tive love for humanity that informs and enables the “great commandment” of love described in the Gospels. Ethically, then, every person should be treated as both an alter ego and an alter Christus. Minimally, this requires that in the gift of self in love each person should not be used as a means to one’s own ends in utilitarian fashion. Self-donation, including bodily self-donation, on the part of persons must be offered and received in unconditional respect and love.

Furthermore, though much modern ideology has trumpeted the liberation of sexuality from the repressive confines of commitment, this proclamation can be challenged on a variety of grounds: empirical observation of the havoc wreaked on familial and social relationships by this ideology; the biblical paradigm of sexual intimacy as a covenant ratifying gesture; the sacramental theology of marriage that grew from this paradigm; and faithfulness as a dimension of Christian character. For Christians, respect for persons as male and female also requires respect for the meaning of sexual union discerned within the Scriptures and an understanding of how it relates to their call to follow Jesus as disciples. This false concept of sexual freedom is also fundamentally at odds with the virtue of chastity as understood within the Christian tradition.

B. Lust and Practices Opposed to Chastity

Just as classical virtue theory specified certain vices that opposed each virtue, these anthropological reflections have still further implications with regard to the vice of lust and specific practices opposed to chastity. Such vicious practices distort and impede the person’s capacity for self-donation. These acts can be internal to the mind and heart or externalized in action and behavior.

1. Interior Acts of Lust

As noted in the previous chapter, the Church’s theological tradition has understood lust to be disordered desire for sexual pleasure or a fixation on sexual pleasure to the exclusion of other purposes of human sexuality (i.e., procreation and interpersonal union). Within the interior of the person this vice often takes the form of lust-inspired sexual fan-
tasy—choosing to dwell upon sexual images or acts for the purpose of enjoying the pleasure that they produce. Such fantasies often abstract sex from any interpersonal context, from the dignity of persons, and from the real moral values at stake in sexual activity—for example, the unmarried person who fantasizes about sexual acts, the married person who fantasizes about romantic or sexual involvement with someone other than his or her spouse.54 These kinds of thoughts, even if never acted upon, undermine the person's freedom to perceive and live the good as an embodied, sexual being.55 They undercut the self-possession necessary to make a gift of oneself in love.

But this is not to say by any means that all thought about sexual matters is lustful. From an ethical perspective, a decision to stir up lust through sexual fantasy should be distinguished from fantasies produced by the unconscious (i.e., dreams) or spontaneous sexual thoughts.56 It should also be distinguished from chaste sexual desire or use of the imagination which perceives the sexual attractiveness of others as integral persons. Finally, it should be noted that there are many reasons for which one might legitimately think about sex that are not in themselves opposed to chastity—for example, doctors and therapists attempting to help patients overcome sexual problems, educators attempting to impart a deeper understanding of authentic human sexuality, spouses seeking to better integrate their sexual relationship into the fabric of their mutual love.

2. Pornography

Fuel for interior acts of lust can be provided by pornographic words or images. Pornography takes real or simulated sexual acts and displays

54. It is possible, of course, for a married person to be guilty of lust in relation to his or her spouse—even interiorly. To do so would be to view him or her as merely an object of sexual gratification rather than as a person to be respected and loved through the means of bodily union. It is for this reason that Pope John II observed (using the biblical idiom) that spouses can “commit adultery in their hearts” in relation to one another. See his weekly general audience of October 8, 1980, in Theology of the Body, 156–59.
55. On the impact of lust on free moral choice, see Cessario, Introduction to Moral Theology, 111–12.
56. The former is a human act and thus the subject of moral evaluation. The latter are involuntary acts of a human. For a more complete discussion of the role of the voluntary in the moral life, see Cessario, Introduction to Moral Theology, 100–115.
them for third parties for purposes of entertainment or profit. The rapid access to information made possible by the growth of the Internet has also made pornographic materials far more widely available—at least in wealthier areas of the world. This growth of information technology has also made it harder for civil authorities to prevent the production and distribution of such materials or even to restrict access to them by the young or by sexual predators.

