



Gestures— Sex and the Cross

By : Dan Kenney, MA

When Dan Van Anne pats me on the butt, its allowed...even appreciated. When my dad pats me on the butt its creepy and when the grocer at the corner store does it, its illegal.

Dan can do it because we played college football together. He was the quarterback and I was his fullback. My job was to protect him and his job was to win football games for us. The occasional pat on the butt after I saved him from a backside hit? A perfectly appropriate and appreciated gesture that communicated to me his thankfulness for a job well done and said something about the nature of our relationship.

There's lots of physical gestures we use, without thinking... but they all communicate something, something about the relationship we have with people.

don't hug just anybody and if you are me and my brothers, you don't hug at all. Actually, if you are me and my brothers, you invent a non-hug way of hugging that communicates both that we are brothers and also that we are idiots.

We stand up for certain people, bow to others, hold hands with some, refuse to touch a few, and if we are dopey hollywood types, we do the double cheek kiss to show everyone else how sophisticated we really are. ... *Continued on page 2*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|--|---|
| Gestures — Sex and the Cross | 1 |
| The Love of Life | 3 |
| “Many people are concerned...” | 3 |
| SNAPSHOT: Blessed Louis and Zelig Martin | 4 |
| Resources | 4 |

We shake hands with lots of people but shake hands in a certain way with other men around the conference room and then quite another way with an old woman at church. We



Christ on the Cross, by El Greco (1585-1590)

DID YOU KNOW????

Fertility appreciation is the foundation of the CREIGHTON MODEL System. Fertility appreciation views a woman's fertility as a normal and healthy process. It is a precious gift from God—a gift to be loved, respected, understood and wisely used. In marriage, fertility appreciation enables couples to value, respect and understand their fertility. This also gives them a deeper appreciation of relating in a multidimensional way, which they learn to do with SPICE—developing a spiritual, physical, intellectual, creative/communicative, and emotional relationship.

As a system of family planning, the CrMS can be used to both achieve and avoid pregnancy. In the June 1998 issue of the Journal of Reproductive Medicine, a large use-effectiveness study of the CrMS revealed that this system has a method effectiveness (perfect use) of 99.5 percent and a use effectiveness (typical use) of 96.8 percent when used to avoid pregnancy. On the other hand, when used to achieve pregnancy in couples of normal fertility, the effectiveness is 76% in the first cycle of use and 98% by the sixth cycle.

A newsletter dedicated to helping young women

Gestures – Sex and the Cross ...continued

Continued from page 1

...The point is this. Our bodily gestures communicate something very real about the relationship we have with other people.

And with our spouses? We have sexual intercourse. And boy does that communicate something about our relationship. This gesture is extreme to be sure. There is a total nakedness, a total embrace to where it is hard to know where one begins and the other ends. The term sex itself is derived from the latin word to cut. In our creation as sexual beings, its like we have been cut off from each other. As if when we are separated, we realize that we are pieces of a puzzle that are meant to be together. And at some age, what is so obvious physically begins to awaken in the rest of our being.

And so in the sexual embrace we do come together and there is an actual physical sharing with the other, in a really extreme, total and complete way. And boy doesn't it say something incredible about the nature of the relationship of the people who share this particular gesture?

Prayer FOR THE Unborn

Jesus, Mary,
and Joseph,
I love you
very much.

I beg you to
spare the life of
the unborn child
that I have
spiritually
adopted,
who is in
danger of
abortion.
Amen.

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

It says that this gesture is so radical, so extreme, so unique, so incredible, so unifying that the relationship of the people sharing this gesture must be utterly unique, incredible, complete, unified, and lasting. In other words, the relationship must be a loving marriage.

You shake hands with lots of people, fist bump some, hug a few, pat a couple on the butt, kiss a few on the cheek, some on the lips, hold a few hands, but intercourse? That's the penultimate physical gesture! You reserve this incredible, fantastic, amazing, naked gesture....for.....one...only one.

You see, in giving us the gift of the other person, the one with whom we could share love, God gave us everything we need to

be happy. The initial victory of the devil was getting humans to doubt that God really had given us all that we needed to be happy. And the sorry history of humanity has been a tortured tale of us humans deciding for ourselves what we need to be happy...and then taking it.

And into this drama, God entered to give us a new Human Gesture. I spoke too soon when I called sex the ultimate human gesture; it no longer is. For if sex carries such deep meaning about how a man and woman love and care for each other in a total way, think about the gesture that Jesus gave us that tells us even more. Jesus gave us a gesture, one given for all sinners, a gesture that shows not just that a man was willing to give everything for us....but that God was willing to give up everything for us.

In a stroke of redemption that not only really saved us but in one that really said something to us very profound; Jesus gave us the gesture of a man, beaten, bloodied and stretched high on a cross.

