

**RESPECT LIFE HOLY HOUR FOR MARYLAND REFLECTION FOR OCTOBER 14, 2024:
All in the Family**

THE AMENDMENT TO THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION STATES:

Article 48: That every person, as a central component of an individual's rights to liberty and equality, has the fundamental right to reproductive freedom, including but NOT LIMITED TO the ability to make and effectuate decisions to prevent, continue, or end one's own pregnancy. The state may not, directly or indirectly, deny, BURDEN, or abridge the right unless justified by a compelling state interest achieved by the least restrictive means."

THE BALLOT will say (not required to match amendment language):

Question 1 - Constitutional Amendment (Ch. 245 of the 2023 Legislative Session)

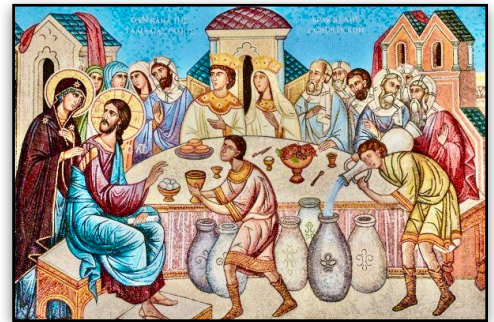
Declaration of Rights – Right to Reproductive Freedom

The proposed amendment confirms an individual's fundamental right to reproductive freedom, including but NOT LIMITED TO the ability to make and effectuate decisions to prevent, continue, or end the individual's pregnancy, and provides the State may not, directly or indirectly, deny, burden, or abridge the right unless justified by a compelling State interest achieved by the least restrictive means.

[] For the Constitutional Amendment

[] Against the Constitutional Amendment

This November, Marylanders will be asked to vote on Question 1 - The Right to Reproductive Freedom. (The language of the law passed by the House and Senate, and how it will appear on the ballot are at the top of the page.) This week's reflection follows up on last week's reflection, *Paradise Lost... Identity Lost...* In that reflection, it was noted that the creation of the first man and woman and the communion they shared with one another and God was the first marriage. We read in Genesis 2:24, "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." Tragically Adam and Eve's communion with one another and God was lost when they committed the one act forbidden to them and ate of the tree of good and evil. For that act they were expelled from the Eden and separated from God. Their relationship was also broken as "the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked;" (Gen 3:7).



Wedding Feast at Cana

A few days ago I was reading St. John's account of the beginning of Jesus' ministry. It struck me like a ton of bricks that Jesus' mission to save mankind from sin and death and to restore mankind's communion with God BEGAN AT A WEDDING!!! Wasn't it right that the restoration of the communion between God and mankind that was lost by Adam and Eve's sin should begin at a wedding? And isn't it interesting that it was at the initiative of Mary (the new Eve) that Jesus began His ministry to redeem mankind from the effects of the Fall since it was the original Eve who initiated the Fall.

Reflecting on this and the fact that Jesus took on human flesh as an infant in the womb of Mary and was born into, grew up in and lived in a family for 30 of His 33 years made me evermore aware of the importance God places on marriage and the family as the fundamental unit of society and essential vehicles of His grace. It also occurred to me that within two generations we have seen a rapid breakdown of the family and an increasing emphasis on the individual. Certainly the adoption of Question 1 would accelerate this trend by threatening the fundamental rights and responsibilities of parents to raise and oversee the education of their children and handing over to the individual (including minors) and the state jurisdiction over those rights.

Come Holy Spirit.... *St. John Paul II and Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!!!*

"All members of the family, each according to his or her own gift, have the grace and responsibility of building, day by day, the communion of persons, making the family "a school of deeper humanity"[59]: this happens where there is care and love for the little ones, the sick, the aged; where there is mutual service every day; when there is a sharing of goods, of joys and of sorrows." *Familiaris Consortio, Pope John Paul II, November 22, 1981.*