specific treatment of the intrinsic wickedness of sin against the Sixth Commandment.

² See: St. Zephyrinus (?), in Tertullian, *De pudicitia*, ch. 1 (D 43).

First Council of Lyons (1245) (D 453): "On fornication committed by an unmarried man with an unmarried woman as if it were not a mortal sin, there should be no hesitation at all, since the Apostle stated that both *fornicators and adulterers were far from the Kingdom of God* (1 Cor 6:9f)."

The errors on moral matters condemned in the Decree of the Holy Office, March 4, 1679, nn. 48-49 (D 1198): "It seems clear that fornication by itself implies no malice and is evil solely because it is forbidden so that *the contrary seems entirely in disagreement with reason*; (D 1199): "*Pederasty is not forbidden by natural law. Hence, if God had not forbidden it, it would often be good and at times even an obligation under pain of mortal sin.*"

The errors of Zaninus of Solcia condemned in the Letter *Cum sicut*, November 14, 1459, n. 7 (D 717g): "Outside of marriage sexual activity is not a sin except by prohibition of positive laws, and therefore these have provided poorly, and only because of ecclesiastical prohibition is he restraining himself from following Epicurus' view as true."

Council of Vienna (1311-1312), the errors of the Beguards and the Beguines, n. 7 (D 477): "That the kiss of a woman, since nature does not incline to it, is a mortal sin; but *the carnal act, since nature inclines to it, is not a sin*, especially when one is tempted mightily."

Alexander VII, Errors on moral matters condemned on March 18, 1666, n. 40 (D 1140): "It is a probable opinion that *a kiss for the carnal and sensible pleasure* which arises from the kiss *is only a venial sin*, if there is no danger of further consent and pollution."

Decree of the Holy Office, August 2, 1929 (D 2201); Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, December 21, 1930 (D 2230): see also the errors of Michael de Molinos, props. 24, 41, 42, 47-53 (D 1244, 1261, 1262, 1267-73).

As for the seriousness of impure acts, see St. Thomas, *Lectura in Eph.*, c. 5, 4, lect. II: "He excludes three vices, impurity in *impure touches and embraces and lustful kisses....* And all these are *mortal* insofar as they are ordered towards mortal sins, because something, even if it is good in general, is mortal insofar as it is ordered towards mortal sin."

³ See also Gal 5:19; Eph 5:5; 2 Pet 2:9f; Rev 22:15. Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, March 25, 1954 (*AAS* 46 [1954], 182f): "All holy men and holy women have most carefully guarded the movements of their senses and their passions, and at times have very harshly crushed them, in keeping with the teaching of the Divine Master: 'But I say to you that anyone who looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. And if your right eye scandalizes you, pluck it out and throw it away. For it is better for you that one of your members should perish than that your whole body should be cast into hell' (Mt 5:28-29). *It is abundantly clear that with this warning our Savior demands of us above all that we never consent to any sin, even in our minds, and that we steadfastly remove far from us anything that can even slightly tarnish the beautiful virtue of purity. In this matter no diligence, no severity can be considered exaggerated.*"

⁴ Council of Trent, Session XXIV, Doctrine on the Sacrament of Marriage, c. 9 (D 979).

⁵ Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., p. 181: "And yet, although chastity pledged to God is a *difficult virtue*, those who after serious consideration generously answer Christ's invitation and do all in their power to attain it, can perfectly and faithfully preserve it. For since they have eagerly embraced the state of virginity or celibacy, they will certainly receive from God that gift of grace through whose help they will be able to carry out their promise. If, therefore, there are any 'who do not feel they have the gift of chastity even though they have vowed it' (see Council of Trent, Session XXIV, c. 9), *let them not declare that they cannot fulfill their obligations in this matter.* For 'God does not command the impossible, but in commanding urges that one do what he can and pray for what he cannot (see St. Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, c. 48, n. 50 [PL 44, 271]) and he helps us to accomplish it' (Council of Trent, Session VI, c. 11). This truth, so full of encouragement, we recall to those also whose will *has been weakened by upset nerves and whom some doctors, sometimes even Catholic doctors, are too quick*

to persuade that *they should be freed from such an obligation*, advancing the specious reason that they cannot preserve their chastity without suffering some harm to their mental balance."

It cannot be objected against these texts that they deal only with those who have made a vow of perfect chastity. For if the possibility of preserving chastity applies for those who have bound themselves *perpetually*, it applies *a fortiori* for others who think that they will marry in the future.

On the other hand, Pius XII spoke expressly of young people in his Radio Message, March 23, 1952 (AAS 44 [1952], 275): "Conscious of the right and duty of the Apostolic See, when necessary, to intervene authoritatively in moral questions, in the discourse of October 29 of last year we set out to illumine consciences about the problems of married life. *With the same authority we declare today to educators and to youth: The divine commandment of purity of soul and of body applies without diminution also to today's youth. They too have a moral obligation and, with the help of grace, the possibility to keep themselves pure.*"

⁶ See also Eph 5:3ff.

⁷ Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., pp. 182, 187: "Here are the helps, commended to us by our Divine Redeemer, by which we may *effectively* protect our virtue: *careful and constant vigilance*.... A vigilance which guards every moment of our lives and every type of circumstance is absolutely *necessary* for us: 'For the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh' (Gal 5:17). But if anyone grants however little to the enticements of the flesh, he will see himself quickly pulled towards those 'works of the flesh' which the Apostle lists (Gal 5:19-21) and which are the basest and ugliest vices of man."

⁸ Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., p. 185: "The educators of the young clergy would render a more valuable and useful service if they would inculcate in youthful minds the precepts of *Christian modesty*, which is so important for the preservation of perfect chastity and which can be called the *prudence of chastity*. For modesty foresees threatening danger, forbids us to expose ourselves to risks, demands the avoidance of those occasions which the imprudent do not shun." These remarks apply not only to those who have vowed themselves to *sacred* virginity, but also to all the unmarried, who must preserve chastity.

⁹ This is directed at the erroneous opinion, widespread especially among young people, that morality is not at issue in amorous stimulations or occasions, if they only engage in *impure touches*, especially if this is done to help them find a proper spouse. This widespread private view is also invading the field of public morality, where modesty is measured by the whim of depraved human customs, but not in accord with the dictates of natural and Christian law. Pius XII wrote against this in the Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., p. 185: "[Modesty] does not love impure or loose *talk*, it shrinks from the slightest *immodesty*, and *carefully avoids suspect familiarity with persons of the other sex.*"

¹⁰ This has in mind what practically happens at least sometimes, even today: that someone thinks it permissible, in order to overcome temptations against chastity, to engage in impure touches or sights with regard to a person of the other sex, if he or she consents. They are wrong in thinking that in this way they can control the flame of lust, as they call it, and that therefore they are doing nothing wrong and thus can approach the sacraments with a tranquil conscience.

Although this does not fall directly into the errors of Michael de Molinos, who saw directly diabolic action in temptations against chastity, this way of acting shows some relationship with those errors. Thus in prop. 47, condemned by Innocent XI (D 1267), we read: "When this sort of violence occurs, Satan should be allowed to operate; using no effort or attempt of one's own, a man should remain in his nothingness; and even if pollutions should follow and *obscene acts with his own hands* and even worse things, there is no need to be disturbed, *but scruples, doubts and fears are to be cast out, because the soul is becoming more illumined, more strong, more shining, and holy freedom is being acquired. And above all it is not necessary to confess these things, and the holiest thing is not to confess*, because in this way the devil is overcome and the treasure of peace is acquired."

As is clear, the basis of the error of Michael de Molinos may be different, but the erroneous means and suggestions contained in this proposition have some relationship to the new suggestions being made or permitted by some in order to overcome sexual difficulties.

¹¹ This is also directed at "*nudism*" both in theory and in practice. Today it is quite widely spread especially in some regions, such as France, Austria, Switzerland, Scandinavia, America, etc. There are a great many "nudist camps" and societies; it may also go by another name, such as "*naturalism*" or "*the free culture of the body*," etc. Complete or total nudity is proposed for

various reasons, philosophical, hygienic, pedagogical, moral, social, artistic. The promoters of "nudism" often make vehement accusations against the Holy Bible and St. Paul in particular or against the Church, since they are seen not to favor "nudism."

¹² The term "sexual initiation" is found in the Decree of the Holy Office, March 21, 1931 (*AAS* 23 [1931], 118).

¹³ There are several pontifical documents: Holy Office, Instruction to the Bishops of the United States (confirmed by Pope Leo XIII) (*Codicis Iuris Canonici Fontes*, IV, pp. 362-65), where there are general remarks on the danger of co-education.

Pius XI, Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*, December 31, 1929 (*AAS* 22 [1930], 71ff); Holy Office Decree, March 21, 1931 (*AAS* 23 [1931], 118-19).

Pius XII, Speech to Italian Mothers, October 25, 1941 (*AAS* 33 [1941], 450); Speech to French Fathers, September 18, 1945 (*AAS* 43 [1951], 732f).

Pius XII, Speech to Teachers in the Discalced Carmelites Order, September 23, 1951 (*AAS* 43 [1951], 736): "This sort of modesty does not mean perpetual silence on this matter, nor that in imparting discipline not even sober and cautious things should ever be said. Adolescents should be given suitable *instruction* about these things and they should be *allowed* to open their hearts, to ask questions without hesitation, to receive answers which, if they are sure, clear, and well explained, can provide them with light and confidence."

Pius XII, To those attending the Fifth International Meeting on Psychotherapy and Psychology, April 13, 1953 (*AAS* 45 [1953], 282): "A word about the method sometimes used by the psychologist to free the ego from its inhibitions in cases of aberrations in the sexual domain: We are thinking of *complete sexual initiation, which does not want to suppress anything, to leave anything in obscurity*. Is this not a pernicious over-estimation of knowledge? There is also an effective sexual education which quite serenely teaches with calm and objectivity what a young man must know in order to conduct himself and deal with his friends."

Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., p. 186: "In modern times, however, there are some teachers and educators who too frequently think it their duty to initiate innocent boys and girls into the secrets of human generation in such a way as to offend their sense of *modesty*. But in this matter *temperance and moderation must be used, as Christian modesty demands*."

The Instruction of the Holy Office, May 16, 1943, could also be added, where reserved norms are given "on how confessors should act with regard to the Sixth Commandment." There it is expressly stated: "The confessor, whether on his own or when asked, should not dare to teach his penitents about the nature or means of the act by which life is transmitted, and he should not be led to do so by any pretext." This Instruction was communicated to all the Bishops by the Holy Office on November 4, 1955.

As for *co-education* in itself, nothing is expressly stated in the Constitution, because particular regional circumstances make it a rather difficult question.

¹⁴ This represents a severe rejection of all the modern ways of behaving which are exhibitions of the pleasures of the flesh whether in some special institutions (Italian: "Istituti di bellezza") or in the ways of dressing, especially in modern *dances, in some beauty contests, shows, pictures, songs, writings, indecent bodily exercises, in swimming and promiscuous bathing, in worldly country relaxation*. In all these, modesty is often offended, without any respect for the Christian soul. The Council, therefore, cannot be silent on this, as Christ was not silent. For today the scandal is growing and spreading all the more since because of radio, film and television what before could be seen in only one place now is seen everywhere. No less known is it that today's worship of *goddesses*, as they call them, is an occasion of scandal. These things were more specific in the first redaction; but then the opinion prevailed that it would be more appropriate that they be mentioned only in somewhat veiled fashion in the Constitution, lest it itself be judged too crude and "realistic."

¹⁵ Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., p. 183: "To defend chastity, according to St. Jerome, flight is better than open combat: 'I flee lest I be vanquished' (St. Jerome, *Contra Vigilant.*, 16 [PL 23, 352]). This flight means that we not only diligently avoid *occasions* of sin, but especially that in this kind of combat we raise our minds and hearts to divine things...."

¹⁶ On this right and duty of the Church, which secularists deny her today, there can be no doubt, as is clear from the frequent documents of the Church in which it opposes the violators of public morality: see Pius X, Encyclical *Editae saepe*, May 26, 1910 (*AAS* 2 [1910], 357); Pius XI, Encyclical *Firmissiman constantiam*, March 28, 1937 (*AAS* 29 [1937], 189); Pius XII, To French Fathers, l.c., pp. 730ff; Letter *I rapidi progressi* to the Bishops of Italy, January 1, 1954 (*AAS* 46 [1954], 18); Encyclical *Miranda prorsus*, September 8, 1957 (*AAS* 49 [1957], 765ff).

¹⁷ Pius XI, Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c.; Pius XII, Letter *I rapidi progressi*, l.c., p. 20f: "Public authorities have a responsibility to be careful that no offence or disturbance be given in any way to that aura of *purity* and of *reserve* which should surround the domestic hearth.... We nourish deep confidence that the lofty sense of responsibility of those who preside over public life will prevent sad eventualities...."

