

Why can't priests be married?

Weren't some of the Apostles married?

Yes, some of the Apostles were married. Priests have not always been required to be unmarried. The Church has used its authority to require a celibate priesthood except in certain cases (some of the Eastern Rites allow married clergy and dispensations can be granted to priests who convert from other religions that allowed them to be married). This is a discipline of the Church, not a doctrine, and therefore has changed throughout Church history. A celibate priesthood reinforces the urgency of the Kingdom of God and frees our ministers from the obligations of family life which would detract from their priestly duties:

"I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; but the married man is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided" (1 Corinthians 7:32-34).

The sacrifice of a physical relationship also enables the priest to unite more intimately with God, benefiting the entire Church:

"For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it" (Matthew 19:12).

(Matthew 19:12; 1 Corinthians 7:32-34)[21]

Catholicism Frequently Asked Questions from the Transporter Information Services.

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