

Bibliography on marriage and the family

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This bibliography is aimed at married persons and those preparing for marriage. It contains books taking a Christian stance regarding men and women and which could be helpful for developing married and family life. Many are by parents who have gathered together and put down their experiences. The accompanying review notes give an idea of their contents and can be helpful in choosing the right book.

BENNETT, Art and Loraine: *The Temperament God Gave You*. Sophia Institute Press, 2005, 288 pp.

A simple and refreshing approach to the classic four temperaments and their importance for personal growth, especially their role in the spiritual life and family relations. The authors include many practical examples from real-life experience. They gradually describe the different types of temperament and their manifestations, to ultimately allow the reader to identify his or her own temperament or combination of temperaments. Includes an identification test at the end which is helpful, though sometimes unclear.

BENNETT, Art and Laraine: *The temperament God gave your spouse*. Sophia Institute Press, 2005, 208 pp.

A practical presentation, fun to read book, on knowing and accepting the temperament of your spouse which facilitates communication and understanding. Includes real- life anecdotes which can help motivate the spouses to respect each other, live a selfless patience and get closer to God in a Christian marriage.

BONACCI, Mary Beth: *Real Love*. Ignatius Press, 1996, 274 pp.

The author shares answers she has given to questions addressed to her on dating, marriage and human sexuality from a Catholic perspective. Her own experience growing up as a teenager and what led her to understand the value of chastity and true love led her to get involved in teaching young persons about living chastity as a virtue and the difference between living chastity and mere abstinence. Makes reference to Church teachings on these issues.

BURKE, Cormac: *Covenanted happiness*. Scepter, 1999, 272 pp.

Marriage can be a great source of happiness if the couple follows the guidelines offered by the Church. Complementarity of man and woman in their sexuality and interpersonal relationships. Importance of sexual identity in educating young people. Creating a family spirit within a permissive society.

BURKE, Cormac: *Man and Values: a Personalist Anthropology*: Scepter Publishers, 2007, 200pp.

The book is a very stimulating analysis of the human condition from an anthropological/personalist perspective. The author manages to pack an immense amount of information and examine the main elements of human existence which, if properly put together, can give shape to a fulfilled life. The book is meant for those of the new millennium who, immersed in the problems posed to personal life, are not fully satisfied with the answers being given, or are finding no answers. The author presents an anthropological vision of man in which he provides us with many deep insights into key areas of human life. His analysis of how one achieves personal fulfilment, how to respond to values, and how to appreciate people, is insightful and convincing. Part II studies sexuality, marriage, and family in man, who is essentially a social being. This part is exceptionally good and will be of particular interest to married couples.

CHAPMAN, Gary: *The marriage you have always wanted*. Northfield Publishing, 2005, 152 pp.

Guidelines that help a marriage and family be happy. Attitudes of service, loving and leading the way for children, educating the children by teaching and training, couple's love for each other is at the core of what family is about.

CHAPMAN, Gary: *Love is a verb*. Bethany House Publishers, 2009, 202 pp.

Collection of hypothetical success stories showing what happens when love comes alive. Couples who work at keeping their marriage together in spite of difficulties. Practical everyday situations that show it can be a positive experience.

CHAPMAN, Gary: *The Family You've Always Wanted: Five Ways You Can Make It Happen*. Chicago: Northfield Pub., 2008.

This book is a practical guide for parents who seek to be better parents. The author, with over 35 years of experience on family issues, proposes in 5 sections through a very familiar writing style, the importance of knowing one's self to improve family atmosphere, the way in which husband and wife can come to know each other better, and the way to educate their children by loving them, guiding them, and demanding of them. Parents, especially those who are just beginning their married life, are likely to find the author's advice very helpful.

CHAPMAN, Gary: *The Five Love Languages*. Northfield Pub., Chicago 1992, 201 pp.

While love is a many splendor thing, it is sometimes a very confusing thing, too. And as people come in all varieties, shapes, and sizes, so do their choices of personal expressions of love. But more often than not, the giver and the receiver express love in two different ways. This can lead to

misunderstanding, quarrels, and even divorce. Dr. Gary Chapman identifies five basic languages of love and then guides couples towards a better understanding of their unique languages of love.

CHESTERTON, Gilbert K.: *Brave new family*. Ignatius Press, 1990, 275 pp.

Collection of articles from Chesterton's works on topics related to men, women, children, divorce, marriage and the family.

GARASCIA, Anthony, *Before I do. Preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage*. Ave Maria Press, 1999, 128 pp.

