

The Sacraments

Holy Matrimony

As with all the sacraments, the external relationship is merely pointing to an internal reality. Marriage is the outer symbol of an inner dynamic in growth. In the sacrament of marriage, if the relationship between two people is not catalytic to internal growth in awareness, there is no sanctity to the relationship – it is a profanity.

The promise of marriage is to be fully committed to one's own fullest integration of all splits and dualities within– most especially what Jung would call the anima and the animus, or the masculine and feminine energies inherent in all of us. For little boys, the feminine energy is suppressed and repressed due to the socialization process and in the girl child the feminine energies are repressed. The final internal marriage is the reconciliation of all the energies within into unity with self and with God.

Falling “in love,” is truly a falling or descent into the hell of living in projection. We marry that which is unconscious within ourselves and unless we reclaim that which is projected outwards, we can never be whole. For example, many women they have suppressed their masculine energies and then fall in love with the projection of their own capacity to earn money, be outwardly successful, protect themselves which are typically assigned to the males in our culture. Unless they find this within themselves, they will resent the other person for being their split off self. For many men in our culture, they have repressed emotions, needs and nurture and fall in love with this in a projection on to a woman who seems warm, nurturing and emotionally alive, only to resent her for living the projection of what is hidden within himself.

If a marriage is not working to bring about awareness and healing of projections in each person then there is no marriage – it is merely an economic bargain of convenience and pleasure, but also of hatred and need. Each person, through relating with the other, must take back the projection of themselves on to the other person and integrate it within themselves. In this way outer marriage becomes an inner marriage and both people are “saved,” or to use a Jungian term reach a fully realized individuation of themselves. At this point true loving relationship is possible... but it takes a long time to get there and mostly people do not get there together. Marriage can be a path to salvation. If understood correctly it is ultimately a partnership in becoming Whole. Whole, not split.

he two rings represent the masculine and feminine energies within that when integrated form a Vesica Pisces – the symbol of the completed journey and the realization of completion and wholeness within. It means that at the end of the journey there are two whole people capable of love, not two halves making a hate-filled whole of dependency.



Ask yourself if you have a good and mature, loving and intimate relationship internally with all aspects of yourself, including the masculine and feminine energies. What would this look like? What work do you need to do internally?

The finest book I have read on the subject is by Adolf Guggenbuhl-Craig called “Marriage: Dead or Alive. To understand the sacramental nature of marriage, this is essential reading. Here are some quotes:

“For us the question is, has the marriage to do with well-being or with salvation? Is it a soteriological institution or a welfare institution? Is marriage, this opus contra natura a path to individuation or a way to well-being?”

“A marriage only works if one opens (actually only if both people do) to exactly that which one would never ask for otherwise. Only through rubbing oneself sore and losing oneself is one able to learn about oneself, God, and the world. Like every soteriological pathway, that of marriage is hard and painful.”

— Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig, Matrimonio: Vivi o morti