

Coming Up

Celebrate Love Seminars

A two day seminar for married couples exploring spirituality and sexuality in the Catholic context.

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| 2007 | |
| Masaka, Uganda | Nov 24 & 25 |
| 2008 | |
| Sydney, NSW | Mar 8 & 9 |
| London, GB | Mar 8 & 9 |
| Brisbane, QLD | Mar 8 & 9 |
| Christchurch, NZ | Mar TBD |
| Perth, WA | Mar TBD |
| Wodonga, NSW | Mar TBD |
| Warnervale, NSW | Apr 5 & 6 |
| Melbourne, VIC | Apr/May TBD |
| Kent, GB | Jun 7 & 8 |
| Sydney, NSW | Aug TBD |
| Brisbane, QLD | Sep TBD |
| Birmingham, GB | 1 & 2 Nov |
| Sydney, NSW | Nov TBD |

www.CelebrateLove.com.au

Embrace

Preparing to Live in Love

A six session programme for engaged couples preparing to marry in the Catholic Church.

Available Now!
in Brisbane, Sydney,
Central Coast,
Newcastle, Perth,
London

www.Embrace.org.au

Smart Loving Evening Talks 2007

Dates & Venues to be determined

www.CelebrateLove.com.au

Living Well Media Resources for Catholic Families

A selection of CDs & DVDs are available including Christopher West and Byron & Francine Pirola

www.LivingWellMedia.com.au

Smart Loving

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It doesn't matter anyway... or does it?

There's a curious thing that happens when a divorce touches a community. Where once parents, children, friends and siblings believed in the power of love and the permanency of marriage, confidence gives way to cynicism and uncertainty.

Instead of believing that children do best when living in the same home with both their parents, we find ourselves saying: "The most important thing is that they know they are loved by both their parents; it doesn't matter if they all live together or not." Instead of upholding the vision of a couple devoting their lives to each other and growing gracefully into old age, we find ourselves saying: "People live so long these days it's unrealistic to expect them to be happy with one person for their whole lives."

Some people would say that such changes in attitude are a positive sign of growth and maturity: we are moving from an unrealistic, idealised notion to one grounded in reality; we are moving with the times. Consequently those who refuse to abandon their ideals are seen to be 'trapped in the past' or 'out-of-touch with reality'.

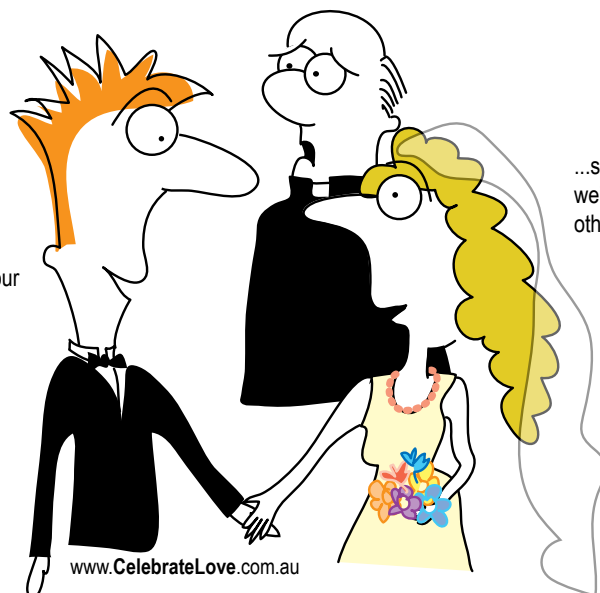
While this response is understandable, it is not helpful. It is a typical human reaction to want to avoid suffering. In the face of the tremendous pain of divorce and its lost dreams, it is natural to want to reduce it and avoid it. In our compassion for those in these situations, we don't want to sound judgemental. So redefining what is normal, or ideal, is one way of protecting ourselves from the pain, and others from perceptions that we are judging them. If we don't expect marriage to last a life time, then we won't be disappointed when it doesn't. If we don't expect children to live with both parents, then we won't be disappointed when they can't.

Unfortunately, this strategy may give short term relief, but usually delivers even more pain over the long term. Why? Because low aspirations leads to limited outcomes. No successful athlete, artist, musician or business person has succeeded by aspiring to failure. If we don't expect our marriage to last, chances are it won't. If we don't aspire to providing the stability of both parents in the one home, we can be almost certain that we won't. The first step towards rebuilding marriage as a life-long commitment in our society is believing it is both possible and optimal. Pretending 'it doesn't really matter' is unhelpful, to everyone involved.

Marriage Planning Disaster

Now that we're married, we're going to concentrate on our careers...

...so when we divorce, we'll have security and other interests.



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