

FACT SHEET OF CATHOLIC BELIEFS ABOUT MARRIAGE

The Catholic church teaches the following things about marriage:

(The numbered statements are excerpts from the Catholic Catechism)

that it is a covenant (not a contract) *A covenant relationship is one that is based on a promise of permanence. God established a covenant with the Israelites, and even though the people were not always faithful to God, God remained faithful to them.*

1611 *Seeing God's covenant with Israel in the image of exclusive and faithful married love, the prophets prepared the Chosen People's conscience for a deepened understanding of the unity and indissolubility of marriage.*

that it believes in permanence *Based on the idea of a covenant relationship, the church expects a lifelong commitment from the partners toward each other*

1644 *The love of the spouses requires, of its very nature, the unity and indissolubility of the spouses' community of persons, which embraces their entire life: "so they are no longer two, but one flesh." 153 They "are called to grow continually in their communion through day-to-day fidelity to their marriage promise of total mutual self-giving."*

that it believes marriage has two purposes; to be life-giving, and to unite the couple *The two purposes of marriage are equal in importance: to be united in love, and to be lifegiving*

1601 *"The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament."*

that it believes in faithfulness ("forsaking all others") which we believe includes virtual others i.e., pornography *Being faithful to each other, both emotionally and physically, is a part of the Catholic view of marriage.*

1646 *By its very nature conjugal love requires the inviolable fidelity of the spouses. This is the consequence of the gift of themselves which they make to each other. Love seeks to be definitive; it cannot be an arrangement "until further notice." The "intimate union of marriage, as a mutual giving of two persons, and the good of the children, demand total fidelity from the spouses and require an unbreakable union between them."*

that it believes it is a sacrament, a sign of God's love in the world. *A sacrament is "an outward sign, instituted by Christ to give grace". In the sacrament of marriage it is the husband and wife who confer the sacrament on one another.*

1131 *The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions.*

that it is a vocation - a special calling to mirror God's love for the world and Christ's love for the church **1603** *"The intimate community of life and love which constitutes the married state has been established by the Creator and endowed by him with its own proper laws.... God himself is the author of marriage." 87 The vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator.*