



A message to the faithful of the archdiocese from Archbishop Michael Jackels

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Part 9: the vocation to the single life

According to God's plan for our happiness and for us to transform the world into the Kingdom of God, some people are called to a permanent commitment in the dedicated single life.

This doesn't refer to someone who presently isn't married, but would be if he could, will if she can, and so goes on dates if asked.

Nor does it refer to someone who isn't married and doesn't ever want to be, preferring to be free from obligations and responsibilities, like a bachelor.

And it doesn't refer to people who choose to live as hermits or consecrated virgins; those are essentially vocations to religious life.

Rather, it is a permanent commitment to a stable way of living; that's why it's usually referred to as the dedicated single life.

As a state in life, it has to answer the questions: With whom do you live a shared life? To whom do you give the gift of self? For whose benefit do you serve?

A dedicated single person lives a shared life with the wider community, giving the gift of self in service to the mission of the Church, or a family member, or a social and political charity.

It is a way of life lived out in celibacy, in keeping with what St. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:32-34, that is, she gives her mind to the Lord's affairs, and how he can please the Lord, instead of to the world's affairs and to a spouse.

St. Catherine of Siena is an example. She dedicated herself to Jesus, and so refused her parents attempts to marry her off. And she wasn't a nun, who at the time did not travel outside of their convents.

Rather, she remained single, dedicating herself to being a peacemaker between the Church and secular rulers, which involved extensive traveling.

Is God calling you to the vocation of the dedicated single life?

Michael Jackels

Archbishop of Dubuque