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ARCANUM DIVINAE
SAPIENTIAE
CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Arcanum Divinae Sapientiae

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

POPE LEO XIII

WITH DISCUSSION CLUB OUTLINE

By REV. GERALD C. TREACY, S. J.

Christian Marriage

ENCYCLICAL LETTER

of

Pope Leo XIII

Arcanum Divinae Sapientiae

*(With Discussion Club Outline
by Rev. Gerald C. Treacy, S.J.)*



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Arcanum Divinae Sapientiae

ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF OUR HOLY FATHER
BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE

POPE LEO XIII

ON

Christian Marriage

To Our Venerable Brethren, All Patriarchs, Primates,
Archbishops and Bishops of the
Catholic World,

In Grace and Communion with the Apostolic See,

POPE LEO XIII

Venerable Brethren,

Health and Apostolic Benediction

The Divine Plan

1. The hidden design of the divine wisdom, which Jesus Christ the Savior of men came to carry out on earth, had this end in view, that, by Himself and in Himself, He should divinely renew the world, which was sinking as it were, with length of years, into decline. The Apostle Paul summed this up in words of dignity and majesty when he wrote to the Ephesians, thus: *That He might make known unto us the mystery of His will . . . to re-establish all things in Christ that are in heaven and on earth.*¹

Restoration by Christ

2. In truth, Christ our Lord, setting Himself to fulfil the commandment which His Father had given Him, straightway imparted a new form and fresh beauty to all things, taking away the effects of their time-worn age. For He healed the wounds which the sin of our first father had inflicted on the human race.

¹ Ephes. i. 9, 10.

He brought all men by nature children of wrath, into favor with God; He led to the light of truth men wearied out by long-standing errors; He renewed to every virtue those who were weakened by lawlessness of every kind; and, giving them again an inheritance of never-ending bliss, He added a sure hope that their mortal and perishable bodies should one day be partakers of immortality and of the glory of heaven. In order that these unparalleled benefits might last as long as men should be found on earth, He trusted to His Church the continuance of His work; and, looking to future times, He commanded her to set in order whatever might have become deranged in human society, and to restore whatever might have fallen into ruin.

The Human Race Elevated

3. Although the divine renewal we have spoken of chiefly and directly affected men as constituted in the supernatural order of grace, nevertheless some of its precious and salutary fruits were also bestowed abundantly in the order of nature. Hence not only individual men, but also the whole mass of the human race, have in every respect received no small degree of worthiness. For, so soon as Christian order was once established in the world, it became possible for all men, one by one, to learn what God's fatherly providence is, and to dwell in it habitually, thereby fostering that hope of heavenly help which never confoundeth. From all this outflowed fortitude, self-control, constancy, and the evenness of a peaceful mind, together with many high virtues and noble deeds.

The State Benefitted

4. Wondrous, indeed, was the extent of dignity, steadfastness, and goodness which thus accrued to the State as well as to the family. The authority of rulers became more just and revered; the obedience of the people more ready and unforced; the union of citizens closer; the rights of dominion more secure. In very truth, the Christian religion thought of and provided for all things which are held to be advantageous in a State; so much so indeed that, according to St. Augustine, one cannot see how it could have offered greater help in the matter of living well and happily, had it been instituted for the single object of procuring or increasing those things which contribute to the conveniences or advantages of this mortal life.

God Established Marriage

5. Still the purpose We have set before Us is not to recount, in detail, benefits of this kind; Our wish is rather to speak about that family union of which *marriage* is the beginning and the foundation. The true origin of marriage, Venerable Brothers, is well known to all. Though revilers of the Christian faith refuse to acknowledge the never-interrupted doctrine of the Church on this subject, and have long striven to destroy the testimony of all nations and of all times, they have nevertheless failed not only to quench the powerful light of truth, but even to lessen it. We record what is to all known, and cannot be doubted by any, that God, on the sixth day of creation, having made man from the slime of the earth, and having breathed into his face the breath of life, gave him a companion, whom He miraculously took from the side of Adam when he was locked in sleep. God thus, in His most far-reaching foresight, decreed that this husband and wife should be the natural beginning of the human race, from whom it might be propagated and preserved by an unailing fruitfulness throughout all futurity of time.

UNITY AND PERPETUITY

And this union of man and woman, that it might answer more fittingly to the infinite wise counsels of God, even from the beginning manifested chiefly two most excellent properties—deeply sealed, as it were, and signed upon it—namely, unity and perpetuity. From the Gospel we see clearly that this doctrine was declared and openly confirmed by the divine authority of Jesus Christ. He bore witness to the Jews and to His apostles that marriage, from its institution, should exist between two only, that is, between one man and one woman; that of two they are made, so to say, one flesh; and that the marriage bond is by the will of God so closely and strongly made fast that no man may dissolve it or render it asunder. *For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*²

Its Ideal Corrupted

6. This form of marriage, however, so excellent and so pre-eminent, began to be corrupted by degrees, and to disappear

² Matt. xix. 5, 6.

among the heathen; and became even among the Jewish race clouded in a measure and obscured. For in their midst a common custom was gradually introduced, by which it was accounted as lawful for a man to have more than one wife; and eventually when *by reason of the hardness of their heart*,³ Moses indulgently permitted them to put away their wives, the way was open to divorce.

Results of Corruption

7. But the corruption and change which fell on marriage among the Gentiles seem almost incredible, inasmuch as it was exposed in every land to floods of error and of the most shameful lusts. All nations seem, more or less, to have forgotten the true notion and origin of marriage; and thus everywhere laws were enacted with reference to marriage, prompted to all appearance by State reasons, but not such as nature required. Solemn rites, invented at will of the lawgivers, brought about that women should, as might be, bear either the honorable name of wife or the disgraceful name of concubine; and things came to such a pitch that permission to marry, or the refusal of the permission, depended on the will of the heads of the State, whose laws were greatly against equity or even to the highest degree unjust. Moreover, plurality of wives and husbands, the abounding source of divorces, caused the nuptial bond to be relaxed exceedingly. Hence, too, sprang up the greatest confusion as to the mutual rights and duties of husbands and wives, inasmuch as a man assumed right of dominion over his wife, ordering her to go about her business, often without any just cause; while he was himself at liberty (as St. Jerome says) "to run headlong with impunity into lust, unbridled and unrestrained, in houses of ill-fame and amongst his female slaves, as if the dignity of the persons sinned with, and not the will of the sinner, made the guilt."⁴

WOMAN THE SUFFERER

When the licentiousness of a husband thus showed itself, nothing could be more piteous than the wife, sunk so low as to be all but reckoned as a means for the gratification of passion, or for the production of offspring. Without any feeling of shame marriageable girls were bought and sold, just like so much merchandise;⁵ and power was sometimes given to the

³ Matt. xix. 8.

⁴ Op. tom. i. col. 455.

