

Everyone is called to a life of communion with God.

This means everyone is called to an eternal experience of union in God's own life: a mutual exchange of love.

The reality of God (eternal exchange of love) wanted to include beings outside of himself in his kingdom of eternal beatitude.

And so he created, not only the entire world, but a very special part of the world: he created man in his own image and likeness: male and female he created (him)(them): designed and built to mirror the image of eternal exchange of love.

He made man (male and female) with free will so that he and she could freely choose to enter into the activity of mutual exchange of love – into a loving relationship with each other and thus with him.

God respected the freedom of his human creations and did not want to force them into loving him or other humans, or even themselves.

He told man to be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it!

The idea of self-gift was then present from the beginning. The self-donation act of procreation (communion – unity in the mutual exchange of love) was a part of man's essence from the very beginning. By the mutual event of self-donation there was in addition to an exchange of love – the production of a third person – a child!

For this reason a man shall leave his mother and the two shall become one flesh. This dynamic which created the first family was deemed by God as the essence of marriage.

This was all before the Original Sin. This is the way it was meant to be. This is how it was to operate. This was called the Order of Creation.

Then there was the Original Sin: the willful act of disobedience committed by our first parents– and everything changed – everything became twisted, and distorted and perverted in one way or another. Everything! The Father of Lies - the Tempter - scored a victory – and mankind was off on a tangential course that God had not planned originally for it!

Everything about self-gift, self-donation, love, was misconstrued – and the varieties of Dis-Order were born.

Simply for clarification, the Church has categorized and labeled those things which participate in the Original Order (with God as its source and goal) as that which is Good; and those things which participate in the Original Dis-Order (caused by Original Sin – with man as aim and end) as Evil. We must remember this when the Church authoritatively and rightfully makes statements about morality. (The secular use of the terms “good” and “evil” “order” disorder” do not apply here).

It is not a distant jump to then take a look at the condition of the world in which we live to see just exactly what still remains of truly “good” and “evil” acts – and determine what ought to be a worthy and life-giving goal for all of us!

Without the benefit of the Redemption of Jesus (which is now a free-gift available to all) – those enslaved by Original Sin exist in a world in which everything is not what it seems –

especially in this regard: **what appears good may really be intrinsically evil; and what is intrinsically evil appears always as apparently good.**

Therefore, evil masquerades as good, and real good can be downplayed as irrelevant, unappealing and even bothersome.

In addition: all sorts of “dis-orders” entered the human scene – the most blatantly obvious are two known as **death, and the pain of childbirth** – these are two undebatable physical realities – just pick up any newspaper a turn to the “obit section” or ask “any woman who has given birth to a child!”

This same “dis-order” of “dis-obedience” of Original Sin also caused every other kind of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual disorder, distortion, aberration, abnormality, anomaly and general “off-centeredness” that has existed since that fateful day in the Garden to this very day.

Even though Jesus did come and Redeem us from sin and destroyed the reality of eternal death – and gave us the promise of eternal life – the *effects* of Original Sin still exist and are felt very strongly in most people – especially in those who have not come to believe in him.

Among the most devastating and unfortunate aberrations in our society – resulting directly from Original Sin – is the almost complete and total twisting around of the understanding of the human body and sex – and thereby marriage and family life in general.

Along with this is a complete misunderstanding by many of what a gift celibacy can be for someone who accepts it voluntarily – and what a gift it can be for those who through no fault of their own find themselves “dis-ordered” in their sexual inclination and orientation, thus precluding them from the “ordered” expression of sexuality in marriage. The primacy of the original order of male/female communion and subsequent procreation of children in marriage and family life is sacred, given by God himself, and therefore inviolable and undebatable. It is not only derived from the deposit of faith in Scripture, but also the deep recesses of the human mind and body! Understanding is not only affirmed from without, but confirmed from within the human conscience and heart!

It is very important to interject here that the technical theological language and usage of “order” “dis-order” “intrinsically good” “intrinsically evil” – are different than secular usage of the same words. It is equally important to use the theological language as defined.

Celibates can experience great fruitfulness in their call to communion with God in other appropriate, non-sexual ways – that are as rewarding and fulfilling as the charity of married life. If the ultimate goal of both is union with God, then the reward of a celibate life can be as rewarding as that of married life! For the ultimate goal in all of our lives is for God one day to “marry us!” How we prepare for that is up to God and his particular call or “vocation” that he gives to each man and woman! And it is up to our response to that call, that “fiat” that we, and we alone can give!

Celibate males can offer themselves for candidacy for priestly life in the Church. Celibate men and women may offer themselves for reception into religious life – if a vocation from God is discerned.

Those celibates not called to religious life, per se, in the traditional sense, can still be called into a “*common life* – a *community life*” with others where they live together as brothers / or sisters – in parings, and/or small or even larger groupings.

Everyone is called to experience love. Everyone is called to experience love by giving love. Everyone is called to some kind of a permanent adult environment or setting in which to be able to develop a spiritual life based on an experience of giving love – to others – and thereby to God!

It is difficult to seek out and find meaningful and lasting relationships both of the married and celibate kind. And even when such a relationship has been entered into, there are all kinds of trials and temptations that can come to weaken or even destroy what has potential to be so good and life giving!

Trials come to all of us! We are all “off-center” “dis-ordered” “dis-oriented” “sinful” – to some degree or another. It is up to us, **WITH THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, THROUGH THE MERITS OF JESUS CHRIST (HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION AS AN ACT OF OBEDIENCE AND LOVE FOR GOD THE FATHER) TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER** to use the difficulties of our state in life to increase our virtue, our desire for centeredness, our hope of attainment of the fullness of life awaiting every man and woman in the heavenly nuptial banquet where Christ will be the Bridegroom and the Church will be his Bride!

One day – in the kingdom to come – when everything is totally restored to the way it was “in the beginning” (which will happen because of the Redemption wrought by the precious blood of Jesus) **we will all live a totally ORDERED life** – everything will be as it ought to be! The center of that life will not be us! It will be Jesus Christ and his Father! And their Love, the Spirit will possess us for ever and ever! And we shall be a great family of brothers and sisters

all sharing in the communion of the exchange of love between the Father and the Son – the image of which was given as a gift to us while we lived on earth – the gift being marriage and the family! – we will live the One True Family Life in the Marriage Covenant that will last forever!

And then we will see how it all makes sense!

Until then, we should listen to the Truth as it exists in the world today – in the Person of Jesus Christ – who exists personally in the Mystical Body of the Church – and its teachings! These teaching though are not so much imposed from the outside as they are retrieved from within us – for the stamp of everything that it means to be male and female, to be created in God’s image, to be united in marriage, to be a family – the truth of the reality of self-giving is already present within the essence of our humanity! We are just simply born with it!

Otherwise, we are just more animal or more angel – but never really body/spirit human (or “angimal”)!

A prayerful, careful unrushed reading of the Catechism of the Catholic Church from cover to cover might be a big help along these lines!

Prayerful Blessings,
Father William Dinga, Jr.
Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
September 14, 2007

* much of this is based on The Theology of the Body of Pope John Paul II and references to the Catechism of the Catholic Church.