



ARCHDIOCESE
OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

Office of Marriage and Family Life
Office of Human Life & Dignity

Bulletin Announcements for February 2021

Included in this mailing, please find the bulletin announcements and fliers for the **month of February for the Offices of Marriage and Family Life & Human Life and Dignity**. Please consider adding any announcements to your bulletin that your parishioners may be interested.

If your parish has Marriage and Family Life or Human Life & Dignity events you want other parishes to know about, please submit them to Keri Carroll by e-mail. We will be in contact with you regarding your request. You may also contact Keri if there are any fliers and brochures listed below that you would like printed and mailed to you. Keri can be reached at (317)-236-1521 kcarroll@archindy.org.

Please visit <https://www.archindy.org/humanlifeanddignity/BulletinsAndNewsletters.html> for the PDF version of these announcements.

Thank you!

Word of Life Bulletin Series and Intercessions from USCCB

<https://www.respectlife.org/word-of-life>

Don't Forget to check these Office events

February 7 – 14, 2021 – National Marriage Week

March 19-21 – Rachel's Vineyard Healing Retreat

For Any or All Weekends in February

Office of Marriage and Family Life Events

Family Enrichment

Marriage Prep

- [Online Pre-Cana Information](#)

Marriage Enrichment

- [World Wide Marriage Encounter](#)
- [National Marriage Week – February 7 – 14, 2021](#)

NFP

Healing Ministries

- [Divorce and Beyond Support Group](#)

Office of Human Life and Dignity

Birthline Ministry

- [Birthline Volunteer Opportunities and Needs](#)

Respect Life Ministry

Project Rachel

- [Rachel's Vineyard Healing Retreat](#)

Health Ministries – Resources

Substance Addictions Ministry – Resources

Corrections Ministry – New Videos - 2020 Conference

Events Around the Archdiocese

- [Women's Care Center First Friday Mass](#)
- [Hope & Healing Survivors of Suicide Monthly Support Group – Indianapolis](#)
- [Respect Life Mass – Terre Haute](#)
- [Faithful Citizens Rosary Crusade](#)
- [Pray for an End to Abortion and Sins Against Life Adoration](#)
- [Living with Pulmonary Fibrosis, St. Joseph, Indianapolis](#)

Marriage & Family Life – Gabriela Ross

www.archindy.org/marriageandfamily

Marriage Enrichment



Worldwide Marriage Encounter

Enjoy a Marriage Encounter Weekend from the comfort of your own home! Married

Couples are enjoying the benefits without having to venture from their doorstep. If you have a good marriage, and want to make it even better, apply to join a **Virtual Marriage Encounter Weekend** and find out how you can make it happen? Visit www.wwme.org for further information.

Quote from a couple who made a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend: “We want you to know we thought we had a great marriage. But Marriage Encounter helped make it fantastic!”



National Marriage Week USA
MARRIAGE IS WORTH IT! • EVERY FEB 7-14

February 7-14, 2021 – National Marriage Week

This is an opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage and Vocation of Family during a time when many of our families have faced challenges.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is joining the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in promoting “National Marriage Week USA” from February 7–14, 2021.

Theme: “To Have, to hold, to Honor”

How You Can Participate

1. Pray - for married couples, engaged couples preparing for marriage, struggling marriages, and those grieving the loss of a marriage. Use the "Prayers of the Faithful" resource listed below.
2. Proclaim - Homily notes are provided to assist clergy on addressing this topic in their homily on February 14 (Valentine's Day and also World Marriage Sunday).
3. Promote - Include in bulletins, newsletters, websites or social media.

Helpful Resources

Click on the links below to access the resources.

Resources from National Marriage Week:

- [Flyer/Bulletin Insert](#) (English)
- [Flyer/Bulletin Insert](#) (Spanish)

- [Preaching Resource](#) for clergy
- [Prayers of the Faithful](#) for parishes
- [At-Home Marriage Retreat](#) (English) for all married couples
- [At-Home Marriage Retreat](#) (Spanish) for all married couples
- [Parish Resource](#) for parish leaders

Resources from the USCCB:

- For Your Marriage foryourmarriage.org/...
- For Your Marriage (Spanish) portumatrimonio.org/...
- Marriage, Unique for a Reason marriageuniqueforareas...
- Made for Love Podcast soundcloud.com/usccbcl...
- USCCB NFP usccb.org/issues-and-a...

