

The Evening Study Group meets on the second and fourth Mondays of every month. Our next meeting is on Nov. 10 at 7:00 at St. Bernadette's Parish Hall at 21 Bayly St. Ajax – contact us at gsmlministry@gmail.com

If you are able to join us on November 10th, please read talks 1 and 2 at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2TBIND.HTM> and we will read them quickly and discuss them as we go at our next meeting.

Summary of the Prologue to The Theology of the Body

For those who unfortunately could not attend our first session, on Oct. 27 the following is a short summary of what we discussed. All of the material will be available again at our next meeting.

We looked at the overall setup and content of the course and our approach to it. We will be studying Pope John Paul II's Theology of the body using the full texts of his audience mainly through the book *Man and Women He Created them*. If anyone is interested in obtaining the book, it is cheapest through amazon.ca, or we can order it for you and save you shipping costs as we buy in bulk. The talks can be printed free on the internet at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2TBIND.HTM> The internet version however does not include the introduction and prologue, neither of which are required for the study group. (old translation)

We looked briefly at the prologue which outlines how the Pope built his theology based on his previous writings, the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas and others on the “marriage of the Lamb”.

He also used the Carmelite tradition and St John of The Cross' writings on the eternal exchange of love. They teach that the Trinity is a perfect exchange of the gift of love and that this gift of love is given to us and returned by us to the Trinity. This is reflected in the spousal analogy of the man giving the gift of love to the woman, and she in turn returning the gift to the man. This gift is the total giving of self to the other, and the happiness of this gift is but a miniscule foreshadowing of the happiness in the final marriage between Christ and His church. The spousal image applies also to celibates who pass on The Trinity's gift to their congregations or for lay celibates, family, friends etc, and receive it back from them.

John Paul II develops his theology by showing that the body through marital communion (spiritual communion for celibates) is a faint but true reflection that spousal love lived as it was created in the beginning before the “fall” is a real icon of the love God has for us.

He starts with the gift as it was created in Genesis, and how after original sin the use of the gift of true love became corrupted and twisted in humanity leading to a breakdown in society through the self-seeking misuse of love turning it into lust., abortion, homosexual acts, contraception etc. The Pope then leads us to our final destiny. He shows us how the true use of the gift will lead us to happiness in eternity in the “marriage of the Lamb”. As the Pope put it, this corruption has led to a “culture of death”. God's aim and the Pope's Theology of the Body aim is to reclaim a culture of life by taking us back to true love as it was in Genesis.