⁵ Arnob. adv. Gent. 4.

father and to the husband to inflict capital punishment on the wife. Of necessity the offspring of such marriages as these were either reckoned among the stock in trade of the commonwealth or held to be the property of the father of the family; ⁶ and the law permitted him to make and unmake the marriages of his children at his mere will, and even to exercise against them the monstrous power of life and death.

Christ Restores Marriage

8. So manifold being the vices and so great the ignominies with which marriage was defiled, an alleviation and a remedy were at length bestowed from on high. Jesus Christ, who restored our human dignity and who perfected the Mosaic law, applied early in His ministry no little solicitude to the question of marriage. He ennobled the marriage in Cana of Galilee by His presence, and made it memorable by the first of the miracles which he wrought; ⁷ and for this reason, even from that day forth, it seemed as if the beginning of new holiness had been conferred on human marriages. Later on He brought back matrimony to the nobility of its primeval origin, by condemning the customs of the Jews in their abuse of the plurality of wives and of the power of giving bills of divorce; and still more by commanding most strictly that no one should dare to dissolve that union which God Himself had sanctioned by a bond perpetual. Hence, having set aside the difficulties which were adduced from the law of Moses, He, in character of supreme Lawgiver, decreed as follows concerning husbands and wives: *I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery.*⁸

Catholic Tradition and Marriage

9. But what was decreed and constituted in respect to marriage by the authority of God, has been more fully and more clearly handed down to us, by tradition and the written Word, through the Apostles, those heralds of the laws of God. To the Apostles, indeed, as our masters, are to be referred the doctrines which *our holy Fathers, the Councils, and the Tradition of the Universal Church have always taught,*⁹ namely, that Christ our

⁶ Dionys. Halicar. lib. ii., cc. 26, 27.

⁸ Matt. xix. 9.

⁷ John ii.

⁹ Trid. sess. xxiv. in or

Lord raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament; that to husband and wife, guarded and strengthened by the heavenly grace which His merits gained for them, He gave power to attain holiness in the married state; and that, in a wondrous way, making marriage an example of the mystical union between Himself and His Church, He not only perfected that love which is according to nature,¹⁰ but also made the natural union of one man with one woman far more perfect through the bond of heavenly love. Paul says to the Ephesians: *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it. . . . So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. . . . For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church; because we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave His father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church.*¹¹ In like manner from the teaching of the Apostles we learn that the unity of marriage and its perpetual indissolubility, the indispensable conditions of its very origin must, according to the command of Christ, be holy and inviolable without exception. Paul says again: *To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth that the wife depart not from her husband; and if she depart, that she remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband.*¹² And again: *A woman is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty.*¹³ It is for these reasons that marriage *is a great sacrament;*¹⁴ *honorable in all;*¹⁵ holy, pure, and to be revered as a type and symbol of most high mysteries.

The Noble Purpose of Marriage

10. Furthermore, the Christian perfection and completeness of marriage are not comprised in those points only which have been mentioned. For, first, there has been vouchsafed to the marriage union a higher and nobler purpose than was ever previously given to it. By the command of Christ, it not only looks to the propagation of the human race, but to the bringing forth of children for the Church, *fellow-citizens with the saints, and the*

¹⁰ Trid. sess. xxiv. cap. i. de reform, matr.

¹² 1 Zor. vii. 10, 11

¹⁴ Eph. v. 32.

¹¹ Eph. v. 25-32.

¹³ 1 Cor. vii. 39.

¹⁵ Heb. xiii. 4.

*domestics of God;*¹⁶ so that a people might be born and brought up for the worship and religion of the true God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.¹⁷

Mutual Duties and Rights Defined

11. Secondly, the mutual duties of husband and wife have been defined, and their several rights accurately established. They are bound, namely, to have such feelings for one another as to cherish always very great mutual love, to be ever faithful to their marriage vow, and to give one another an unflinching and unselfish help. The husband is the chief of the family and the head of the wife. The woman, because she is flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, must be subject to her husband and obey him; not, indeed, as a servant, but as a companion, so that her obedience shall be wanting in neither honor nor dignity. Since the husband represents Christ, and since the wife represents the Church, let there always be, both in him who commands and in her who obeys, a heaven-born love guiding both in their respective duties. *For the husband is the head of the wife; as Christ is the head of the Church. . . . Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let wives be to their husbands in all things.*¹⁸

Children and Parents

12. As regards children, they ought to submit to the parents and obey them, and give them honor for conscience' sake; while, on the other hand, parents are bound to give all care and watchful thought to the education of their offspring and their virtuous bringing up: *Fathers, . . . bring them up* (that is, your children) *in the discipline and correction of the Lord.*¹⁹ From this we see clearly that the duties of husbands and wives are neither few nor light; although to married people who are good these burdens become not only bearable but agreeable, owing to the strength which they gain through the sacrament.

Church Authority and Marriage

13. Christ, therefore, having renewed marriage to such and so great excellence, commended and entrusted all the discipline bearing upon these matters to his Church. The Church, always and everywhere, has so used her power with reference to the

¹⁶ Eph. ii. 19.

¹⁸ Eph. v. 23, 24.

¹⁷ Catech. Rom. c. viii.

¹⁹ Ibid. vi. 4.

marriages of Christians, that men have seen clearly how it belongs to her as of native right; not being made hers by any human grant, but given divinely to her by the will of her Founder. Her constant and watchful care in guarding Marriage, by the preservation of its sanctity, is so well understood as to not need proof. That the judgment of the Council of Jerusalem reprobated licentious and free love,²⁰ we all know; as also that the incestuous Corinthian was condemned by the authority of blessed Paul.²¹ Again, in the very beginning of the Christian Church were repulsed and defeated, with the like unremitting determination, the efforts of many who aimed at the destruction of Christian marriage, such as the Gnostics, Manicheans, and Montanists; and in our own time Mormons, St. Simonians, Phalansterians, and Communists.

Marriage Rights Equal

14. In like manner, moreover, a law of marriage just to all, and the same for all, was enacted by the abolition of the old distinction between slaves and free-born men and women; and thus the rights of husbands and wives were made equal: for, as St. Jerome says, "with us that which is unlawful for women is unlawful for men also, and the same restraint is imposed on equal conditions."²² The self-same rights also were firmly established for reciprocal affection and for the interchange of duties; the dignity of the woman was asserted and assured; and it was forbidden to the man to inflict capital punishment for adultery, or lustfully and shamelessly to violate his plighted faith.

The Church Protects Marriage

15. It is also a great blessing that the Church has limited, so far as is needful, the power of fathers of families, so that sons and daughters, wishing to marry, are not in any way deprived of their rightful freedom; that, for the purpose of spreading more widely the supernatural love of husbands and wives, she has decreed marriages within certain degrees of consanguinity or affinity to be null and void; that she has taken the greatest pains to safeguard marriage, as much as is possible, from error and violence and deceit; that she has always wished to preserve the holy chasteness of the marriage bed, personal rights, the honor of husband and wife, and the security of religion. Lastly, with such foresight of legislation has the Church guarded its divine institu-

20 Acts xv. 29.

21 1 Cor. v. 5.