This book helps engaged couples to examine the thorny issues of marriage through the lens of recent behavioural science and catholic sacramental theology. Each of its six sessions focus on a particular skill set for building strong marriage relationships.

GARCIA DE HARO, Ramon: *Marriage And The Family In The Documents Of The Magisterium: A Course In The Theology Of Marriage*; translated by William E. May. 2nd ed., rev. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993.

This book serves as an excellent point of reference on marriage and family issues. Intended as a teacher's guide for courses on Theology of Marriage, it is also a good resource for those who give guidance to married people and young people, with a certain level of formation, considering the prospect of marriage. The book presents the Christian understanding of this sacrament (as well as the role of the teaching of the Magisterium). Furthermore, the author provides a brief historical overview of the Magisterium's teaching on these issues, and in particular, gives an analysis on recent documents: the Encyclical *Casti Connubii* of Pope Pius XI, *Gaudium et Spes* from the Second Vatican Council and the vast magisterium of John Paul II.

GOTTSCHALK, Mary (Ed.): *The Family Revolution: Rebuilding Traditional Family Life In The Third Millennium*. Papers presented at the First Pan-American Congress on the Family and Education held in Monterrey, Mexico in 1994. Princeton: Scepter Publishers, 1997.

The book gathers a collection of short papers given at the above conference covering a wide range of topics: from theological to educational aspects of marriage and family. It is particularly useful for the reader with a certain level of familiarization on marriage issues. It contains a number of practical articles on aspects of education relevant to present day situations: Isaacs' 'Sailing against the Tide', Cosentino de Curat's 'Joy and Pain in the Family' or Aishemberg and Gorlero's 'Free Time in the Family'. Other articles, however, contain negative language which may be problematic in today's cultural atmosphere (for example 'Family Togetherness is Social Peace'). Others include very outdated information (like 'Population Growth and Quality of Life' or 'Education: the Missing Link in Development'; also 'The Family and the Media', which makes no mention of internet issues).

GRAY, John: *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus: A Practical Guide For Improving Communication And Getting What You Want In Your Relationships*. Harper Collins, New York 1992, 286 pp.

The book provides practical tools and insights to effectively manage stress and improve relationships at all stages and ages with original solutions that help to understand the different communication styles between men and women.

HAHN, Kimberly: *Life-Giving love: Embracing God's Beautiful Design for Marriage*, Servant Publications, 2001, 375 pp.

The book is very easy to read and very uplifting. Good for anyone planning to get married, married couples, and anyone involved in helping people with marriage difficulties or with difficulties in having children. The human and spiritual aspects of marriage are placed within the overall context of God's plan for the married couple. It provides a very positive outlook, even for difficult situations such as infertility. The teachings of the Catholic Church are strongly adhered to and explained in a very down to earth and straight-forward way. The book covers a wide range of topics, gently explaining the true meaning of marital love, the importance of the right use of the marital act, and how to help people experiencing difficulties of many types. Natural Family Planning is explained in its true perspective. Each chapter includes personal testimonies, both from the author herself and from others. Although each is taken from the experience of Americans, the concepts can readily be applied to anyone open to doing God's will. They encourage married couples to rediscover the path of prayer, sacrifice, and the self-discipline that God intends for them. The author also deals at length with the issues of abortion and contraception. She gives the Catholic viewpoint and stresses the healing power of prayer and a good Confession. Many of the chapters give practical examples of how to help people experiencing certain difficulties – what to say or what not to say, what will help ease the emotional pain they are going through, what sort of practical support can be offered etc.

HOGAN, Richard & Le VOIR, John: *Covenant of Love. Pope John Paul I on sexuality and marriage and the family in the modern world*. Ignatius Press, 1992, 329 pp.

The authors analyze the teachings of John Paul II on sexuality, marriage and the family. It sets out the philosophical and theological design for every Christian who seeks a closer relationship with God through the person of Christ, the Church and the human heart. Stresses the importance of the family in God's plans.

JOHN PAUL II, Pope: *Fruitful And Responsible Love*. With contributions by Giorgio Campanini et al. New York, Seabury Press, 1979, 74 pp.

Delivered as the opening address at the International Congress on Fruitful and Responsible Love: Ten Years after Humanae Vitae, June 1978, Milan.

KASS, Leon and Amy: *Wing to wing, oar to oar: readings on courting and marriage*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2000, 584 pp.

The book is an anthology of source readings offered by the authors with comments as a response to the contemporary silence surrounding love that leads to marriage. Courting had as its purpose preparing a couple for marriage and some of its lessons need to be revisited. Current cultural practices have impoverished the man/woman relationship leading to misinterpretations of true love. The book offers advice emerging from practice more than theory. Some leading questions answered are: Why marry? Is this love? How can I find and win the right one to marry? Why a wedding and promises of marriage? The authors use readings from Homer, Plato, Aquinas, Erasmus, Tolstoy, C.S. Lewis, etc., to share unexamined opinions.

LAWLER, Ronald, BOYLE, Joseph M. and MAY, William E.: *Catholic Sexual Ethics: A Summary, Explanation And Defense*. 2nd ed., Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 1998.

This book is very up-to-date, having been revised in the face of the recent drive for same-sex unions and attempts to redefine "marriage" and "family". It is very clear, positive and well-written, with extensive end notes containing many suggestions for those who want to delve deeper into the subject. It looks at what the Magisterium, Bible and Tradition teach about human sexuality. It considers the general moral issues which must be faced by those trying to reach responsible and true judgements about how they should act. It analyzes the virtue of chastity and how it ought to be lived in the various walks of life within the Church and explains the "obligations" on Chastity virtue, for married and unmarried persons. The authors provide a deep explanation about the huge difference between Contraception and Natural Family Planning. The book ends with a superb Pastoral Conclusion on how to proclaim the saving teaching of sexual morality to a flawed world where people are weak and find it hard to accept Catholic doctrine on morality in present cultural conditions. The importance of teaching Catholic Sexual morality faithfully, intelligently and attractively is stressed.

LEWIS, C.S.: *The Four Loves*. Barnes & Noble, November 1991, 156 pp.

A candid, wise, and warmly personal book in which Lewis explores the possibilities and problems of the four basic kinds of human love- affection, friendship, erotic love, and the love of God. "Immensely worthwhile for its simplicity...a rare and memorable book" (Sydney J. Harris).

LOVASIK, Lawrence: *The Catholic family handbook*. Sophia Institute Press, revised ed. 2000, 240 pp.

Practical and common sense lessons that parents can learn from the Holy Family. Qualities good parents should have, common mistakes that happen and how to "fix" them. Happiness in a marriage has to be "earned" and there are key ingredients that stabilize and foster good relationships between the spouses and their children. Virtues that go into making a marriage "successful".

MAY, William: *Marriage the rock on which the family is built*. Ignatius Press, second ed. 2009, 198 pp.

Offers an overview of John Paul II “theology of the body” and Benedict XVI teachings on marriage and the family. Speaks of marriage as a person-affirming, love-enabling, life-giving and saving reality. It updates the theological and socio-economic studies from previous edition.

MAY, William E., HARVEY, John F.: *On Understanding Human Sexuality*. Franciscan Herald Press, Illinois, 1977, 79pp.

The authors produced this write up "On Understanding Human Sexuality" as a critical response to another publication: "Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought", published under the auspices of the Catholic Theological Society of America. Full benefit of this material requires prior working knowledge of philosophy such as metaphysics and anthropology. The ordinary reader may find the jargon abstruse and some statements are long and complex. An integral understanding of the inherent purpose of sexuality is presented side-by-side with what it is not.

The initial three chapters include a thorough commentary on the meaning and purpose of human sexuality, followed by an assessment of its morality. The 4th and 5th present different sources for understanding the subject, namely, Scripture, Christian Tradition and the empirical sciences. In the last chapter they bring relevant pastoral guidelines in dealing with marital and non-marital sexual ethics followed by a long section on a range of issues such as homosexuality, sex therapy, sex education, etc.

MAY, William: *The Nature and Meaning of Chastity*. Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago 1976, 46 pp.

This little booklet, written in 1976, is a very useful synopsis of the positive place for chastity in the life of every human person. Thus, it is a very good precursor to Blessed Pope John Paul II's catechetics on the meaning of the virtue of chastity, as it systematically explains the deep-rootedness of sexuality and its connection to the self giving of human beings who are "creatures begotten not made" (p. 20).

William May explains the fact that chastity is a loving integration of sexuality and affectivity into our lives enabling us to love and be loved. There are excellent quotes and references throughout which clarify this main idea.

MAY, William E.: *Sex, Marriage and Chastity*: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981, 170pp.

This book is an orthodox statement of Catholic teaching on topics such as human sexuality, marriage and Christian marriage, marital love, marital chastity and chastity of unmarried. The notes at the end of each chapter give good information, and criticism where necessary, about the writers, both orthodox and unorthodox, who have written about these topics. Chapter 3 on marital or conjugal love is a particularly good explanation on how love is exclusive, not inclusive. It also shows why pleasure should not be sought for its own sake. The chapter on marital chastity deals with contraception in some detail, showing why it is immoral.

PARSONS, Rob, *The 60 Minute Marriage*. Broadman & Holman Pub, Nashville 2001, 102 pp.

The author proposes ten goals, with practical suggestions on how to rehabilitate a marriage where partners feel that love has died. The book caters to the needs of the modern couple by providing a thorough guide which can be read in an hour.

RIGBY, Jill: *Raising Respectful Children in a Disrespectful World*. Howard Books, New York 2006, 193 pp.

The author presents to specialists and specially to parents her thoughts about the education based on respect and responsibility. She explains her experience, founded on the philosophy of life which is truly authentic, the search for a morality and truth, that transcend, and a solid affection for the others. The aim of the book is to give the necessary tools for bringing about change: in a disrespectful world, children must be educated in order to obtain their objectives in life and become people who contribute to their environment. She underlines the importance of manners and language, the promotion of the right human attitudes, which are at the basis of an authentic humanism. She shows how the cardinal virtues open the way to the most pleasant mode of human interaction. With a lot of courage and personal conviction, she dismounts some clichés regarding child education and replaces them with the wisdom of her experience.

ROBINSON, Josephine: *Marriage and Gift, a Catholic Perspective*, St. Pauls UK, 2004

A very readable and practical book about marriage which can be recommended to those who are married, those who are preparing for marriage and those who advise married people. It follows the teachings of the Catholic Church. Perhaps more to the liking and usefulness of women than men.

SHEEN, J. Fulton: *Three to get married*, (1st ed. 1951) Scepter, 2006. 216 pp.

Marriage love is triune and is meant to include Christ. Solutions to various marriage difficulties: paternity, maternity, children, fidelity are found in seeking help from Christ.

SHERMAN, Kathy Fitzgerald: *A Housekeeper Is Cheaper Than A Divorce: Why You Can Afford To Hire Help And How To Get It*. Mountain View, Calif.: Life Tools Press, 2000. On prevention of marital conflict.

The book was written to encourage women to employ household help so that they can be better mothers and wives, and also have additional time to devote to a career, as well as personal activities and development. Household help reduces feelings of anger, stress, resentment and arguments in a marriage and allows for quality time with husband and children. The book targets an American audience as regards the legal aspects of employment, salaries, and way of life. There are however a number of chapters that can be applied to any household in terms of planning and organization. Part

I clearly lays out the financial arguments for and against employing household help. Part II gives ideas on how to organize one's home in order to facilitate the work of the future employee. Her description of the 'Group Rules for Effective Household Systems' presents a very organized and efficient method of breaking down the various aspects of a normal household (larder, fridge, laundry, all kinds of storage space, menu planning, etc.). The author also provides practical advice on how to find the right person and how to interview the applicants. There is a very useful appendix with instructions for the people who gets the job, guiding them on how to best organize the house. In this way the author emphasizes the professional nature of the job and suggests a model for home organization. The author stresses that 'Household help is not a luxury; it is a service that enhances the quality of family life'. The employer and the employee are of mutual help to one another.

SMITH, Janet: *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later*. Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C. 1991, 426 pp.

The author draws from theology, philosophy, and classical studies to examine the arguments for and against Catholic Church teaching on contraception. She includes a heavily annotated translation of *Humanae Vitae* from the original Latin that is especially valuable. This is not light reading, but extremely worthwhile.

SMITH, Janet: *Why Humanae Vitae Was Right: A Reader*. Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1993, 591 pp.

Rather than end the debate over artificial means of contraception once and for all, the encyclical letter *Humane Vitae* only energized the debate when it appeared in 1968, and that debate continues to this day. Janet E. Smith presents a comprehensive review of this issue from a philosophical and theological perspective. Tracing the emergence of the debate from the mid-1960s and reviewing the documents from the Special Papal Commission established to advise Pope Paul VI, Smith also examines the Catholic Church's position on marriage, which provides context for its condemnation of contraception.

STENSON, James: *Lifeline*. Scepter, 2005, 251 pp.

The author offers simple practical suggestions from his personal experience as an educator. He encourages parents to exercise leadership within the family so they can bring up their children to be good Christians. Character education and Christian education.

STENSON, James: *Father, the family protector*. Scepter, 2006, 256 pp.

Practical guidelines for fathers so they take care of their responsibilities within the family set up. The father's role in building the character of his children. Good working habits and relationships with God's help.

STENSON, James: *Anchor: God's promises of hope to parents*. Scepter, 2003, 86 pp.