And what the Cross communicates to us destroys the Devil's lie that God was unwilling to Give us everything (Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?). Whenever the Devil tempts us that God really doesn't have our interests at heart; that this other way of acting or behaving, the way that I want to act, is okay (You certainly will not die!); whenever the Devil tempts us in this way; Christ's broken body shouts down to us from the Cross! Remember child, you can trust that voice in your gut because as you can see, I have not withheld anything from you; I've given you everything.....down to my last drop of blood and my own last breath.

So chest bump whomever you wish; do your little french double cheek kiss if you must; hold hands if its appropriate; and if you played football feel free to go with the occasional butt pat. But sexual intercourse? That says something profound. Don't listen to everybody these days who suggest that sex means nothing. They are wrong. Sex says a lot. Sex means a lot.

And the Cross? It says and means even more.

Thankfully, Christ has entered into an eternal marriage...with the whole Church. And the Cross is Christ's marriage proposal and covenant with each one of us. And our response?

To Accept the proposal. To say yes to Christ in Faith. And then repent and pick up.....our cross....of course!

Dan Kenney, husband to Teresa Kenney, APRN, CFCP, has a Masters in Theology. He writes children books and is author of the blog "Dan Kenney: Writing about the Catholic Life".

The Love of Life

By: Monsignor Ignacio Barreiro-Carámbula

In 2013, it will be 40 years since the Supreme Court's right-to-abortion decisions.

On January 22, 1973, the Roe v. Wade ruling established a right to abortion and said that a fetus is "potential life" rather than a person.

On the same day, Doe v. Bolton decided that a woman seeking abortion for maternal health reasons could not be limited by the state.

Since 1973, there have been over 55,000,000 abortions.

From USCCB "Summary of Roe v Wade and Other Key Abortion Cases" and NRLC "Abortion Statistics: United States Data and Trends"

Love is not merely a feeling, but is rather the desire for the best possible good for those whom we love. Through our natural intelligence and through Divine Revelation we become aware of the value of this most basic of all gifts which is life. Mere reason leads us to comprehend that it is better to be alive than never have been in existence. The knowledge of the value of life that comes through revelation leads us to understand better this gift and to appreciate it: as a result, we worship and love more and more the Giver of this gift. This love is what moves us to protect the life of the unborn or any who might be unjustly treated. We are also led to protect women that might feel tempted or forced to commit abortion, as we know the devastating consequences that abortion will have in their lives. Last but not least we have to love, even if most of them seem to be utterly unlovable, the many perpetrators of abortion: medical personnel, and pro-abortion activists and politicians. We have to do everything that we can to convince them of their errors so that they repent and change their ways, both for their own benefit and for the benefit of society. ...

does not intervene directly in the world; He does it through our free collaboration in his plans of salvation. He gives to us the saving truths through Holy Scripture, our natural reason and the mediation of the Church and we have to manifest them in our daily lives. If we love those truths we should be impelled to share them with all whom the Lord places in front of us. So when we speak with love and conviction of those truths we cannot be accused of carrying out an exaggerated rhetoric when we defend human life from its biological beginning until natural death. Nobody in his right mind can call it "vitriolic rhetoric" when we denounce that millions upon millions of unborn babies have been killed in the womb in the U.S. and in the rest of the world. It is literally a question of life and death, for the victim, for the mother of the baby and for the perpetrator of abortion, assisted suicide or euthanasia. The victim will have his earthly life terminated; the mother will suffer greatly for her actions, and the perpetrator and the mother will live under the shadow of the unhappiness of having rejected the loving truths of their Creator and certainly they will place their eternal salvation in jeopardy. Our main solidarity has to be always with the victim of the crime, because if the conscience of the nation is not moved by this growing injustice, we know that a growing number will be victimized in the future. Our solidarity is also with the mothers of those babies because often they have been misled or forced into committing this terrible action.

This manner of creation brings us to understand the unique essential dignity of every human being. ...A person might be born with a disability, or may suffer disability through injury or disease, but these deprivations do not affect his basic dignity. ...

We are also created to be collaborators in the salvation of the World. The Lord normally

Last but not least we wish and pray that all abortionists will understand the terrible consequences of their actions and be converted.

Excerpted from Spirit & Life, Monsignor Ignacio Barreiro-Carámbula, Interim President, Human Life International

Many people are concerned with children of India, with the children of Africa where quite a few die of hunger, and so on. Many people are also concerned about the violence in this great country of the United States.

These concerns are very good. But often these same people are not concerned with the millions being killed by the deliberate decision of their own mothers. And this is the greatest destroyer of peace today —abortion which brings people to such blindness.

—Blessed Teresa of Calcutta



Images courtesy of Microsoft Office clipart online, 2012 (images from Microsoft Partner StockPhoto)



Resources

www.popepaulvi.com

www.DrHilgers.com

www.fertilitycare.org

<http://www.chastity.com>

<http://vocation-network.org>

www.onemoresoul.com

www.ewtn.com

SNAPSHOT: Blesseds Louis & Zélie Martin

"I", said Zélie Martin, "love children to madness. I was born to have them." This home, however, might never have existed. Louis Martin, at age 20, was in Switzerland as an apprentice in watchmaking. He discovered the highest monastery in Europe, the Hermitage of the Great St. Bernard of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine, helps to mountain climbers during avalanches. The prior was firm: no knowledge of Latin, no postulancy in the monastery. Disappointed, Louis returned to the plain of Alençon and became a watchmaker.