22 Oper. tom. 1 col. 455,

tion, that no one who thinks rightfully of these matters can fail to see how, with regard to marriage, she is the best guardian and defender of the human race; and how withal her wisdom has come forth victorious from the lapse of years, from the assaults of men, and from the countless changes of public events.

Perverse Ideas of Marriage

16. Yet, owing to the efforts of the arch-enemy of mankind, there are persons who, thanklessly casting away so many other blessings of redemption, despise also or utterly ignore the restoration of marriage to its original perfection. It is a reproach to some of the ancients that they showed themselves the enemies of marriage in many ways; but in our own age, much more pernicious is the sin of those who would fain pervert utterly the nature of marriage, perfect though it is, and complete in all its details and parts. The chief reason why they act in this way is because very many, imbued with the maxims of a false philosophy and corrupted in morals, judge nothing so unbearable as submission and obedience; and strive with all their might to bring about that not only individual men, but families also, nay indeed, human society itself, may in haughty pride despise the sovereignty of God.

The State and Marriage

17. Now since the family and human society at large spring from marriage, these men will on no account allow matrimony to be the subject of the jurisdiction of the Church. Nay, they endeavor to deprive it of all holiness, and so bring it within the contracted sphere of those rights which, having been instituted by man, are ruled and administered by the civil jurisprudence of the community. Wherefore it necessarily follows that they attribute all power over marriage to civil rulers, and allow none whatever to the Church; and when the Church exercises any such power, they think that she acts either by favor of the civil authority or to its injury. Now is the time, they say, for the heads of the State to vindicate their rights unflinchingly, and to do their best to settle all that relates to marriage according as to them seems good.

Civil Marriage Laws

18. Hence are owing *civil marriages*, commonly so called; hence laws are framed which impose impediments to marriage;

hence arise judicial sentences affecting the marriage contract, as to whether or not it have been rightly made.. Lastly, all power of prescribing and passing judgment in this class of cases is, as we see, of set purpose denied to the Catholic Church, so that no regard is paid either to her divine power or to her prudent laws. Yet under these, for so many centuries, have the nations lived on whom the light of civilization shone bright with the wisdom of Christ Jesus.

The Sacredness of Marriage

19. Nevertheless, all those who reject what is supernatural, as well as all who profess that they worship above all things the divinity of the State, and strive to disturb whole communities with such wicked doctrines, cannot escape the charge of delusion. Marriage has God for its Author, and was from the very beginning a kind of foreshadowing of the Incarnation of His Son; and therefore there abides in it a something holy and religious; not extraneous, but innate; not derived from men, but implanted by nature. Innocent III, therefore, and Honorius III, our predecessors, affirmed not falsely nor rashly that a certain sacredness of marriage rites existed ever amongst the faithful and unbelievers.²³ We call to witness the monuments of antiquity, as also the manners and customs of those people who, being the most civilized, had the greatest knowledge of law and equity. In the minds of all of them it was a fixed and foregone conclusion that, when marriage was thought of, it was thought of as conjoined with religion and holiness. Hence among those, marriages were commonly celebrated with religious ceremonies, under the authority of pontiffs, and with the ministry of priests. So mighty, even in the souls ignorant of heavenly doctrine, was the force of nature, of the remembrance of their origin, and of the conscience of the human race. As, then, marriage is holy by its own power, in its own nature, and of itself, it ought not to be regulated and administered by the will of civil rulers, but by the divine authority of the Church, which alone in sacred matters professes the office of teaching.

The Dignity of Marriage

20. Next, the dignity of the sacrament must be considered; for through addition of the sacrament the marriages of Christians have become far the noblest of all matrimonial unions. But

23 Apud fideles et infideles existere sacramentum conjugii.

to decree and ordain concerning the sacrament is, by the will of Christ Himself, so much a part of the power and duty of the Church, that it is plainly absurd to maintain that even the very smallest fraction of such power has been transferred to the civil ruler.

History and Church Authority

21. Lastly should be borne in mind the great weight and crucial test of history, by which it is plainly proved that the legislative and judicial authority of which We are speaking has been freely and constantly used by the Church, even in times when some foolishly suppose the head of the State either to have consented to it or connived at it. It would, for instance, be incredible and altogether absurd to assume that Christ our Lord condemned the long-standing practice of polygamy and divorce by authority delegated to Him by the procurator of the province, or the principal ruler of the Jews. And it would be equally extravagant to think that, when the Apostle Paul taught that divorces and incestuous marriages were not lawful, it was because Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero agreed with him or secretly commanded him so to teach. No man in his senses could ever be persuaded that the Church made so many laws about the holiness and indissolubility of marriage, and the marriages of slaves with the free-born, by power received from Roman emperors, most hostile to the Christian name, whose strongest desire was to destroy by violence and murder the rising Church of Christ. Still less could any one believe this to be the case, when the law of the Church was sometimes so divergent from the civil law that Ignatius the Martyr, Justin, Athenagoras and Tertullian publicly denounced as unjust and adulterous certain marriages which had been sanctioned by Imperial law.

Marriage and the Christian Emperors

22. Furthermore, after all power had devolved upon the Christian emperors, the supreme Pontiffs and Bishops assembled in Council persisted, with the same independence and consciousness of their right in commanding or forbidding in regard to marriage whatever they judged to be profitable or expedient for the time being, however much it might seem to be at variance with the laws of the State. It is well known that, with respect to

the impediments arising from the marriage bond, through vow, disparity of worship, blood relationship, certain forms of crime, and from previously plighted troth, many decrees were issued by the rulers of the Church in the Councils of Granada, Arles, Chalcedon, the second of Milevum, and others, which were often widely different from the decrees sanctioned by the laws of the empire. Furthermore, so far were Christian princes from arrogating any power in the matter of Christian marriage, that they on the contrary acknowledged and declared that it belonged exclusively in all its fullness to the Church. In fact, Honorius, the younger Theodosius, and Justinian also, hesitated not to confess that the only power belonging to them in relation to marriage was that of acting as guardians and defenders of the Holy Canons. If at any time they enacted anything by their edicts concerning impediments of marriage, they voluntarily explained the reason, affirming that they took it upon themselves so to act, by leave and authority of the Church, whose judgment they were wont to appeal to and reverently to accept in all questions that concerned legitimacy and divorce; as also in all those points which in any way have a necessary connection with the marriage-bond. The Council of Trent, therefore, had the clearest right to define that it is in the Church's power "to establish diriment impediments of matrimony," and that "matrimonial causes pertain to ecclesiastical judges."²⁴

A Contract and a Sacrament

23. Let no one then be deceived by the distinction which some civil jurists have so strongly insisted upon—the distinction, namely, by virtue of which they sever the matrimonial contract from the sacrament, with intent to hand over the contract to the power and will of the rulers of the State, while reserving questions concerning the sacrament to the Church. A distinction, or rather severance, of this kind cannot be approved; for certain it is that in Christian marriage the contract is inseparable from the sacrament; and that, for this reason, the contract cannot be true and legitimate without being a sacrament as well. For Christ our Lord added to marriage the dignity of a sacrament; but marriage is the contract itself, whenever that contract is lawfully concluded.