Natural Family Planning

Marriage Prep Opportunities

For questions about marriage preparation please contact **Gabriela Ross** at **(317) 592-4007**.



Pre-Cana Retreats have moved online for Spring 2021.

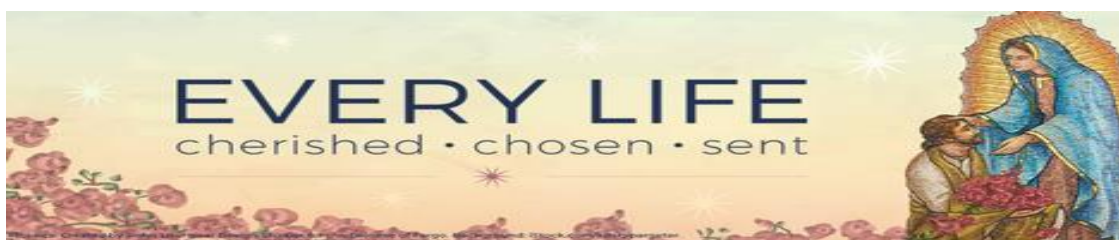
This is the self-paced, online version of our Pre-Cana Retreat, using the same materials and covering the same topics for a comprehensive marriage preparation retreat. Couples must complete the combined "God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage" and "Life Skills for Couples" course in order to receive their certificate and fulfill the marriage preparation requirement. The course is available in English or Spanish and cost is \$50. [Online Pre-Cana Information](#)

Other Marriage Preparation Opportunities



To learn more and register, go to: <https://www.oicindy.com/>

Human Life & Dignity – Brie Anne Varick



To Learn more about the Ministries of Human Life & Dignity office visit the following webpages:

www.archindy.org/humanlifeanddignity

[Birthline Ministry webpage](#)

[Health Ministry webpage](#)

[Mental Health webpage](#)

[Substance Addiction Ministry \(SAM\) webpage](#)

[Corrections Ministry webpage](#)

[Hospice and Palliative Care webpage](#)

[Observance of Roe vs. Wade](#)

[Religious Freedom webpage](#)

[Project Rachel webpage](#)

Birthline Ministry–Volunteers Needed



Birthline is a ministry of the Office of Human Life & Dignity which provides baby layettes for families in need.

We are currently receiving donations which are accepted on **Monday & Wednesday** from **10:00 am – 2:00 (closed from Noon – 12:45 pm)** at the **Xavier Building (Crisis Center's main entrance on Northside of building – 1435 Illinois Street, Indianapolis 46202)**

- **Birthline's Current Wish List - Flyer**

Urgent Needed Items: Winter and Spring Clothes all sizes and Pajamas in Boy and Girls in sizes 18 mo, 24 mo and 2T. Always need baby wash and diaper cream.

- **Needed: Have you ever thought about being a volunteer? Birthline is currently looking for Volunteers** to help on Monday and Wednesday at the Xavier Building to prepare layettes and assist clients. Bi-lingual is a plus. Training is provided. Social distancing observed.
- **Needed: Phone Volunteers** to help monitor the phones and schedule clients from their home. Training is provided. Must have a computer.
- **Needed: Joe-Handyman** to help on Monday and/or Wednesday from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm to accept and evaluate the donations coming in, to assist clients with layettes back to their cars, and general labor in a working environment.

If you are available to help in this ministry please contact Keri Carroll, at (317) 236-1433 or birthline@archindy.org

Rachel Vineyard Healing Retreats

If you are suffering after abortion, you may feel very alone. You may have experienced abortion many years ago and never told anyone. You may be struggling with a more recent abortion. Regardless of the circumstances, healing is possible. If you would like to learn or to register for a retreat, please contact (317) 452-0054 or www.archindy.org/humanlifeanddignity/past-abortion.html. For more information regarding Rachel's Vineyard Retreats visit: www.rachelsvineyard.org. Inquiries, registration and participation are strictly confidential.

March 19-21, 2021 – Rachels's Vineyard Healing Retreat

Greater Lafayette Indiana Area

To register and for confidential help and healing after abortion.

