



Dare to!

Ten good reasons for marriage

A cause for thought given by the Catholic Church



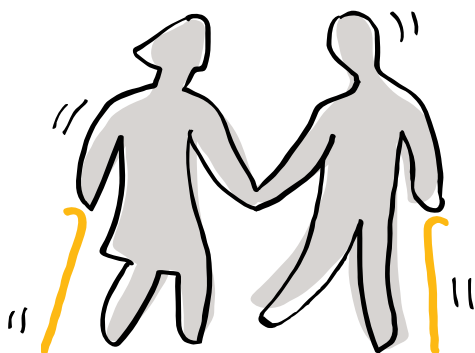
DEUTSCHE
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1.

Every human being longs for love.

Every human being longs for being loved and for giving love because human beings are created for one another. Love does not need a justification and it is more than crackling eroticism or dutiful burden. Love is the comprehensive and unconditional yes to another human being – for his or her own sake, without ulterior motives and without reservation.



2.

*True love
wants permanence.*

Love is not limited to the magic of the moment. It does not set a time limit and does not have an expiration date. Who loves says: “You can always rely on me!” This reliability drives away the fear of no longer being able to satisfy the needs of the other, of not being attractive any more or of fighting a losing battle.



3.

Love looks for mutual promise.

As love wants permanence it looks for mutual promise. The lovers want to hear that their yes to one another will also be valid in the future – in good and in bad times, in health and sickness – until death. This mutual promise is valid in the highest state of ecstasy, in the banalities of everyday life and in the abysses of pain and suffering. During the marriage ceremony the bride and groom commit themselves to each other and they give each other in a loud and clear voice an irrevocable promise of faithfulness before God and the people: “I will always stay with you!”



4.

*Marriage is a promise
given with body and soul.*

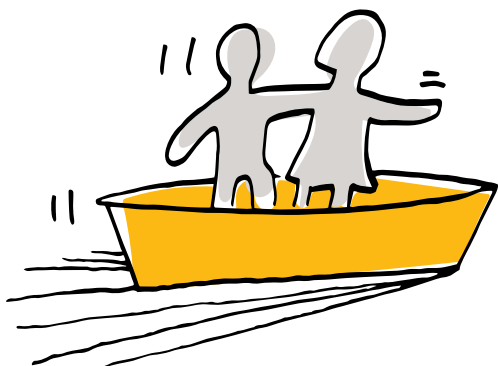
The marriage vows include Eros and sexuality. Love between man and woman looks for erotic desire as well as for loving care and affection. This field of tension between desire and surrender, friendship and concord opens a special space for the procreation of new life.



5.

*Marriage needs protection
and deserves recognition.*

Marriage offers the married couple an intimate and protective frame which is rightly respected by society, by the state and the Church. The advancement of society starts with the family and so it needs recognition, support and special protection by society.



6.

*Marriage is a risk
which requires courage
and commitment.*

Marriage is a life project containing challenges and risks and it is in need of total commitment. We are not dealing with a permanent feeling of being in love, with the constant feeling of having “butterflies in the stomach”. In any situation and at all times the spouses again and again embark on the adventure to discover each other thus remaining faithful to one another.



7.

Love communicates itself.

Love wants to give itself as a gift and so marriage develops in the love for the children and the family members. As a covenant of faithfulness marriage gives reliability and security: In this space children can gain confidence in life and receive the necessary emotional, intellectual and religious competences for an independent life. If a married couple has been denied children, this often causes great pain and requires empathy.



8.

In the Catholic Church marriage is a sacrament.

In the love of the spouses the love of God is present and tangible. They have received Christ's promise: "I will go with you. My love will accompany you. You can witness my love and pass it on to others." For the Catholic Church the love between man and woman in marriage is a holy sign. In this love Christ's love to his church is effective and requires the faithfulness of the people.

This expects something of the couple but at the same time makes life easier for them. Married couples can do much for love. They can make an effort to keep the fire of their love alive, but they do not have to and are not able to make each other happy infinitely. They are and remain carried by God's grace.



9.

Christian marriage is the experience of Church.

If Catholics call marriage a sacrament, they give expression to the fact that the spouses do not keep their love just to themselves. Their love has a special radiance which can be experienced in the common education of the children, in transmitting the faith and in activities as regards the family, neighbours, society and the Church. So Christian marriage is a visible sign of the love of God and its effective power: The experience of Church. This is why the Church calls marriage and family a church in a smaller setting or a “domestic church”.



10.

*God is also with those
who make mistakes.*

Marriage is a sign for God's faithfulness. At the same time, however, marriage is and remains a worldly and human affair and the spouses remain imperfect and fallible. What is needed is willingness to self-criticism, conversion and forgiveness. The spouses have to give one another space to change and to develop themselves – together and not against each other. Otherwise they will find out one day that they have drifted apart.

The spouses can trust in God in all ups and downs of life. He helps if they look for conversion, forgiveness or a new beginning. His love remains – even if the spouses do not keep their promise of marriage. Even if they fail His love will not get lost. God remains faithful.

Every marriage has its special beauty and fascination, but it also knows vulnerability and misery. For some people it is a present, a promise and a source of personal strength and stability. For others who made disappointing experiences with marriage it is obsolete or a romantic fantasy.

The “ten good reasons for marriage” want to give an impression of the significance of this bond of marriage. In short theses the Catholic understanding of marriage as a sacrament is explained. People who have never thought about marriage in this way shall become curious and those who are married already shall be strengthened. *The “ten good reasons” are an invitation to dare to get married.*

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