Production or use of pornographic materials is contrary to both chastity and justice. They are a demonic icon of fallen sexuality, distorting the beauty of the body and the mutual self-gift of the conjugal act to a form of voyeuristic fixation on anonymous body parts. They fail to respect the dignity and subjectivity of those whom they portray. Even if they participate in them willingly, persons who engage in the production of pornographic materials are stripped not just of their clothing, but of their dignity as persons. They are treated as mere objects for the sexual consumption and enjoyment of others. Particularly grave harm is done to vulnerable persons such as children or disadvantaged women who are coerced into participation in the making of these materials. Those who produce and distribute pornography violate justice by profiting from the exploitation of others and by being an occasion of scandal to the public. Those who buy or use pornography formally cooperate in this degradation of other human beings and thus sin not only against chastity, but against justice and love as well.

3. Masturbation

Often those who feed sexual fantasy with pornographic materials seek to heighten the pleasure they seek through masturbation—that is, genital stimulation to the point of orgasm outside the context of intercourse. Indeed, these practices often form an unhealthy cluster of mu-

57. Cf. CCC, 2354.
58. Pope John Paul II uses this line of argument to draw a subtle distinction between authentic art that happens to involve nudity and pornography. Art, the pope argues, always portrays the subjectivity and hence the dignity of those it portrays. Pornography, on the other hand, isolates the sexual characteristics of the person from his or her total personal reality and therefore presents those it portrays as objects for the use and satisfaction of others. See the weekly general audiences of April 15, 22, and 29, and of May 6, 1981, in Theology of the Body, 218–29.
tually reinforcing behaviors that can become addictive for who practice them. Lustful fantasy inspired by pornography frequently seeks release through masturbation. A person trapped in such a pattern may seek to increase his or her level of sexual pleasure by engaging in other kinds of sexual acting out—having recourse to prostitution, or engaging in clandestine affairs. Conversely, a person in the grip of these vicious habits may withdraw from others, solipsistically preferring the pleasure derived from fantasies without the vulnerability of interpersonal exchange necessary to real relationships. As William Kraft expresses it, “Masturbation can lead to an affair with oneself.”

Though it is not an uncommon practice among adults and adolescents, the Catholic tradition has generally regarded masturbation as seriously disordered. This is because it seeks sexual pleasure in isolation from the basic purposes of sexuality—an interpersonal union of love and the procreation and education of children. Masturbation can achieve neither of these ends. As such it does not enable a Christian to realize his or her vocation to love—whether as single, celibate, or married. The fixation on genital pleasure and release in isolation from the transcendent meaning of human sexuality frustrates the capacity to freely give oneself in love that is the hallmark of chastity. Instead, it accords well with the current ideology dominant in Western culture which truncates the meaning of sex to personal pleasure through ecstatic release.

While the practice of masturbation is itself a grave violation of chastity, the Church’s tradition has also increasingly recognized that one’s culpability for such an act might be greatly impacted by age, psychosexual maturity, and other circumstances. Such factors can lessen or

59. See Mark Laeter, Faithful and True: Sexual Integrity in a Fallen World (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 1996), 25–29. It is interesting to note that many of Laeter’s descriptions of the compulsion generated by sexual addiction bear a great deal of resemblance to the classical moral tradition’s understanding of the vice of lust.


even minimize a person's culpability for engaging in such an act. Thus the moral culpability of an adolescent who uses masturbation to relieve hormone-induced sexual tension or the psychological pain and pressure experienced by a man struggling with infertility who engages in masturbation as part of a medical procedure designed to diagnose or treat this condition will be different from that of a relatively mature adult who engages in the practice out of boredom or curiosity. But even when a person's culpability is minimal, the act itself remains morally bad and therefore in no way contributes to growth in chastity.

4. Extramarital Sex

Another fundamental distortion of the meaning of human sexuality and the dignity of person is sexual activity between persons who are not irrevocably committed to one another in marriage. When two unmarried persons engage in sex the biblical and theological tradition has named it fornication. When one or both parties are married to another, the tradition has termed it adultery. Throughout its history, the Church has condemned these practices and institutions that have attempted to legitimize them such as concubinage. Today this opposition is often directed against "trial marriages" and "free unions" (i.e., the various forms of cohabitation) as well as casual sexual encounters. The fact that these practices have become more widespread and socially acceptable in many Westernized societies is undoubtedly one of the legacies of the sexual revolution. If the pill and other modern contraceptives removed the burden of children from marriage, practices such as casual sex and cohabitation have removed the obligation of marriage from the pursuit of sex and companionship.

