

A Sign of Contradiction

- Luke 2:34

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Humanae Vitae

Calling people of science, medical professionals, families, priests, and religious! Come to an afternoon conference to revisit Pope Paul VI's famous encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*. We will learn about its historical development, its prophetic message, and what it means for us now 50 years later.

WHEN: Saturday, July 7, 2018

Noon—5:00 p.m.

WHERE: St. Peter Parish Hall

285 W. Water Street

Chillicothe, OH 45601

COST: \$20 per person / \$35 per family

CONTACT: Judy Harness, Family-Life Coordinator, 740-774-1407

GUEST SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

- **Sr. Renee Mirkes** - a member of the Fransiscan Sisters of Christian Charity, Manitowoc, WI. She serves as director for NaProEthics [the ethics division of the Pope Paul VI Institute, Omaha, NE]
- **Dr. Ashley K. Fernandes** - President Trustee of Ohio Right to Life, Associate Director of the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities at The Ohio State University College of Medicine, and an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Nationwide Children's Hospital.
- **Dr. Alicia Thompson, DO** - Ob-Gyn Westar Ob/Gyn Westerville, OH; Medical Consultant for Creighton Model FertilityCare and NaPro Technology
- **Fr. Adam Streitenberger, OFS** - Priest of the Diocese of Columbus



Pre-Registration by phone: St. Peter Church 740-774-1407

or email: secretary@stpeterchillicothe.com

Lunch provided by BFI Catering

Love is Faithful

Married love is also faithful and exclusive of all other, and this until death. This is how husband and wife understood it on the day on which, fully aware of what they were doing, they freely vowed themselves to one another in marriage. Though this fidelity of husband and wife sometimes presents difficulties, no one has the right to assert that it is impossible; it is, on the contrary, always honorable and meritorious. The example of countless married couples proves not only that fidelity is in accord with the nature of marriage, but also that it is the source of profound and enduring happiness.

(Humanae vitae no. 9)

Reflection

Salvation history tells the story of a faithful God and his oftentimes unfaithful people. The Israelites made idols in the desert. Out of fear, the disciples abandoned Jesus when he was arrested and Peter even denied knowing him. Each time, however, through all of history, God did not abandon his people. Instead he forgave, and called his people back to a faithful, exclusive love.

This divine love stands as a model for married couples—to forsake all others and remain faithful unto death. The call to fidelity is represented in the wedding rings, which are blessed and exchanged as a sign of a couple’s love and fidelity for each other through all of life’s difficulties and trials.

Love is Fruitful

“[Married] love is fecund (fruitful). It is not confined wholly to the loving interchange of husband and wife; it also contrives to go beyond this to bring new life into being. ‘Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the procreation and supreme gift of marriage and contribute in the highest degree to their parents’ welfare.’”

(Humanae vitae no. 9)

Reflection

When God created Adam and Eve, he blessed them and told them “be fruitful and multiply,” a command which follows almost immediately after their creation in Scripture and which precedes any other directive (Genesis 1:28). This command not only highlights the importance of procreation, but also that fruitful love is a way man and woman were made in God’s image and likeness. For just as God in his goodness is supremely generous, creating the entire world to share in his goodness, so should husband and wife be generous, by remaining open to life, oriented toward children that spring from the love they share.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes marriage as “directed towards the salvation of others” (CCC 1534). This emphasis on others reminds us in another way that fruitful love goes forth, brings new life into being and seeks the good of the other. Marriage calls the spouses out of themselves and into communion with each other and with their family.

To Love Is to Will the Good of Others

[Married love] is above all fully human, a compound of sense and spirit. It is not, then, merely a question of natural instinct or emotional drive. It is also, and above all, an act of the free will, whose trust is such that it is meant not only to survive the joys and sorrows of daily life, but also to grow, so that husband and wife become in a way one heart and one soul, and together attain their human fulfillment.

(Humanae vitae no. 9)

Reflection

In our modern times there is great confusion about what it means to love another. Romantic love is portrayed as based primarily, if not entirely, on emotional highs and a feeling of intense attraction for the other. For many, then, when these feelings or attractions change, as they often do, the relationship ends.

Our Catholic tradition offers a different understanding of love: that to love is to “will the good of another.” For Blessed Pope Paul VI to say that married love is “above all, an act of the free will,” means that love is not only emotion or feelings of affection towards one’s spouse, rather it is choosing to “will the good” of one’s spouse in all times and circumstances. Love, in the view of the Catholic Church, looks beyond changing emotions and attractions to will – to choose – the good of the other.

What does it mean for spouses to choose the good for one another in everyday married life? How can you choose the good for others in your life, even when emotions or feelings fluctuate?