¹⁸ This does not *expressly* address so-called *pansexualism*, since there are psychologists today who deny that Freud himself taught real pansexualism. This is why they rebuke Pius XII himself for his speech about the pansexual method, which will be cited below. On the other hand, *theoretically and practically*, the sexual elements in man are adduced beyond what is right as if they are the only ones or at least the principal ones, explaining even supernatural realities. Thus *sexualism* is condemned in the meaning given it in the Constitution. On this point, whatever is the case with Freudian pansexualism, the following documents remain valid:

Pius XII, Speech, September 14, 1952 (*AAS* 44 [1952], 783): "It is not proven, *it is even inexact*, that the pansexual method of a certain school of psychoanalysis is an indispensable and integral part of all serious psychotherapy worthy of the name, nor that the neglect of this method in the past has caused serious psychological damage, errors in teaching and in application in education, in psychotherapy, and *no less also in pastoral activity*, nor that it is urgent to fill this lacuna and to initiate those who are concerned with psychological problems into the leading ideas and even, if needed, into the practical use of this technique of sexuality."

In an article, "A proposito di psicanalisi," published in *L'Osservatore Romano*, September 21, 1952, on the occasion of this speech of the Supreme Pontiff, we read: "Such psychoanalysts add that priests involved in the care of souls or in the spiritual direction of consciences should also have a substantial knowledge of the theory and practice of psychoanalysis, thus understood, and should recognize that this means cannot be bypassed, although they themselves, personally, need not use it, but must make use of the help of a competent medical psychoanalyst. Otherwise we should fear, they maintain, that priests in the exercise of their spiritual ministry will endanger and harm souls. Unfortunately, these ideas are being *imprudently* presented and defended in articles, books, and conferences even by some theologians who, more preoccupied with the medical aspect, are overlooking the established norms of Christian morality, again promulgated and inculcated by the Supreme Pontiff."

As is clear, neither the Supreme Pontiff nor the present Constitution intend to condemn the knowledge and use of these sciences, even by priests; but it is a mistake in the care of souls to explain everything by sex and to accuse Catholic pastoral activity as if the Church had essentially failed on this matter in directing souls. The Constitution was consciously written in such a way that while the error is condemned, in the second part the *accusation* is only *described*, and the word "condemnation" is avoided, lest the Council be accused of opposing the sciences. A description and rejection of the error of which the Constitution speaks is found in Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., p. 174f: "First of all, it is against common sense, which the Church always holds in esteem, *to consider the sexual instinct as the most important and the deepest of human tendencies* and to conclude from this that man cannot restrain it for his whole life without the serious danger of disturbing his bodily vitality and especially his nerves and therefore of harming the balance of the human person." In other places (see above, note 7), any exaggeration of the sexual element in human life is rejected.

¹⁹ This is against, for example, Dr. Hesnard, *Morale sans péché* and other similar books which therefore have been placed on the *Index of Prohibited Books*. For information on the errors contained in them, see *L'Osservatore Romano*, January 23-14, 1956, "Psicanalisi e mitomorale," which explains the condemnation of Dr. Hesnard's three books.

²⁰ Cf. Hesnard's books and more than a few old and modern medical doctors.

Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., p. 174f: "...and they conclude from this that a man *cannot* restrain [the sexual instinct for his whole life *without danger of disturbing his vital members* and especially his nerves and thus of doing harm to the balance of the *human person*."

Pius XII: Address to Midwives, October 29, 1951 (*AAS* 43 [1951], 850f): "All these secondary values of the generative sphere and activity remain within the context of the specific office of the spouses, which is to be authors and educators of new life. Lofty and noble office! but one which *does not belong to the essence of a complete human being* as if, were the natural generative tendency not to be actuated, there would be in some way or to some degree a *diminution of the human person*. Renouncing this actuation is not, especially if made for noble motives, a mutilation of personal and spiritual values."

See Pius XII on many other occasions. Although some of the comments directly address perpetual virginity and chastity, still the principle of Catholic morality is clear enough.

²¹ Today the vice of *homosexuality* is also quite widespread. Not only is simple horror at this most foul vice missing, but the claim is being made that it should be praised and presented as the mark of a loftier love and higher culture. For, it is said, to love a person of the other sex is easy; but sexually to love a person of the same sex is not for all, but only for the few who are suitable and educated for it. That is why that deplorable fact is spread, that even men of superior genius were addicted to this vice.

²² This is directed against many moderns, especially among psychologists, who do not acknowledge sufficient freedom, especially in young people and with regard to sins against the Sixth Commandment. On the contrary, freedom should be presupposed in quite healthy people until the contrary is proved, as Pius XII said on more than one occasion:

Pius XII, Address, May 16, 1957 (*AAS* 49 [1957], 406): "Morality and justice are not immobilized in an obsolete attitude when they say that one needs to demonstrate where freedom ceases and not where it begins. Sound reason and common sense itself rebel against such factual determinism which would reduce freedom and responsibility to a minimum."

Radio Message, March 23, 1952 (*AAS* 44 [1952], 275): "We therefore *reject* as *mistaken* the statement of those who consider failings in the years of puberty to be *inevitable*; these thus would not deserve to be taken too seriously *as if they were not grave faults*, because ordinarily, they add, *passion takes away the freedom necessary* for an act to be morally imputable."

It was not without reason and not without relationship to these errors that the Holy Office condemned the book of Marc Oraison, *Vie chrétienne et problèmes de la sexualité* (Paris 1951).

²³ Pius XII, Address to the Pastors and Lenten Preachers of Rome: On the Ten Commandments, February 22, 1944 (*AAS* 36 [1944], 73), where the Pontiff explicitly speaks about erroneous concepts about serious sin (on which see also the Constitution On the Moral Order). Specifically with regard to sins against the Sixth Commandment, the Pontiff complains: "To give an example, for a believer who otherwise wishes to stay united in friendship to God, the many deviations from the Sixth Commandment would not be *a grave failing and would not imply mortal fault*."

Pius XII, Address, April 13, 1953 (*AAS* 45 [1953], 286), where he explicitly deals with so-called "material sin" and says among other things: "Still less can psychotherapy advise a sick person tranquilly to commit a material sin because he would do so without subjective fault, and this advice would also be mistaken if such an action should appear necessary for the psychological easing of the illness and thus for attaining a cure. One may not advise a conscious activity which would be a deformation, not an image of the divine perfection."

See also Pius XII, Address, October 1, 1953 (*AAS* 45 [1953], 728).

PART II: MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

8. Introductory Note

In the sources of divine Revelation, both the mystical union of Christ with the Church and other mysteries of religion are more than once presented under the analogies of marriage and the family.¹ By this very fact the Holy Spirit is already intimating that marriage and family are not fleeting and changeable human inventions but proceed from God, the author of nature and of grace, "with whom there is no alteration or shadow of change" (Jas 1:17). For this reason, so that the institution, purpose, and functions of chaste marriage and of the Christian family may be known more clearly, that their importance, nobility, and beauty may shine more fully and may be more effectively defended from the shadows of errors arising everywhere, the Sacred Synod, taught no less by the Spirit of love than by that of truth, intends to propose what God himself willed when he created man male and female and gave him a helpmate like himself (see Gn 1:27; 2:18-24 and 5:2; Mt 19:4) and what Jesus Christ, by restoring marriage and raising it to the dignity of a Sacrament, divinely entrusted to the Church as a basic and never changeable law.

CHAPTER I: THE DIVINELY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

9. The Origin, Nature, and Dignity of Marriage

God provided for the multiplication of the human race by instituting marriage (see Gn 1:28; 2:18-24; Mt 19:4).² By its origin, purpose, and function, therefore, marriage is of its nature good and holy.³ Indeed for the baptized it is a Sacrament, a dignity to which Christ elevated it.⁴ The Sacred Synod teaches that this sacrament is constituted between Christians by the very fact that two baptized persons, a man and a woman, legitimately join themselves by one and the same mutual and valid consent in a true marriage.⁵ By the very will of God the Father and of Jesus Christ, therefore, such a human consent, even in a Christian marriage, is so essential that without it there is no Sacrament;⁶ it is so personal that it cannot be supplied by any other consent or human power;⁷ it is so one and indivisible that between the baptized there can be no true and valid marriage without it being by that very fact a Sacrament.⁸ By this sacramental character, the dignity, nobility and splendor of Christian spouses is so great that they themselves not only represent the most pure and most fruitful union of Christ with the Church (see Eph 5:32-33), but they themselves, in the person of Christ and the Church, are made, through a valid consent mutually manifested and accepted externally in the rite, the ministers of this Sacrament and by this consent constitute the sign by which grace is conferred on those who place no obstacle in its way.⁹ As the Council of Trent teaches, by the grace which Christ himself merited for us by his passion, natural love is perfected, the indissoluble unity is confirmed, and the spouses are sanctified.¹⁰ And thus in truth the spouses in their own state can and should be a symbol of the grace and love of the Savior.¹¹

10. The Properties of Marriage

Although, considered in itself, Christian marriage does not constitute a state of evangelical perfection,¹² nonetheless according to Christ's laws, it also requires its own perfection.¹³ In the first place, the reigning divine order with regard to its properties, purposes, and goods must be preserved even if this may require heroic acts.¹⁴ Restoring what had fallen, Christ established that not only Christian marriage but marriage for all be permanently one and, further, so indissoluble that it can never be dissolved by the will of the parties or indeed by any merely human authority.¹⁵ Unity and indissolubility, therefore, are such intrinsic and essential properties of any marriage¹⁶ that they are not even subject to the contrary will of the contracting parties and therefore must be necessarily and perpetually accepted by anyone who wishes to contract a true marriage.¹⁷ Anything, therefore, which is proposed or done by men, who in this matter lack all power, against the unity and indissolubility of marriage, neither responds to the demands of nature or the good of society nor belongs to the progress of human culture, but rather is to be considered an act of no value, which reveals the most wretched moral regression of man the sinner from original justice. For what offends the divine order can in no way profit the individual, the family, or civil society.¹⁸

11. The Ends of Marriage

Of itself, furthermore, and independently of the intentions of the contracting parties, marriage has its own divinely established objective ends.¹⁹ Among these, if careful consideration is given to the divine institution of marriage itself and to nature itself as well as to the magisterium of the Church,²⁰ the primary end of marriage is only the procreation and education of children,²¹ even if a particular marriage is not fruitful.²² By pursuing this end, man, by the dignity of fatherhood and motherhood, cooperates with God, creator and sanctifier of souls, in the propagation and sanctification of the human race. For this reason, the procreation of children, although it is not the object of the marriage consent, is nonetheless of itself so connatural to every marriage, indeed in this sense is essential, that in every valid consent is included a perpetual and exclusive right to acts of themselves naturally apt for the generation of children as the proper object to be handed over;²³ in fact it is so primary and predominant that it does not depend on any other intended ends, even ones indicated by nature, indeed it cannot be made equivalent or confused with them.²⁴ The other objective ends of marriage, which arise from the nature of marriage itself but are secondary, are the mutual help and solace of the spouses in the communion of domestic life and what is called the remedy for concupiscence. For in a marriage concupiscence is correctly directed by conjugal fidelity, and therefore, subject to reason, serves chastity and is ennobled by it.²⁵ Rightly understood, these ends establish rights, although subordinate ones, in a marriage,²⁶ and therefore, although secondary in themselves, they are not to be despised or thought little of, but are to be promoted in the required way by true charity.²⁷

While the procreation of children is legitimately obtained only in a marriage, concupiscence can also by the help of divine grace be conquered outside of marriage.²⁸ Insofar, however, as the mutual assistance and remedy for concupiscence are to be attained in marriage itself, they participate in the specific nature of the conjugal union and thus differ in kind from any other assistance, even

that which comes from a friendship.²⁹ Other subjective purposes, by which people are not rarely immediately and primarily moved to enter a marriage,³⁰ do not obstruct a marriage, provided that they do not contradict the ends indicated by nature itself but are subordinated to them.³¹

The faithful should remember that all the ends of marriage, both objective and subjective, even that primary one by which men are associated with God in his creative work, cannot be perfectly attained unless a marriage is informed by true and right conjugal love, which, enriched by supernatural love and the grace of Christ, in Christian marriages, more and more contributes to the attainment of the ends.

12. The Power of the Church

As belonging to the divine order, marriage was entrusted by Christ, not to individuals, but to the Church that it might preserve, explain, and determine the doctrine and norms by which it is governed.³² The Church must exercise this power not only for the good of souls but also for the benefit of Christian faith³³ and the growth of the Mystical Body.³⁴ For this reason, Christ, who wished the Church to defend to the utmost the indissolubility which he restored to marriage, also gave it the power,³⁵ within limits and conditions established by divine law, to dissolve the bond of all other marriages, both natural and sacramental, always excepting, however, a marriage consummated after the baptism of both parties.³⁶

13. The Competence of Civil Authority

Without doubt, legitimate civil authority enjoys competence with regard to the merely civil effects of marriage, even of the baptized, in accord with the norm of natural law and the right requirements of the common good.³⁷ In virtue of its own law, it also enjoys the power, on its part and in its own field, to state, apply, and urge the marital requirements of the natural law. But it enjoys no power with regard either to the dissolution of the bond of any validly entered marriage,³⁸ or to the sacramental character of Christian marriage,³⁹ or to other goods divinely linked with marriage,⁴⁰ or to impediments established by the Church,⁴¹ or to judicial judgements passed by the Church.⁴² These things, since they belong to God and not to Caesar, are the competence of the Church alone (see Mt 22:21).⁴³

14. Errors are Repudiated

The Sacred Synod knows how greatly the salvation of the Mystical Body of Christ depends on a right acknowledgment of the divine order with regard to marriage.⁴⁴ To defend it, it knows first of all that it is its duty to condemn all the radical errors of those who maintain that marriage in its origin and constitution is some merely social phenomenon in continuous evolution and without any natural or supernatural value, and that it does not come from God and from Christ and is not subject to the power of the Church in the new economy of salvation.⁴⁵ Likewise it condemns those errors by which it is held that the marriage of Christians either is not a sacrament or that the sacrament itself is something accessory and separable from the contract itself.⁴⁶ It also rejects the view of those who

state that the use of marriage is the specific means for attaining that perfection by which man is truly and properly an image of God and the Most Holy Trinity.⁴⁷ It severely rejects the errors and theories by which is denied the immutable divine order with regard to the properties and purposes of marriage. And it explicitly confutes as a supreme calumny the statement that the indissolubility of marriage does not come from God but is a cruel invention of the Church, no less cruelly retained.⁴⁸ Finally, it rejects the theories by which, in an inversion of the right order of values, the primary purpose of marriage is esteemed less than biological and personal values⁴⁹ and conjugal love, in the objective order itself, is proclaimed to be the primary purpose.⁵⁰

NOTES

¹ See Mt 9:15; 22:2; 25:1; Eph 5:22-23; Rev 19:7-9, etc.

² See Leo XIII, Letter *Ci siamo*, July 10, 1879 (*Acta Leonis XIII*) [Roma, 1881ff], I, 236-47); Encyclical *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, February 10, 1880 (*Acta Leonis XIII*), II, 10-40); Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, December 31, 1930 (*AAS* 22 [1930] 539-92, *passim*; D 2225-2250).

³ See Second Council of Braga, can. 11 (D 241); Second Lateran Council, can 23 (D 367); Profession of faith required of Durandus of Osca and his Waldensian colleagues (D 424); Council of Florence, Decree for Armenians (D 702); Errors of the Armenians (D 537); Leo XIII, Encyclical *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c., pp. 22f): "Marriage has God for its author and was *from the very beginning* a kind of foreshadowing of the Incarnation of the Word of God; and therefore there abides in it something *holy and religious*, not extraneous but *innate*, not derived from men, but *implanted* by nature.... Since marriage, then, is *holy by its own power, in its own nature, and of itself*, it ought not to be regulated and administered by the will of civil rulers, but by the divine authority of the Church which alone has authority to teach about sacred matters;" Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c.; First Roman Synod, 1960), art 490, 1.

⁴ Council of Trent, Session XXIV, Doctrine on the Sacrament of Marriage, c. 1 (D 971).

⁵ Council of Florence, Decree for Armenians (D 702): "The *efficient cause* of marriage is the *mutual consent duly expressed in words relating to the present*"; Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (D 2225): "Yet, although marriage is of its very nature of divine institution, the *human will* also enters into it and performs a *most noble* part. For each *individual* marriage, inasmuch as it is a conjugal union of a particular man and woman, arises only *from the free consent of each of the spouses*....; Leo XIII, Encyclical *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c., p. 25f: "...for certain it is that in Christian marriage the contract is *inseparable* from the sacrament, and therefore the contract cannot be true and legitimate without *being a sacrament itself*. For Christ the Lord added to marriage the *dignity* of a sacrament, but marriage is the contract itself, whenever that contract is lawfully concluded.... Hence it is clear that among Christians every true marriage is *in itself and by itself* a sacrament and that nothing can be further from the truth than to say that the sacrament is a certain *added ornament* or *outward* endowment which can be separated and torn away from the contract by the caprice of man." So also in many other documents of the Church's magisterium.

⁶ See Pius IX, *Syllabus*, n. 66 (D 1766); Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., With regard to this the following canon was prepared at the First Vatican Council: "Can. 2: If anyone should say that the *sacrament* of marriage is not *itself* the contract between Christians which is made *by consent* or that it is something accessory to and *separable* from the contract or that there can be a true marriage between Christians in virtue of a merely civil contract, A.S." (Mansi, 53, c. 721).

⁷ Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (D 2225): "...and this free act of the will by which *each party* hands over and accepts the rights proper to the state of marriage is so necessary to constitute true marriage that *it cannot be supplied by any human power*;" see CIC, c. 1081, 1; Pius XII, Speech, March 5, 1941 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, III, p. 8): "Before the altar only your will can unite you in the bond of marriage, and *no other consent could substitute for yours*. Other sacraments, those which are more necessary, when the minister is lacking, can be supplied by the power of divine mercy, which goes beyond the external signs to bring grace to hearts.... *But in the sacrament of marriage there is no supplying for the minister, just as there is no substitution of persons*; here triumphs the incomparable greatness of that great gift which is the freedom to will...."

⁸ The teaching on the inseparability of the contract from the sacrament of marriage and vice-versa was widely discussed, explained and prepared at Vatican I. There was a great debate about whether it is definable or not. It can be said that it was a chief topic of the whole Commission for preparing a schema on Christian marriage. This is explained by the error of *liberalism and laicism* which was widely growing then. The canons prepared about this were the following (Mansi, 53, c. 720f): "Can. 1: If anyone should say that Christ did not raise marriage to the dignity of a sacrament and that there can be a union between a Christian man and woman which is a true marriage but not a sacrament, A.S.;" for c. 2, see above, n. 6.

⁹ See the Roman Catechism, c. VIII: On the Sacrament of Marriage, nn. 4-8; Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (D 2237): "And since the valid matrimonial consent between the faithful was *constituted* by Christ as a *sign* of grace, the nature of the sacrament is so intimately bound up with Christian marriage that there can be no true marriage between baptized persons 'without it being by that very fact a sacrament.' When, therefore, the faithful sincerely give such consent, *they open up for themselves a treasure of sacramental grace* from which they draw supernatural power for the fulfilling of their rights and duties faithfully, religiously, perseveringly even unto death;" Pius XII, Speech, March 5, 1941 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, III, p. 6): "...you yourselves were instituted by God as *the ministers of the sacrament*, you, whom he has used to bond your indissoluble union and to pour out into your souls the graces which make you constant and faithful to your new duties. *How great is the honor and dignity to which he has exalted you!*"

¹⁰ See Council of Trent, Session XXIV, Doctrine "On the Sacrament of Marriage" (D 969).

¹¹ See Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (D 2236).

¹² See also the Constitution "On the Church," ch. V.

¹³ Cf. also the Constitution "On the Moral Order."

¹⁴ Pius XII, Speech, December 6, 1939 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, I, p. 414): "Whoever faithfully and without weakness fulfils *the duties of his own state* is immaculate before God. God does not call all his children to *the state of perfection*, but he invites each one to the perfection of his state: 'Be perfect,' said Christ, 'as your heavenly Father is perfect' (Mt 5:48). You know the duties of marital chastity. They *require* a real courage, *sometimes heroic*, and a filial trust in divine Providence...;" see also Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (AAS 22 [1930], 579). As is clear from the text itself and from the context of our Constitution, the word "perfection" is used in a rather broad moral sense to include *precepts* and counsels; for the Supreme Pontiff is speaking especially of the *obligations* of one's own state.

¹⁵ Council of Trent, Session XXIV, Doctrine on the Sacrament of Marriage (D 969): "Inspired by the divine Spirit, the first father of the human race proclaimed the perpetual and indissoluble bond of marriage when he said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife and they will be two in one flesh' (Gn 2:23f; see Eph 5:31)."

That by this bond *two alone are united* and joined Christ the Lord taught more openly when, referring to those last words as if spoken by God, he said, "Therefore they are not two, but one flesh" (Mt 19:16), and immediately confirmed the strength of that bond, stated by Adam so long before, with these words: "What God has joined together, let no man place asunder...."

Council of Trent, Can. 2 (D 972): "If anyone says that it is lawful for Christians to have several wives at the same time and that this is not forbidden by any divine law (Mt 19:4ff; 9), A.S.;" can. 7 (D 977): "If anyone says that the Church is in error for having taught and for still teaching that in accordance with the evangelical and apostolic doctrine (Mk 10; 1 Cor 7), the marriage bond cannot be dissolved because of adultery on the part of one of the spouses and that neither of the two, not even the innocent one who has given no cause for infidelity, can contract another marriage during the lifetime of the other, and that the husband who dismisses an adulterous wife and marries again and the wife who dismisses an adulterous husband and marries again are both guilty of adultery, A.S." See also First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 491-92.

¹⁶ Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c., pp. 12f: "And that even from its beginning this union of man and woman might correspond more fittingly to the infinitely wise counsels of God, it manifested chiefly two most excellent properties—*deeply imprinted and carved upon it*, as it were--namely unity and perpetuity;" see Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, passim.

¹⁷ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p.541: "...hence these laws cannot be subject to any human decrees or to any contrary pact even of the spouses themselves;" Pius XII, Encyclical *Sertum laetitiae*, November 1, 1939 (AAS 31 [1939] 640ff): "For this

reason the greatest care should be taken that the *dogma* which asserts by divine law the individual and perpetual bond of marriage is kept religiously and guarded religiously by those contracting a marriage. Would that your country knew by the experience of others rather than by your own usages the pile of evils to which the licence of divorce gives birth! May reverence for religion, may piety persuade the noble American race to cure and remove this dreadfully growing sickness whose consequences Pope Leo XIII so vigorously and truly described: 'Matrimonial contracts are by it made variable; mutual kindness is weakened; deplorable inducements to infidelity are supplied; harm is done to the education and training of children; occasion is offered for the breaking up of homes; the seeds of dissension are sown among families; the dignity of women is lessened and abased; and women run the risk of being deserted after having ministered to the pleasures of men. Since, then, nothing has such power to lay waste families and destroy the mainstay of kingdoms as the corruption of morals, it is easily seen that *divorces are in the highest degree hostile to the prosperity of families and states*' (Encyclical *Arcanum*)."

¹⁸ The words of the Constitution are directly aimed at the false view that divorce of the bond would be valid in God's forum and that the introduction of divorce would be a sign of civilization since almost all *materially* more civilized nations have that institution. Hence the need to state solemnly that this is rather the effect of the so-called "civilization of sin."

¹⁹ It is important to state first that the very purposes of marriage are to be understood according to the order established by God himself according to the teaching of Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., 542: "...From God come the very institution of marriage, its *purposes*, its laws, its blessings...."

²⁰ The sources of the teaching on the question of the purpose of marriage appear to be indicated by the words of Pius XII, Address to Midwives, Oct. 29, 1951 (*AAS* 43 [1951], 849): "Precisely to put an end to all the uncertainties and deviations which threaten to spread errors about the order of precedence in the purposes of marriage and about the relationships among them, some years ago (March 10, 1944) we ourselves composed a statement of the order of these purposes, indicating what the very internal structure of *their natural disposition reveals*, what is *the patrimony of the Christian tradition*, what *the Supreme Pontiffs have repeatedly taught*, what then was definitely stated in the Code of Canon Law." If such sources are valid for the hierarchy of purposes, they also are valid for their existence and nature.

²¹ See first the Roman Catechism, "On the Sacrament of Marriage," ch. VIII, n. 12: "The words of the Lord, 'Increase and multiply,' intend to state *for what purpose marriage was instituted*." These words precede all the other things which the Roman Catechism itself says about the reasons for which people are moved to marry. Add:

Leo XIII, Encyclical *Rerum novarum*, May 15, 1891 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, XI, p. 104): "No human law can abolish the natural and primitive right of marriage or in any way limit the chief and principal purpose of marriage, ordained by God's authority from the beginning: *Increase and multiply*."

Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 543: "Thus among the blessings of marriage the child holds the *first* place."

Pius XII, Speech, October 3, 1941 (*AAS* 33 [1941], 423): "In this question, as delicate as it is difficult, two tendencies must be avoided: the one which in examining the constitutive elements of the act of generation gives weight only to the *primary purpose* of marriage, as if the *secondary purpose* did not exist or at least were not the *finis operis* established by the very Orderer of nature; and that which considers the secondary purpose as equally *principal*, losing it from its essential subordination to the primary purpose, which by logical necessity would lead to deadly consequences. If, in other words, truth stands in the middle, two extremes are to be avoided: on the one hand, the practical denial or excessive denigration of the secondary purpose of marriage and of the generative act; on the other, dissolving or separating beyond measure the conjugal act from the primary purpose to which according to its whole internal structure it is primarily and *principally* ordered."

Pius XII, Speech, March 18, 1942 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, IV, p. 5): "God has established that the father and mother cooperate in the *essential and primary* purpose of the conjugal bond, which is *the generation of children*."

Pius XII, Address to Midwives, October 29, 1951, l.c., p. 848f: "Now the truth is that marriage, as a *natural institution*, in virtue of *the will of the Creator*, does not have as its primary and intimate purpose the personal perfecting of the spouses, but *the procreation and education* of new life...;" and shortly later (p. 852), he goes on: "Now instead this is in a word completely subordinate to and ordered towards that *single great law* of the '*generatio et educatio prolis*,' that is, to the fulfilment of the *primary purpose of marriage* as the origin and source of life." And in the same speech, Pius XII says (p. 850f): "All these secondary values of the generative sphere and activity remain part of the *specific office* of the spouses, which is to be the authors and educators of new life."