In light of the understanding of sexual union as a covenental and

62. Cf. CCC, 2352.
64. Within the United States, across all age groups, there has been a 45 percent increase in cohabitation from 1970 to 1990. While 11 percent of couples cohabited in the United States between 1965 and 1974, at present 50 percent of marriages are preceded by cohabitation (and many cohabiting couples never marry). See the statistics and sources summarized in Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women and Youth, Marriage Preparation for Cohabiting Couples: An Informational Report on New Realities and Pastoral Practices (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1999), 3–7.
sacramental activity described above, the moral evil of these actions is evident. To engage in sexual activity is to imply an unconditional and faithful gift of self within the covenant of marriage. It is to somatically articulate a particular kind of language of unconditional fidelity and self-donation, reflective of Christ's self-offering to the Church. However, when no such covenant exists between the two persons, such a language, whether spoken with the body or verbally, becomes an untruth, a falsehood.\(^65\) The words or deeds of sexual expression are not adequate to the truth of the relationship between the two persons. It therefore violates the dignity of both parties and undermines their capacity to give themselves in love and truth. It also risks committing a grave injustice to children who might be conceived through such a union and born to unmarried parents, or worse, destroyed within their mother's wombs. Sex between persons not married to one another thus violates justice, truth, and chastity. When such persons are married to another there is an even more grave breach of fidelity through the violation of the marriage covenant.

Some authors have attempted to argue for a distinction between casual sex and so-called preceremonial sex (sex between persons who are not married but committed to one another in some way—e.g., through engagement).\(^66\) While the former is almost always morally evil, the latter, it is asserted, though a disvalue (i.e., "ontic evil") may not be morally evil in every case. This argument is faulty for a number of reasons. It ignores the fact that sexually active couples with only an emotional or an intentional commitment may never marry. It assumes that choosing evil (of whatever kind) has no impact on the character of the couple. And it suggests that marriage is nothing but a mere ceremony—a ritual devoid of efficacy. This assumption is contrary to the whole of the Church's sacramental theology, which insists on their being acts of Christ within the Church. To worship the eucharistic elements prior to the consecration is to engage in idolatry. To do so after is to recognize

\(^{65}\) See John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, Familiaris consortio, no. 11. This bears upon not only bodily sexual activity but also simulated sex through conversation (e.g., "phone sex") or through electronic means of communication (e.g., "cybersex" in an Internet chatroom).

the presence of Christ. So too with marriage. Sexual union prior to marriage is a travesty. Afterward it is a renewal and remembrance of the sacrament celebrated.

5. Prostitution

Another profound degradation of human sexuality and human persons can be found in prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual activity. Known as the “world’s oldest profession” because of its presence in both cultic and commercial forms in the ancient world, currently prostitution has become increasingly connected with pornography and the sex industry in many Western countries and has expanded in new forms of sexual slavery in the third world. In both cases the practice generally targets those who are vulnerable because of socioeconomic conditions and age—particularly women and children. Even more than sex between unmarried persons, prostitution and paid sexual performances depersonalize their participants. For in this case there is no friendship, emotional attachment, or knowledge of one another between those paid to perform sex acts and those who pay them. The prostitute or performer becomes nothing but an anonymous body to be bought and sold, a commodity to be consumed with no recognition of her or his personal dignity. Those who pay for these sexual services violate not only the dignity of the prostitute as a person but sin against themselves as body persons called to imperishable life. The practice is thus a violation of both chastity and justice. Those who force others into prostitution or profit from it commit an even more grave injustice; scandalizing others (particularly when they use children, adolescents, or other vulnerable persons) and poisoning communities in


69. Cf. 1 Cor 6:15–20; CCC, 2353.
which the practice takes place. It should be noted that the moral culpability of those who sell themselves as prostitutes can be minimized by force, the threat of violence, poverty, addiction, or other constraints upon their freedom.\footnote{See CCC, 2355.}

