

**SAME SEX "MARRIAGE"
THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS
October 21, 2015**

IMPORTANT READING

From Isaiah 55

"All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat; come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk." (1)

"Why spend your money for what is not bread; your wages for what fails to satisfy? Heed me, and you shall eat well, you shall delight in rich fare. Come to me heedfully, listen, that you may have life." (2-3)

"Seek the Lord while he may be found, call him while he is near. Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; let him turn to the Lord for mercy; to our God, who is generous and forgiving." (6-7)

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. As high as the heavens are above the earth so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts." (8-9)

**From Love is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive
(The Catechesis for the 2015 World Meeting of Families)**

39-40. “Material creation has spiritual meaning, which has implications for the way we live as male and female. Our sexuality has purpose. Our bodies are not simply shells for the soul or sensory machines for the brain. Nor are they raw material we can freely abuse or reprogram. For Christians, body and spirit are profoundly integrated. Each human being is a unity of body and soul.... The body has innate dignity as part of God’s creation. It is an intimate part of our identity and our eternal destiny. The two sexes literally enflesh God’s design for human interdependence, community, and openness to new life. We cannot debase or abuse the body without inflicting a cost on the spirit.”

42-43. “Our origin as two different and complimentary sexes, and our call to love, to communion, and to life, are one and the same moment.... This call to love, to communion, and life involves the entire being of man and woman, body and soul. The human person is simultaneously a physical and spiritual being. The body, in a sense, reveals the person. As a result, human sexuality is never merely functional. Sexual difference, visible in the body, contributes directly to the body’s spousal character and the person’s capacity to love. At the center of this call to love is God’s summons to be fruitful and multiply. A couple’s spousal union through the body is therefore, by its very nature, also a call to live as father and mother.

68. Marriage includes love, loyalty, and commitment. But so do many other worthy relationships. Marriage is something distinct. Marriage is the covenant built on the procreative power of male and female. Our biology poses certain limits and possibilities, and marriage is one answer for living this situation in holiness.

134. Premising marriage as mainly erotic or emotional satisfaction, which is a step made easier by the separation of sex and procreation, also enables arguments for same-sex unions. In some countries today there are movements to redefine marriage as if it could include any strong affective or sexual relationship between any consenting adults. Where divorce and contraception are established habits and this revised vision of marriage has taken root, redefining marriage to include same-sex marriage can seem a plausible next step.

135. With respect to the idea of same-sex marriage, as is well known, the Church declines to bless or sanction it. This does not imply any denigration or failure to appreciate the intensity of same-sex friendships and love. As should be clear at this point in this catechesis, the Catholic Church holds that everyone is called to give and receive love. Committed, sacrificial, chaste, same-sex friendships should be esteemed. Because Catholics are committed to love, hospitality, interdependence, and “bearing one another’s burdens,” the Church at all levels will want to nurture and support opportunities for chaste friendship, always seeking solidarity with those who, for whatever reason, are unable to marry.

136. True friendship is an ancient and honorable vocation.... True friends produce a “fruit” and a “sweetness” as they help each other respond to God, encouraging one another in living the Gospel. “Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion.”

137. But, as should also be clear by now, when Catholics speak of marriage, we are referring to something distinct from other relationships of particularly intense love, even if that love is deep and endures sacrificially and over long periods of time. Intense long term affective intimacy is not sufficient for a marriage. Marriage, as indeed was universally recognized until very recently in the West, is premised on the duties arising from the possibilities and challenges posed by the procreative potential of a man and a woman.

138. The Church invites all men and women to see in their sexuality the possibility of a vocation. To reach maturity as a man or a woman means engaging certain questions to one’s self: how is God calling me to integrate my sex into his plan for my life? Created in the image of God, our destiny is always communion, sacrifice, service, and love. The question for each and every one of us is how we will donate the sexual aspects of our lives in marriage or in celibate community. In neither case is our erotic desire or romantic preference sovereign or autonomous; in both cases, we will inevitably be called upon to make sacrifices which we would not choose if we were writing our own scripts.