

BENEDICT XVI PRAISES SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Notes How Human Love Is Foretaste of Heaven

VATICAN CITY, MAY 5, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI today praised the sacrament of marriage, saying it is "truly an instrument of salvation," not only for the couple, but also for society.

The Pope affirmed this during his English-language message at the end of the general audience, when he greeted participants in a family conference to be held in Sweden this month.

"Your message to the world is truly a message of joy, because God's gift to us of marriage and family life enables us to experience something of the infinite love that unites the three divine persons -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit," he said.

The Holy Father noted how human beings are made for love: "Indeed at the core of our being, we long to love and to be loved in return."

He continued, "Only God's love can fully satisfy our deepest needs, and yet through the love of husband and wife, the love of parents and children, the love of siblings for one another, we are offered a foretaste of the boundless love that awaits us in the life to come."

Worthwhile goal

Benedict XVI affirmed that marriage is an "instrument of salvation, not only for married people but for the whole of society."

And like any "worthwhile goal," he said, "it places demands upon us, it challenges us, it calls us to be prepared to sacrifice our own interests for the good of the other. It requires us to exercise tolerance and to offer forgiveness. It invites us to nurture and protect the gift of new life."

He reflected on those "fortunate enough to be born into a stable family," saying they "discover there the first and most fundamental school for virtuous living and the qualities of good citizenship."

The Pontiff concluded by encouraging "all of you in your efforts to promote a proper

understanding and appreciation of the inestimable good that marriage and family life offer to human society."

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