See also First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 493.

²² Pius XII, Address to Midwives, October 29, 1951, l.c., p. 849.

²³ See CIC, c. 1013, 1. This does not deal with the distinction between *a right and the exercise of a right*.

²⁴ See Decree of the Holy Office, April 1, 1944 (*AAS* 36 [1944], 103).

²⁵ See St. Thomas, *In 1 Cor.* 7:2-9.

²⁶ See Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c.

²⁷ See Pius XII, Address to Auditors of the Holy Roman Rota, October 3, 1944 (*AAS* 33 [1941], 421); and Address to Midwives, l.c.

²⁸ See *S. Romanae Rotae Sententia*, January 22, 1944 (*AAS* 36 [1944], 179-200).

²⁹ See Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c. For the secondary ends of marriage participate, although in subordinate fashion, in the specific nature of the conjugal union, which differs specifically from any other union, even from friendship, because of the essential intrinsic relationship to the primary end to which, therefore, these objective but secondary ends are in themselves also ordered. See Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 561.

⁰ Roman Catechism, On the Sacrament of Marriage, ch. VIII, n. 13. There is a discussion there of the purposes of marriage under the subjective aspect, that is, the *finis operantis*.

³¹ Here it is a question of the personal motives for which spouses are in various ways moved to enter a particular marriage with a particular person. For a marriage cannot arise in a particular case without the will of the spouses; see Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 541.

³² Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c., p. 18; Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., pp. 539ff. As is expressly stated in not a few of the documents of the Church's magisterium, this power of the Church extends to the marriage itself, to the incurring or loosing of the bond, to conditions of validity and liceity, to declarative judgements of nullity, to the separation of the spouses, to the defense of the sanctity to be preserved in a marriage, even by adding canonical coercion; in general it extends to everything which belongs to it according to the breadth of the divine law, a breadth which it alone can authoritatively interpret.

³³ This alludes to the *Pauline and Petrine Privilege*. The exercise of this power, even if there had earlier been a dispensation from *the impediment of disparity of cult*, is left to the prudent judgement of the Church. That is why no other statements are made in the Constitution.

³⁴ Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c., p. 17: "Furthermore, the Christian perfection and completeness of marriage are not comprised in those points only which have been mentioned. For first there has been vouchsafed to the marriage union a higher and nobler purpose than was ever previously given to it. By the command of God it not only looks to the propagation of the human race, but to the bringing forth of children for the Church, 'fellow citizens with the saints and the servants of God,' so that 'a people might be born and brought up for the worship and religion of the true God and our Savior Jesus Christ (Roman Catechism, ch. VIII).'"

³⁵ Pius XII, Address to the Auditors of the Holy Roman Rota, October 3, 1941 (*AAS* 33 [1941], 421-26, esp. p. 424, n. 3 to p. 426); October 1, 1942 (*AAS* 34 [1942], 338-43); October 2, 1944 (*AAS* 36 [1944], 281-90).

³⁶ Pius XII, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 552: "And if this stability seems to be open to exception, however rare the exception may be, as in the case of certain *natural marriages between unbelievers*, or among *Christians* in the case of marriages which though valid have not been consummated, that exception does not depend on *the will of men* nor on that of any merely human power, but on *divine law*, of which the only guardian and interpreter is the Church of Christ. However, not even this power can ever affect for any reason whatever a *valid and consummated Christian marriage*."

³⁷ Benedict XIV, Letter *Redditae sunt nobis*, September 17, 1846 (Migne, *Theologiae Cursus Completus* [Paris, 1839-1845], XXV, p. 682; Pius VII, Letter *Que votre Majesté*, June 26, 1805; Pius IX, Letter *La lettera*, September 9, 1852 (*CIC Fontes*, II, pp. 869-72); Leo XIII, Letter *Ci siamo*, June 1, 1879 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, I, pp. 236f); *Arcanum divinae sapientiae* (*Ibid.*,

II, pp. 10-40); Consistorial Address, March 18, 1895 (*Ibid.*, XV, pp. 73-77); Letter *Quam religiosa*, August 10, 1898 (*Ibid.*, XVIII, pp. 140-44); Pius XII, Address to Auditors of the Holy Roman Rota, October 6, 1946 (*AAS* 38 [1946], 391-97).

³⁸ Pius VI, Letter *Litteris tuis*, July 11, 1789 (Migne, *Ibid.*, XXV, p. 703).

³⁹ Pius VI, Letter *Deessemus nos*, September 16, 1788 (Migne, *Ibid.*, XXV, p. 694); Pius VII, Letter *Que votre Majeste*, June 26, 1805; Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c.; Consistorial Address, December 16, 1901 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, XXI, pp. 185-88; Pius XII, Address to Auditors of the Holy Roman Rota, l.c.

⁴⁰ From the pontifical documents it is clear enough that civil authority cannot limit the primary purpose of marriage (as is said elsewhere in the Constitution) nor pass laws which are harmful to divine laws about its unity, indissolubility, fidelity, etc. There are many Church documents about this.

⁴¹ Pius VI, Constitution *Auctorem fidei* against the errors of the Synod of Pistoia, errors about espousals and marriage, prop. 60 (D 1560).

⁴² These judicial sentences of the Church can also be interpreted with reference to espousals, with regard to the bond, and even with regard to the simple separation of the spouses, on which, however, see Pius XI, *Casti connubii*. See also the following note.

⁴³ Pius IX, Letter *La lettera* (*CIC Fontes*, II, p. 870): "There is no other way to conciliation than *for Caesar to keep what belongs to Caesar, while the Church is left what belongs to her*. Let the civil power dispose of the civil effects which derive from marriage, but leave to the Church the regulation of its *validity* among Christians. Let the civil law *take account of the validity or invalidity of marriage* as this will be determined by the Church, and let it then take care of the civil effects on the basis of that fact, to determine which is outside its sphere."

⁴⁴ Roman Catechism, On the Sacrament of Marriage, ch. VIII, n. 1.

⁴⁵ See the Schema prepared at Vatican I (Mansi, 53, 719f).

⁴⁶ See the Schema prepared at Vatican I (*Ibid.*).

⁴⁷ See also the Schema of the Constitution "On the Moral Order" prepared by the Theological Commission.

⁴⁸ Council of Trent, Session XXIV, "On the Sacrament of Marriage," cc. 5-7 (D 975-977); Pius IX, *Syllabus*, n. 67 (D 1767); Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, see above note 2; Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, see above note 2; Pius XII, Address, April 22, 1942 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, IV, p. 47): "The bond of Christian marriage is so strong that if it has attained its full permanence with the use of conjugal rights, *no power on earth, not even Ours, the power of the Vicar of Christ, can rescind it*;" Pius XII, Address, March 16, 1946 (*Ibid.*, VIII, p. 14): "...a marriage between baptized persons that is validly contracted and consummated cannot be dissolved by any power on earth, *not even by the supreme ecclesiastical authority*."

⁴⁹ See various erroneous opinions on the purposes of marriage, among them H. Doms, *Vom Sinn und Zweck der Ehe* (Breslau, 1935). See also E. Michel, *Ehe, Eine Anthropologie der Geschlechtsgemeinschaft* (Stuttgart, 1948; 2d. ed. 1950). This book was placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum* by the Holy Office (*AAS* 44 [1952], 879).

⁵⁰ Those who maintain that conjugal love is the primary purpose of marriage are expressly rebuked by Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c., pp. 849f: "Not only the exterior common life, but also all the personal enrichment, even intellectual and spiritual enrichment, *indeed all that there is of the most spiritual and deep in conjugal love as such, has been placed by will of nature and of the Creator at the service of the offspring*;" Pius XII, Address, May 19, 1956 (*AAS* 48 [1956], 469f): "Several times we have already thought it necessary to recall how the individual aims of the spouses, their common life, their personal perfection, can only be conceived in subordination to the purpose which surpasses them, fatherhood and motherhood. 'Not only the exterior common life,' we said in an address to midwives on October 29, 1951, 'but also all the personal enrichment, even intellectual and spiritual enrichment, indeed all that there is of the most spiritual and deep in conjugal love as such, has been placed by will of nature and of the Creator at the service of the offspring.' This is the constant teaching of the Church; it has rejected any conception of marriage which would threaten to fold it in on itself, to make it an egoistic search for emotional and physical satisfactions in the interests of the spouses alone."

See also Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., pp. 548f), although some, on the basis of the words of the Roman Catechism

cited there, unduly extol conjugal love as the primary objective purpose of marriage itself.

CHAPTER II: THE RIGHTS, OBLIGATIONS, AND VIRTUES
PROPER TO CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

15. The Duties and Rights of Individuals

Of himself everyone has an innate, personal, and inviolable right legitimately to enter a marriage. Some legitimate impediment can, however, stand in the way, either absolutely or relatively, permanently or temporarily.¹ Sometimes some people, for various reasons, e.g., medical, eugenic, economic, or social, should be exhorted not to contract a marriage, unless personal and moral reasons, overriding less important considerations, recommend that they too enter a marriage and make use of it.² Similarly, no private or public authority can by law, through unjust limitations and premarital conditions, prevent someone who is naturally capable from entering a marriage.³ While these rights are being preserved, everyone has a duty also to act prudently, justly, and chastely in matters preceding the marriage.⁴ For this reason, morally to be rejected are imprudent engagements, treacherous deceptions of the other party, and illicit sexual liberties between future spouses, even in order to enter the marriage more securely.⁵ For, as the Apostle warns (see Rm 3:8), evil is not to be done in order that good come about. Of supreme importance for marriage are a right and Christian education and diligent preparation with apt instruction, in a spirit of chastity, charity, and sacrifice, with the help of various kinds of natural and especially supernatural means, and avoiding the errors of naturalism.⁶ Finally, in the celebration of the marriage itself, there is a serious duty legitimately to express the required consent and to avoid all simulation or profanation.

16. Rights and Obligations with Regard to the Good of Children

From the divinely established order concerning the nature, properties, and purposes of marriage, it is very clear that God himself and Christ ordered it towards the achievement of certain goods. St. Augustine summed them up in these words: "These are all the good things because of which marriage is good: children, fidelity, the sacrament."⁷ Concerning these three divinely given goods, there are rights and obligations which spouses must duly keep; and among them, considering the purpose for which marriage was instituted by God, the good of children holds the first place.⁸ Children, therefore, must be lovingly received, generously nourished, religiously educated, as the same St. Augustine vigorously put it;⁹ and children, as Sacred Scripture often teaches, are to be faithfully acknowledged as a true good, a heavenly blessing, and a gift of God.¹⁰ As for the act of procreation itself which, as ordered by God, is in itself legitimate and good,¹¹ it is the right and duty of spouses to preserve in their way of acting the things that are according to nature.¹² For that reason, even in a legitimate marriage, the in itself praiseworthy desire for children from one's own spouse does not make licit so-called artificial fertilization; it does not prohibit, however, artificial assistance to the conjugal act.¹³ Similarly, all means and arts by which in the use of marriage, by human effort, the procreation of children is directly impeded must be considered intrinsically and seriously evil.¹⁴ Conjugal onanism and formal cooperation for the same purpose is always seriously prohibited.¹⁵ As for so-called *amplexus reservatus*, pastors and faithful must act in accord with the teachings and decrees of the Holy See.¹⁶ As for preserving the child, spouses have the serious duty to avoid either

as end or as means any intentional killing of the child,¹⁷ even if it should be brought about by a therapeutic abortion.¹⁸ It is also illicit after a conjugal act to interrupt the process of conception at any stage,¹⁹ or to effect the direct destruction of an unborn fetus, an action which is also a sin against a serious commandment of God.

