

Dear Parishioners,

The *Code of Canon Law* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teach that: “the matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring.” In other words, God specifically designed marriage for two goods: 1) the procreation and education of children, and 2) the spouses’ mutual growth in love and holiness. Let us now consider the marital fruit of children.

When a couple approaches the altar at their wedding, before they make their vows, they are asked if they will accept children lovingly from God and raise them according to the law of Christ and His Church. They are asked this question because *marriage, by its very nature, is procreative*. It is the only proper forum for bringing children into the world. Children, in turn, are an incarnation of the love between a man and his wife! While having children is not a requirement for having a valid marriage, married couples must be open to the possibility of children. Thus, they must be willing and able to enter into that act by which children are conceived; they must be willing and able to enter into procreative acts. That’s why true marriage can only exist between a man and a woman. Marriage relies on the differences between men and women to bring about the fruits of procreation. In fact, a marriage is consummated only when the married couple has entered into the conjugal act. This life-giving act is so important because it is the full physical expression of the covenantal bond that exists between the married couple, and this act symbolizes the God’s love for all of us!

Some may wonder what the difference is between the sexual acts of a same-sex couple and a man and woman who are infertile or beyond childbearing age. Are not the sexual acts of each couple sterile? While the actions of both the homosexual couple and the infertile couple are sterile, there is a difference in their sterility. The homosexual acts are sterile *by their very nature* and can never be procreative under any circumstance. But the conjugal relations of the infertile couple are sterile only by accident, and under normal conditions can be procreative. This is a big difference! The homosexual union, *by its very nature*, is incapable of procreation. Moreover, homosexual unions are not only sterile by their very nature, but they also misuse the reproductive organs, and in this sense are anti-procreative. If a couple is infertile or beyond child-bearing age, their conjugal actions still remain procreative in their essence, even if children are never produced by their union.

Many in our society today are equating homosexual acts with the marital act, and this is a false comparison. Not all sexual acts are the same. The marital act is life-giving, while homosexual actions are anti-procreative by their nature and are a misuse of one’s reproductive organs. Because marriage (and the marital act) is by its nature, meant to be fruitful and ordered to the procreation of children, homosexual unions can never be considered true marriages. In insisting upon this, the Church is not being hateful, bigoted, or unjustly discriminatory. She is simply recognizing marriage for what it truly is.

Sincerely in Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Reid