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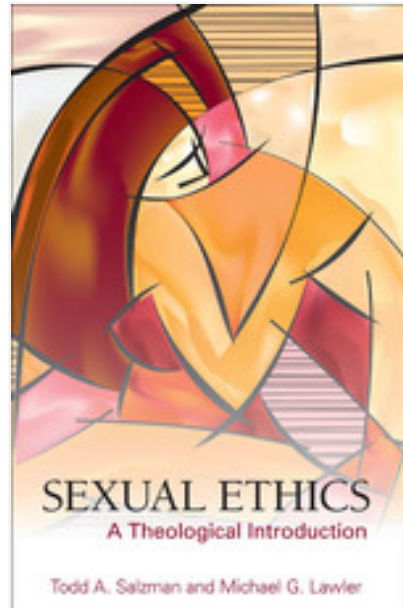


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Sexual Ethics: A Theological Introduction

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☐ **Prologue** (pp. xiii-xxx)

Our earlier book, *The Sexual Person: Toward a Renewed Catholic Anthropology*, was highly acclaimed by its academic critics and was selected by the Catholic Press Association as the best theological book of 2009. That book, however, was written primarily for our fellow theologians, and that, countless readers told us, made it a difficult read for those who were not theologically trained. That complaint, allied to a fairly common request for a Catholic book on sexual morality that “people in the pews” and “my students” can understand, is the origin of this book. It is offered to the general educated Catholic...

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☐ **CHAPTER 1 Sexual Morality in the Catholic Tradition A Brief History** (pp. 1-46)

Human sexual activity and the sexual ethics that seeks to order it are both sociohistorical realities and are, therefore, subject to historicity. Before we embark on a presentation of contemporary Catholic sexual anthropology and ethics, therefore, it behooves us to look at their past history. We will do that in two stages. First, and briefly, we will consider the pre-Christian history that helped to shape Western understanding of human sexuality, sexual activity, and sexual ethics. Second, and more extensively, we will consider their understanding in specifically Catholic history. Before embarking on the history, however, we must first say a word...

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☐ **CHAPTER 2 Unitive Sexual Morality A Revised Foundational Principle and Anthropology** (pp. 47-94)

Theologians who espouse the theology articulated in *Gaudium et spes* find in it a foundational principle for judging all human activity, including human sexual activity: the principle of the human person adequately considered. A reasonable question immediately arises: What does it mean to consider the human sexual person adequately? In response to this question, we first formulate a foundational principle of human sexuality; second, we expand on the morally significant dimensions of that principle; and third, we draw insight from these dimensions in our reconstructed definition of complementarity to formulate a comprehensive explanation of a “truly human” sexual act.

In...

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☐ **CHAPTER 3 Marital Morality** (pp. 95-122)

In the previous chapter we advanced a theoretical foundational principle for making judgments about the morality of sexual actions. That principle was articulated as follows: Sexual actions within marriage by which a couple is united intimately and chastely are noble and worthy. Expressed in a manner that is truly human and justly loving, these actions signify and promote that mutual self-giving by which spouses enrich each other, their family, and their community with a joyful and thankful will.

We also reconstructed the idea of complementarity, initiated by Pope John Paul II, into holistic complementarity, comprised of orientation, personal, and genital...

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☐ **CHAPTER 4 Cohabitation and the Process of Marrying** (pp. 123-154)

Emmanuel Ntakirutimana expresses the Central African experience of marrying in the following words. “Where Western tradition presents marriage as a point in time at which consent is exchanged between the couple in front of witnesses approved by law, followed by consummation, the tradition here recognizes the consummation of a marriage with the birth of the first child. To that point the marriage was only being *progressively realized*.” Four years of field experience in East Africa taught us the same thing. We offer three points of clarification. First, the Western tradition to which Ntakirutimana refers is the Western tradition of only...

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☐ **CHAPTER 5 Homosexuality** (pp. 155-190)

One sexual issue is today tearing the Christian churches apart. It is the issue of homosexuality. In this chapter we consider this issue in the context of scripture and the Catholic moral tradition interpreted in contemporary historical context. Our approach is that mapped out by Pope Benedict XVI when he was Professor Joseph Ratzinger. “Not everything that exists in the Church must for that reason be also a legitimate tradition.... There is a distorting, as well as legitimate, tradition ... [and] ... [c]onsequently tradition must not be considered only affirmatively but also critically.” We critically reflect on traditional teaching on...

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☐ **CHAPTER 6 Artificial Reproductive Technologies** (pp. 191-220)

In the 1950s, the marketing of effective oral contraceptives made it possible to have sexual intercourse without reproduction; in the 1980s, the marketing of artificial reproductive technologies (ARTs) made it possible to reproduce without having sexual intercourse. The Catholic Magisterium argues against the morality of both artificial contraceptives and ARTs on the basis of its principle of the inseparability of the unitive and procreative meanings of sexual intercourse. We have already dealt at length with the teaching on contraception. In this chapter, we deal with the teaching on ARTs. The CDF’s *Instruction, Donum Vitae*, enunciates the principle: “The Church’s teaching...

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☐ **Epilogue** (pp. 221-232)

Throughout this book, we argue that Catholic sexual morality is institutionalized within the confines of marriage and procreation, and we examine the foundations of two principles that articulate the essence of that Catholic morality. The first principle states that “each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life.”¹ The second states that “any human genital act whatsoever may be placed only within the confines of marriage.”² In contemporary Catholic moral theology, two approaches to understanding these principles demarcate two schools of Catholic moral theology. There is, first, the classicist approach, which holds the principles as universal,...

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