17. Rights, Obligations, and Virtues with Regard to the Good of Fidelity

Spouses also must conscientiously preserve and foster the good of faithfulness which besides other things entails the unity of the marriage, the chaste fidelity of the couple, and Christian love between them.²⁰ Chaste fidelity requires of each of the spouses, on the ground of justice, that they preserve and render the rights surrendered to one another in contracting marriage. Any adulterous relationship is absolutely to be avoided by each of them. The adultery of the other partner does not excuse one from the sin of adultery, and neither does the partner's silence or consent or his renunciation of his rights²¹ or infidelity committed only by internal acts (see Mt 5:28). Chaste fidelity also requires that in rendering the mutual debt nothing be done against the law of God, even if this imposes truly heroic acts. Such conjugal acts, with the help of God's grace, they can perform. For God does not command what is impossible, but by his commands teaches you to do what you can and to pray for what you cannot, and he helps you so that you can, since God does not deny what is rightly sought and he does not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able (see 1 Cor 10:13).²²

18. Conjugal Charity

Above all the rights, duties, and virtues, occupying its own first place,²³ shines charity, which also in the life of spouses presupposes and fulfils, indeed completes and elevates, other laws, as the Apostle teaches: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church" (Eph 5:25). For that reason, Christian conjugal love not only must excel with the glorious marks of charity exalted by the Apostle (see 1 Cor 13:47), but as much as possible it must in its own way imitate Christ's love for the Church (see Eph 5:25ff), bought by his blood (Acts 20:28). Charity is therefore the perfection²⁴ and fulness of married love; for that word of God is also true of the state of marriage: the fullness of the law is love (see Rm 13:10). But the marital consent must not be said to be invalid if in fact conjugal love fails;²⁵ nor should the perfection of love be considered to lie, instead of in whole-hearted observance of the divine law, in some tenderness of soul, which has been proclaimed by some to be the basis of some spiritual life proper to spouses alone;²⁶ far be it, finally, for married love to be restricted to some sensual and blind inclinations: rather spouses are to love one another in mind and act, in God and for God's sake.²⁷

19. Obligations with Regard to the Good of the Sacrament

By the good of the sacrament is meant the good which "denotes the indissolubility of the bond and Christ's elevation and consecration of the contract into an efficacious sign of grace;"²⁸ and under its own aspect it is excellent²⁹ and also entails serious duties. In the first place, Christians have the serious duty not to set aside the religious marriage prescribed by the Church and to join in a mere

"civil marriage," for by that juridical act they are declared to be a couple only in the sense that in the forum of the civil state they are invested with merely civil rights and duties. The faithful should know that from a merely civil union alone, which contradicts the invalidating laws of the Church, no marriage bond or sacrament devolves upon them before God. For this reason those who are deceitfully and invalidly married against the laws of the Church are rightly considered as public sinners, and the Church has the right publicly to declare them to be publicly sinning and to inflict canonical penalties upon them.³⁰

20. Civil Divorce

Spouses are seriously prohibited from seeking so-called civil divorce as a proper dissolution, as if a valid bond before God could be dissolved by civil authority; indeed neither is it licit for others directly and formally to cooperate in such a civil divorce. In no case and for no reason, even if it is not rarely serious and painful, is it licit for the faithful, while the sacred bond lasts, to dismiss a wife in order to take another, as the Lord himself clearly teaches (Mk 10:11), although sometimes civil authority invalidly allows this. Sometimes, however, "civil divorce," while the bond endures and without contradiction of ecclesiastical authority, can be sought. So-called simple separation is not to be done lightly, without just, serious, and proportionate cause.³¹

21. Mixed Marriages

Where a marriage between two Catholics can be contracted without extraordinary difficulties, the good of religion for the most part requires that Catholic men and women avoid so-called mixed marriages, especially with unbelievers. But the faithful also have the duty, in accordance with the dictates of prudence and the other virtues, to avoid marriage with those who are opposed to God or religion³² or with those who are Catholics in name but not in life. Although the Church, using her power, may permit mixed marriages, nevertheless the Catholic party, as divine law dictates, must in the conceded mixed marriage avoid dangers to the faith and indifferentism, must always carefully see to the Catholic education of the children, and lovingly and prudently try to bring the spouse to the Catholic truth.³³ Pastors should take special care for those who are joined in a mixed marriage. The Sacred Synod knows that in some places mixed marriages cannot be avoided, but from the fact that this can happen in some places false principles or dangerous inducements should not be deduced.³⁴

22. Errors are Rejected

The Sacred Synod must severely condemn so-called "temporary" or "experimental" or "companionate" marriages.³⁵ It also rejects as unworthy of a man and especially of a Christian those instructions by which through various skills a real hedonism in sacred and holy marriage is propagated.³⁶ It also rejects theories by which a violation of marital fidelity is considered allowed to spouses, either when the mutual love between the couple has failed or when the sexual impulse is falsely thought to be impossible to keep within the limits of monogamous marriage.³⁷ It is also

mistaken to state that civil authority itself never has the power to punish adulterers, and indeed with an equal penalty for both men and women.³⁸ It also rebukes those who say, and indeed under the pretext of benefitting the Church, that mixed marriages are generally and in themselves to be fostered rather than tolerated. That position is also mistaken which maintains that a marriage can be declared invalid or dissolved solely because of a failure of love.³⁹ Finally the Sacred Synod most severely condemns so-called "free love," by which, under a false pretext of constructing a new fraternity and society, sin is committed against the divine order and a lethal wound is inflicted not only on marriage but also on the family and society.

NOTES

¹ Leo XIII, Encyclical *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, February 10, 1880 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, II, pp. 10-40); Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, December 31, 1930 (*AAS* 22 [1930], 539-92, *passim*); Pius XII, Address, October 3, 1941 (*AAS* 33 [1941], 422): "And in the first place, if one considers the *right to marriage*, our glorious Predecessors Leo XIII and Pius XI already taught that 'no human law can take away a man's *natural and primitive right to marriage*.' This right, because it was given to man *immediately* by the Author of nature, the supreme Legislator, cannot be denied to anyone unless it is proven that he either has freely renounced it or is incapable of contracting a marriage because of a mental or physical defect. But in order, in particular cases, for a marriage to be contracted to be impeded or for a marriage already contracted to be declared null, it is necessary that this antecedent and perpetual incapacity be established not only in a doubtful or probable way but with moral certainty; and in such a condition of certainty, a marriage cannot be permitted or, if already celebrated, it cannot be considered valid."

² Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 565: "Certainly it is wrong to brand men with the stigma of crime because they contract marriage, on the ground that, despite the fact that they are in every respect capable of marriage, they will give birth only to defective children, even though they use all care and diligence; although often these individuals are to be dissuaded from entering into marriage;" Pius XII, Address, September 7, 1953 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, XV, p. 165): "Certainly it is right and in most cases a duty to point out to those who are certainly bearers of a very encumbered heredity what burden they are about to impose upon themselves, on their spouses, and on their descendants, a burden which may become intolerable. But to discourage them is not to forbid. They may have other motives, above all moral and personal ones, which are so important that they authorize them to contract and use marriage even in such circumstances."

³ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 564f; Pius XII, Address, September 7, 1953, l.c., p. 264f: "Another path leads to the same result: forbidding marriage or physically preventing it by interning those whose heredity is damaged are both to be rejected. The objective is good in itself, but the means for reaching it offend the personal right to contract and to use marriage. When the bearer of a hereditary defect is not fit to act humanly nor, consequently, to contract marriage, or when later he becomes incapable of freely claiming the right acquired by a valid marriage, he can be prevented in a licit manner from procreating a new life. Outside these cases, the forbidding of marriage and of marital relations for biological, genetic, and eugenic reasons is an injustice, whoever it may be that bears this interdiction, an individual or public authorities."

⁴ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 585. This implicitly rebukes those modern but imprudent means for finding a spouse through so-called "Marriage Agencies," not in themselves, but insofar as some Christian virtue is offended by these means.

⁵ First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 495, 2.

⁶ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c.; Decree of Holy Office, March 21, 1931 (*AAS* 23 [1931], 118); Pius XII, Address to Pastors, February 22, 1944 (*AAS* 36 [1944], 69-87); Address, September 18, 1951 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, XIII, pp. 241-45); Address, March 19, 1953 (*Ibid.*, XV, pp. 9-17); Address, April 19, 1953 (*Ibid.*, pp. 95-98); Address, September 8, 1953 (*Ibid.*, pp. 269-72); First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 494.

⁷ St. Augustine, *De bono conjugali*, 24, 32 (PL 40, 394): "These are the three good things because of which marriage is good: children, fidelity, the sacrament;" see Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 543.

⁸ See Gn 1:28; 1 Tim 5:14; Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c. (D 2228): "Thus among the blessings of marriage the child holds the first place;" see also *Roman Catechism*, On the Sacrament of Marriage, ch. VIII, n. 23: "The first blessing, therefore, is the child...."

⁹ St. Augustine, *De Gen. ad litt.*, IX, 7, 12 (PL 34, 397).

¹⁰ See Ps 126:3; Ps 127:3; Jn 16:21; 1 Tim 2:15; Pius XII, Address to Midwives, October 29, 1951 (*AAS* 43 [1951], 848f).

¹¹ See Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c.

¹² See Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c. (D 2239); Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c.

¹³ See: Decree of Holy Office, March 26, 1897 (*ASS* 29 [1896-97], 704); Pius XII, Address, September 29, 1949 (*AAS* 41 [1949], 557-61); Address to Midwives, l.c., p. 850: "...we have *formally* excluded *artificial fertilization* from marriage;" Address, May 19, 1956 (*AAS* 48 [1956], 471): "On the various questions raised with regard to artificial fertilization, in the ordinary sense of the word, or 'artificial insemination,' we have already expressed our thought in a discourse to doctors on September 29, 1949; we refer for details to what we said then and here we limit ourselves to repeating the judgement given in order to conclude: 'With regard to artificial fertilization, not only should one be extremely reserved, *but it should be absolutely avoided.*' In saying this, the use of certain artificial means designed *only* either to facilitate the natural act or to make the natural act normally accomplished reach its purpose are not necessarily proscribed."

In the Constitution, clearly, is forbidden any truly artificial fertilization, as the First Roman Synod, art. 493, 2, has already done. It is condemned without reservation, not only, therefore, between spouses themselves, but *a fortiori* outside a legitimate marriage or from another man.

¹⁴ Therefore, first is condemned all *direct* sterilization, whether *permanent* or *temporary*, which is done to avoid children; see Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 560: "Any use whatsoever of marriage exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offense against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a serious sin;" Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c., p. 844. With regard to modern techniques for temporarily suspending the generative faculty (i.d., irradiation, pills, drugs, etc.), the words of the Supreme Pontiff must be kept in mind: Pius XII, Address, September 12, 1958 (*AAS* 50 [1958], 734-36).

¹⁵ There are many documents and decisions of the Holy See with regard to conjugal onanism: Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary: November 15, 1816; April 23, 1822; February 1, 1823; June 8, 1842; May 27, 1847; May 21, 1851; March 2, 1853; December 14, 1876; June 16, 1880; March 10, 1886; November 13, 1901; September 2, 1904; April 3, 1916; June 3, 1916, on all of which see Fr. Hürth, *Leo XIII et Pius XI: Enc. de Matrimonio Christiano*, Textus et Documenta, Series Theologica 25 (Rome 1953), pp. 86ff; Holy Office, May 21, 1851; April 19, 1853; December 1, 1922 (*Ibid.*, pp. 87, 99, 94; Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 559ff; Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c., p. 842ff; Address, May 19, 1956 (*AAS* 48 [1956], 469ff).

¹⁶ This addresses that *copula reservata* which, although it is not something modern but was also used by couples in antiquity, today is being widely spread orally and in writings even by Catholics; indeed there even are some Institutes (e.g., in France "Dynam-Institut" and "L'Institut de sexologie familiale," etc.) which teach and spread the methods. Although the Commission knows the difficulty of determining whether such an embrace is intrinsically evil, still the Church, because of the danger of spreading hedonism, has the right practically to prohibit its spread, as the *Monitum* of the Holy Office on June 30, 1952 (*AAS* 44 [1952], 546) has done. See also Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c., pp. 851-53.

¹⁷ See among other documents: Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (D 2242).

¹⁸ See Decree of the Holy Office, May 4, 1898 (*ASS* 30 [1897-98], 704); July 24, 1895 (*ASS* 28 [1895-96], 383f); May 31, 1884 (*ASS* 17 [1884], 556); Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (D 2243).

¹⁹ Here are condemned all the techniques which interrupt the process of human life already begun. Nor is there any excuse in the probable opinion that the rational soul is infused only some time after conception. Whatever is the truth of this teaching, maintained also by men of great authority, the principle remains that it is never permitted to interrupt the human vital process

once it has begun.

²⁰ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c. (D 2231ff, 2247f).

²¹ Expressly about the condemnation of adultery in all aspects: Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, where those who "look upon whatever penal laws are passed by the state for the preservation of conjugal fidelity as void or to be abolished" are expressly reproved (l.c., p. 566). See the Decree of the Holy Office, March 4, 1676, prop. 50 (D 1200): "Intercourse with a married woman, if her husband consents, is not adultery." See also First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 492, 2: "Conjugal fidelity is the right and sacred duty of *each* spouse." It is not rare for adultery to be considered reprehensible only in the woman.

²² Trent, Session VI, Decree On Justification, c. 11 (D 804) and Session XXIV, Doctrine On the Sacrament of Marriage, can. 9 (D 979); St. Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, c. 43, n. 50 (PL 44, 271); Pius XII, Address, August 20, 1941 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, III, p. 184): "When our Predecessors of venerable memory, and particularly Pope Pius XI in his *Casti connubii*, recalled the holy and inescapable laws of married life, they considered and took perfect account of the fact that in not a few cases a real heroism is required of Christian spouses if they are to observe them perfectly;" Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c., p. 846f, where he again speaks of the possibility and about grace.

²³ See Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c. (D 2232).

²⁴ Many people today confuse natural conjugal love with conjugal charity, which is supernatural. That is why the Constitution speaks of charity. Grace perfects conjugal love itself, according to the teaching of the Council of Trent, Session XXIV, Doctrine On the Sacrament of Marriage (D 969).

