

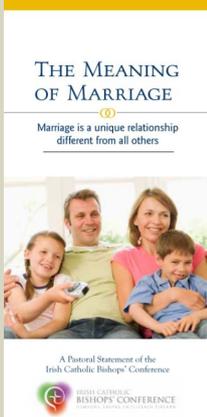


The Meaning of Marriage

Newsletter for dioceses and parishes

Issue 5 - Sunday 19 April 2015

Bishops' pastoral statement: *The Meaning of Marriage*



Please read the full text of *The Meaning of Marriage* which is available in English, Irish and Polish on catholicbishops.ie.

“The family is the greatest treasure of any country. Let us all work to protect and strengthen this, the cornerstone of society.”

Pope Francis



Produced by the Catholic Communications Office of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference. See www.catholicbishops.ie

Prayer by Pope Francis for the Synod on the Family

Holy Family of Nazareth,
May the upcoming Synod of Bishops
Re-awaken in all an awareness
Of the sacred character and inviolability
of the family,
Its beauty in the project of God.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
Hear and answer our prayer.
Amen.

Marriage is important - Reflect before you change it

Marriage is of fundamental importance for children, mothers and fathers, and society - all of us need to reflect deeply before changing it. Ahead of the referendum on 22 May, bishops ask the faithful to carefully consider that:

- A woman and man united in marriage are witness to God's plan for both life and love in a way unlike any other relationship of human persons.
- Central to the current debate on marriage is the very nature of marriage of itself and the importance that society places on the role of mothers and fathers in bringing up children.
- The union of marriage provides for the continuation of the human race and the development of human society.
- The proposed amendment would radically change the current protection offered to marriage by the *Constitution of Ireland* – the foundation stone of society.

The Teaching of the Church on Marriage Today



On 19 March last Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin, spoke on *The Teaching of the Church on Marriage Today*, saying, “There is something irreplaceable in that relationship between a man and a woman who commit to each other in love and who remain open to the transmission and the nurturing of human life, within an intergenerational framework which contributes to the stability of society.

“It is also true that no person exists who is not the fruit of a male and a female. Even if it were possible to clone a child, that child would still bear the genetic imprint of a male and a female. Genetic parentage is not irrelevant. Some people sadly have to spend their entire lives seeking their genetic parents: not just out of a natural emotional desire; knowledge of one's genetic make-up is important – and indeed it can be vital when planning to have children.

“We are all children of a male and a female and this must have relevance to our understanding of the way children should be nurtured and educated.”