

Part III. Vocations

- I. Definition of “vocation”
- The calling or destiny we have in this life and hereafter. *(1)(358)(1700)
 God created the human person to love and serve him.
 The fulfillment of this vocation is eternal happiness.
- Vocation of the laity is to God’s kingdom by engaging (898)
 in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s
 will.
- The vocation to the priesthood and religious life is to (873, 931)
 dedicate oneself to the service of the Church as the
 universal sacrament of salvation.
- II. The universal call to holiness
- God calls everyone “to seek Him, to know Him and to (1, 358)
 to love Him” and to offer creation back to Him.
- The dignity of the human person is fulfilled in each (1700)
 person’s vocation to divine holiness.
- Human freedom and vocation. (1730)
- III. Christ calls all the faithful to perfection in holiness through one of
 the following vocations:
- Single state (1658)
 Married life (1601-66)
 Priesthood (1536-1600)
 Consecrated life (1618)
- IV. The Virtue of Chastity is essential to all states in life. (2348)
- Definition (2337)
- Christ is the model of chastity (2394)
- Moral virtue and the effect of the habit of self- (2339)(2345)
 mastery
- Part of the cardinal virtue of temperance (2341)
- Gift from God, a grace or fruit of spiritual effort (2345)
- Result of personal effort but one that redounds (2344)
 to the improvement of society
- Church’s teaching on Chastity
Chastity: A Pastoral Letter by the Most Reverend Joseph F.
 Martino, D.D., Hist. E.D., Bishop of Scranton

	The contemporary context	(Chast., pp. 3-6)
	Chastity is for everyone	(Chast., pp. 6-8)
	Marital Chastity	(Chast., pp. 8-10)
	Offenses against the virtue of chastity	(2351-56)
	Chastity and homosexuality	(2357-59)
V.	The Sacraments at the Service of Communion	
	Holy Orders and Matrimony are sacraments directed toward the service of others.	(1534-35)
	Holy Orders confers the grace “to serve in the name and in the person of Christ.”	(1591)
	Matrimony establishes a partnership for life, ordered by nature toward the good (unity) of the spouses and toward procreation and education of offspring.	(1601)(1625)
VI.	The vocation to the married state	(1601-66)
	Sacrament of Matrimony	
	Sacred Scripture begins and ends with marriage	(1602)
	Gen 1:26-27 to Rev 19:7,9	
	God is the author of marriage.	(1603)
	Conjugal love is an image of God’s absolute unfailing love for His creatures.	(1604)
	God blesses love and intends for it to be Fruitful.	(1605)
	God’s covenant with Israel: image of the exclusivity and faithfulness of marriage	Hos 1-3
	New Testament images	
	Wedding at Cana	Jn 2:1-11
	Indissolubility of marriage	Mt 19:6
	Validity of marriage	
	Parties must be baptized man and woman	(1625)
	Not under constraint	
	Not impeded by natural or ecclesiastical law	
	Ministers of the sacrament	(1626)
	No such thing as a true and valid homosexual marriage	(1625-26)
	Free consent is essential for valid marriage	(1626-29)
	Preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage	
	Remote preparation	
	life of chastity; example and teaching by parents, family, friends	

Proximate preparation

The Diocese of Scranton requires engaged couples to receive sacramental preparation. This includes sessions with a priest (or his designee) and participation in a Marriage Preparation Program that is faithful to the diocesan curriculum for pre-cana and Natural Family Planning. The engaged couple must contact a priest at least six months prior to the wedding date. Ordinary steps for marriage preparation include:

- Initial interview with the priest;
- Participation in a Marriage Preparation Program:
 - Engaged Encounter
 - Diocesan, regional, or parish pre-cana conference
 - Evenings for the Engaged, i.e., small group sessions
 - Individually arranged sessions with a priest, if none of the first four are feasible

Arrangements for instruction in Natural Family Planning

Second interview with priest to discuss premarital inventory results; reflect on the couple's experience in the pre-cana program; discuss mixed faith issues (if applicable); make referrals for extra-ordinary circumstances; and begin planning wedding liturgy.

Third interview (final preparation) to complete canonical papers; finalize wedding liturgy; ask questions; and make rehearsal arrangements.

Reception of the sacrament of penance "for the celebration to be valid, worthy and fruitful." (1622)

- Celebration of marriage should be public. (1663)
 - Normally part of the Mass for Catholics (1621)
 - Witnessed by a priest/deacon (1630)
 - Always part of liturgical celebration (1631)
- Effects of the Sacrament of Matrimony
 - A perpetual and exclusive bond once consummated can never be dissolved (1638-40)
 - Grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony (1641)
 - Perfects the couples' love
 - Strengthens indissolubility of the bond

Helps the couple to attain holiness
Assists in the education of children

The three “Goods” of marriage

Unity and indissolubility (1644-45)
Fidelity of conjugal love (1646-51)
Openness to children (1652-54)

The Love of husband and wife (Chast., pp. 10-13)

Human sexuality is ordered to conjugal love of a man and a woman. (2360)
The ends of marriage--the unity of spouses and transmission of life—cannot be separated. (2363)
Conjugal chastity is a witness to the world of Christ’s fidelity to the Church. (2365)
“Each and every marriage act” must remain ordered *per se* to the procreation of children. (2366-72)
Natural Family Planning is an effective, moral way for couples to cooperate with God in the creation of new life. (2368-70)

Benefits of NFP

More effective than artificial contraception
Elimination of health risks associated with artificial contraception
Very low rate of divorce

Note: High school students may be taught principles of NFP, but not the method.

