Sexuality and conyugal SPIRITUALITY

An invitation to dialogue

Testimony

Sexuality and conyugal
SPIRITUALITY
An invitation to dialogue

Index

Chapter	Theme
	Introduction
1	Marital sexuality, the great gift of god.
2	Man and woman: different and equal.
3	The language of sexuality: tenderness
4	Sexuality envelops all our being.
5	Sexuality makes us fecund.
6	Let us learn to educate
7	Jesus and sexuality.
8	During crises … let us search together
9	Forgiveness makes tenderness possible
10	Let's cultivate our sexuality
11	"let us re-discover our love"
12	Testimonies

TESTIMONY FROM SPAIN:

Expressed by the woman

Above anything I want to say that in our sexual encounters and the preambles, the dialogue and communication are quite present and we like to make an assessment after our encounters.

First of all, I want to ask for forgiveness from my couple for the times I have given myself to him and I have not been able to give him the maximum pleasure because I focus more on my pleasure and joy.

I consider myself a simple person, who doesn't need "exceptional performances" as those on the movies. My curiosity does not go on that direction. Our encounters are mainly motivated by the desire of celebrating what we live in a concrete day, to satisfy a need for mutual pleasure and I have never, and I underline it, never have felt I have been humiliated, used … on the contrary, I have felt loved, protected and I have seen my husband taking care of me and trying to satisfy our mutual desires. In general we speak and agree about it. I sometimes miss the spontaneity when we were sweethearts or the first years of marriage, but I know that the lack of illusion or enthusiasm has been transformed into tenderness and the need to mutually take care of ourselves.

Our feelings are just underneath our skin and our encounters confirm that they remain pleasant for both of us and that we feel fulfilled and satisfied after living them. Affection demonstrations occur every day and although our sexual encounters are not as frequent as in the beginning, nowadays, they still satisfy both of us.

FROM COLOMBIA:

TESTIMONY

We married very young and madly in love, without any awareness of what the sacrament of matrimony meant. We started our life as a couple full of illusions and projects. With time children arrived to complete our happiness, life went by between labor, family and social commitments. Children demanded lots of our energy and our time, but that did not impede us to enjoy our love that kept us delighted and vibrant with passion.

We had the fortune of knowing about Our Lady's Teams; its meetings and encounters gave a new air to our relation, we started to encounter God in a different way: to have relations with couples and priests that gave our life a more transcendent touch, creating a support community; however, difficulties and problems also arrived. Labor stress, tensions and pressures of a society that demanded lots of energy and money to cover the requirements of school excursions of our children at school, social commitments, ups and downs in the studies of any of them caused friction in our relations; stressing economic difficulties. Our children in the teens gave a lot of activity and happiness to our home, which was usually crowded, with plans, parties, but also with tense moments; with concerns for any of them. Their girlfriends, drinking at parties, the ever present and latent

temptations, added to the illness of our parents that required time and dedication from us, and the daily stress undermined our relation and suddenly we were tired, tense, bored; routine was established in our home.

We had lost illusion.

Many nights we were alone because our children were partying and we were silent, with nothing much to say. Where had our dreams and plans gone? We even noticed that we had an unkind language, we reproached each other for unimportant things. The initial enchantment had been lost. We were destined to continue in that melancholic inertia that lead us to a profound demotivation, or else we dared to stop, intend to understand our situation and do the maximum effort to change. We belonged to a marriage spirituality movement, we had all the points of effort available, we profoundly believed in God… we had everything.

The change started with personal and matrimonial prayer so that our Good Lord was present in all this process of renewal and one day we dared, with lots of efforts to do the Duty of Sitting in the presence of God opening our hearts; expressing sincerely our disappointments, our criticisms, asking the other in a generous and humble way about our needs and one of them was the desire to be physically close again, to be sheltered in the arms of the other, feel once more the admiration

and the grace of the first times. We had to change our thoughts regarding the other; remember good old times, recover forgotten activities such as going for a walk holding hands, dancing in our living room listening to our preferred music, open a bottle of one and make a toast to life. Hug each other without reason, cry out loud forgotten sentences such as: I like you, I love you, I need you. And surprisingly we broke the ice, magic returned. We understood that the Lord always acts when we ask him, we understood that everything is in our mind. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God." (Romans 12. 2).

The way of thinking determines our feelings, and they establish our form to act. Starting to think of the other in a positive and joyful way, admiring him for all his/her efforts and achievements, rediscovering the enchantment that joined us,

thanking for his/her presence, company, made that at nights we benefitted from the absence of the children to deliver our love without fear, without distractions, with total authenticity and today many years have gone by, our children left home, got married, built their own lives and we are here, old and with many health ailments but happy, enjoying ourselves, loving each other, less passionate probably but with more tenderness and love. We wish to think that when any of the two passes away, which will happen, the other thinks that it was fine, that we enjoyed the times and that we were not wasted, that we did what God saw since the beginning "and God saw it was good".

FROM FRANCE:

DENISE AND HENRY'S TESTIMONY

DENISE

We were married at 23, wishing to build our couple on the values of our Christian education. Together we discovered with joy and generosity our sexuality, the daily dialogue and the pleasure of reciprocally giving our bodies to each other. Two years later we had two children; I had to quit working and was overwhelmed by bottles and pampers! Later, tired and focused on the mother's role I ran away from marital relations, rejecting even a caress, frightened by another pregnancy. I love Henri very much but the anguish was too strong to please his multiple desires. I suffered and cried alone locking myself in silence.

