

DIPPING INTO THE CATECHISM

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From the Compendium to the Catechism paragraphs: 488-496

WHAT IS CHASTITY ?

Chastity means the positive integration of sexuality within the person. Sexuality becomes truly human when it is integrated in a correct way into the relationship of one person to another. Chastity is a moral virtue, a gift of God, a grace, and a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE VIRTUE OF CHASTITY ?

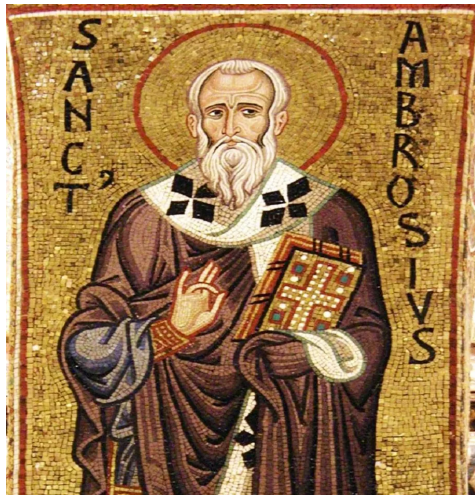
The virtue of chastity involves an apprenticeship in self-mastery as an expression of human freedom directed towards self-giving. An integral and continuing formation, which is brought about in stages, is necessary to achieve this goal.

WHAT ARE THE MEANS THAT AID THE LIVING OF CHASTITY ?

There are many means at one's disposal: the grace of God, the help of the sacraments, prayer, self-knowledge, the practice of an asceticism adapted to various situations, the exercise of the moral virtues, especially the virtue of temperance which seeks to have the passions guided by reason.

IN WHAT WAY IS EVERYONE CALLED TO LIVE CHASTITY ?

As followers of Christ, the model of all chastity, all the baptised are called to live chastely in keeping with their particular states of life. Some profess virginity or consecrated celibacy which enables them to give themselves to God alone with an undivided heart in a remarkable manner. Others,



“There are three forms of the virtue of chastity: the first is that of spouses, the second is that of widows, and the third that of virgins. We do not praise any one of them to the exclusion of the others... This is what makes for the richness of the discipline of the Church.”
St Ambrose.

if they are married live in conjugal chastity, or if unmarried practise chastity in continence.

WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPAL SINS AGAINST CHASTITY ?

Grave sins against chastity differ according to their object: adultery, masturbation, fornication, pornography, prostitution, rape, and homosexual acts. These sins are expressions of the vice of lust. These kinds of acts committed against the physical and moral integrity of minors become even more grave.

ALTHOUGH IT SAYS ONLY “YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY” WHY DOES THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT FORBID ALL SINS AGAINST CHASTITY ?

It is because the Tradition of the Church comprehensively follows the moral teachings of the Old and New Testaments and considers the sixth commandment as encompassing all sins against chastity.

WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CIVIL AUTHORITY IN REGARD TO CHASTITY ?

Insofar as it is bound to promote respect for the dignity of the person, civil authority should seek to create an environment conducive to the practice of chastity. It should also enact suitable legislation to prevent the spread of the grave offences against charity mentioned above, especially in order to protect minors and those who are the weakest members of society.

WHAT ARE THE GOODS OF CONJUGAL LOVE TO WHICH SEXUALITY IS ORDERED ?

The goods of conjugal love, which for those who are baptised is sanctified by the sacrament of Matrimony, are:

- unity,
- fidelity,
- indissolubility, and
- an openness to the procreation of life.



WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE CONJUGAL ACT ?

It has a twofold meaning: unitive (the mutual self-giving of the spouses) and procreative (an openness to the transmission of life). No one may break the inseparable connection which God has established between these two meanings of the conjugal act by excluding one or the other of them.

It is essential that every Catholic has access to good Catechesis to be able to deepen their faith. The Diocese of Plymouth recommends the many Catechetical Workshops from 'Franciscan at Home,' for more information on access to these and online or real group sessions contact deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk