

**Catholic Pro-Life Dinner Keynote Speaker: Father Jonathan Meyer**  
**March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

- I was pro-choice before I was a priest. I saw a bumper sticker when I was eight-years-old that said “Abortion stops a beating heart.” I didn’t know what abortion was but knew it must be bad. “Inculturated” as I matured, my college girlfriend convinced me that abortion was a good (1996-97). I remembered that bumper sticker in my head, but the message hadn’t yet reached my heart.
- I like gimmicks, but they don’t change hearts. Only Christ can do that. We can’t rely on pro-life bumper stickers/billboards/t-shirts, etc.
- As the archdiocesan youth minister for the past five years, I’ve seen many broken hearts. Typical is a 16-year-old girl who recently came to me after her parents forced her to have an abortion. She felt condemned every time she saw a Catholic church.
- The world is hurting and in grave pain.
- How do we change hearts? We teach John Paul II’s Theology of the Body.
- The health of society depends upon the health of the family. We need healthy families. Healthy families teach that abortion is wrong. But what do we lack in America—healthy families.
- At the root of a healthy family is marriage. At the root of healthy marriage is a proper understanding of human sexuality. We don’t have that. Instead, behind every abortion you’ll fund the sin of lust. A child is lost each time lust results in conception.
- The Theology of the Body is rooted in the Bible. In Genesis, we read that Adam and Eve, while naked, were united with God in the Garden of Eden. True marriage. In Revelation, we read that “The wedding day of the lamb has come.” One again, we are all, men and woman, to be married to Jesus in heaven.
- Marriage is the sign and symbol of the love that Christ has for his Church. The marital act is the sign and symbol of the intimate joy of heavenly ecstasy. That’s right, in its proper context, sex is holy.
- But taken out of God’s context, sex is dangerous. People have become the unfaithful brides of Christ. Sin is perceived as a good. Eve thought eating the apple was a good. Abortion is now considered a good. Our young people, our Church, ourselves so easily forget what marriage and sex are—being with God.
- God uses our flesh to teach us how to live. Every single man is the image of Christ. Every single woman is the image of the Church.

- Ephesians chapter 5 is one of the most misunderstood and hated passages from the Bible. But it is at the root of authentic marriage.
- Men. How did Christ love the Church? He died for it. Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church. Two things distinguish the male body. First, it's stronger. Why, because men are meant to protect, to defend, to provide through sacrifice. Sacrifice does not include lust or domination. Second, the man's sexual organ is located on the outside of his body because men are meant to give, not take.
- But the two biggest industries in the world today, pornography and violence (movies, video games, etc.) have contributed to men not giving of themselves sacrificially as Jesus gave of himself, but instead closing in on themselves and taking (momentary pleasure) at the expense of women.
- Women. You are the image of the Church. The Church's goal is to receive and nourish life. Your sexual organs are on the inside so that you can receive just like the Church. Each woman is called to imitate the Mother of the Church, Mary, by nourishing life.
- So, marriage is a mutual relationship of self-giving.
- We know in our heads that we're not to be used, but we don't know it in our hearts. Simply look at the way women and young girls dress today.
- What will it take to restore the proper relationship between men and women? That is where pro-lifers are called to step in. First and foremost we must be with God consistently. Men, we must be willing to sacrifice our time constantly and make time EVERY DAY for Eucharistic adoration, praying the Rosary, etc. Women, you must be women of prayer like the Blessed Virgin.
- The future will not be pretty and it will get ugly if we're not people of prayer. Begin a saint begins NOW. If you're married, reclaim the sacrament in your own marriage and we must teach our children that they should be waiting because sex is so darn good in its proper context.
- If we restore the proper context for sex, we restore marriage. If we restore marriage, we restore the family. If we restore the family, we restore society. Our young people have been convinced that pleasure is the only thing that can fill the holes in their hearts. This is why 50 million babies have been slaughtered since 1973.
- My challenge to you is to be more with God—sit in his presence DAILY. And then bring others to the banquet.