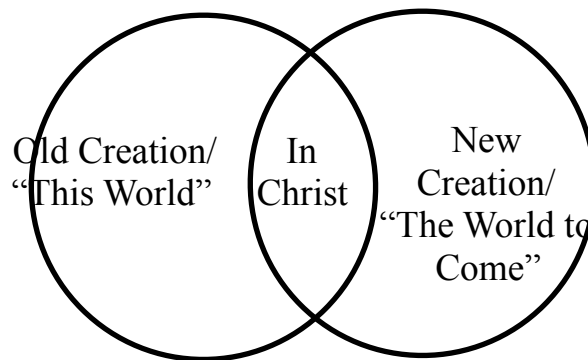


Married Life vs. Celibacy (4th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B)

1 Corinthians 7:32-35—Married Life vs. Celibacy

³² I want you to be free from anxieties. *The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord;* ³³ *but the married man is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please his wife,* ³⁴ *and his interests are divided. And the unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please her husband.* ³⁵ I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your *undivided devotion to the Lord.* (1 Corinthians 7:32-35)

1. Paul's theology of the "this world" and the "world to come" (1 Cor 7:31):



2. Unmarried Man: anxious about "the affairs of the Lord" (7:32)
3. Married Man: anxious about "worldly affairs" and how to please "his wife" (7:32)
4. Unmarried Woman: anxiety about "affairs of the Lord" (7:34)
5. Virgin: the word "girl" (RSV) is actually "virgin" (Greek *parthenos*) (7:34)
5. Married Woman: anxious about "worldly affairs" (7:34)

The Living Tradition

Catechism: *Virginity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven* is an unfolding of baptismal grace, a powerful sign of the supremacy of the bond with Christ and of the ardent expectation of his return, *a sign which also recalls that marriage is a reality of this present age which is passing away.* (CCC 1619; cf. Mark 12:25; 1 Cor 7:31)

Catechism: All the ordained ministers of the Latin Church, with the exception of permanent deacons, are normally chosen from among men of faith who live a celibate life and who intend to remain *celibate* "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven." *Called to consecrate themselves with undivided heart to the Lord and to "the affairs of the Lord,"* [

1 Cor 7:34] they give themselves entirely to God and to men. (CCC 1579)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (4th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B)

1. What was Paul’s view of consecrated celibacy? How does fit into his Jewish concept of “two worlds”—this world, and the world to come?

For Further Reading

1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (trans. F. R. Larcher, O.P.; eds. J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón; Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012).
2. Gerald Bray, ed. *1-2 Corinthians* (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament VI; Downers Grove, IL.: IVP, 1999).
3. George T. Montague, SM, *First Corinthians* (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).