²⁴ Trid. sess. xxiv. can. 4, 12.

The Image of Christ's Nuptials

24. Marriage, moreover, is a sacrament, because it is a holy sign which gives grace, showing forth an image of the mystical nuptials of Christ with the Church. But the form and image of these nuptials is shown precisely by the very bond of that most close union in which man and woman are bound together in one; which bond is nothing else but the marriage itself. Hence it is clear that among Christians every true marriage is, in itself and by itself, a sacrament; and that nothing can be further from the truth than to say that the sacrament is a certain added ornament, or outward endowment, which can be separated and torn away from the contract at the caprice of man. Neither therefore by reasoning can it be shown, nor by any testimony of history be proved, that power over the marriages of Christians has ever lawfully been handed over to the rulers of the State. If, in this matter, the right of any one else has ever been violated, no one can truly say that it has been violated by the Church. Would that the teaching of those who reject what is supernatural, besides being full of falsehood and injustice, were not also the fertile source of much detriment and calamity! But it is easy to see at a glance the greatness of the evil which unhallowed marriages have brought, and ever will bring, on the whole of human society.

Marriage Not a Human Institution

25. From the beginning of the world, indeed, it was divinely ordained that things instituted by God and by Nature should be proved by us to be the more profitable and salutary the more they remain unchanged in their full integrity. For God, the Maker of all things, well knowing what was good for the institution and preservation of each of His creatures, so ordered them by His will and mind that each might adequately attain the end for which it was made. If the rashness or the wickedness of human agency venture to change or disturb that order of things which has been constituted with fullest foresight, then the designs of infinite wisdom and usefulness begin either to be hurtful or cease to be profitable, partly because through the change undergone they have lost their power of benefiting, and partly because God chooses to inflict punishment on the pride and audacity of man. Now those who deny that marriage is holy, and

who relegate it, stripped of all holiness, among the class of common things, uproot thereby the foundations of nature, not only resisting the designs of Providence, but, so far as they can, destroying the order that God has ordained. No one, therefore, should wonder if from such insane and impious attempts there spring up a crop of evils pernicious in the highest degree both to the salvation of souls and to the safety of the commonwealth.

God's Twofold Purpose in Marriage

26. If, then, we consider the end of the divine institution of marriage, we shall see very clearly that God intended it to be a most fruitful source of individual benefit and of public welfare. Not only, in strict truth, was marriage instituted for the propagation of the human race, but also that the lives of husbands and wives might be made better and happier. This comes about in many ways: by their lightening each other's burdens through mutual help; by constant and faithful love; by having all their possessions in common; and by the heavenly grace which flows from the sacrament. Marriage also can do much for the good of families, for, so long as it is conformable to nature and in accordance with the counsels of God, it has power to strengthen union of heart in the parents; to secure the holy education of children; to temper the authority of the father by the example of the divine authority; to render children obedient to their parents and servants obedient to their masters. From such marriages as these the State may rightly expect a race of citizens animated by a good spirit and filled with reverence and love for God, recognizing it their duty to obey those who rule justly and lawfully, to love all, and to injure no one.

Results of Desecrating Marriage

27. These many and glorious fruits were ever the product of marriage, so long as it retained those gifts of holiness, unity, and indissolubility from which proceeded all its fertile and saving power; nor can any one doubt but that it would always have brought forth such fruits, at all times and in all places, had it been under the power and guardianship of the Church, the trustworthy preserver and protector of these gifts. But now there is a spreading wish to supplant natural and divine law by human law; and hence has begun a gradual extinction of that most excellent ideal of marriage which Nature herself had impressed

on the soul of man, and sealed, as it were, with her own seal; nay, more, even in Christian marriages this power, productive of so great good, has been weakened by the sinfulness of man. Of what advantage is it if a State can institute nuptials estranged from the Christian religion, which is the mother of all good, cherishing all sublime virtues, quickening and urging us to everything that is the glory of a lofty and generous soul? When the Christian religion is rejected and repudiated, marriage sinks of necessity into the slavery of man's vicious nature and vile passions, and finds but little protection in the help of natural goodness. A very torrent of evil has flowed from this source, not only into private families, but also into States. For the salutary fear of God being removed, and there being no longer that refreshment in toil which is nowhere more abounding than in the Christian religion, it very often happens, as from facts is evident, that the mutual services and duties of marriage seem almost unbearable; and thus very many yearn for the loosening of the tie which they believe to be woven by human law and of their own will, whenever incompatibility of temper, or quarrels, or the violation of the marriage vow, or mutual consent, or other reasons induce them to think that it would be well to be set free. Then, if they are hindered by law from carrying out this shameless desire, they contend that the laws are iniquitous, inhuman, and at variance with the rights of free citizens; adding that every effort should be made to repeal such enactments, and to introduce a more humane code sanctioning divorce.

Divorce Does Not Halt Impiety

28. Now, however much the legislators of these our days may wish to guard themselves against the impiety of men such as we have been speaking of, they are unable to do so, seeing that they profess to hold and defend the very same principles of jurisprudence; and hence they have to go with the times, and render divorce easily obtainable. History itself shows this; for, to pass over other instances, we find that, at the close of the last century, divorces were sanctioned by law in that upheaval, or rather, as it might be called, conflagration in France, when society was wholly degraded by the abandoning of God. Many at the present time would fain have those laws re-enacted, because they wish God and His Church to be altogether exiled and excluded from

the midst of human society, madly thinking that in such laws a final remedy must be sought for that moral corruption which is advancing with rapid strides.

Evils Flowing From Divorce

29. Truly, it is hardly possible to describe how great are the evils that flow from divorce. Matrimonial contracts are by it made variable; mutual kindness is weakened; deplorable inducements to unfaithfulness are supplied; harm is done to the education and training of children; occasion is afforded for the breaking up of homes; the seeds of dissension are sown among families; the dignity of womanhood is lessened and brought low, and women run the risk of being deserted after having ministered to the pleasures of men. Since, then, nothing has such power to lay waste families and destroy the mainstay of kingdoms as the corruption of morals, it is easily seen that divorces are in the highest degree hostile to the prosperity of families and States, springing as they do from the depraved morals of the people, and, as experience shows us, opening out a way to every kind of evil-doing in public and in private life.