Contact David Bangs (765) 860-6006 or dlbangs@gmail.com

For hope and healing after abortion you can always contact the Indianapolis Project Rachel Hotline at (317) 452-0054

February 2021 - Events Around the Archdiocese

February 5, 2021: Women's Care Center First Friday Mass

The Women's Care Center (4901 West 86th Street Indianapolis 46268) invites you to our **First Friday Mass** on **February 5th** at 5:00 pm in our chapel. There will be light refreshments after Mass and the ability to take a tour and learn more about our mission. We are now serving over 30 women facing unplanned pregnancies many days, most of who benefit from multiple services, such as pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, parenting classes, and goals counseling. We are so grateful to be able to serve the women who walk through our door. If you have questions please contact Jenny Hubbard, Director, at (317) 509-9596. We hope to see you there!

February 11, 2021: Hope and Healing Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Monthly Support Group

On second **Thursday, February 11th Hope and Healing**, a support group for adults who have lost a loved one to suicide, struggle with thoughts suicide, or seek to understand the causes and prevention of suicide will meet at 7:00 pm. A children's support group, Spread Our Youthful Wings, for ages 9 years to 17 years old is held in the same location and same time as the Hope and Healing SOS Group.

For more information and location site, please contact Judy Proctor at (317) 851-8344, or visit Hope & Healing SOS at <https://www.hopeandhealingsos.com/Monthly-SOS-Meeting.html>.

February 17, 2021: Respect Life Mass – Terre Haute

On **February 17th**, the 3rd Wednesday of the month, please consider joining the St. Joseph Respect Life Ministry in praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet (St. Joseph University, 113 S Fifth St., Terre Haute) at 4:45 pm prior to the 5:15 pm Respect Life Mass. For more information, contact the parish office at (812) 232-7011. For more information please contact Amy Langham at amyLou0330@gmail.com or the parish office at 812-232-7011.

February 18, 2021: Pray for an End to Abortion and Sins Against Life Adoration

Please join us for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is held at **St. Joseph Catholic Church**, (1401 South Mickley Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46241) on **every third Thursday – February 18th** from 11:00 am – 7:00 pm to pray specifically for Gabriel Project mothers and babies, for an end to abortion, and sin against life, and for the closing of Clinic for Women abortion facility location at 3607 West 16th Street, and for a return to a “Culture of Life.” For more information contact Patty Arthur, St. Joseph's Pro-Life Ministry coordinator at (317) 244-9002 or patty.arthur@aol.com or visit website: <http://www.stjosephindy.org>. [Printable Flyer](#)



National Marriage Week USA
MARRIAGE IS WORTH IT! • EVERY FEB 7-14

to have, to hold, to honor

For more information and resources, visit foryourmarriage.org



FOR YOUR MARRIAGE



@foryourmarriage



At-Home Marriage Retreat: National Marriage Week 2021

Marriage: To Have, To Hold, To Honor

Dear Married Couples,

This year's theme for National Marriage Week is To Have, To Hold, and To Honor, a reminder of the promises made on your wedding day.

The stories and reflection questions that follow are intended to help you renew your commitment "to have, to hold, to honor" your spouse.

Celebrate and enrich your marriage this week by taking some time each day to listen to the Word of God, meditate, reflect, and pray together. Each day is an opportunity to read and meditate on a passage from Scripture followed by a re-imagined story from a different perspective. Reflect on the questions that follow and close with the prayer for couples.

This exercise of praying with the Scriptures is called *Lectio Divina*. It consists of four steps: *lectio* (the reading of Scriptures), *meditatio* (meditation), *oratio* (prayer), and *contemplatio* (contemplation).

God bless you!

Day One

Adam and Eve: That Could Be Us

Lectio: Gen. 2:23; 3:1-24

Meditatio 1: Scripture reveals that God made man and woman for each other! Adam’s cry that “at last, this one is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” signals the holy recognition that God desired man and woman to be husband and wife. Now, consider how sin has affected God’s marvelous plan for His children.

Imagine Adam and Eve exiled from the Garden of Eden one year after they ate the forbidden fruit. They toil daily by the sweat of their brow. Eve has already borne their first child, fully experiencing the pangs of labor. Today they have stopped ploughing the fields to take a rest from the heat of the sun. Their conversation picks up the old refrain: who is at fault for bringing them to this point? Who is to blame for their toil and labors?

Adam: Why did you listen to that serpent? Couldn’t you tell he was speaking with a forked tongue?

Eve: You were right there next to me the entire time and you didn’t say a single word. I took just one bite. You ate the rest!

Adam: Still, that doesn’t change the fact that you took the first bite. I was sure you weren’t going to fall for his smooth talk. But since you fell for it, I didn’t feel like I had any choice.