Pius XII, Address, January 29, 1941 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, II, p. 384): "A mutual affection which is born only out of the inclination of one for the other or even out of the simple pleasure in the human gifts which you discover with such delight in one another--such an affection, however beautiful and profound it shows itself and re-echoes in the intimacy of trusting conversations of new spouses, is never enough; nor will it ever be able fully to achieve that union of your souls intended and desired by the loving Providence of God when he brought you to each other. *Only supernatural charity, the bond of friendship between God and man* can bind knots indestructible by any shocks, by any vicissitudes, by any of the inevitable tests during a long life together...."

And in the same sense already in Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c., p. 16: "To the Apostles, indeed, as our masters, are to be referred the doctrines which our holy Fathers, the Councils, and the Tradition of the Universal have always taught, namely that Christ our Lord raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament..., and that in a wondrous way, *making marriage an example of the mystical union between Himself and His Church, He not only perfected that love which is according to nature*, but also made the natural union of one man with one woman far more perfect through the bond of *divine charity*."

²⁵ Here is rejected the view that conjugal love is the proper *object* of marital consent as such, when it is not conjugal love, but only the *right* to acts in themselves apt for the generation of children, as objective, that can exist in itself "even without considering how it is done by the agent," as St. Thomas says (*Summa theol.*, II-II, q. 57, a.1). But it is not denied that conjugal love, perfected by supernatural charity, is the law which must pervade in a Christian way all of conjugal life. There is another error which maintains that conjugal love is the primary purpose of marriage, and this error is rejected towards the end of the Constitution.

²⁶ This addresses a certain false "conjugal spirituality" and a certain false view of conjugal love which prescind from laws, as Pius XII already warned when he spoke against the so-called "new morality;" see Radio Message, March 23, 1952 (*AAS* 44 [1952], 170ff) and April 18, 1952 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*), XIV, pp. 71ff. See earlier Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 583: "In fine, in spite of what others may wish to assert and spread abroad by word of mouth or in writing, let husband and wife resolve to stand fast to the commandments of God in all things that marriage demands, always to render to each other the assistance of mutual charity, to preserve the honor of chastity, not to lay profane hands on the stable nature of the bond, to use the rights given them by marriage in a way that will be always Christian and moderate, more especially in the first years of wedlock, so that should there be need of constancy afterward, custom will have made it easier for each to preserve it."

²⁷ See Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (D 2232), and Pius XII, Address, October 29, 1951 (*AAS* 43 [1951], 852f): "At the present time..., there is a common view, maintained in words and in writings (even by some Catholics), that holds the necessary

autonomy, proper purpose, and proper value of sexuality and its fulfilment, independently of the purpose of creating a new life.... They would like no other restraint on the way of satisfying this instinct than observing the essence of the instinctive act.... Too often people are not ashamed to raise this anti-Christian hedonism to a doctrine, inculcating the desire to make the enjoyment of the preparation and fulfilment of the conjugal union ever more intense, as if in marital relations the whole moral law were reduced to the proper completion of the act itself, and as if everything else, however it is done, is justified by *the profuse expression of mutual affection, sanctified by the sacrament of marriage, worthy of praise and of reward before God and conscience*. There is no concern for the dignity of man or for his dignity as a Christian, both of which place restraints on the excesses of sensuality. *But no*. The seriousness and holiness of the Christian moral law do not allow an unrestrained satisfying of the sexual instinct and this sort of tendency towards mere pleasure and enjoyment. They do not permit a reasonable man to let himself be dominated to this degree, either by the substance or by the circumstances of the act. Some would like to allege that the happiness of marriage is in direct proportion to the mutual enjoyment of marital relations. No, the happiness of marriage is instead in direct proportion to the mutual respect between the spouses, even in their intimate relations. Not that they should regard as immoral and should refuse what nature offers and the Creator has given, but because this respect and the mutual esteem which it engenders are one of the most important elements of *a love that is all the more pure because it is more tender*."

²⁸ See Pius XI, *Casti connubii* (D 2234).

²⁹ See Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 569: "Considering that the third blessing, which is that of the sacrament, far surpasses the other two, we should not be surprised to find that because of its outstanding excellence, it is much more sharply attacked by the same people;" see also pp. 550-53.

³⁰ With regard to civil marriage, some canons were already prepared at the First Vatican Council (Mansi 53, 721, 718 [n. 16], 752). There are innumerable documents of the Church's magisterium on this matter; see among others: Instruction of the Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, (AAS 21 [1929], 352) and the First Roman Synod, 1960, art 496, 2: "The faithful in Italy should know that if they should dare to contract a civil marriage, even if they intend a religious marriage later, they will be considered to be public sinners and that the pastor will act in accord with canon 1066." In some areas, however, a civil marriage is required to precede the religious marriage. In such cases, obviously, the faithful should do what they can.

³¹ The teaching against civil divorce is contained in innumerable documents of the Church which anyone can easily consult. With regard to what should be considered just cause for a separation, the *Roman Catechism* (On the Sacrament of Marriage, n. 20) says: "Nor does Holy Church allow a man and woman to separate from each other *except for more serious reasons*."

³² At Vatican I, teaching and canons were also prepared with regard to mixed marriage (Mansi 43, 721, 754f). See the Decree of the Holy Office, July 1, 1949 (AAS 41 [1949], 334) and its Declaration, August 11, 1949 (AAS 41 [1949], 427f).

³³ Benedict XIV, Encyclical *Magnae nobis*, June 29, 1748 (*Bullarium*, II [Rome 1754], p. 247ff); Clement XIII, Apostolic Letter *Quantopere*, November 16, 1763 (*Bullarii Romani Continuatio*, II Pont. Clem. XIII [Rome 1837], p. 425ff); Pius VI, Letter *Exsequendo nunc*, July 13, 1782 (*CIC Fontes*, II, p. 655ff); Pius VIII, Apostolic Letter *Litteris altero* (*CIC Fontes*, II, p. 733ff); Gregory XVI, Encyclical *Summo igitur*, May 27, 1832 (*Acta Gregorii Papae XVI*, I [Rome 1901], p. 140ff); Encyclical *Commissum divinitus*, May 17, 1835 (*Ibid.*, II [Rome 1901], p. 32ff); Brief *Non sine gravi*, May 23, 1846 (*Ibid.*, III [Rome 1902], p. 537f); Apostolic Letter *Quas vestro*, April 30, 1841 (*Ibid.*, p. 122ff); Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae*, l.c., p. 10ff; *Constanti Hungarorum* September 2, 1893 (*Acta Leonis XIII*), XIII, p. 268ff); Letter *Quam religiosa*, August 16, 1898 (*Ibid.*, XVIII, p. 140ff); Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 539ff; Pius XII, Encyclical *Sertum laetitiae*, November 1, 1939 (AAS 31 [1939], 635ff); CIC, can. 1060-1066.

³⁴ Pius VII, Brief *Etsi fraternitatis*, October 8, 1803 (*CIC Fontes*, II, p. 718): "And the first of these is that the Catholic Church has always forbidden and rejected as illicit, pernicious and detestable the marriages of Catholics with heretics, as we could demonstrate from innumerable decrees of Councils and of Supreme Pontiffs.... And although in some areas because of difficulties of time and place, such marriages may be *tolerated*, this should be considered to be an equanimity *which in no way implies approval or consent* but mere *patience*, necessary but not voluntary, in order to avoid greater evils..." collate this with many other documents, especially those listed in the note to D 1499 and in the note to CIC c. 1060. With regard to canons 10 and 31 of the Council of Laodicea (Mansi II, 565 and 570), it should be noted that they are to be interpreted in the light of the whole teaching of the Council, which did not even permit the faithful to pray with heretics and schismatics.

³⁵ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 558f: "Armed with these principles, some men go so far as to concoct new species of unions, suited, as they say, to the present temper of men and the times, which various new forms of marriage they presume to label '*temporary*,' '*experimental*,' and '*companionate*.' These offer all the indulgence of marriage and its rights without, however, the indissoluble bond and without offspring, unless later the parties alter their cohabitation into a marriage in the full sense of the law."

³⁶ This has in mind the notorious book of Van de Velde, *Il matrimonio perfetto*, placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*. The way in which the holiness of marriage is publicly profaned in films is also condemned.

³⁷ See Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, where these errors are explicitly condemned.

³⁸ This does not deal with particular questions or errors about the crime of adultery and its punishment by civil laws. Only the general principle is rejected.

³⁹ Even today the adversaries of the Church are continually talking about this "free love." That is why this widespread opinion is finally to be explicitly condemned.

CHAPTER III: THE DIVINELY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

23. The Origin and Dignity of the Christian Family

By the divine order itself, the family consists of parents and children and arises out of a legitimate marriage,¹ without which there cannot *per se* be, before God and the Church, a legitimate family. Illegitimate children, however, possess rights and duties which derive from the very fact of procreation. By its origin, nature, and goal, the family, like marriage, is sacred and, for Christians, holy,² by which holiness the Christian family shines before all others. According to the divine order, therefore, grace and the virtues, and charity first of all, must reign within the family, just as they did in the most holy Family of Nazareth, which is the most perfect model of every Christian family.³

24. The Family a True Society

In the light of the divine order, the family is a true society, of itself preceding the other natural societies,⁴ although it can be helped and fostered by the latter so that it can really attain its own proper purposes. Indeed the family is, and will remain till the end of time, the society that for every person, in whatever social order, is necessary and inviolable, the principle and presupposition of other societies, endowed with its own spiritual and moral, juridical and economic unity.⁵ The properties and goods with which marriage is furnished, especially unity, indissolubility, and the chaste fidelity of each spouse, were also given by God for the defense and the good of the whole family.⁶

25. Authority in the Domestic Society

As an ordered life together, the family cannot exist without proper authority,⁷ which should be understood to be for the sake of securing the good of all the members, according to the saying in Mt 23:11, "The greatest among you must be your servant." Although as human persons the man and the woman have the same dignity before God and enjoy full equality of rights in the matters that constitute the essence of the marriage contract, still the man naturally presides over the whole family,⁸ over the wife as the companion to be especially honored and loved, and over the children who are to be nourished and educated. This natural primacy over the wife is confirmed and elevated by the sacrament of marriage,⁹ as the Apostle teaches: "Wives, be subject to your husbands as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church.... As the Church is subject to Christ, so wives should be subject in all things to their husbands" (Eph 5:22-24). Although the woman is subject to the man, as a mother she has her own authority over the children, an authority subordinate to that of the father. Indeed the wife takes the place of the husband in directing the family, should he be unable to fulfil his role.¹⁰ It follows that children are under the power of the parents (see 1 Tm 3:4) until they themselves become adults.¹¹ In the family, further, the woman is as it were the heart, endowed with her own distinct qualities and gifts, so that she may sweetly and effectively arrange everything for the good of the whole domestic group.¹² For this

reason, the wife should not be considered by her husband as a maid, subject to whatever the husband might order; but the woman, companion of the husband in procreation, must also be his companion in the education of the children, a help to him, as God willed from the beginning (see Gn 2:18), in charity and sanctification.¹³ But the Church, mindful of the doctrine of the Apostle who taught that before God there is neither male nor female but that all the baptized are one in Christ Jesus (see Gal 3:28), has rejected and rejects the false ideas by which a woman is described as lacking in mature judgement, or incapable of mastering her own acts, or not equipped enough to exercise her own rights.¹⁴ The authority of the man over the wife must therefore be informed and tempered by both the natural and the supernatural virtues, especially by conjugal love according to the divine mandate: "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church and handed himself over for her" (Eph 5:25). So that the authority of each parent over the children may be exercised with that moderation without which rich fruits cannot be expected, it was said to the parents and particularly to the father, "Do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged" (Col 3:21).¹⁵ Let them be strong and gentle, for if they are meek God will teach them his ways (Ps 24:9), so that they will be able to lead their children in the way of the Lord. As the authority of the father must be informed by love, so the obedience of the wife and children should be the submission of love.

26. Some Errors are Rejected

It is mistaken, therefore, to deny the divine origin of the family and to subvert the order which God set within it or to remove it from the control and influence of the divine order and of the Church. And therefore this Sacred Synod, while it defends the rights of the woman, rejects that evil form of emancipation by which, whether as a daughter or a wife or a mother, her proper nature, function, and role are disfigured by some false view of her equality with the man.¹⁶ Nor does it approve of that way of acting by which some people, indeed civil authority itself, moved by some false exaltation of freedom, either denies or belittles or, what is worse, practically destroys, to the detriment of the family's good, the natural and distinct qualities of man and woman.¹⁷

NOTES

¹ See Leo XIII, Epistle *Ci siamo*, June 1, 1879 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, I, pp. 237-38); *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, February 10, 1880 (*AAS*, 12 [1879-80], p. 391); Epistle *Il divisamento*, February 8, 1893 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, XIII, pp. 37-38); Address in Consistory, March 18, 1895 (*Ibid.*, XV, pp. 74-75); Pius XII, Address to Spouses, July 12, 1939 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, I, p. 247).

² See Leo XIII, in the documents noted above; Pius XI, Encyclical *Ubi arcano*, December 23, 1922 (*AAS* 14 [1922], 678); *Casti connubii*, December 31, 1930 (*AAS* 22 [1930], pp. 539ff, 583-85, 590).

³ Leo XIII, Apostolic Epistle *Neminem fugit*, January 14, 1891 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, XII, p. 149); Pius XI, *Ubi arcano*, l.c., p. 690.

