

One Flesh In Christ:
Eucharistic Insights on Pope John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*
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Matthew 19:3-8

Some Pharisees approached him, and tested him, saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?" He said in reply, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate." They said to him, "Then why did Moses command that the man give the woman a bill of divorce and dismiss [her]?" He said to them, "Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

Genesis 1:27

God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), paragraph 221

But St. John goes even further when he affirms that "God is love": God's very being is love. By sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret: God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange.

Genesis 2:7, 18-25

...then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him. So the LORD God formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each living creature was then its name. The man gave names to all the tame animals, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be a helper suited to the man. So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of man this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. The man and his wife were both naked, yet they felt no shame.

CCC, paragraph 254

The divine persons are really distinct from one another. "God is one but not solitary." "Father", "Son", "Holy Spirit" are not simply names designating modalities of the divine being, for they are really distinct from one another: "He is not the Father who is the Son, nor is the Son he who is the Father, nor is the Holy Spirit he who is the Father or the Son." They are distinct from one another in their relations of origin: "It is the Father who generates, the Son who is begotten, and the Holy Spirit who proceeds." The divine Unity is Triune.

St. Augustine

- *You have formed us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in you.*
- *The deepest desire of the human heart is to see another and be seen by that other.*

Gaudium et spes, 24

Indeed, the Lord Jesus, when He prayed to the Father, "that all may be one. . . as we are one" (John 17:21-22) opened up vistas closed to human reason, for He implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons, and the unity of God's sons in truth and charity. This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself.

The Body as the Exterior Sign of the Interior Reality to Give Ourselves in Love

"The spiritual call to be a gift—to love as God loves—is stamped in the beauty and mystery of the body in its complementarity." (Christopher West)

Matthew 5:27-28

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Matthew 22:30

At the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven.

Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 5:26-32

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. So [also] husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man shall leave [his] father and [his] mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church.

Hosea 2:16, 17 (correction from slide that reads Hosea 2: 14,15)

Therefore, I will allure her now; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak persuasively to her. There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as on the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

Ezekiel 16:59-63

For thus says the Lord GOD: I will deal with you for what you did; you despised an oath by breaking a covenant. But I will remember the covenant I made with you when you were young; I will set up an everlasting covenant with you. Then you shall remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your sisters, those older and younger than you; I give them to you as daughters, but not by reason of your covenant. For I will re-establish my covenant with you, that you may know that I am the LORD, that you may remember and be ashamed, and never again open your mouth because of your disgrace, when I pardon you for all you have done—oracle of the Lord GOD.

Isaiah 54:4-6

For the shame of your youth you shall forget, the reproach of your widowhood no longer remember. For your husband is your Maker; the LORD of hosts is his name, Your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, called God of all the earth. The LORD calls you back, like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, a wife married in youth and then cast off, says your God.

Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt. 25:1-13)

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.' While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.' Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Jesus' Use of Bridegroom in Reference to Himself (Mark 2:18-20)

Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day."

John the Baptist, Friend of the Bridegroom (John 3:29)

I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent before him. He who has the bride is the bridegroom; the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice; therefore this joy of mine is now full. He must increase, but I must decrease.

Christ "Preparing a Place" as a Bridegroom would for His Bride (John 14:1-3)

Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may also be.

Wedding Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:6-9, 21:1-2)

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunder peals, crying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure"—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb... Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband..."

Eve Born From Christ's Side on the Cross

- *As Eve was formed from the sleeping Adam's side, so the Church was born from the pierced heart of Christ hanging dead on the cross. (St. Ambrose)*
- *"From the wound in Christ's side has come forth the Church, and He has made her His Bride." (Origen)*
- *"...As God then took a rib from Adam's side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. Do you understand, then, how Christ has united his bride to himself and what food he gives us all to eat? By one and the same food we are brought into being and nourished." (John Chrysostom)*

Genesis 1:31

God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good.

Altar as Marriage Bed

*"...the altar cloth not only has the meaning of a table cloth, but all the more it symbolizes bed linen, covering the marriage bed where the Covenant between Christ and his Church is consummated."
(Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone)*

Acts 9:4

Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

Lumen gentium, 8

*Christ, the one Mediator, established and continually sustains here on earth His holy Church, the community of faith, hope and charity, as an entity with visible delineation through which He communicated truth and grace to all. But, **the society structured with hierarchical organs and the Mystical Body of Christ, are not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things; rather they form one complex reality which coalesces from a divine and a human element.** For this reason, by no weak analogy, it is compared to the mystery of the incarnate Word. As the assumed nature inseparably united to Him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the visible social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ, who vivifies it, in the building up of the body.*

Lumen gentium 7

All the members ought to be molded in the likeness of Him, until Christ be formed in them.

Galatians 4:19

My children, for whom I am again in labor until Christ be formed in you!

Christ Has No Body Now But Yours

*"Christ has no body but yours, No hands, no feet on earth but yours, Yours are the eyes with which he looks Compassion on this world, Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good, Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, Yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now but yours, No hands, no feet on earth but yours, Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world. Christ has no body now on earth but yours."
(popularly attributed to St. Teresa of Avila)*