For her part, Zélie Guérin, who wanted to be admitted to the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul of Alençon, met with the superior, who said she had no vocation. Zélie decided then to go to lacemaking school to be initiated into the formidable art of precision of making Point d' Alençon lace, a "collective masterpiece." In 1853, at twenty-two years of age, she established herself, with her sister Elise as a "manufacturer of Point d' Alençon" ...

The watchmaker married the lacemaker on July 13, 1858 in the Church of Notre Dame at Alençon. "They were married and had many children." Thus ended the tales that delighted us in childhood. ...

Louis and Zélie live a Passion, each in her or his own manner. When, in December 1876, Zélie learns that she has an inoperable cancer that leaves her without hope, Louis is "overwhelmed;" panic takes over his household.

With a heroic courage, Zélie faces death, working until the limit of her strength, going to Mass each morning until the end. A pilgrimage to Lourdes, filled with deplorable incidents, will add still more to her sufferings. Her worry is the future of her five daughters. She worries above all for "poor Léonie," who, as Zélie knows, is more fragile than the other girls. Zélie will leave her family on August 28, 1877. ...

The passion of Louis will be of another kind. From November 1877 onward, he lived as a renter in the house of the Buissonnets, which he leased in Lisieux. He accepted giving all his daughters in turn to God: Pauline (1882); Marie (1886); Léonie (who would make several tries in religious life and would finally become a Visitation nun in Caen in 1899); next his little Queen, Thérèse (1888). Céline enters the Carmel in 1894.

Louis's shaky health deteriorated more and more until a serious attack made it necessary for him immediately to enter the Bon Sauveur asylum in Caen... in 1889 people called it the "insane asylum" ...Unhealed, Louis Martin was returned to the Guérin family, who lodged him next door to their house in Lisieux, where Céline aided him night and day. ...He is like a child who perpetually asks for help. He dies on July 29, 1984, and is buried in the Lisieux cemetery.

From: *Louis and Zélie Martin: A marriage of love* by Guy Gaucher, O.C.D., auxiliary bishop emeritus of Bayeux and Lisieux, published in French in Feu et Lumière no. 230, July/August 2004 at <http://www.feuetlumiere.org/rencontrer-dieu/amis-de-dieu/louis-et-zelie-martin.html>, translated by Susan Ehler for thereseoflisieux.org



Louis and Zélie Martin,
parents of St. Therese of Lisieux

Among the vocations to which people are called by Providence, marriage is one of the most noble and elevated. Louis and Zélie understood that they could sanctify themselves not despite marriage but through, in, and by marriage, and that their nuptials would be considered as the starting point for a rising together. Today the Church...is reflected in this Blessed couple who contribute to make more splendid and beautiful the gown of a bride married in the Church. She...recognizes in this couple the eminent holiness of the institution of conjugal love as conceived by the Creator himself. The conjugal love of Louis and Zélie Martin is a pure reverberation of the love of Christ for his Church, but it is also a pure reverberation of the love "resplendent, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and immaculate" (Ephesians 5:27) in the manner that the Church loves her spouse: the Christ. The Father "chose us before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before him, in love" (Ephesians 1:4). ...

But what is the secret of the success in their Christian life? "You have been told, O man, what is good and what the Lord requires of you: Only to do the right, and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Louis and Zélie: a man and a woman who walked humbly with God in search of the counsel of the Lord. "Master, give us your opinion." They looked for the counsel of the Lord. They thirsted after the counsel of the Lord. They loved the counsel of the Lord. ...And to be sure and certain of walking in the true counsel of the Lord, they always turned toward the Church...

Louis and Zélie are a gift for young engaged couples because of the courage they showed in obeying the Church even when this required them to go against the tide, to go against their inclination. ...Louis and Zélie are a gift for spouses of all ages through the esteem, the respect, and the harmony with which they loved each other in marriage for nineteen years. ...Louis and Zélie are a gift for parents by the evangelical abnegation with which, in common agreement, they wanted many children to offer to the Lord. ...Louis and Zélie are a gift for educators because they respected and wisely guided the vocational choices of their children. ...Louis and Zélie are a gift for all those who have lost a spouse. ...Louis and Zélie are a gift for those who must face coming death.

From: *Witness of Conjugal Love*, Homily of Cardinal José Saraiva Martins, at the beatification of Louis and Zélie Martin, Lisieux, World Day of Missions, October 19, 2008. Translated by Susan Ehler for thereseoflisieux.org.

Pope Paul VI Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction

6901 Mercy Road • Omaha, NE 68106-2621 • (402) 390-6600

www.popepaulvi.com • Comments/questions: popepaul@popepaulvi.com