Divorce Breeds and Spreads

30. Further still, if the matter be duly pondered, we shall clearly see these evils to be the more especially dangerous, because, divorce once being tolerated, there will be no restraint powerful enough to keep it within the bounds marked out or presurmised. Great indeed is the force of example, and even greater still the might of passion. With such incitements it must needs follow that the eagerness for divorce, daily spreading by devious ways, will seize upon the minds of many like a virulent contagious disease, or like a flood of water bursting through every barrier. These are truths that doubtlessly are all clear in themselves; but they will become clearer yet if we call to mind the teachings of experience. So soon as the road to divorce began to be made smooth by law, at once quarrels, jealousies, and judicial separations largely increased; and such shamelessness of life followed, that men who had been in favor of these divorces repented of what they had done, and feared that, if they did not carefully seek a remedy by repealing the law, the State itself might come to ruin. The Romans of old are said to have shrunk with horror from the first example of divorce, but ere long all sense

of decency was blunted in their soul; the meager restraint of passion died out, and the marriage vow was so often broken that what some writers have affirmed would seem to be true—namely, women used to reckon years not by the change of consuls, but of their husbands. In like manner, at the beginning, Protestants allowed legalized divorces in certain although but few cases, and yet from the affinity of circumstances of like kind, the number of divorces increased to such extent in Germany, America, and elsewhere, that all wise thinkers deplored the boundless corruption of morals, and judged the recklessness of the laws to be simply intolerable.

Misery the Sequel to Divorce

31. Even in Catholic States the like evil existed. For whenever at any time divorce was introduced, the abundance of misery that followed far exceeded all that the framers of the law could have foreseen. In fact, many lent their minds to contrive all kinds of fraud and device, and by accusations of cruelty, violence, and adultery to feign grounds for the dissolution of the matrimonial bond of which they had grown weary; and all this with so great havoc to morals that an amendment of the laws was deemed to be urgently needed.

Social Upset Its Consequence

32. Can any one, therefore, doubt that laws in favor of divorce would have a result equally baneful and calamitous were they to be passed in these our days? There exists not, indeed, in the projects and enactments of men any power to change the character and tendency which things have received from nature. Those men therefore show but little wisdom in the idea they have formed of the well-being of the commonwealth who think that the inherent character of marriage can be perverted with impunity; and who, disregarding the sanctity of religion and of the sacrament, seem to wish to degrade and dishonor marriage more basely than was done even by heathen laws. Indeed, if they do not change their views, not only private families, but all public society, will have unceasing cause to fear lest they should be miserably driven into that general confusion and overthrow of order which is even now the wicked aim of Socialists and Communists. Thus we see most clearly how foolish and senseless it is to expect any public good from divorce, when, on the contrary, it tends to the certain destruction of society.

The Church Safeguards the State

33. It must consequently be acknowledged that the Church has deserved exceedingly well of all nations by her ever-watchful care in guarding the sanctity and the indissolubility of marriage. Again, no small amount of gratitude is owing to her for having, during the last hundred years, openly denounced the wicked laws which have grievously offended on this particular subject; as well as for her having branded with anathema the baneful heresy obtaining among Protestants touching divorce and separation; also for having in many ways condemned the habitual dissolution of marriage among the Greeks; for having declared invalid all marriages contracted upon the understanding that they may be at some future time dissolved; and lastly, for having, from the earliest times, repudiated the imperial laws which disastrously favored divorce.

The Bravery of the Popes

34. As often, indeed, as the supreme Pontiffs have resisted the most powerful among rulers, in their threatening demands that divorces carried out by them should be confirmed by the Church, so often must we account them to have been contending for the safety, not only of religion, but also of the human race. For this reason all generations of men will admire the proofs of unbending courage which are to be found in the decrees of Nicholas I against Lothair; of Urban II and Paschal II against Philip I of France; of Celestine III and Innocent III against Alphonsus of Leon and Philip II of France; of Clement VII and Paul III against Henry VIII; and lastly, of Pius VII, that holy and courageous Pontiff, against Napoleon I, when at the height of his prosperity and in the fulness of his power.

RULERS SHOULD CO-OPERATE WITH THE CHURCH

This being so, all rulers and administrators of the State who are desirous of following the dictates of reason and wisdom, and anxious for the good of their people, ought to make up their minds to keep the holy laws of marriage intact, and to make use of the proffered aid of the Church for securing the safety of morals and the happiness of families, rather than suspect her of hostile intention and falsely and wickedly accuse her of violating the civil law.

The Church Co-operates With Civil Rulers

35. They should do this the more readily because the Catholic Church, though powerless in any way to abandon the duties of her office or the defence of her authority, still very greatly inclines to kindness and indulgence whenever they are consistent with the safety of her rights and the sanctity of her duties. Wherefore she makes no decrees in relation to marriage without having regard to the state of the body politic and the condition of the general public; and has besides more than once mitigated, as far as possible, the enactments of her own laws when there were just and weighty reasons. Moreover, she is not unaware, and never calls in doubt, that the Sacrament of Marriage, being instituted for the preservation and increase of the human race, has a necessary relation to circumstances of life which, though connected with marriage, belong to the civil order, and about which the State rightly makes strict inquiry and justly promulgates decrees.

Concord Between Church and State

36. Yet no one doubts that Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Church, willed her sacred power to be distinct from the civil power, and each power to be free and unshackled in its own sphere: with this condition, however—a condition good for both, and of advantage to all men—that union and concord should be maintained between them; and that on those questions which are, though in different ways, of common right and authority, the power of which secular matters have been intrusted should happily and becomingly depend on the other power which has in its charge the interests of heaven. In such arrangement and harmony is found not only the best line of action for each power, but also the most opportune and efficacious method of helping men in all that pertains to their life here, and to their hope of salvation hereafter. For, as We have shown in former Encyclical Letters, the intellect of man is greatly ennobled by the Christian faith, and made better able to shun and banish all error, while faith borrows in turn no little help from the intellect; and in like manner, when the civil power is on friendly terms with the sacred authority of the Church, there accrues to both a great increase of usefulness. The dignity of the one is exalted, and so long as religion is its guide it will never rule unjustly; while the other receives help of protection and defence for the public good of the faithful.

Public Safety Calls for Co-operation

37. Being moved, therefore, by these considerations, as We have exhorted rulers at other times, so still more earnestly We exhort them now, to concord and friendly feeling; and We are the first to stretch out Our hand to them with fatherly benevolence, and to offer to them the help of Our supreme authority, a help which is the more necessary at this time when, in public opinion, the authority of rulers is wounded and enfeebled. Now that the minds of so many are inflamed with a reckless spirit of liberty, and men are wickedly endeavoring to get rid of every restraint of authority, however legitimate it may be, the public safety demands that both powers should unite their strength to avert the evils which are hanging, not only over the Church, but also over civil society.