6. Sexual Harassment and Abuse

When the deformation of sexual activity into an assertion of power and control takes place in a public or professional arena, it is often identified as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment has come to be understood legally and ethically as taking a number of forms: unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors as a condition of employment, academic status, or treatment; or the creation of a hostile environment through conduct that interferes with another's ability to work or study.\footnote{On this topic, see J. Landau, "On the Definition of Sexual Harassment," Australasian Journal of Philosophy 77, no. 2 (1999): 216–23; and Anne E. Patrick, "Sexual Harassment: A Christian Ethical Response," Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics 19 (1999): 371–76. For an overview of the legal basis of sexual harassment claims, see Richard H. Hiers, "Sexual Harassment: Title VII and Title IX Protections and Prohibitions—The Current State of the Law," Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics 19 (1999): 391–406.} Usually in such cases there is a power differential between the two parties involved—a supervisor and a subordinate, a teacher and a student, a pastor and a parishioner, a doctor and a patient, a politician and an intern. This practice not only voids the meaning of sex as self-giving, it is fundamentally unjust because the misuse of power on the part of the person in the higher position breaches the integrity of his or her profession. It too therefore is opposed to both chastity and justice. Doctors, teachers, clerics, and even politicians undertake their profession to serve and help those entrusted to their care. When this position is used to prey on others for one's own sexual gratification, it is a betrayal of professional integrity and interpersonal justice.

When this conduct goes beyond merely creating a hostile environment or making unwanted sexual advances to sexual activity between a person in a superior position and one in a subordinate position, it can be described as a form of sexual abuse. The more the person preyed upon is vulnerable because of socioeconomic factors, mental illness, or age, the greater the violation of justice. The worst forms of sexual
abuse are directed against those incapable of full moral agency: the mentally ill, the mentally handicapped, and children.

Traditional moral analysis has treated such sins under the rubric of "seduction." However, such a designation risks ascribing too much moral agency to the abused party and obscuring the impact of the power differential in the relationship highlighted by more recent reflection on sexual harassment. When one adult with relatively equal status and authority (of whatever kind) manipulates another to whom he or she is not married to engage in sex, the designation of seduction is apt. When an adult in a position of authority (e.g., a parent, a cleric, a doctor) preys upon a child or mentally ill person, he or she is legally and ethically guilty of something closer to rape—even if no violence or physical coercion is involved. There are also a variety of cases in between—for example, the employer who requires sexual favors from an employee.

There are specific disorders that predispose individuals toward the sexual abuse of children. When an adult has recurrent and intense sexual urges and sexual fantasies (whether acted upon or not) involving prepubescent children, he suffers from pedophilia. When such urges and fantasies (and actual abuse) are directed toward postpubescent children (i.e., adolescents), the disorder is described as ephelophilia. Clinicians sometimes further divide these disorders into regressed and fixated forms.

The former refers to those whose primary sexual attraction is to adults of the opposite sex but who in situations of extreme stress regress psychosexually and become attracted to children. The latter refers to those whose primary sexual attraction is to children. Those with the regressed form of these disorders are far more responsive to clinical treatment than those with the fixated forms. It also appears that ephelophiles in

72. See, e.g., St. Thomas’s treatment of seduction as one of the parts of lust in his ST II-II, q. 154, a. 6.
73. For helpful overviews of these disorders, see Coleman, Human Sexuality, 79–89; and Peter Cimbolic, “The Identification and Treatment of Sexual Disorders and the Priesthood,” The Jurist 52 (1992): 598–614. The masculine pronoun is used here because, as Cimbolic notes, “the sex ratio is thought to be at least twenty males to every female with this class of disorders [paraphilias]” (p. 603).
74. See Coleman, Human Sexuality, 80, 85; Cimbolic, “Identification and Treatment,” 600–601.
general are more responsive to treatment than pedophiles. 75 Generally, these disorders are classified as paraphilias—that is, psychosexual disorders. 76 The exact relationship of these disorders to more recognizable sexual orientations is both complex and controversial. 77

While the presence of these disorders might lessen the culpability of those who engage in them, sexual abuse of children remains a monstrously evil and destructive act that requires decisive action from those who become aware of it. Children who are victims and their families are often devastated by this abuse and suffer lasting harm psychologically, morally, and spiritually. Because of this and because adults who molest children may have scores of victims, it is morally imperative that responsible parties who become aware of such acts report this abuse to civil authorities immediately. As one clinician notes, “A single child molester may commit hundreds of sexual acts on hundreds of children. To report one abuser is to perhaps save scores of future victims.” 78

7. Sexual Misconduct by Clerics and Vowed Religious

The Church, though it is the community of salvation constituted by the death and Resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy


76. Currently recognized paraphilias include exhibitionism, fetishism, frotteurism, pedophilia, sadomasochism, sexual sadism, transvestic fetishism, voyeurism, and other less-defined disorders such as ephebophilia. For a description of these disorders, see Cimbolic, “Identification and Treatment,” 802. However, some classify the fixated forms of them as sexual orientations akin to a heterosexual or homosexual orientation. Melvin Blanchette, S.S., and Gerald Coleman, S.S., in a recent article argue for five sexual orientations: heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, fixated pedophilia, and fixated ephebophilia; see “Priest Pedophiles,” America 186, no. 13 (April 22, 2002): 18–21. It is not clear on what clinical or theological basis these disorders are thus reified into sexual orientations.

77. Many pedophiles who abuse boys are in fact heterosexual in their sexual orientation. Ephebophilia is a less defined condition clinically, but it seems that ephobophilic are attracted to adolescents who correspond to their basic sexual orientation (heterosexual or homosexual), leading some to speak of a “repressed” or “stunted” form of these orientations. See Stephen Rossetti, “The Catholic Church and Child Sexual Abuse,” America 186, no. 13 (April 22, 2002): 8–15, esp. 11.

Spirit, is nonetheless made up of sinners. Few things make this point more clearly and tragically than sexual misconduct on the part of clerics and vowed religious. Such persons undertake promises of celibacy as a sign of the inbreaking of eternity into time in Christ and the eschatological union of the Church with her Bridegroom. Breaking these promises cannot but cast doubt on the reality of the mysteries that the celibate state is meant to signify. That is, these actions scandalize those in the Church and the broader society. Though not unknown throughout the Church’s history, cases of sexual misconduct by clerics and religious have received intensive treatment by the media in recent years—particularly instances of sexual abuse of children and adolescents.

The immorality of these acts by clerics and religious is evident. For the reasons described above, genital activity between unmarried persons violates both chastity and justice. When one of these individuals has made a promise of celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom of God there is a further violation of truthfulness and fidelity to this promise as well as the evil of scandal given to others by this failure. In most cases such actions may also be considered a form of sexual abuse—even when the victim is a “consenting adult”—since the state of the cleric or religious puts him or her in a position of spiritual authority over the other. When the victim is a mentally ill or handicapped person or a child, the betrayal by the cleric or religious is particularly heinous. The person who has promised him- or herself to God and the service of the Church who preys upon the vulnerable to satisfy emotional or sexual needs truly acts as a “wolf in sheep’s clothing.” Such acts do in calculable harm to victims, their families, parishes, and to the Church’s ability to evangelize and teach within a skeptical society.

Those in positions of pastoral authority (i.e., bishops and religious superiors) have moral obligations to both the clerics and religious under their authority and those whom they serve.79 If there is credible evidence that sexual misconduct has occurred, they have a responsibility to act to prevent further actual or potential harm to victims and further scandal to the community (usually this means removing a person from active

ministry until such evidence can be thoroughly examined). If such misconduct has violated civil law (e.g., cases involving sexual abuse of children), civil authorities should be notified so that appropriate criminal investigations and procedures can be undertaken. At the same time, those in pastoral authority must respect the rights of accused clerics and religious to be treated fairly and receive some form of due process so that they are not treated as guilty on the basis of even spurious accusations.80

While cases of sexual misconduct by clerics and religious, particularly those involving the abuse of minors, tightly evoke horror, some further observations are in order. Studies have found that disorders such as pedophilia are no more prominent among clergy and religious than among the population as a whole. Celibacy does not predispose those vowed to it to the abuse of children or other forms of aberrant sexual behavior.81 The vast majority of celibates live their vows and find them a means to grow in both chastity and love. Less clear is whether seminaries and the religious life attract a disproportionate number of those who have unresolved sexual problems and how to deal with this phenomenon if this proves to be the case.82

8. Sexual Violence and Coercion

Fundamentally contrary to the meaning of sexuality and its orientation toward love as well as to the dignity of persons is any form of sexual violence. Unfortunately, rape has had a long and ugly history as an expression of fallen human sexuality. It has been used not only as an outlet for individual lust, but as an expression of power individually and


82. Many have called for psychological testing of those in seminaries to identify and weed out pedophiles and ephebophiles since these disorders create observable and shared cognitive distortions. It is fairly clear that those who have these disorders are not fit for ordination or for religious life. Others have argued that the same holds for persons with homosexual orientations. However, this seems to overlook the complex relationship between sexual orientation and the abuse of children noted above and the fact that many persons with a homosexual orientation are able to live chastity in continence. For some initial discussions of these issues, see Rossetti, “Catholic Church,” 9–11; and Blanchette and Coleman, “Priest Pedophiles,” 18–21.
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corporately—for example, when used on a mass scale to induce terror during war. The victims of rape are typically those members of a community who are most vulnerable, particularly women and children.