Eve: Now look at us. We sweat and toil daily, we are not happy here like we were in the garden... and it’s your fault.

Adam: Oh, no, it isn’t.

Eve: Perhaps God can tell us who’s at fault. We can get on with our lives once we know who is to blame.

Adam: Good idea.

Adam and Eve seek out God to find the answer.

God: You are both at fault by seeking out the culprit. You think one is the villain and the other is the victim? You are both the villain and the victim.

Adam: We don’t understand.

God: You are far more similar than you are different. It’s unimportant to consider who is at fault. Instead, consider how you – together – can work to repair the damage that has been done. You have both experienced the consequences of the fall from grace. Together, as husband and wife, you can experience redemption.

Meditatio 2: (Ask yourselves and reflect)

- **To Have:** We were called by God to be caretakers and stewards of each other and the world he created. Do I cherish my spouse as God’s personal gift to me? Do we delight in the blessings we have received, such as our marriage? Or do we grasp for temporal goods that are not ours? How can we simplify our life – especially during this pandemic – and share the goodness we have all received with those who are less fortunate?
- **To Hold:** Do we bring God into our conversations? Do we pray together daily or pray for one another regularly? Do we discern together about God’s plan for our family and the number of children He desires us to have? How can we better hold and sustain each other, especially during challenging times?

- **To Honor:** Do I give my spouse the benefit of the doubt? Do I lay blame on my spouse unjustly? How can I honor my spouse better in word and action? How do we honor God's plan for married love? For example, have we rejected all forms of contraception and committed to practicing Natural Family Planning?

Oratio:

O God, who in creating the human race willed that man and wife should be one, keep, we pray, in a bond of inseparable love those who are united in the covenant of Marriage, so that, as you make their love fruitful, they may become, by your grace, witnesses to charity itself. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Contemplatio: Spend a few moments in silence, grateful for the gift of your marriage, and allow the Lord to speak directly to your heart. When finished, end by slowly reciting the Our Father together.

Day Two

In the Lion's Den

Lectio: Daniel 6:16-28

Meditatio 1: Daniel was thrown into the lion's den because he faithfully worshiped the one, true God. However, God sent His angel to close the mouth of the lion to protect Daniel from harm.

Let us imagine the perspective of the lion, whose mouth had been closed by God:

"This is a new kind of companion, this Daniel that has intruded upon my space. We circled each other warily all day, keeping an eye on each other. My objective is always the same: to reduce my prey to satisfy my appetite. I am always ready to pounce at the first sign of weakness in my prey – any prey, beast or human.

But, strangely, I am not eager to eat this person of human flesh, who is both vulnerable and vigilant. I am *not* inclined to seduce or entrap, with my careful approach, my cunning eye, my strength always alert.

This man confuses and confounds me. What is so different about him?

Almighty God, Daniel's God, you closed my mouth and opened my heart. What is happening to me? One day, very soon, I may even be willing to lie with a lamb."

Meditatio 2:

- **To Have:** 'To have and to hold' is hugely different from 'to trap and to devour.' How do I shield or protect my spouse from falling into traps set for them by others or by their own weaknesses?

- **To Hold:** In our relationship as a couple, when have I acted like the lion, ready to pounce, rather than protect? An old Czech proverb says, “If I have to bite you, let me bite you with my heart.” How can I speak the truth with tenderness and kindness, and not with brutality?
- **To Honor:** During this pandemic, many couples have experienced new constraints and close confines that have tested the relationship. Have I attacked my spouse verbally, emotionally, or physically? How can my words, my thoughts, and my actions be transformed by God’s grace to better honor my spouse?

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Amen.

Contemplatio: Spend a few moments in silence, grateful for the gift of your marriage, and allow the Lord to speak directly to your heart. When finished, end by slowly reciting the Our Father together.

Day Three

The Emmaus Journey

Lectio: Luke 24:13-35

Meditatio 1: On the first Easter Sunday, two disillusioned disciples were returning home from Jerusalem. Jesus’s crucifixion had crushed and bewildered them. All seemed lost. Then a stranger joined them on their journey. Let us imagine that the two disciples were husband and wife. Only one of the two – Cleopas – is named. To help us dive deeper into the story, let us give the woman a name, Judith, and a voice.

“I don’t like it when a third person joins us on a trip, especially another man. It is customary for the two men to walk ahead, and the woman usually follows behind. This time was different, though. The stranger was sometimes by my side, sometimes by the side of my husband, Cleopas.

