

Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth

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Bishop Kevin Vann Book on Marriage Set for Release

A new book authored by Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Bishop Kevin W. Vann that explores the sacrament of marriage will be released at a diocesan marriage ministry Mass which will be held at 5 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 17 at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, located at 861 Wildwood Lane in Grapevine.

Bishop Vann's book, *What God has Joined: A Catholic Understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage*, is published by Basilica Press as part of its "The Shepherd's Voice Series" and is the fifth book authored by Catholic bishops to be published by Basilica.

In *What God has Joined: A Catholic Understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage*, Bishop Vann discusses the sacramentality of marriage and the Catholic Church's teaching on the sacrament of marriage.

"The institution of marriage is facing serious challenges and threats today," Bishop Vann writes in the book's introduction. "In our postmodern culture the tendency is to view marriage through the lens of individual rights without referencing its relation either to God or to the common good of society. One result is a widespread

obliviousness to the fact that marriage is given us by God and rooted in a relationship with him."

Using a question and answer format, Bishop Vann explores in his book "The Sacrament of Marriage," "Marriage and Sexual Morality," "Living the Sacrament of Marriage," "Difficult Questions Concerning Marriage," and "Marriage Preparation."

In the opening chapter, Bishop Vann explains what marriage is to a Catholic:

"Marriage is a lifelong commitment and covenant of love pledged between a man and a woman. In marrying, they promise that with the help of God's grace they will love one another faithfully and fruitfully, with an exclusive and uncompromised love. Which means, among other things, that the possibility of the creation of new human life must be kept open, in accord with the first command God gave human beings (see *Genesis 1:28* and *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1604).

"This covenant of marriage would not be possible to keep were it not for the presence and power of Christ, who blesses, strengthens, and sustains the love between husband and wife. Christian marriage is 'the sacrament of the covenant of Christ and the Church,' and the source of its grace is Christ himself" (*CCC*, 1617 and 1642)."

In addition to being involved extensively in marriage preparation as a parish priest and working for years in a diocesan marriage tribunal, Bishop Vann said he thought of "my grandparents Les and Mary Jones, who were married for 64 years, and of my own parents, Bill and Theresa Vann, who recently celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary" as examples of what the Catholic Church teaches about marriage: "That marriage is for life."

The marriage ministry Mass will bring together more than 200 marriage ministers from throughout the Fort Worth Catholic Diocese followed by a dinner at which a copy of the Bishop's new book will be presented to each participant. A copy of the Bishop's book also will be given to each couple that enrolls in Catholic marriage preparation for the next year.

Previous books in The Shepherd's Voice Series include *Catholic in the Public Square* by Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix, *A Will to Live: Clear Answers on End of Life Issues* by Archbishop José Gomez of San Antonio and *Draw Near to Me, O Lord: Heartfelt Prayers for Everyday Life* by Francis Cardinal Arinze, who directs the Vatican's Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

What God has Joined: A Catholic Understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage, is available through Basilica Press. The cover price is \$5.95. Basilica Press is located at 111 Ferguson Court, Ste. 102, Irving, TX 75062 or by calling 888-570-5182. The web address is: www.basilicapress.com.