

Mary's Marriage with Joseph

Roman Catholicism insists that the Virgin Mary married Joseph but never had sex with him. How could this marriage be a real union?

If a man and woman who wed need to have sex to consummate their marriage and confirm/complete it then it follows Mary and Joseph were not fully married. You are either married or not so they were just living together.

The Church says that Mary and Joseph were not celibates for they were married. They are really saying, "A celibate is an unmarried person. Mary and Joseph were not celibates therefore they were married." But that is a circular argument. It assumes the marriage even though its the thing that needs to be proven. Its begging the question.

The honest view is that Mary and Joseph were celibates who only had the outward appearance of marriage. The Church admits that this would be deceptive and hypocritical. So the Church has to use tricks to stop us seeing that.

For the pair to be truly married, it would need to be argued that consummation is not required for a valid marriage and that only the ability to consummate is required. If the Church accepted that, it would have to admit that there is no evidence that Joseph and Mary's marriage was real. Maybe Joseph was gay or had erectile problems. And maybe Mary had a phobia about sex that made having sex with her impossible.

Most people regard a non-consummated marriage as real but incomplete. If they are right, non-consummated marriage is valid. The Church is clear though that consummated marriage is permanent and a sacrament and it cannot be dissolved. Divorce cannot truly end the legal bond.

It follows then that if Mary and Joseph had divorced it would not have been a sin! The Church deceives us about what fine role models they are when they would have in their hearts intended, "I will stick with this if it works. Divorce is an option if it goes all wrong."

Some Catholic theologians say, "Mary and Joseph were married before the Catholic Church and canon law which requires consummation for a real marriage. So by the rules of the time they were really married." But that is really saying that marriage is not a commitment for life. It is saying that whatever laws say about what makes a marriage is all that matters. If the law was that only marriages contracted at the full moon were real it would become so. That would be grossly over-legalistic. The theologians are contradicting the Catholic definition of marriage which implies it must be full commitment and so it has to involve sexual activity. Mary holding back implies that she has serious doubts about her relationship with Joseph. It is interesting how in its hypocrisy how the Church tries to stop the state redefining marriage as being between two people no matter what sex they are. Recognising Mary's sexless marriage as real infers a bigger redefinition of marriage than what the state is doing.

Another try, "Mary and Joseph lived under Jewish law. There was nothing in the Jewish law that required consummation of marriage for it to be valid and legal. Under the religious laws of their time Mary and Joseph were truly married."

That is a lie as the Bible says that man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, so they become one flesh (Genesis 2:24) referring to marriage being a commitment forged by sexual union. Jesus reinforced this teaching.

Mary did not consent to the marriage - in those days only the man took vows for the woman was regarded as his possession. Such a marriage is degrading and cannot be valid.

Mary was too young for marriage. Like other girls who wed, she was in her early teens. Celebrating her marriage only celebrates paedophilia at least in principle if not in practice. And if it is not bad in principle then why worry about people practicing it? The apostle Paul who spoke with Christ's authority says sex is owed by one spouse to the other in marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:3-5. It is hard to believe that Mary and Joseph really had a sexless marriage by choice. No it is impossible and as marriages between men and female children were the norm in Paul's time he was advocating the rape of a child bride.

Jewish girls were married as soon as they reached puberty or started to menstruate (page 13, 30, Son of Joseph). They were betrothed which was a kind of marriage that took place shortly before full marriage, at about 12 years of age (page 35, Putting Away Childish Things, Uta Ranke-Heinmann, HarperSanFrancisco, 1992). There was no concern for the girl being mature enough or ready for marriage. Girls of that age would have been more innocent and inexperienced and easily taken

advantage of than girls today. We are talking about a serious abuse of young girls here. They were used by men and by religion. Rape is not too strong a word to describe what was done to them on the wedding night. The marriage was their lot whether they wanted it or not. The psychological pressure must have been intense. The man who rapes by pressuring a woman is as much a rapist as one who holds the woman down. In fact he is more hateful.

And the New Testament comes out and sanctions this behaviour when it says that God gave Mary a baby before the wedding. It was bad enough after the wedding but before it meaning she was a younger mother than usual. The New Testament gives divine approval for the abuse of children. It is bad enough to have sex with a child but to make one pregnant is a hundredfold worse. But Christians are strangely appalled at the idea that Mary might have had sex or come close to it and conceived that way and delighted at the idea that she conceived without sex or a man well below what anybody in their right mind would consider a decent age. So illicit sex is worse than an illicit pregnancy! This is another manifestation of the majority Christian belief that pain is good and pleasure is bad.

Whoever says that the girls were not underage in those days so that their getting married at 12 or at the start of puberty is not a problem is one sick individual. First of all, the point is that they were emotionally and mentally and physically unprepared for sex. Second, they had no sex education. Third, they are implying that the only thing wrong with abusing children is that the law says they are underage and the fact that they are not ready doesn't matter! This is silly for the law is only about regulation. The law saying something doesn't automatically make it right.

Jesus was asked if any man could divorce his wife. Jesus said no and if he did he was making her commit adultery. He was recognising the validity of the underage marriages based on abuse and degradation of the female. He was approving of paedophilia. He was even forcing them to stay married - such was the strength of his pro-paedophilia stance.

1 Peter 3 goes,

3 Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewellery or fine clothes. 4 Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. 5 For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, 6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

COMMENT: Sarah was far from an ideal example and plus she was an incestuous wife to Abraham. She is a desperate example. That Jesus' mother is not a model here as a wife or as chaste is incredible. And Peter was writing for Christians not avid Bible readers. Christians say Mary was not married long enough to Joseph and not enough was known of her marriage for her to be an example. If people are good by nature or mostly good, then you cannot win anybody to your religion by being good for everybody in every religion is as impressive as you. The implication is that other religions are bad and Christians should be an improvement on other religionists and thus be able to draw in converts by living a good life even if they don't verbally evangelise

Mary and Joseph were not married at all. If they gave themselves to each other in marriage, they turned their marriage into a lie by refusing to have sex. That refusal was a refusal of full commitment.

Thinking about their example leads to the notion that as long as you don't have sex with your spouse you can marry and divorce every day in the year! Catholic teaching has to allow for that which shows the cruel hypocrisy of the Church's ban on divorce.

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