The Bishop's Duty

38. But, while earnestly exhorting all to a friendly union of will, and beseeching God, the Prince of Peace, to infuse a love of concord into all hearts, We cannot, Venerable Brothers, refrain from urging you more and more to fresh earnestness, and zeal, and watchfulness, though we know that these are already very great. With every effort and with all authority, strive, as much as you are able, to preserve whole and undefiled among the people committed to your charge the doctrine which Christ our Lord taught us; which the apostles, the interpreters of the will of God, have handed down; and which the Catholic Church has herself scrupulously guarded, and commanded to be believed in all ages by the faithful of Christ.

The Spread of Right Doctrine

39. Let special care be taken that the people be well instructed in the precepts of Christian wisdom, so that they may always remember that marriage was not instituted by the will of man, but, from the very beginning, by the authority and command of God; that it does not admit of plurality of wives or husbands; that Christ, the author of the New Covenant, raised it from a rite of nature to be a sacrament, and gave to His Church legislative and judicial power with regard to the bond of union. On this point the very greatest care must be taken to instruct them, lest their minds should be led into error by the unsound conclusions of adversaries who desire that the Church should be deprived of that power.

The Meaning of True Marriage

40. In like manner, all ought to understand clearly that, if there be any union of a man and a woman among the faithful of Christ which is not a sacrament, such union has not the force and nature of a proper marriage; that although contracted in accordance with the laws of the State, it cannot be more than a rite or custom introduced by the civil law. Further, the civil law can deal with and decide those matters alone which in the civil order spring from marriage, and which cannot possibly exist, as is evident, unless there be a true and lawful cause of them, that is to say, the nuptial bond. It is of the greatest consequence to husband and wife that all these things should be known and well understood by them, in order that they may conform to the laws of the State, if there be no objection on the part of the Church; for the Church wishes the effects of marriage to be guarded in all possible ways, and that no harm may come to the children.

Divorce and Separation

41. In the great confusion of opinions, however, which day by day is spreading more and more widely, it should further be known that no power can dissolve the bond of Christian marriage whenever this has been ratified and consummated; and that, of a consequence, those husbands and wives are guilty of a manifest crime who plan, for whatever reason, to be united in a second marriage before the first one has been ended by death. When, indeed, matters have come to such a pitch that it seems impossible for them to live together any longer, then the Church allows them to live apart, and strives at the same time to soften the evils of this separation by such remedies and helps as are suited to their condition; yet she never ceases to endeavor to bring about a reconciliation, and never despairs of doing so. But these are extreme cases; and they would seldom exist if men and women entered into the married state with proper dispositions, not influenced by passion, but entertaining right ideas of the duties of marriage and of its noble purpose; neither would they anticipate their marriage by a series of sins drawing down upon them the wrath of God.

Religion Necessary

42. To sum up all in a few words, there would be a calm and quiet constancy in marriage if married people would gather

strength and life from the virtue of religion alone, which imparts to us resolution and fortitude; for religion would enable them to bear tranquilly and even gladly the trials of their state, such as, for instance, the faults that they discover in one another, the difference of temper and character, the weight of a mother's cares, the wearing anxiety about the education of children, reverses of fortune, and the sorrows of life.

Dangers in Mixed Marriages

43. Care also must be taken that they do not easily enter into marriage with those who are not Catholics; for when minds do not agree as to the observances of religion it is scarcely possible to hope for agreement in other things. Other reasons also proving that persons should turn with dread from such marriages are chiefly these: that they give occasion to forbidden association and communion in religious matters; endanger the faith of the Catholic partner; are a hindrance to the proper education of the children; and often lead to a mixing up of truth and falsehood, and to the belief that all religions are equally good.

The Unlawfully Married

44. Lastly, since We well know that none should be excluded from Our charity, We commend, Venerable Brothers, to your fidelity and piety those unhappy persons who, carried away by the heat of passion, and being utterly indifferent to their salvation, live wickedly together without the bond of lawful marriage. Let your utmost care be exercised in bringing such persons back to their duty; and, both by your own efforts and by those of good men who will consent to help you, strive by every means that they may see how wrongly they have acted; that they may do penance; and that they may be induced to enter into a lawful marriage according to the Catholic rite.

The Safety of Nations and Souls

45. You will at once see, Venerable Brothers, that the doctrine and precepts in relation to Christian marriage, which We have thought good to communicate to you in this letter, tend no less to the preservation of civil society than to the everlasting salvation of souls. May God grant that, by reason of their gravity and importance, minds may everywhere be found docile and ready to obey them! For this end let us all suppliantly,

with humble prayer, implore the help of the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, that, our hearts being quickened to the obedience of faith, she may show herself our mother and our helper. With equal earnestness let us ask the princes of the apostles, Peter and Paul, the destroyers of heresies, the sowers of the seed of truth, to save the human race by their powerful patronage from the deluge of errors that is surging afresh. In the meantime, as an earnest of heavenly gifts, and a testimony of Our special benevolence, We grant you all, Venerable Brothers, and to the people confided to your charge, from the depths of Our heart, the Apostolic Benediction.

46. Given at St. Peter's in Rome, the tenth day of February, 1880, the third year of Our Pontificate.

LEO XIII, *Pope*.

DISCUSSION CLUB OUTLINE

By REV. GERALD C. TREACY, S.J.

Numerals Indicate Paragraphs

LESSON I

Paragraphs 1 to 5

According to God's plan Christ came to re-establish all things in Himself. He healed the wounds of sin that had afflicted humanity from the Fall, restoring mankind to God's favor. He brought to men the light of truth and the power of virtue, and gave them assurance of immortal bliss. He left His Church in the world to continue His healing mission. The effect of the teaching of the Church has benefited not only man as an individual but the whole social body. To such a degree is this true that it may be said that the Church has contributed to human happiness, and the welfare of the State in an extraordinary manner.

It is not our intention to treat of all the benefits accruing to human society from the teaching of the Church, but to speak of the family and of marriage which is the foundation of the family. Marriage was established by God when He gave Eve to Adam as his wife and decreed that from them the human race should be propagated. As our Lord taught clearly marriage is from its foundation the life-long union of one man and one woman, joined together in a bond that no man may sever. "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and cleave to his wife, and they too shall be in one flesh. Therefore now they are not but two but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together let no man put asunder" (Matt. xix. 5, 6).

QUESTIONS

What was Christ's purpose in coming upon earth?

How does St. Paul express it?

Enumerate the benefits given mankind by Christ.

How is the Church related to Christ's plan?

Was man as an individual the sole recipient of Christ's mercy?

What benefit did the State derive from our Lord's coming to earth?

Explain the origin of marriage.

What did Christ say of marriage?

Quote the text in St. Matthew's Gospel on marriage.

LESSON II

Paragraphs 6 to 10

With the passing of time the true meaning of marriage was lost sight of by the pagan world, and even among the Jews it became clouded. Eventually Moses permitted his people divorce under certain conditions, "by reason of the hardness of their hearts," as our Lord explicitly stated (Matt. xix. 8).

