

# **The Virginal Marriage of Mary and Joseph in the Light of the «Theology of the Body»**

## *Abstract*

The mystery of Incarnation is central for our Christian Faith: The eternal Word, namely the second person of the Holy Trinity, became Man by the virginal conception of Mary through the Holy Spirit. Joseph, the virginal spouse of Mary, was the juridical father of Jesus Christ here on earth, according to Jewish law and custom. In this virginal marriage of Mary and Joseph the three goods of marriage were realized, namely faithfulness, progeny and sacramental indissolubility. The marital union of Mary and Joseph was not realized by a sexual act but by an eminent form of virginal love which had its origin and source in God. In this marital love, there was neither sin nor concupiscence, meaning that all sinful acts and inordinate affections and aspirations were excluded. Mary and Joseph were truly united, and their love included both body and soul but was never expressed in the genital sphere. Mary and Joseph were equal, according to their human and marital dignity, despite of the complementary difference in their vocation and in their graces. Their marriage had a truly sacramental character since it was a union with God, and Christ was present in its centre. The loving union of Mary and Joseph finds its fulfilment in heaven in the eschatological perspective of the wedding of Christ the Lamb with his bride, the Church. The marriage of Mary and Joseph, respectively the Holy Family which includes the child Jesus, gives an example and provides help for all married couples and families.