As Cleopas and I were talking about what had happened in Jerusalem, we walked holding hands, glancing at one another from time to time, and sharing more deeply than we ever had before. The stranger walked behind us then, though not in a threatening way, but protectively.

At one point, he began to explain the Scriptures to us. He talked excitedly and walked quickly alongside us. Suddenly he jumped in front of us and walked backwards facing us. His eyes shone and his voice was alive with feeling.

That's when I began to sense that something supremely important was playing out, but I could not tell what. As the stranger spoke, everything began to get clearer to me. I whispered to Cleopas, 'Invite him to stay with us when we get to Emmaus.' I wanted to hear more.

When we arrived, he took bread and blessed it. When we took the bread from his hands, it felt like the most important meal we would ever eat. I began to pray, 'Help me to take this meal into me and never let it leave me.' I looked up and he was gone. 'That was ... the Lord!' I asked Cleopas. 'Yes! Let us get back to Jerusalem,' he replied."

Meditatio 2:

- **To Have:** What have been the most meaningful spiritual experiences that you and your spouse have experienced together? Perhaps it was a pilgrimage, a response to tragedy or a moment of joy while performing an act of service. Looking back, was your heart burning within you? Remind your spouse of that moment, and why it was so meaningful to you.
- **To Hold:** How do you hold each other accountable for spiritual growth? What ways can you as a couple strive for holiness and help each other become more desirous of God?
- **To Honor:** You might view this week as an Emmaus journey. Try not to anticipate the next hill. As in the Emmaus story, let this be a time of sharing your heart, searching for meaning, and celebrating God's presence in your lives.

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Amen.

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Day Four

The Mother-In-Law Speaks

Lectio: Luke 4:38-41

Meditatio 1: The Gospel of Luke tells us about the healing of Saint Peter the Apostle's mother-in-law. What would she have said?

“My daughter married Peter, a fisherman. He is a great hulking man, a big talker, inclined to extravagant gestures and emotional outbursts. It’s hard not to love him. He is full of energy and always up for an adventure. Where his mind goes, his body follows – right away.

There is always a crowd around him. He has many friends, but one stands above the rest. His name is Jesus. Let me tell you about him.

I love to welcome people to my home. There is nothing I would rather do than take care of the people I love. But I have been sick recently, and unable to wait on others. So, one day Peter told me he wanted me to meet his friend.

Jesus was unlike anyone I ever met. He came into the house having already drawn the jug of water from the well. He smiled *at* me, not past me. He seemed to study me. I couldn’t wait on him and the guests for long. Finally, I had to go rest. He came in and touched me, and now I feel more whole than I have in a long time.

I can see that Jesus is influencing Peter. Peter looks deeper into my eyes. He looks around to seek out the lost and assist the needy. He has become a better husband, father, son.

Peter is not perfect, but he is becoming more noble, good, and free. He is becoming the man he was meant to be.”

Meditatio 2:

- **To Have:** Reflect on your individual strengths and weaknesses. How have your gifts enriched your marriage? How have your weaknesses challenged your marriage? Pray together for wisdom to know how to place these gifts at God’s disposal. Allow Him to transform weaknesses with His grace.
- **To Hold:** As a couple, what boundaries do we need to set? What rules and expectations do we need to adjust, as both our parents and our children grow older or new circumstances require us to adapt?
- **To Honor:** How do we honor our extended family members and their marriages? If we have mother or father-in-law(s) - how do we honor and respect them and their marriage while maintaining our independence and sense of identity as a couple? If we have married children - How can I love and respect my son or daughter-in-law(s) and find a balance between ignoring and intruding on my children’s marriage(s)?

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Amen.

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Day Five

Martha and Mary

Lectio: Luke 10:38-42 or John 11:1-54

Meditatio 1: These famous sisters in the Bible can help us reflect about cooperation and accepting each other's differences as a married couple. They appear again when their brother, Lazarus, dies. Martha runs to Jesus, while Mary waits until she is called. One is pro-active, the other is passive. However, they both demonstrate that they are committed to Jesus.

Martha: Everyone seems to have an opinion of us: I am all work and she is all prayer. In reality, life is not that simple, and I resent being described that way. Sure, I sometimes act before I think. And I prefer to act rather than sit and muse too long over the potential solutions to a problem.

Mary: I don't like being caricatured, either. It's true that you hurried and ran to Jesus when our brother died, and then Jesus raised him from the dead while I stayed behind at home. Regardless of our differences, though, it's fair to say that "anything *you* can do, **we** can do better."