Pagan society sank deeper and deeper into corruption until marriage became little better than legalized lust. The pagan State determined the conditions for marriage, pagan laws allowed plurality of wives and husbands, the husband was an absolute tyrant, the wife a slave, the children were merely the property of the husband. Marriageable girls were bought and sold like cattle, for women were considered as instruments for the production of offspring, and means for the gratification of man's lusts. Such was marriage among the pagans when Christ our Lord came upon earth.

Christ our Lord restored marriage to its original dignity and raised it to the honor of a sacrament. As Supreme Lawgiver He put aside all objections that the Pharisees offered from the Law of Moses and to husbands and wives said: "I say to you that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery" (Matt. xix. 9).

According to Catholic Tradition Christ made marriage a sacrament, gave to husband and wife the grace to attain holiness in the married state, and made the natural love of man and woman a supernatural bond of heavenly love, likening it to the love He has for His Church. St. Paul says: "Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church. . . . So also ought men love their wives as their own bodies. . . . This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (Ephes. v. 25).

From the teaching of the Apostles we learn the unity and indissolubility of marriage. "To them that are married," declares St. Paul, "not I but the Lord commandeth that the wife depart not from her husband; and if she depart, that she remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband" (1 Cor. vii. 10, 11). "A woman is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty" (1 Cor. vii. 39). That is why

marriage "is a great sacrament" (Eph. v. 32), "honorable in all" (Hebr. xiii. 4).

Furthermore Christ has given to marriage a higher purpose than merely the propagation of the race. For by Christ's command children are to be brought forth to be members of God's Church and citizens in His Kingdom. Again the mutual duties of husband and wife have been made clear. The husband is head of the family as Christ is Head of the Church. The wife gives her husband loving obedience as a partner and companion, and not as a servant. There is thus a mutuality of dignity, honor and love. And children owe their parents loyal obedience, while parents are bound to educate their offspring in "the discipline and correction of the Lord" (Eph. vi. 4). It is clear then that the duties and responsibilities of husband and wife are by no means light. They receive strength to fulfill them from the grace of the sacrament.

QUESTIONS

Did marriage retain its original purity among the Jews and the pagans?

How did pagan marriage laws affect women?

What rights did pagan laws give the husband?

How did they affect children?

Who gave a new holiness to marriage?

Cite Apostolic teaching regarding marriage.

How does St. Paul express the love between man and wife?

What higher purpose has been given marriage by the command of Christ?

LESSON III

Paragraphs 11 to 16

To the Church Christ has given the right and duty of safeguarding marriage. Accordingly she has constantly passed laws to protect the marriage bond. From the time of the Council of Jerusalem to the present, the Church has refuted the errors that have appeared in regard to this holy sacrament. To the Gnostic of early days and to the Communist in modern times the Church says: "Mine and mine alone is the right to say what marriage is and regulate everything concerning this sacred contract. Christ has given me this right." It was due to the Church that a just marriage law was enacted equal for man and woman, abolishing the old distinction between the slave and the free-born. "For with us," says St. Jerome, "that which is unlawful for women is unlawful for men also." It was through this legislation of the Church that woman's dignity was proclaimed and secured. It is the Church that has limited the power of the father of the family and denied him the right to interfere with the freedom of his child in choosing a life-partner. To diffuse the supernatural love of husbands and wives the Church forbids marriage within certain degrees of relationship, and she has ever been watchful to safeguard marriage from error, violence and deceit. To any fair-minded person the history of the Church proves her to be the best guardian of the human race, in protecting the divine institution of marriage.

QUESTIONS

Enumerate the mutual rights and duties of husband and wife.

State the rights and duties of parents and children.

To whom did Christ entrust the discipline regarding marriage?

What may we conclude from the action of the early Church regarding marriage?

Quote St. Jerome on the justice of the Church's marriage laws.

What does the Church say regarding the freedom of people to marry?

Why does the Church forbid marriage to those within certain degrees of relationship?

What motives prompt those who are seeking to destroy the right ideal of marriage?

LESSON IV

Paragraphs 17 to 22

We reproach some of the ancients for their attitude toward marriage. But what of our moderns who ignore or despise the restoration of marriage to its original perfection? This modern disregard of the sanctity of marriage springs from the false philosophy of the day which teaches unbridled license not only to individuals but to the family and to the human race, ignoring completely the sovereignty of God. Modern theories hold that the State and not the Church has jurisdiction over marriage. If they allow the Church any say in the matter they do so by favor of the State. So we have what are called civil marriages. And we find State laws prescribing what is licit and valid in the marriage contract, ignoring the legislation of the Church.

We assert in the face of these errors that marriage has God for its author and the Church for its protector. From earliest times marriage has been regarded as something holy and religious. This is a fact even among unbelievers. A further fact is that the more civilized the people, the more they regarded marriage as sacred. As marriage then is holy by its very nature, it should be regulated not by the civil ruler but by the divine authority of the Church. Moreover as marriage is a sacrament among Christians it belongs, by the will of Christ, to the jurisdiction of the Church and not the State. History testifies that the Church has ever exercised her juridical power in face of the opposition of the State. It would be foolish to think that Christ legislated on marriage with authority delegated to Him by the procurator of Judea or by the chief ruler among the Jews. It would likewise be absurd to think that Paul taught the holiness of marriage because the Roman emperor authorized him to do so. The fact is the Church from earliest times often pronounced marriages unjust and unlawful that were sanctioned by Imperial law.

Even after the Roman Empire became Christian, the Popes and the Bishops in council assembled continued to legislate regarding marriage, even though this legislation did not conform to the imperial decrees. And Christian princes far from resenting this, agreed that such legislation fell within the province of the Church. And if they passed laws concerning impediments

to marriage, they always asserted that it was done with the approval and permission of the Church. It is not surprising then to find the Council of Trent declaring that it belongs to the Church "to establish diriment impediments of matrimony" and that "matrimonial causes pertain to ecclesiastical judges."

QUESTIONS

The State has all power over marriage. Refute.

Prove that marriage has been holy and religious from the beginning.

Give the historical argument for the sacredness of marriage.

Why should not marriage be regulated and administered by civil rulers?

What makes the marriages of Christians the noblest of all unions?

Has the Church used her rights over marriage by the consent of civil rulers? Explain.

What was the attitude of the Church toward Imperial Roman law on marriage?

What was the attitude of Popes and Councils toward the Christian emperors?

Quote the emperors Honorius, Theodosius and Justinian on the Church's marriage laws.

Cite the canon of the Council of Trent regarding the Church's power over marriage.

