

Love Bears Fruit

August 2018

"Finally, [married] love is fecund (fruitful). It is not confined wholly to the loving interchange of husband and wife; it also contrives to go beyond this to bring new life into being.

"Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the procreation and education of children. Children are really the supreme gift of marriage and contribute in the highest degree to their parents' welfare."

(Humanae vitae no. 9)

Reflection

All love bears fruit. For married couples, fruitful love most often results in children. Indeed, our faith tells us that married love is designed by God ("ordained") to the procreation and education of children (see *Gaudium et spes*, 50). Children are not objects to be "had" in marriage—every child is "someone" with an eternal destiny whom God has created to love and be loved.

The fruitfulness of married love for couples who are unable to have children, expresses itself in varied ways. "Their marriage can radiate a fruitfulness of charity, of hospitality, and of sacrifice" (CCC 1654). They can also open their lives to adopting children who need homes. Fruitful love after all, pulls couples out of themselves and asks them to be "at the service of life" (CCC 1653).

We are reminded of these truths in the Gospel of John, when Jesus tells us to remain in him, for whoever remains in him and in his love will bear much fruit (see John 15:1-17). It is this love for Christ that bears fruit—this going outward for the sake of the other, as after Jesus tells his disciples about the vine and the branches he says, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13).

It is important to consider how to be "at the service of life" in one's state in life. Are you married, is God calling you to be open to receiving a child? In what way is the Lord calling you to be fruitful?

Intercessory Prayer to Paul VI

God our Father,
fill all married couples
with your love.

Give them the grace
to love one another every day,
so that they may live out their promise to love
and to love in a way which looks beyond themselves.

Help them to imitate your
freely given, sacrificial love,
that they may choose each day
to give of themselves,
and so reflect your love for us
when you sent your Son to
die for our sins.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,
Paul VI, pray for us!
Amen.