HENRI

We knew a very happy beginning of marriage discovering each other in joy; afterwards Denise changed her attitude; when I got back home after few days of absence because of my profession, I found a truly dedicated mother but not the attractive and pleasant wife I knew. I did not understand that change; the lack of dialogue or that negative answer to any intimate relationship was very strong. I became irritable and we argued about foolish daily matters; it was not pleasant to go back home.

A priest with whom I had spoken suggested me to take a holiday with Denise leaving the children with the grandparents.

DENISE

It was hard to leave my two children with my parents… But I did it trying to save our couple. We spent three days without any duties but the dialogue was not easy. Henri tried to tame me with tenderness, softly but I was mute, I could not say a word. We prayed together and decided to ask for help from a marriage counseling bureau.

HENRI

With the help of a professional and thanks to him, we learned to put words to our feelings. Denise was able to express her anguish about another pregnancy and I told her how much I needed her love. We asked each other for forgiveness for not understanding and later we were able to think with serenity and knowledge about the values we had chosen. We searched what we were able to accept from each other, to control our fecundity and fully live our sexuality with happiness and honesty, in the context of that time of our life.

Since that painful period, we pray together to thank God after our sexual encounter and we take a two day holiday at least, every year On a "wedding trip" leaving our 5 children very happy to see their parents in love at 48 …

FROM BRASIL:

LIVING OF THE MARITAL ENCOUNTER

(We decided to give a testimony as a couple, taking into consideration that we agree on our needs and feelings and how we live our marital encounters.

We only speak about our life experiences. We give this testimony to transmit that our sexual encounters are highly satisfactory and make us happy. And if in any case it may help any other couple we would be even happier.)

Since the beginning of our relationship (from the very first kiss, which was the starting point of getting in love, forty years ago) there is an enormous sexual attraction between us that has covered us for almost half a century. There has always been a very intense mutual physical attraction. For us our sexual encounters, from the beginning until today are a very positive demonstration of our sexuality, a very strong one if not the strongest that makes our relation very easy. We were never distrust to give ourselves completely to one another (free from previous concepts, taboos or any other kind of prevention), with total transparency regarding our feelings. We always had a sincere, open, reliable, light, delightful, courageous and joyful dialogue. We always felt to be in the arms of the other. We always revealed our bodies and our souls, one for the other. Always without limitations of time we desired each other. We were always ready to give our love because of the initiative of either one.

1. What do we need in our sexual encounters?

We need intimacy and privacy of the "marital being".

We are highly requested by our family (two children and five grandchildren), our relatives, our profession, the church and the Movement. It is natural we diversify our attention focus. From time to time, we need to concentrate on both of us, we need time only for us, which allows us to remember, dream, be in love and return to the enchantment of one for the other. The highest point of "being alone" is to live a full sexual encounter that allows us a subsequent, sound, tender and rejuvenating sleep. All this brings, from the bottom of our hearts, a very big feeling of gratitude with one another, and in relation with God, in whose plans we believe.

2. What do we feel while living our sexual encounters?

We feel pleasure, tenderness, and respect.

We feel more intensely the reality of being "one sole flesh". We have the feeling that one is the prolongation of the other (no longer two). We feel the need to have each other (we would not know how to live without the other)

We feel valuable, strong, brave and loved.

We perceive that life with all its contradictions, absurd suffering has sense, has a reason to be.

We feel the delicacy of God that enriches us.

We feel happy.

TESTIMONY - LETTERS

We leave you the best example of forgiveness regarding sexuality that we have ever known: quoted from "la Presencia de Dios, 100 cartas sobre la oracion" by Father Caffarel

"I had been married for 5 years, mother of 2 children, and I was unfaithful. However I loved him. And I was careful he would not suspect anything because I did not want to destroy his happiness.

His deep love for me grew every day. One night, I remember as if it was yesterday, he spoke, in terms that touched my heart, about his tenderness, his affection and admiration for me. It was too much. And spontaneously the word "If you new!" escaped from my mouth. "I know" he answered. These words made me burst into a violent and unjust indignation: "Then what is this horrendous comedy about? Either you don't suffer because of what you know and that is the evidence that you don't love me, or you are crooked and your calm is only a lie"!. I was out of myself, aggressive, mocking and offensive. He waited for the storm to calm down. Then calmly, seriously and tenderly he said:

"Understand! I have been suffering during six months, I could bear my suffering and it didn't ruin me; whilst my love could not see you sinking... I clearly saw what I had to do, it was the only way out: loving you even more than before so that you could resurrect to love, a new love that would not only destroy your illness with its flame, but gave you a new, pure heart with a radiant beauty". And in fact Serge's love from that same instant made me a new being."

NOTRE TÉMOINAGE

Équipes Notre-Dame
Secrétariat International
49, rue de la Glacière
7ème étage • 75013
Paris • France
Tel. (33) (1) 43 31 96 21• Fax. (33) (1) 45 35 37 12
end-internacional@wanadoo.fr
www.equipes-notre-dame.com