Children are a gift from God. Contraception and methods that involve dissociation of spouses, e.g., *in vitro* fertilization, are contrary to Church teaching. (2377)

Mixed Marriages and disparity of cult (1633-37)

VII. Holy Orders: “The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus.” (St. John Vianney)
The sacrament of apostolic ministry: the mission entrusted by Christ to His apostles continues to be exercised until the end of time. (1536)

Ordination

The sacramental act which integrates a man into the order of bishops, priests, or deacons (1538)
Confers a gift of the Holy Spirit that permits the exercise of a sacred power that can come only from Christ Himself through His Church. (1538)

Priesthood of the Old Covenant (1539-43)

Tribe of Levi, within the people of Israel Num. 1:48

Priesthood of Aaron prefigures New Covenant priesthood
Num 11: 24-25

The one priesthood of Christ	(1544-45)
Melchizedek	(1544) Heb. 5:10
Two participants in the one priesthood of Christ:	(1546-47)
The common priesthood: all the baptized	
The ministerial (hierarchical) priesthood:	
Sacrament of Holy Orders	
The priest stands “in the person of Christ the Head (<i>in persona Christi Capitis.</i>)	(1548-51)
Priest’s sins cannot impede the fruit of grace	(1550)
given in the sacraments (<i>ex opere operato</i>)	
Through bishops and priests, the presence of Christ is made visible in the midst of the faithful.	(1545)
The priesthood is ministerial, that is, instituted by Christ for the good of mankind and the communion of the Church.	(1551)
Three degrees of Holy Orders	(1555-71)
Bishop: means “overseer;” chief shepherd of a particular Church (diocese)	
Offices of sanctifying, teaching and ruling	(1558)
Grace of the Holy Spirit	
Sacred character by which the bishop takes the place of Christ himself as teacher, shepherd and priest.	
Priest: means “elder;” assists the bishop in priestly service to the people of God	(1563-64)
Signed with a special character	
Consecrated in order to preach the Gospel, shepherd the faithful and celebrate divine worship.	
Deacon: means “servant;” helps and serves the bishop and priests in the celebration of divine mysteries and in service to the faithful	(1570)
Transitional deacon: program of formation leading to priesthood.	
Permanent deacon: does not aspire to ordination to Priesthood; may be married	
Ways in which deacons, priests and bishops minister to the People of God	
Deacons perform the following:	
Proclaim the Gospel	
Preach (when permitted)	
Distribute Holy Communion	
Celebrate Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament	
Baptize solemnly	
Bless articles of devotion	
Assist at and bless marriages (when permitted)	
Preside over funerals	
Dedicate themselves to various ministries of charity	

Priests perform all of the above and the following
 Act in the person of Christ, make present the
 Sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist
 Hear confession and grant absolution
 Celebrate Anointing of the Sick
 Bishops perform all that deacons and priest do and the
 following:
 Confer the sacrament of Holy Orders
 Receive through episcopal consecration the
 offices of teaching, sanctifying and
 ruling the people in his diocese
 Bishops are the ordinary ministers of
 Confirmation

- The Celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Orders (1572-74)
 Essential rite for all three degrees consists in:
 Laying on of hands by the bishop
 Bishop's consecratory prayer
 Who may confer the sacrament of Holy Orders? (1575-76)
 Bishops
 Who may receive the sacrament of Holy Orders? (1577-80)
 Only a baptized man (1577)
 One called by God Heb 5:4
 With the exception of permanent deacons, ordained
 ministers are chosen from among men of faith who
 live celibate lives (Latin Church)
 Eastern Churches: bishops are chosen from among
 celibate priests; married men may be ordained as priests
 and deacons (they may not marry after they receive Holy
 Orders).
 Effects of Holy Orders (1581-89)
 Configures the recipient to Christ
 Enables him to act as representative of Christ, as head of the
 Church, in the office of priest
 Confers an indelible spiritual character which can never
 be taken away, even after physical death
- VIII. Consecrated Life: “. . . to follow Christ more nearly . . .” (916)
 Evangelical counsels (915-16)
 Chastity in celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom
 Poverty
 Obedience
 Forms of religious life (917-19)
 Life of community
 Life of solitude
 Eremitic Life (hermits) (920-21)

Consecrated virgins and widows	(922-24)
Mystical betrothal to Christ	
Eschatologically, images of the heavenly Bride of Christ and of the life to come	
Religious Life	(925-27)
Originated in the East in early centuries of Church	
Distinguished from other forms of consecrated life by	
Public profession of vows	
Evangelical counsels	
Communal life	
Secular Institutes	(928-29)
Order temporal things to God	
Inform the world with the Gospel	
Committed to evangelical counsels by sacred bonds	
Communion and fellowship with others	
Societies of Apostolic Life	(930)
No religious vows	
Have some apostolic purpose	
Life in common according to a particular manner	
Strive for perfection of charity through observance of a constitution	
Some embrace evangelical counsels	

Resources for Teachers

Study Guide on the Pastoral Letter on Chastity, Office for Parish Life, Diocese of Scranton, 2005.

On Human Life, Humanae vitae, 1968, Encyclical by Pope Paul VI.

On the Family, Familiaris consortio, 1996, Apostolic Exhortation by Pope John Paul II.

The Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People, Christifideles Laici, 1988, Apostolic Exhortation by Pope John Paul II.

On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone, Ordinatio sacerdotalis, 1994, Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II.

*Numbers in parentheses are references to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.