Lazarus: My dear sisters, let us look to our Lord to see the best way forward. Think about this, why did Jesus bring me back to life? Why I was chosen is a mystery, but perhaps here is a clue.

Jesus had already lost Joseph his father on earth, and his cousin, John the Baptist. Both of these deaths, Jesus accepted as His Father's will. However, when I died, Jesus recognized it as an opportunity to glorify His heavenly Father by returning me to life (cf. John 11:4). In a sense, it seems that he acted as Mary during the deaths of his father and cousin, but He seemed to act more like Martha when he raised me from the dead. It takes the wisdom of God to know when it is time for patient acceptance and when it is time for heroic action.

Meditatio 2:

- **To Have:** Discuss how your natural inclinations complement each other. If you are inclined to inertia, pray for the courage to act. If you are inclined to impulsivity, pray for the patience to reflect. Consider a way forward to act and pray together.
- **To Hold:** Tell your spouse about something you have been contemplating or dreaming about for a long time. Discuss together what steps you can take, and help each other to put your ideas into action.
- **To Honor:** Take a moment to reflect on how your spouse has actively helped you to grow as a person—perhaps in encouraging you to try something new, expanding your perspective, developing a skill, or letting go of a sinful inclination. Share your thoughts with your spouse and thank him or her for the positive impact they have had on your life.

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Day Six

Tentmakers for God

Lectio: Acts 18

Meditatio 1: When the Jews were expelled from Rome, Priscilla and Aquila, a married couple, and tentmakers, went to Corinth where they met St. Paul. As fellow tradesmen, they became close friends and traveling companions. This couple tells us about their friend, St. Paul.

Priscilla: Do you know how hard it is to stitch a tent? We work in leather and linen, but we also weave camel and goat hair to make strips of cloth, which we then sew together. The fabric is coarse and heavy. Punching a hole once is hard; try punching in a straight line repeatedly. It takes skill, determination, and practice.

Aquila: A stranger named Paul showed up at one of our gatherings, and he said he was good at tent-making, too. He proved himself to be an expert tentmaker. As he furiously stitched and worked, he told us about his extensive travels. He also told us about a good friend of his, Jesus.

We had heard of Jesus before, but over time, what Paul said about Jesus made more and more sense, and then it became real for us. Paul helped us recognize that Jesus as our Messiah, the Christ, the One who came to save us.

We wanted to help share this good news with Paul. So, we started working in Corinth with him, then moved to the community in Ephesus, and finally came back to Rome. Along with Paul, we stitched the world together. It was a challenge to tell the same story of Jesus – to tailor it to the Corinthians, the Roman-obsessed Ephesians, the ever-debating Athenians. To say nothing of stitching Jews and Gentiles together! Try to get a Galatian and a Thessalonian to agree on anything. But you know what? It is possible. The pattern is everything, and we model everything on Jesus Christ, who gave us the template.

Priscilla: If you believe in Jesus, you are called to be a tentmaker. Our marriage was made for this work, and for these times. Isaiah's words are our motto: "Enlarge the place of your tent,

stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back, lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes” (Isaiah 54:2).

Meditatio 2:

- **To Have:** Like Priscilla and Aquila, few of us live and work in the same place all our lives. Every new place and position is an opportunity to share in the call of evangelization. How do you partake in that call and mission as Christians? Do you have friends who could benefit from your sharing about your life in Christ? Does your marriage reflect what you believe and profess?
- **To Hold:** Can we be tentmakers – sewing and patching the torn and tattered areas of our lives? Where in our lives is there a ragged edge, where healing needs to take place? Is there an area of our marriage or family that needs healing? Or is God asking us to expand our marriage and home – our tent – to the gift of more children, naturally or by adoption?
- **To Honor:** How can I better honor my marriage vows and by doing so, honor my spouse and my family?

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Day Seven

Post-Cana

Lectio: John 2:1-11

Meditatio 1: The story of the wedding feast at Cana is rich with meaning for Christian couples. Let us take a closer look at the one who may have felt disgraced and disrespected by the entire incident: the groom at the wedding.

What should have been the best day of his life, still tormented him. How, after such an auspicious courtship, could things have turned so sour? The energy had run out of the crowd even sooner than the wine had. He knew he was moody and she was spirited, but it had seemed to make sense for them to align their families, their businesses, their lives. It had turned out to be a bad bargain. He could not master her the way he could master the vines.