⁴ Leo XIII, Encyclical *Rerum novarum*, May 15, 1891 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, XI, p. 104): "Thus we have the family, the domestic society, little indeed but a *true society*, older than any other State, with rights and duties of its own, totally independent of the commonwealth;" Pius XI, Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*, December 31, 1929 (*AAS* 22 [1930], 52-53).

- ⁵ Pius XII, Address, November 21, 1953 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, XV, p. 477): "She [the Church] cannot cease to warn and to recall that, according to the will of the Creator and the natural order established by him, the family must be a *spiritual and moral, juridical and economic unity*...."
- ⁶ See Pius XII, Encyclical *Sertum laetitiae*, November 1, 1939 (*AAS* 31 [1939], 640); Leo XIII, Encyclical *Immortale Dei*, November 1, 1885 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, V, p. 129); Encyclical *Caritatis*, March 19, 1894 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, XIV); Encyclical *Longinqua oceani*, January 6, 1895 (*Ibid.*, XV, p. 15); Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., pp. 553-54.
- ⁷ Leo XIII, *Rerum novarum* (*Acta Leonis XIII*, XI, p. 105): "The family, no less than the State, as we have said, is a true society, governed by a power of its own, that is to say, by the father."
- ⁸ Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c., p. 18: "The husband is the chief of the family and the head of the wife."
- ⁹ Leo XIII, Encyclical *Quod apostolici*, December 28, 1878 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, I, pp. 178-79).
- ¹⁰ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., pp. 549-50: "If the husband should fail in his duty, it falls to the wife to take his place in directing the family."
- ¹¹ This is not meant to address the juridical questions of the legal and juridical emancipation of children, which depends also on the various legislations of States.
- ¹² Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 549: "For if the man is the head, the woman is the heart, and as he occupies the chief place in the ruling, so she may and ought to claim for herself the chief place in love."
- ¹³ Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c.: "...[the woman] must be subject to her husband and obey him, not indeed as a servant but as a companion;" Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 549: "...nor does it bid her obey her husband's every request if not in harmony with right reason or with the dignity due to the wife."
- ¹⁴ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 549: "...nor does it imply that the wife should be put on a level with those persons who in law are called minors, to whom it is not customary to allow free exercise of their rights on account of their lack of judgement or of their ignorance of human affairs."
- ¹⁵ Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, l.c., p. 18, which is cited in Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., pp. 550: "...may divine charity always be the guide of their respective duties."
- ¹⁶ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., pp. 567-68, where a false emancipation of woman is explicitly and at length rejected; First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 213, 2.
- ¹⁷ Leo XIII, Epistle *Quod apostolici*, December 28, 1878 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, I, pp. 171, 178ff); Benedict XV, *Motu proprio Bonum sane*, July 25, 1920 (*AAS* 12 [1920], 314); Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., pp. 49-86; *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 568.

CHAPTER IV: THE RIGHTS, OBLIGATIONS, AND VIRTUES
PROPER TO THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

27. The Responsibility of Parents with Regard to the Number of Children

Today especially, a distinctive sign of truly Christian parents should be that generous way of acting, one in accordance with the norms of Christian virtues, with which they think correctly about the number of their children and act accordingly.¹ The Sacred Synod is not at all unaware of the many and great difficulties which spouses may encounter on this matter. It therefore teaches in general that by divine law, natural or positive, there is no universal norm with regard to the number of children to be had in each family. In each case should be considered what individual conditions, the good of the whole family and of society suggest, according to the dictates of Christian prudence, linked also with the other virtues. In their particular deliberations, the faithful should not be moved only by temporal and material considerations, but first of all by supernatural ones, and they should be led by the light of reason and of faith.² And, as befits Christians, in measuring the number of their children, they should be mindful of divine Providence by which all things are wisely ordered. In so serious a matter, the faithful should avoid irrational and blind instinct and the various forms of hedonism.³ If they both agree and if they have a just cause, it is licit for the faithful to make use of marriage only on those days which are known to be infertile.⁴ But renouncing the use of marriage becomes illicit for them if, as the Apostle noted (see 1 Cor 7:5), it brings the spouses into a proximate danger of sin. Let the supreme rule be the Apostle's general advice: "Let all your acts be done with charity" (1 Cor 16:14). And therefore values and reasons that are merely medical, eugenic, economic, social or of some other temporal and material order, may not be opposed to, preferred to, or equated with the values and reasons of a higher order, the order of religion and morality.⁵

28. The Demographic Question

No obligation to restrict the multiplication of children can of itself be drawn from simple fear of an excessive multitude of people, absolutely considered, or from a universal, necessary, and definitive disproportion between the number of living people and the quantity of temporal means necessary for them. For the theory on which this fear rests cannot be proven a priori, unless one denies the spiritual quality of the human agent, indeed unless a defect of divine Providence is posited in the order of creation established by the most wise God himself.⁶ Some relative and temporary greater multitude of people may happen here or there because of the conflux of various contingent causes; but this should stimulate people to new ways of producing and distributing goods, instead of limiting, against the divine law, the procreation of children. The spread of ideas affirming a need to bring the generation of children into agreement with continually changing economic conditions, produces in matters which concern the family a way of assessing things that is too utilitarian, smacks of materialism, and is therefore quite foreign to the genuine nature of the family.⁷ There is nothing against promoting certain processes and certain social transformations in the fields of economics, hygiene, and public education and in achieving other goods. But great care should be taken that these

social transformations not corrupt essential values of a higher order in the family; and these changes must by all means be done in such a way that they conform to divine laws.⁸

29. The Rights and Duties of Parents with Regard to the Education of Children

Parents have the serious and divinely sanctioned duty especially by their word and example to educate their own children not only with regard to natural and earthly matters, but especially with regard to supernatural and eternal matters.⁹ First of all, therefore, parents themselves, out of a duty owed to their children themselves, must see to it that not only are the newborn given new birth in the supernatural life as soon as possible, but also that they are religiously educated from the earliest age especially with regard to the elements of the Christian religion and the observance of the law of the Gospel.¹⁰ For marriage itself and the family also have the goal of increasing the body of the Church and augmenting the number of the elect.¹¹ In educating their children, parents should give attention to natural and earthly matters, but maintain a correct assessment and degree of values.¹² The sciences and pedagogical arts must be in conformity with true and Christian principles,¹³ and on this matter it should especially be noted that a person on the one hand is enlightened and led by the illuminations and movements of the Holy Spirit and, on the other, remains subject to evil concupiscence and to the other consequences of original sin.

30. The Rights and Duties of Children

Children should truly be the honor of their parents (see Mal 1:6), their crown and glory (see Prov 17:6). Children should therefore be truly obedient and docile to their parents, should love them both affectively and, as Sacred Scripture teaches more than once, effectively, by their works.¹⁴ Care should also be taken that children's rights are not violated, especially with regard to their choice of marriage or in freely following their vocation, especially with regard to divine service.¹⁵

31. The Duties of Others and of Civil Society towards the Family

Relatives, both natural and spiritual, and others who by role or office are devoted to families should help the families to which they are in some way bound, especially in the support and right education of the children. Civil authority also has its duties towards the domestic group. Civil authority, whether national or international, has the right and duty to use its own organs and means to preserve, defend, and foster the goods of the family, even by positively helping it, especially in the support and education of children, according to what the common good requires.¹⁶ For that reason, public authority should see to it that the family not fail or be deprived of things necessary to it, including its just and right progress in the social group; further, the family's right to work, with a just and fitting salary, must not be violated against natural justice and equity themselves; finally, the family must not be deprived of a just ability to emigrate; and in general, parents, especially mothers, should not be prohibited directly or indirectly from being able rightly to fulfill their own duties.¹⁷

32. Family and Schools

With regard to schools, the civil authority may not offend the just rights of parents and of the Church that children be educated rightly and in a Christian way also in schools.¹⁸ Indeed the civil authority must help the family also on this matter by fitting means and to the degree possible.¹⁹ Parents have the right and duty diligently to see to it that their children not attend schools or associations in which either religion or moral integrity is placed in proximate danger,²⁰ which often cannot be obtained except at costs which families cannot pay.

33. The Family and the Church

By divine law the family is entrusted to the Church not only because marriage, from which it legitimately arises, first of all and in itself belongs to the Church; but also because the Church has from God the most serious right, one that is independent and inviolable by any human power, to impart Christian education by its teachers and schools not only to children but also to parents, especially instructing them so that they are able to fulfill the obligations of their proper states in a Christian manner.²¹ This right is proper to the Church both because of its universal teaching authority and also because of its spiritual motherhood towards children and parents.²² For only the Church, through the administration of the sacraments, has access in the name of Christ to the sanctuary of the conscience of both parents and children.²³ Conjugal and familial intimacy has, therefore, its own limits, even with regard to the members of the family themselves. So it is that the Christian family becomes an honorable instrument, living and holy, of such and so great a Mother Church, for the building up of the Body of Christ.

34. Errors are Rejected

When weighing demographic questions, it is mistaken and indeed injurious to human and Christian dignity to consider the procreation of people and their families only in relation to the service of civil society or truly to dishonor them by discussing them as if they were animal species.²⁴ For this reason, the Sacred Synod, while it most urgently exhorts all to provide as much effective help as possible to families burdened with a number of children, at the same time severely condemns the recommending and the spread of shameful contraceptive means in order to limit children; instead of defending the good of peoples, as is sometimes thought today, they corrupt the whole social order.²⁵ The Sacred Synod also condemns all theories that in any way deny the rights of the Church and of the family with regard to the education of children, or which assign primary rights in this area to civil authority; and it most seriously condemns those who directly support or formally cooperate in the passage of wicked laws about marriage and the family.²⁶ As for the education of children, it condemns the views of any moral doctrine which defames the Church as if in its moral education, instead of the law of liberty and love, it exclusively favored a moral education resting only on laws and fear, is negative, and contradicts, as they say, authentic Christian doctrine and method. How false such accusations or malevolent insinuations against the Church are will be clear if it is recalled that

the Church in its teaching about Christian education, has always had before her eyes the example of the divine Teacher, who on the one hand entrusted to the Church the new and great commandment of charity, but on the other urged even the negative precepts of the Decalogue (see Mt 19:18),²⁷ and indeed urgently proposed his own self-abnegation and cross (see Mt 16:24). And if the Apostle, led by the divine Spirit, warns all the faithful to work out their salvation in fear and trembling (see Phil 1:12), those who engage themselves by divine will in the equally onerous and glorious task of Christian education know that those words apply to themselves for two reasons.

NOTES

¹ Pius XII, Address to Midwives, October 29, 1951 (*AAS* 43 [1951], 841): "Unfortunately cases are not rare in which even a cautious reference to children as a 'blessing' is enough to provoke a downright denial and perhaps even derision. Far more frequently, in thought and in words, the attitude of considering children a heavy 'burden' predominates. How opposed is this frame of mind to the *mind* of God and to the words of Sacred Scripture, and, for that matter, to sound reason and the sentiment of nature!" Address to the Directors of the Association for Large Families of Rome and Italy, January 20, 1958 (*AAS* 50 [1958], 93): "Only the divine and eternal light of Christianity gives full life and meaning to the family and this is so true that right from the beginning and through the whole course of its history, a large family has often been considered as synonymous with a Christian family."

² Pius XII, Address to the Seventh International Hematological Congress in Rome, September 12, 1958 (*AAS* 50 [1958], 732-40); Address to Midwives, l.c., pp. 835-54.

³ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, December 31, 1930 (*AAS* 22 [1930], 548); Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c., p. 853: "The seriousness and holiness of the Christian moral law does not permit the unrestrained satisfying of the sexual instinct..."

⁴ See the Reply of the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary, March 2, 1853, June 16, 1880; Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., p. 561; Pius XII, Address to Midwives, l.c., pp. 844ff. Because of the controversies today among theologians, the Constitution does not determine whether a just and *serious* reason is required under pain of serious sin.

⁵ Pius XII, Radio Message, December 24, 1952 (*AAS* 45 [1953], 42): "But to want to escape from the difficulty with the formula that the number of men must be regulated according to political *economy* amounts to subverting the order of nature and the whole psychological and moral world that is linked to it."

⁶ Pius XII, Address to Directors of the Association for Large Families, l.c., pp. 92-93; John XXIII, Encyclical *Mater et magistra*, May 15, 1961 (*AAS* 53 [1961], pp. 445ff). N.B.: With regard to the absolute impossibility of universal over-population, the members of the Theological Commission were not of the same view. Some thought so clear a decision was not opportune. There was no division in the subcommission, where there were two sociologists. All held to the impossibility of over-population, not on sociological but on dogmatic grounds. For if there is over-population, then the words of Gn 1:22, "Increase and multiply," fail and so does the primary purpose of marriage.

⁷ Pius XII, Address to Directors of the Association for Large Families, l.c., pp. 92-93: "In recent times we have seen how so-called 'demographic politics' have failed to achieve any noteworthy results; it is easy to see why, for the individual interest will almost always win out over the collective selfishness which this idea so often expresses, and the aims and methods of this policy *debase the dignity of the family* and of persons by placing them on the same level as lower species;" John XXIII, *Mater et magistra*, l.c., pp. 447.

