

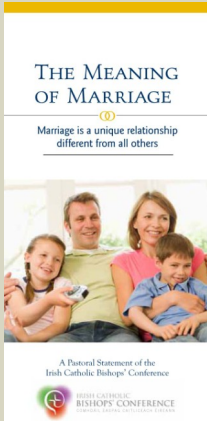


The Meaning of Marriage

Newsletter for dioceses and parishes

Issue 7 for Sunday 3 May 2015, Fifth Sunday of Easter

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 most effective witness to the blessing of

marriage is the good life of Christian spouses and their families.”

**Pope Francis,
29 April 2015**

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

Extract from the Prayer by Pope Francis for the Synod on the Family

Homily Family of Nazareth

May our families never more experience

Violence, isolation and division:

May anyone who was wounded
or scandalised

Rapidly experience consolation
and healing. **Amen**

Why is marriage so important?

In marriage, a woman and man promise love and fidelity to each other, for the rest of their lives. Not knowing what lies ahead they nevertheless make a commitment that they will continue to love each other whatever comes. While we know that their commitment may break down and know also the sorrow that this can bring, we also recognise that many couples live that marital commitment faithfully.

Married love provides a stable and nurturing environment, where children receive the most important and lasting education of all: how to be a member of a family and of society.

Any proposal to redefine the meaning and purpose of marriage on which the family is founded, by enabling the relationship of a same sex couple to also become a marriage, is based on the assumption that marriage - which has always been recognised as the natural, primary and fundamental unit group of society - has nothing unique about it, and on the assumption that marriage can be stripped of that social standing without obscuring its irreplaceable social role.

From *The Meaning of Marriage* pastoral statement, see full text on www.meaningofmarriage.ie

Marriage is important - Reflect before you change it



The following points are taken from *Marriage is important – Reflect before you change it*, the pastoral statement from the bishops of Ireland which was published after their Spring 2015 general meeting:

- We respect the views of people who think differently to us, trusting that our sincerely held views, grounded in faith, will also be heard and respected.
- Mothers and fathers bring different, yet complementary gifts and strengths into a child's life.
- We ask the people of Ireland to consider very carefully the profound implications which this constitutional amendment would have on the family environment and on our understanding of parenthood.

For further information:
Online: meaningofmarriage.ie
Twitter: @marriagesmatter
Fb: Meaning of Marriage