

Le Nouvel Esprit:
A Video Series on the Theology of
the Body

TOB 20, General Audience of Mar. 5, 1980

Matthew 19

- In Matt. 19 Christ appealed to the beginning, telling us to return to it
- The beginning is the original dimension of the mystery of creation
- Original sin shattered this dimension with sin and death
 - Death entered into history through the heart of the unity of the first man and woman
- Christ's words indicate that there is continuity between historical man and original innocence
 - This continuity can be discerned in the concepts of "knowledge" and "procreation"

Yada

- Gen. 4:1-2: “Adam **knew** Eve his wife...”
- יָדָע, yada, to know
- The one flesh, conjugal union of man and woman is defined as knowledge
- Fn 31
 - Yada is not only intellectual knowledge, but also concrete experience and moral judgment based on experience
 - This is knowledge in terms of interpersonal relationships, describing paternity, descendents, and genealogy
 - In its negative meaning, yada means abstinence
 - Eg. Mary did not know man, meaning she was a virgin (Luke 1:34)

Knowledge

- Knowledge means that the conjugal union as a one flesh union is brought into the dimension of the person
- This knowledge is reciprocal
- Man and woman participate in this knowledge through their body and sex
- Knowledge is an archetype
 - JPII explains what he means by archetype in the next audience, TOB 21, fn 32

Knowledge as Archetype

- Gen. 4:1-2 is the first use of knew
 - Two aspects
 - 1) Expresses human intentionality proper to knowledge
 - 2) Refers to the whole reality of the conjugal union
- Knowledge indicates the deepest essence of married life
 - Three aspects of essence
 - 1) Part of the consciousness of the body
 - 2) There is a single subject of the conjugal act and its experience
 - 3) Man and woman reveal their self to each other through the body and sex, and this revealing is given in the mode of knowledge

Gift of Self through the Body

- For Scripture, *datum* is identical to *donum*
 - *Datum* means that which is given
 - *Donum* means gift
- *Datum* is stressed in Gen. 4:1-2
 - The *datum* is body and sex which enter directly into the structure and content of knowledge
 - This knowledge is conjugal knowledge
- Through being man and woman, each is given to the other as an unique, unrepeatable subject, as a gift of person to another person
 - This is not a passive object being given that is defined by body, sex, or “nature”

Reflections on Sex

- Sex is decisive for somatic individuality
 - Somatic comes from the Greek word, soma, meaning body, so we are discussing here bodily individuality
- Sex defines personal identity and concreteness
 - In this identity man is unrepeatably masculine, woman is unrepeatably feminine
 - The man and woman become known
 - The one flesh union becomes established
 - Knowledge penetrates the innermost roots of human identity and concreteness because of sex
 - This concreteness implies the uniqueness and unrepeatability of the person

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