LESSON V

Paragraphs 23 to 27

Some civil jurists have attempted to distinguish between marriage as a contract and as a sacrament, giving the jurisdiction of the contract to the State and the jurisdiction of the sacrament to the Church. This is wrong for the contract and the sacrament are one and the same. Moreover marriage is a sacrament for it is a sacred sign which gives grace, mirroring forth the image of the mystical nuptials of Christ with the Church. The form and image of these nuptials is found in the marriage bond which makes man and woman one, and this bond is the marriage itself. The sacrament is not something added to the contract, an outward ornament. No. Sacrament and contract are one. So everything pertaining to it belongs to the jurisdiction of the Church. If these truths had been appreciated and observed, human society would not have been afflicted with so many evils springing from unholy marriages.

The more closely God's law and the law of Nature are observed, the happier the state of human society. This is the lesson of history. The Divine law gives order to the world. Order gives peace. Peace brings happiness. Those who deny the sacred character of marriage and reduce it to a merely human level, uproot the very foundations of nature and set at nought the Divine plan. The consequence of this is that innumerable evils follow detrimental to human society and the eternal welfare of souls. According to God's plan marriage was to be the source of individual benefit and of public welfare. It was not only instituted for the propagation of chil-

dren, but for mutual happiness of man and woman. For the common life that results from marriage makes for human happiness, as it calls for sacrifice based on love and strengthened by sacramental grace. Parents and children form the family in which there are mutual rights and duties. And from such families the State may expect dutiful and loyal citizens.

Such were the fruits of marriage as long as it remained one, holy and indissoluble. And such results would have continued had the guardianship of the Church over marriage been permitted to continue. But now men are striving to lower this true ideal of marriage and substitute human law for God's law. This is fatal both to individual good and to the welfare of society. Take religion out of marriage, reject the authority of the Church in this all-important matter, and you will have a flood of evils flowing into human society. For once the fear and love of God are thrown into the discard unbridled lusts rule men, and marriage becomes a mere outlet for passion, with divorce as a refuge when passion is sated.

QUESTIONS

The State has the right over the contract, the Church over the sacrament. Discuss.

Why is marriage a sacrament?

Is the sacrament added to the contract as an outward ornament?

What has followed from men tampering with God's plan regarding marriage?

Is the propagation of the human race God's only purpose in marriage?

How does marriage, according to God's plan, benefit the individual, the family, the State?

When marriage loses its supernatural character what effects follow?

LESSON VI

Paragraphs 28 to 33

Let divorce be resorted to as a remedy and the remedy will prove worse than the disease. For once allow divorce, and the marriage bond is rendered unstable, mutual love is weakened, the way is opened to unfaithfulness, children are neglected, the dignity of woman is destroyed, and the solid foundation of home life is shattered. Divorce is but an expression of depravity of morals. Depraved morals mean the end of the home and the ruin of the State. It is idle to think that divorce can be kept within a restricted sphere. It will grow and spread like a virulent plague. History testifies to this. The Romans allowed legal divorce, hoping it would remain an occasional practice. Before long it became widespread. When Protestantism began the same process was followed. Look at the divorce record of Protestant countries today. And even in some Catholic countries unfortunately the same policy was adopted, with the same result.

The modern clamor for laws in favor of divorce, if heeded, will bring to the modern world the same evils that have been brought in the past, whenever the sacred character of marriage has been tampered with. One

fact stands out clearly—the spread of divorce means the ruin of society. The Church deserves well of all nations for her uncompromising attitude toward divorce. From the beginning of her history, and especially during the last century, she has unflinchingly condemned every law that has favored divorce. Rulers of States have often urged the Popes to approve divorce laws enacted by the civil power. They have been met by a fearless refusal. It is for the State to realize that the Church is working for civil welfare when she stands for unhesitating obedience to God's law which prohibits divorce. The Church is ever anxious to co-operate with the State for the common welfare. Her laws on marriage ever look to the common good. She realizes that the State should legislate upon marriage because marriage is intimately connected with the civil order. The concern of the Church is to see to it that every State law conforms to God's law regarding marriage.

QUESTIONS

Why is any divorce law incapable of protecting the sacredness of marriage?

Enumerate the evils that follow from divorce.

A nation's attitude toward divorce is an index of the morality of its people. Explain.

Divorce once allowed, morality corrupts. Prove from history.

Enumerate the benefits conferred on the State by the Church's attitude on marriage.

LESSON VII

Paragraphs 34 to 38

Christ our Lord Who founded the Church wished it to be distinct from the State. He wished each power to be free in its own sphere, and at the same time that concord should be maintained between them. In this harmony is found the best line of action for each power, and the best method of helping men in their life here and for their life hereafter. When civil and Church authority are on friendly terms the usefulness and influence of both are increased to the benefit of the public good. In these days when unbridled license masking under the name of liberty is growing apace, public safety demands the most friendly co-operation between both powers, to avert the dangers threatening not only the Church but civil society itself.

QUESTIONS

The early Romans attempted to restrict divorce. What was the result?

What were the Pope's defending when they opposed every State that advocated divorce?

Does the Church oppose all State regulation of marriage?

According to the Mind of Christ what should be the relation between Church and State?

Enumerate the benefits following from the proper relationship of Church and State.

What will avert the evils now threatening civil society and the Church?

LESSON VIII

Paragraphs 39 to 45

We appeal to all the Bishops of the Catholic world to preserve and spread the doctrine of Christ, handed down to them from the Apostles. We ask them to remind their flocks that marriage was instituted by God, was raised by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament, and that legislative and judicial power regarding this sacred bond has been entrusted by Him to His Church. Moreover the children of the Church must be taught that any union of man and woman among Christ's faithful which is not a sacrament, is not marriage. It is for the civil law to deal *only* with those matters which in the civil order spring from marriage. A Christian marriage ratified and consummated cannot be dissolved by any power on earth. Death alone dissolves a Christian marriage. Divorce is a sin against nature and against God. In special cases the Church permits separation. In no case divorce. And even in the event of separation the Church ever strives for a reconciliation of the married couple. If people entered upon marriage with an appreciation of its dignity and nobility, there would be few unhappy marriages.

Catholics should not marry non-Catholics without realizing the dangers involved. For the blending of two minds which is an essential of a happy marriage is difficult when there is divergence of attitude toward religion. Agreement in other things is hard when there is disagreement on religion. The education of children is difficult when there is difference of religious viewpoint.

We urge the Bishops to bring back those who are living together outside the bonds of holy wedlock, and we pray our Blessed Mother and the holy Apostles Peter and Paul to render the minds of all people docile to the teachings we have given on Christian marriage.

QUESTIONS

Sum up the teaching that the Pope is urging the Bishops to spread among the people.

Can there be a marital union among Christians that is not a sacrament?

Can the civil law deal with those matters which in the civil order spring from marriage?

What power can dissolve a marriage ratified and consummated?

What is permissible for people who claim they can no longer live together as man and wife?

What part must religion play in marriage?

Enumerate the dangers of mixed marriages.

With what prayer does the Pope end his encyclical?