⁸ John XXIII, *Mater et magistra*, l.c., pp. 446-47.

⁹ CIC, c. 1113; Pius XII, Radio Message, March 23, 1952 (*AAS* 44 [1952], 270-78); Pius XI, Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*, December 31, 1929 (*AAS* 22 [1930], 49-86); *Casti connubii* l.c., p. 545.

- ¹⁰ See CIC, c. 770; Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., passim.
- ¹¹ Pius XII, Address, May 24, 1939; Roman Catechism, On the Sacrament of Marriage, ch. VIII, n. 15.
- ¹² See CIC, c. 1113; Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., passim.
- ¹³ See St. Pius X, Encyclical *Editae saepe*, May 26, 1910 (*AAS* 2 [1910], 357-80); Pius XII, Radio Message, January 12, 1954 (*AAS* 46 [1954], 59-62); Address to French University Teachers and Students, September 21, 1950 (*AAS* 42 [1950], 735-38).
- ¹⁴ See Prov 6:20; Eccl 3:14; Eph 6:1; Col 3:20, etc.
- ¹⁵ See CIC, cc. 214, 1087, 2352; First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 495, 2.
- ¹⁶ See Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c.
- ¹⁷ There are many pontifical documents about both the family wage and the other rights mentioned here.
- ¹⁸ See Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c.
- ¹⁹ This refers to the role of civil society in providing aid also to free Catholic schools, but according to just laws.
- ²⁰ See First Roman Synod, 1960, art. 241-243.
- ²¹ For in some areas, under tyrannical oppression, the only way for the Church to be present is through parents who are instructed rightly and in a Christian way and then educate their children.
- ²² See Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., pp. 53ff.
- ²³ See Pius XII, Radio Message, March 23, 1952, l.c., p. 271: "To use an image as old as it is fitting, conscience is, therefore, an *aduton*, a sanctuary, at whose threshold all must stop, even, in the case of a child, *the father and the mother. Only the priest enters there as caretaker of souls and as minister of the sacrament of penance.*"
- ²⁴ See Pius XII, Address to the Associations of Large Families, November 26, 1951 (*AAS* 43 [1951], 856): "But there is an even deeper misery from which the family must be preserved: that debasing slavery to which it is reduced by a mentality tending to make it a mere organism at the service of the social community, in order to procreate for such a community a sufficient mass of 'human material.'"
- ²⁵ This addresses the condemnation of all the ways in which perversion of the conjugal act is being spread; see already Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, l.c., pp. 559ff. But in the Constitution the error is condemned not only in its individual but also in its social aspect.
- ²⁶ The condemnation is necessary so that Catholics who have public responsibility may themselves properly stand watch and assist the salvation and promotion of the rights of the family according to the Church's teaching.
- ²⁷ See Pius XII, Radio Message, March 23, 1952, l.c., pp. 274f: "He [Jesus] spoke of the 'narrow gate' and of the 'hard road' that leads to life (see Mt 7:13-14)... Similarly, to the rich young man he replied, 'If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments,' and to a second question, 'Which?' he replied, 'Thou shalt *not* kill! *not* commit adultery!, *not* steal! *not* bear false witness! *Honor* your father and mother! And love your neighbor as yourself!' He made it a *condition* for anyone who wishes to imitate him that he *renounce* himself and take up his cross every day (see Lk 9:23)... Thus spoke Jesus Christ, *the divine Pedagogue*, who certainly knows better than men how to penetrate into souls and attract them to his love with the infinite perfections of his Heart, *full of goodness and love*. And the Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul, did he perhaps preach something different?... Not in warnings such as this one: 'Work out your salvation *in fear and trembling*' (Phil 2:12)... Thus the accusation of oppressive harshness brought against the Church by the 'new morality' is really first aimed at the adorable person of Christ himself."

PART III: SACRED VIRGINITY

35. The Excellence of Sacred Virginity

If holy Mother Church has always especially honored chastity as a choice fruit of the Holy Spirit, it has certainly always regarded as among its supremely precious treasures that perfect chastity by which a person consecrates himself to God's service by sacred virginity and, out of singular love for God, for the sake of the Kingdom of God (see Mt 19:12), by a spiritual and free decision abstains from marriage and from its bodily delights. This honor given by the Bride of Christ is still greater when that chastity is undertaken by a permanent bond and is thus surrounded by a greater strength and firmness.¹ By such a consecration, a man emulates in some ways the purity of the Angels,² in some degree already here on earth he anticipates the state of heaven,³ is more perfectly likened to Christ the Virgin, born of the immaculate Virgin, and is more closely united with God, the most pure Spirit. By such a consecration, with the help of God's grace, a person can totally hand himself over to the service of the divine Majesty, more easily engages in the contemplation of divine things, and, free from secular and fleshly cares, undertakes apostolic works in order to spread the Kingdom of God.⁴

36. Virginity and Marriage

It cannot be surprising, therefore, if Holy Church, taught by the divine Teacher himself and by the Apostle of the Gentiles (see Mt 19:11-12; 1 Cor 7:25-27, 32-36, 38-40), has never ceased to extol virginity over marriage, even if, as the Lord himself attests, there always have been and will be, those who cannot accept this (see Mt 19:12). Soberly, yet clearly, following as usual other God-speaking Fathers,⁵ St John Damascene said, "Virginity is an angelic kind of life, marked by characteristics of an incorporeal nature. Nor do we say this in order to detract from marriage, far be it; for we know that the Lord blessed marriage by his presence and we know who it was who said 'Let marriage be honored,...and the marriage bed undefiled' (Hb 13:4); but we acknowledge that virginity is better than marriage, good as this is."⁶ No less soberly and clearly did the Sacred Council of Trent teach that it is better and more blessed to remain in virginity or celibacy (undertaken for God's sake, of course) than to be joined in marriage.⁷ Nor does virginity, by which in a singular way we are conformed to Christ the Virgin impede or diminish the development of one's own personality, rather it augments it and can lead it to a higher level (see 1 Cor 7:33-40).⁸

37. The Practice of the Church

While the dignity of marriage and of the Christian family can never be sufficiently praised, the Church, considering the objective order established by God through Jesus Christ, has wished that chaste marriage, which is a great mystery in Christ and the Church (see Eph 5: 32), cede in honor to the state of sacred virginity, even where virginity is not linked to a vow or profession of the other evangelical counsels, so long as it is undertaken not for human reasons but for the sake of the love of God and of Jesus Christ; and of the sacred ministers of the Latin rite it demands that they willingly

and freely choose virginity as their spouse and remain faithful to it until death, while it recommends the same virginal chastity to ministers of the Oriental rites as a sweet priestly ornament.⁹

38. Errors are Rejected

Kindly Mother Church joyfully exults over the great number of those who in various regions, particularly in recently founded churches, under the Spirit's inspiration and with his help, are embracing the sacred state of virginity. But it also observes with anxiety that in not a few regions where sacred virginity was once the ornament of many families, the number of those who by divine grace are aspiring to a state so singularly loved by God is diminishing and sometimes is being notably reduced. This is happening not only because of a worldly spirit, penetrating more easily today than before even into Catholic families, but also because of errors spread and propagated concerning the character of marriage and of sacred virginity. For that reason, compelled by harsh necessity, she renews the severe condemnation once uttered by the Sacred Council of Trent against those who dare to maintain that the marital state is to be preferred to the state of virginity or celibacy,¹⁰ and she also seriously rejects the view of those who claim that the bond of celibacy today is obsolete, indeed impossible today, exceeds the competence of the Church and should be relaxed according to the will of the subject.¹¹ She also must severely reject the dangerous view, very injurious to the life of the Church, which teaches that the obligations with regard to virginal chastity assumed by young people desiring to dedicate themselves to God are practically non-existent, on the grounds that adolescents should be a priori and generally presumed to lack psychological maturity and the required experience of persons of the opposite sex.¹²

Finally, the Sacred Synod exhorts Christian parents by prayer, purity of life, and veneration for the priestly and religious state, to foster sacred vocations, knowing that chaste marriage is then most greatly honored when from it flow the flowers of sacred virginity.

EPILOGUE

39. A Brief Encouragement

These are the things which the Sacred Synod has thought it necessary to say to meet the needs of the day, not only so that the truth might be not only better known, but also more readily acknowledged and profitably expressed in life itself. It encourages Pastors religiously to instruct the faithful about these decrees and to help them by their good advice. It encourages the married to allow continually to grow within themselves the gifts and graces which they received from heaven when they received the Sacrament in which the spousal love of Christ and the Church was symbolized. It encourages parents and children by imitating the sacred Family of Nazareth continually to strain towards the higher things. It encourages those who serve God by sacred virginity to refuse secular desires out of the love for Jesus Christ and so to change all fleshly love into spiritual love. It encourages all, generously and in a spirit of love and subjection, to accept and to offer to God the

troubles and difficulties which in this order after Adam's fall are as it were inevitably linked with the divine gifts. As the kindly Mother of the faithful, the Church sympathizes with the distress, miseries, and torments with which the great number of her children is burdened and not seldom oppressed. But it also cannot remain silent about the sacrifices willed by God and Jesus Christ. And it is forced to respond no less to some lamenting faithful than to the many calumniating enemies: "Whether it is right in the sight of God for us to obey you rather than God, you be the judge.... We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 4:19 and 5:29). But if the voice of the Church is truly heard, marriage and the family will correspond to the counsels of God, who is love, and of Jesus Christ who loved us with a perpetual charity; and "this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison" (2 Cor 4:17-18).

NOTES

¹ See Pius XII, Encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, March 25, 1954 (*AAS* 46 [1954], 161-91); on the vow, *Ibid.*, p. 165.

² St. John Chrysostom, *In Matt. hom.* 70, 5 (PG 58, 660); St. Bonaventure, *De perfectione evangelica*, q. 3, a. 3; St. Thomas, *Catena aurea in Matth. Evang.*, ch. 22, v. 30-32 (Parma ed., 1860, p. 254B): "...thus all the virtues are *angelic things*, especially chastity through which nature is overcome by the virtues;" St. Cyprian, *De habitu virginum*, 22 (PL 4, 462): "When you persevere as chaste virgins, you are equal to God's Angels;" St. Ambrose, *De virginibus*, bk. 1, ch. 8, n. 52 (PL 16, 202-203); Pius XII, *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., pp. 167, 173.

³ See Mt 22:30.

⁴ See 1 Cor 7:32-34.

⁵ See especially Didymus of Alexandria, *Contra Manich.*, 8 (PG 39, 1096) and St. John Chrysostom, *De Virginitate*, 10 (PG 48, 450).

⁶ *De fide orth.*, IV, 24 (PG 94, 1210).

⁷ Council of Trent, Session XXIV, Doctrine on the Sacrament of Marriage, c. 10 (D 980): "If anyone should say that the conjugal state is to be preferred to the state of virginity or of celibacy and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity or in celibacy than to be joined in marriage, A.S."

⁸ Pius XII, *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., pp. 176f. "For although all those who have embraced a life of perfect chastity have deprived themselves of the expression of human love permitted in the married state, nonetheless it cannot thereby be affirmed that because of this privation they have diminished and spoiled the human personality. For they receive from the Giver of heavenly gifts something spiritual which far exceeds that 'mutual help' which husband and wife confer on each other. They consecrate themselves to him who is their source and who shares with them his divine life, and thus *they do not diminish themselves but make themselves immensely greater*;" Pius XII, Speech, September 15, 1952 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, XIV, p. 334): "Today we wish to address ourselves only to those, priests and lay people, preachers, orators, or writers, who no longer have a word of approval or of praise for virginity vowed to Christ, who for years, despite the warnings of the Church and in spite of its teachings, assign marriage a preference in principle over virginity, who go even to the point of presenting it as the only means capable of assuring the development and natural perfection of the human person. Those who speak and write such things should become aware of their responsibility before God and before the Church."

⁹ Council of Trent, Session XXIV, Doctrine on the Sacrament of Marriage, c. 10 (D 980).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, c. 9 (D 979).

¹² Thus Pius XII, *Sacra virginitas*, l.c., pp. 183f: "Some indeed claim that all Christians and the clergy in particular should not be separated from the world as in the past, but should be present to the world; therefore *they should take the risk and put their chastity to the test in order to show whether or not they have strength to resist*; therefore, they say, let young clerics see everything so that they may accustom themselves to gaze at everything with equanimity, and thus render themselves immune to all temptations." But now things have developed to the point that amorous relationships are being advised for those who desire to vow themselves to perpetual chastity. Furthermore, this passage intends to reject what many psychologists maintain, namely that during puberty and early youth a man is incapable of a fully free and fully responsible human act. This opinion, unfortunately, is heard even from Catholic psychologists. The Constitution obviously does not reject healthy types of education for chastity, in which young people and even the clergy, if they are destined for the care of souls, are educated so that they will be able to see and deal with pure and simple minds with whatever they have to see and deal with. Neither is the text aimed at extraordinary or pathological conditions or at an impetuous sexuality, which would render a youth less fit for vowing himself to perpetual chastity or which could diminish imputability. All these things would have to be measured according to circumstances in the particular cases.