

# POPE'S REMARKS ON THE FAMILY AND SEXUALITY

*Pope Francis' comments on economic issues, the environment, and migration, which reflect his more liberal leanings, have received much media attention, including before his addressing the World Meeting of Families in Dublin in August. In contrast, his statements on marriage, the family, and sexuality, which evince a more traditional moral outlook, have not been widely reported by the media. Here are some of his more poignant comments on the latter series of issues.*

## Abortion

- "It is God who gives life. Let us respect and love human life, especially vulnerable life in a mother's womb."
- "A pregnant woman isn't carrying a toothbrush in her belly, or a tumor... We are in the presence of a human being."
- "The right to life is the first human right. Abortion is killing someone that cannot defend him or herself."
- On the extension to all priests of the ability to forgive the sin of abortion, the pope said: "Careful, this does not mean trivializing abortion. **Abortion is a grave, grave sin. It's the homicide of an innocent.** But if there is a sin, it is necessary to facilitate forgiveness."
- On June 16, 2018 Pope Francis spoke to an Italian family association, and following his scripted remarks, he made some unscripted comments. He denounced those couples who screen for abnormalities in the womb in order to abort such children, likening the decision to a Nazi-like tactic. "Last century," he said, "the whole world was scandalized by what the Nazis did to purify the race. Today, we do the same thing but with white gloves."

## Gay Marriage

- “Let us not be naive: this is not simply a political struggle, but it is an attempt to destroy God’s plan. It is not just a bill (a mere instrument) but a ‘move’ of the Father of Lies [the Devil] who seeks to confuse and deceive the children of God.”
- “At stake is the identity and survival of the family: father, mother, and children.”
- “At stake are the lives of many children who will be discriminated against in advance, and deprived of their human development given by a father and a mother and willed by God. At stake is the total rejection of God’s law engraved in our hearts.”
- “Marriage between people of the same sex? ‘Marriage’ is a historical word. **Always in humanity, and not only within the Church, it’s between a man and a woman...**we cannot change that. This is the nature of things. This is how they are. Let’s call them ‘civil unions.’ Let’s not play with the truth. It’s true that behind it there is a gender ideology. In books also, children are learning that they can choose their own sex. Why is sex, being a woman or a man, a choice and not a fact of nature? This favors this mistake. But let’s say things as they are: Marriage is between a man and a woman. This is the precise term. Let’s call unions between the same sex ‘civil unions’.”
- Pope Francis said only heterosexuals can form a family. “It is painful to say this today: People speak of varied families, of various kinds of family,” but “the family [as] man and woman in the image of God is the only one.”

### Gays

- “If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will, then who am I to judge him?”
- “You have to distinguish between the fact of a person being gay, and the fact of a lobby. The problem isn’t the orientation. The problem is making a lobby.”

### Gender Ideology

- “I ask myself, if the so-called gender theory is not, at the same time, an expression of frustration and resignation, which seeks to cancel out sexual difference because it no longer knows how to confront it. Yes, we risk taking a step backwards.”
- “The crisis of the family is a social reality. Then there are ideological colonizations of the family, modes and proposals from Europe and also from overseas. The error of the human mind that is gender theory creates a lot of confusion.”
- “Gender ideology is demonic!”
- “Today there is a global war out to destroy marriage. Not with weapons but with ideas...we have to defend ourselves from ideological colonization.”
- Gender theory represents a “global war against the family.”
- Gender theory has caused a “world war against marriage,” an example of “ideological colonization.”
- There is a “nasty” tendency in schools to “indoctrinate” children, teaching that gender can be chosen and changed.
- “It is one thing if a person has this tendency and also changes his sex. It’s another thing to teach this in school to change mentalities. This is what I call ‘ideological colonization.’”
- Teaching gender theory is “the great enemy of marriage.”
- Teaching gender theory “is against natural things.”

### **Marriage and the Family**

- “Complementarity will take many forms as each man and woman brings his or her distinctive contributions to their marriage and to the formation of their children—his or her personal richness, personal charisma.”
- “Children have a right to grow up in a family with a father and a mother capable of creating a suitable environment for the child’s development and emotional maturity.”

### **Moral Destitution**

- “Moral destitution...consists in slavery to vice and sin. How

much pain is caused in families because one of their members—often a young person—is in thrall to alcohol, drugs, gambling or pornography!...In such cases moral destitution can be considered impending suicide.”

### **Morality and Sexuality**

- “Morality is always a consequence... there is a great danger for preachers, that of falling into mediocrity. Condemning only morality—forgive the expression —‘under the belt.’ But no one talks of the other sins like hate, envy, pride, vanity, killing another, taking a life. Entering the mafia, making illegal agreements... ‘Are you a good Catholic? Then give me the check’.”

### **Priestly Sexual Abuse**

- “On this path, the Church has done much, perhaps more than all others. The Catholic Church is perhaps the only public institution that has moved with transparency and responsibility. No one has done more, and yet the Church is the only one that is being attacked.”

### **Women**

- “We cannot forget the irreplaceable role of women in the family. The qualities of gentleness, of particular sensitivity and tenderness, which is abundant in the female soul, represent not only a genuine force for the life of families, for the irradiation of a climate of peace and harmony, but also a reality without which the human vocation would be unfeasible.”
- “They are the strawberries on the cake, but we want more!”

### **Women Cardinals**

- “I don’t know where this idea sprang from. Women in the church must be valued, not clericalized. Whoever thinks of women as cardinals suffers a bit from clericalism.”

## **Women Priests**

- “The Church has spoken and said: ‘No.’ John Paul II said it, but with a definitive formulation. That door is closed.”