A Christian parent's mission is a vocation –part of God's plan– a call to service. God keeps his promise to strengthen parents in their efforts.

VON HILDEBRAND, Alice: *By Grief Refined*. Franciscan University Press, 1994, 123 pp.

This book, written as letters to a widow, could be read by anyone suffering grief at the death of a loved one, parent, child or sibling. Von Hildebrand leads the reader through the stages of suffering that a widow experiences at the loss of her husband, to her discovery of fulfilment in loving service to others. It is a spiritual book, asking the reader to believe in God's love for each of us, to believe in life after death for our loved one, who can continue to love and care for us. There is a sensitive letter dealing with childlessness in marriage, with a call to supernatural parenthood.

VON HILDEBRAND, Alice: *By Love Refined*. Sophia Institute Press, 1989, 216 pp.

The book is written in the form of letters with practical advice to a young bride. Each chapter shows a simple every day situation that can be dealt with positively in the process of growing in love for your spouse. These are some of the unglamorous daily happenings that help spouses grow in love and wisdom rather than become obstacles to their relationship. Marriage helps a couple learn to love on a daily basis through each day's idiosyncrasies.

VON HILDEBRAND, Dietrich: *Marriage the mystery of faithful love*. Sophia Institute Press, 1997, 2nd ed. 70 pp.

Originally written in German in the 1950s, this early work of the author sets the road for his future writings on marriage and the family from a doctrinally sound perspective. The purpose and meaning of marriage are love and procreation. Human love longs for infinity and so it makes sense that marriage be a lasting commitment. Freely choosing marriage as a commitment strengthens the relationship. The option of living together does not make a relationship happy nor lasting. The valuable reasons for marriage considering the qualities of human love and how the sacrament reinforces them. Particular components of married love. Difficulties and sufferings can strengthen the relationship.

VON HILDEBRAND, Dietrich: *Man, woman and meaning of love, (God's plan for love, marriage, intimacy and the family)*. Sophia Institute Press, 2002, 144 pp.

The author writes moved by his concern about fundamental teachings on married love that are in danger of being forgotten today; truths about love, friendship and intimacy facing a hedonistic culture. He also speaks of Marriage as a sacrament and how it helps understand and live true human love.

VON HILDEBRAND, Dietrich: *The Nature of Love*: St. Augustine's Press, 2009, 395pp.

In this extraordinarily powerful book which the author wrote towards the end of his life -although it can be considered the epitome of his life's deep ponderings on the nature of love and its personalist dimension- we have a *tour-de-force* for research and study for exegesis in the 21st century. Intended for readers familiar on anthropology, it is better suited to academic consideration, given that the language is often very specialised and challenging. It's a precious book to study in sections, for the insights it brings into the nature of love understood in philosophical terms.

Recurring ideas throughout this book hinge on the value of love being uniquely attributed to its being of the heart, having a dimension of self-donation which leads towards another person. It is interesting to note that Von Hildebrand's deep insights on love, most especially its spousal aspects, contributed in no small way to the Church's teaching that the unitive and procreative aspects of the sexual act cannot be willfully separated if its integrity is to be kept intact. A delightful affirmation throughout this book is that happiness is neither the motive nor the goal of love, nor even the primary theme of love: it is a superabundant gift flowing from the gift of love. This key phrase of the author pinpoints how this study on *The Nature of Love* can make a valuable contribution to the philosophical understanding of love at the highest levels of human thought. The author provides valuable linkages with the writings of Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas. Thus, it is to be hoped that this can inform and be a corrective for the many disorders around interpretations of what constitutes happiness for the human person and, by extension for human society, in contemporary culture.

WOJTYLA, Karol: *The Jeweler's Shop*. Ignatius Press, 1992, 91 pp.

A three act play exploring the relationships between men and women. Each act focuses on a different couple and exemplifies the love and pain that are involved in marriage relations. It addresses fundamental concerns couples have regarding what is love, can it last and can it be brought back to life.

WOJTYLA, Karol: *Love And Responsibility*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, New York 1981, 319 pp.

This book contains the thoughts of John Paul II after his experience with the youth, who often asked him questions about love and marriage: What is love? What is the relationship between affectivity and sex? Is chastity a positive virtue or is it repressive? What is modesty? Does the premarital sex make sense? The book is at the same time original and profoundly philosophical. It studies sexual ethics based on the dignity of the human person and the fundamental principle which affirms love as the only right attitude towards the one and only value of the personal subject. The author gives deep ethical base to the most difficult topics of sexual morality. A good philosophical preparation is required to understand this book.