

**FATHER MARK SCHULTE**  
**HOMILY**  
**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
**July 27, 2025**

**“Chaste Love”**

My Brothers and Sisters, the Mass readings do not often give us an opportunity to look at this part of the Book of Genesis, and what it does give us is only half the story. In today's first reading we hear that God intends to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of a sin that they have committed, which he calls “extremely grave” (Gen 18:20-32). We have to read further on to discover what this serious sin is (Gen 19:1-29).

Scripture and tradition tell us that there are certain sins that are so grievous and offensive to God that the sin itself cries out to God for retribution. There are four of these sins: the blood of Abel (willful murder) (Gen 4:10), the sin of Sodom, or sodomy (Gen 18:20), the cry of the oppressed people in Egypt (Ex 3:7-10), or the oppression of the weak and defenseless (Ex 20:20-22), and defrauding the laborer of his just wage (Duet 24:14-15) (CCC 1867).

We see that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah have become overrun by the serious sin of illicit sexual activity between people of the same sex. In this instance, it is occurring among the men of the community who have now come to the home of Lot, Abraham's nephew, demanding to be permitted to abuse the two men who are at his home as guests. The two men just happen to be the avenging angels that God has sent to destroy these cities because of this terrible sexual act which is occurring among the men there of all ages.

Scripture and the tradition of the Church has always condemned this serious sin of sexual impurity between people of the same sex because it is a sin against nature and chastity, and it is closed to the gift of life. Under no circumstances can it be condoned (CCC 2357).

Married couples as well must be very careful not to fall into the practice of this sin against nature. In this instance the words of Tobias the son of Tobit is very appropriate. All married couples should be familiar with this story from sacred scripture. The young man Tobias, accompanied by the archangel Raphael was sent by his father to his relatives in a distant land in order to marry a woman from among his own relatives. On the night of his marriage, he called his wife to prayer and said: Lord, “I am taking this kinswoman of mine, not out of lust, but with sincerity” (Tob 8:4-9) (CCC 2361). Thus, the Church teaches that the physical love and pleasure between a married man and woman are good, but “Spouses should know how to keep themselves within the limits of just moderation” (CCC 2362). In other words, according to the prayer of Tobias lust has no place in the sexual relationship of even a married man and woman. Their intentions and actions must always be chaste and remain within the realm of nature and the natural order (CCC 339-341), and certainly the sin of the sodomites has no place within the love of a man and woman, married or otherwise. Married love always respects the dignity of the spouse, whereas any form of lust is a selfish act, not an act of love (CCC 2380-2400).

In this passage we see that God intends to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for such acts, because they are ultimately destructive to the social order and if left unchecked the society that condones these immoral unchaste practices will eventually self-destruct (CCC 1950-1960). These unchaste acts are also contrary to the purpose of marriage and family life, which forms the foundation of society (CCC 2201-2213).

In our paganized, pornographized culture, many if not most people think that anything goes in the bedroom. Marriage is a gift from God as well as all sexual activity and God intends that humans engage in all sexual activity for His purposes, which is to bring new life into the world (CCC 2363).

Parents have a grave responsibility to teach their children at the appropriate age God's purpose for the gift of sexual activity. God created humanity and He created it good, along with the rest of his creation. It is man who tends to distort it out of his own lust for pleasure.

For the sake of the younger people in the congregation today, I have kept the subject matter of the importance of chaste sexuality rather cryptic. If anyone has any questions about this subject feel free to speak to me at a future time, although it is likely that the adults here understand quite clearly what I am talking about. Chastity and charity in all things, especially in your love life.

NOTE: CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church