



News from the

Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach

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NEWS RELEASE

(Palm Beach Gardens, FL) May 8, 2009

Statement of Most Reverend Gerald M. Barbarito on the Gift of Priestly Celibacy

Celibacy is a great gift and blessing for the priest, for the Church and for society. It affords the priest a unique opportunity for a greater ability to serve all of God's people as well as for an intimate and mystical union with Christ Himself. The basis for priestly celibacy is the imitation of Christ who lived His mission in complete union with His Father and gave His life in love for all.

Priestly celibacy is not a function. It is a way of life in conformity to the life of Christ. Celibacy is of the same nature as marriage. Just as a husband and wife give themselves exclusively to each other for their family, the priest gives himself exclusively to Christ for the service of Christ's family, the Church. Both ways of giving bring joy.

A particular priest's human failing in regard to living his fidelity to celibacy should not call into question the joyful gift of celibacy anymore than a particular person's infidelity to his or her spouse should call into question the joyful gift of marriage.

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