There is some debate as to how to best understand and classify the evil involved in sexual violence. Much of the contemporary literature on sexual assault has argued that rape is fundamentally an assertion of power or dominance over another—it is not primarily a sexual act. While there is undoubtedly truth in this claim, it is undeniable that this particular form of violence is aimed at and experienced by the victim not just in the psyche but in her or his bodilyness. Because sexuality touches the very core of the person and therefore is a particular way in which the person is vulnerable to others, such violence is especially devastating. Even more destructive is when sexual violence takes place between persons who purport to be friends (e.g., “date rape”). More heinous still is when sexual assault occurs between spouses—for it violates the heart of the trust and mutual respect/love on which marriage is built. These practices are utterly incompatible with any form of interpersonal justice—let alone love.

Practices that use controlled forms of violence or simulated violence for purposes of sexual arousal (i.e., sadomasochism) are also morally objectionable. Even if employed between spouses, it is difficult to see how real or simulated violence is compatible with the gift of self in love that sexual union signifies. Pleasure derived from interpersonal love and that derived from one’s own or another’s pain are qualitatively different. It is therefore better to understand sadomasochistic practices as a disordered expression of sexuality.

85. For an overview of some of the pastoral and spiritual dimensions of the trauma inflicted by rape, see Mary D. Pellauer, “A Theological Perspective on Sexual Assault,” Christianity and Crisis 44 (1984): 250–55.
86. Unfortunately, the Catholic tradition’s understanding of the marital debits owed by spouses to one another has at times made it difficult to discern the tragic fact that sexual assault can and does occur between spouses. For an ethical analysis of marital rape, see Edward J. Bayer, Rape within Marriage: A Moral Analysis (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985). For an overview of the phenomenon, see Diana E. Russell, Rape in Marriage, rev. ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990).
87. For those who require such practices to become aroused sexually, this may
A still more subtle distortion of sexual activity into a statement concerning power occurs in sexual coercion or manipulation. This takes place when sex becomes a bargaining tool in a struggle for power between persons. This can happen, for example, when spouses use sex as a reward or withhold it as a punishment in return for certain behaviors on the part of their partner. Obviously, there can be many legitimate reasons why a spouse might defer a request for sexual relations on the part of his or her partner (e.g., illness, fatigue, concern about pregnancy when a couple has good reasons to avoid becoming pregnant), but when this is done for reasons of vengeance or to make a power statement, it too undercuts the mutual respect and love of spouses.\(^{87}\) In such cases, the language of control overwrites and deforms the word of love.

V. Conclusion

An appreciation of the human person as male or female created in the image of God can serve to deepen an understanding of the virtue of chastity and its requirements. Men and women are created for love, and this fundamental vocation is writ within their differences as embodied persons. Because they are fulfilled in the self-donation of love, men and women need to be accepted unreservedly and loved unconditionally in ways appropriate to their state in life. To engage in sexual practices that do nothing more than use persons as objects for sexual enjoyment, control, or an outlet for various psychological needs undercuts their dignity and belies their destiny in the eternal communion of love which is God’s true life. Hence lust-inspired sexual fantasy, masturbation, pornography, fornication, adultery, prostitution, sexual harassment and abuse, sexual misconduct by celibates, and sexual violence and coercion in differing degrees all deny the dignity of human persons and their vocation to love. These practices also courses those who engage in them, deadening their perception of the real values at stake in human sexuality and thwarting their growth in the self-possession that makes the gift of self in love possible.

\(^{87}\) Indicate a psychological disorder (one of the paraphilias akin to pedophilia). See Cimbolic, "Identification and Treatment," 599–604.

87. It also often indicates deeper problems in the marriage such as long-term resentment, hostility, or bitterness.