

Pastoral Council
Thoughts for Reflection
April 24, 2016

Marriage and the Family

The final battle between the Lord and the reign of Satan will be about marriage and the family....”

(Sister Lucia writing on the apparition of the Virgin at Fatima)

Anyone who has paid any attention to the world news – the mainstream media and agenda driven liberal press – might think that the pope had changed Church teaching. “Francis’ Message Calls on Church to be Inclusive” (NY Times). “Pope Francis eases the way for divorced Catholics” (LA Times).

Two weeks ago, I listened to a discussion of *Amoris Laetitia* led by Bishop Morlino. He made three main points:

- 1) Read Chapter 4 first. Read it even if you read none of the rest of it. Chapter 4 is a poetic ode to marriage, the beauty of the sacrament, how we are perfected in marriage, and how it speaks to the world of God’s love. Then read 1-7.
- 2) Nothing has changed in Church teaching. Transgender and same-sex union ideologies are rejected. Divorced and remarried Catholics, who have not had their first marriages annulled, are not permitted to receive communion.
- 3) Chapter 8 is difficult to understand. There are passages that are confusing, even muddy, in their meaning. When reading confusing passages, always refer back to the earlier Church documents that provide clear teaching. Then read the confusing parts in the light of those clear teachings, because defined Church teaching is eternal and universal. It cannot change or be changed to suit a particular time or place.

Sister Lucia’s words straddle this article, because they define the Catholic response to the world’s religion of insanity. Satan wants to corrupt the world and to destroy God’s supernatural kingdom. By confusing the meaning of things, particularly the meaning of marriage and family, he will attempt to ruin as many souls as possible. It is hard to continue to stand for the truth in an age that loves falsity, but let’s hold fast to the Church’s unambiguous and immutable teachings, and let us have no fear of the serpent:

“...Don’t be afraid ... because anyone who operates for the sanctity of marriage and the family will always be contended and opposed in every way, because this is the decisive issue... however, Our Lady has already crushed its head”