The wine incident had been the best of all occasions to her, and it should have been for him, too, but he had been so woefully embarrassed. Yes, he admitted, he had cut it too close. He had made too many promises to supply wine to others, and had run short at his own wedding. It was bad business; he had taken a business gamble and lost. But then Jesus appeared. At the moment when all eyes should have been on him, the groom, they were fastened on Jesus.

The same wine jars lay as a reminder of that day among his reserves. "These jars ruined my wedding day," he thought to himself as he dipped a cup into one jar. He swirled the water around. "I can get wine from water too, can't I? I take little grape seedlings, string them out over the countryside, add the rain, and the wine comes, eventually. I just can't do it immediately, like he did."

He dashed the water out of the cup. His mind returned again and again to the day of the wedding. She had watched Jesus with wonder and admiration. Why didn't she watch him with the same admiration? When she did look at him with love, he lived for those moments.

"I'm a winemaker, not a miracle worker," he thought to himself. "I can't fill a stone jar all at once but I can bring my wine to her, slowly and steadily, in every season of my life."

Meditatio 2:

- **To Have:** How have I changed since my wedding day? In what ways have I lost focus? In what ways have I grown? Share with your spouse the ways in which you think you have changed. Share with one another what you most appreciate about your spouse, but perhaps have seen less evidence of lately. Ask to see that quality again.
- **To Hold:** As you look at the next stage of your life, what can you work on to be a better person, a better spouse, a better Christian? Trust that God will change your water into wine, if you let Him.
- **To Honor:** What made you fall in love with your spouse? What drew you to him or her? What do you see and love in your spouse now that was unknown to you on your wedding day? Share these reflections with each other.

Oratio:

O God, who in creating the human race
willed that man and wife should be one,
keep, we pray, in a bond of inseparable love
those who are united in the covenant of Marriage,
so that, as you make their love fruitful,
they may become, by your grace, witnesses to charity itself.
Through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Contemplatio: Spend a few moments in silence, grateful for the gift of your marriage, and allow the Lord to speak directly to your heart. When finished, end by slowly reciting the Our Father together.

Cana is reprinted with permission from *Possible Parables: Biblical Stories Re-Imagined* by Jim Healy, Rooted in Love, 2010, 2020.

This year's Do It Yourself Marriage Retreat was created by Dr. Jim Healy (www.rootedinlove.org), who was the director of the Family Ministry Office for the Diocese of Joliet for 30 years before his retirement from that position last year. He delights in continuing to write, speak, and consult on marriage and family topics.

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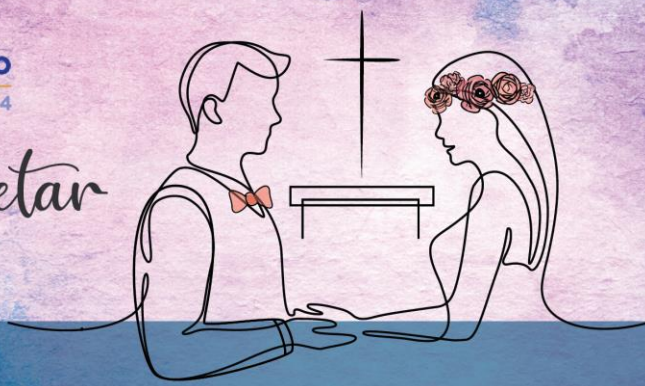


Semana Nacional del Matrimonio

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Recibir, prometer, respetar

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Retiro matrimonial en el hogar

Semana Nacional del Matrimonio 2021

Matrimonio: Recibir, prometer, respetar

Queridas parejas casadas,

El tema de este año para la Semana Nacional del Matrimonio es Recibir, prometer y respetar, un recordatorio de las promesas hechas el día de su boda.

Las historias y las preguntas para la reflexión que siguen tienen por objeto ayudarlas a renovar su compromiso de “recibir, prometer y respetar” a su cónyuge.

Esta semana, celebren y enriquezcan su matrimonio tomándose un tiempo cada día para escuchar la Palabra de Dios, meditar, reflexionar y orar juntos. Cada día es una oportunidad para leer y meditar en un pasaje de las Escrituras seguido de una historia imaginada desde una perspectiva diferente. Reflexionen en las preguntas que siguen y concluyan con la oración para las parejas.

Este ejercicio de orar con las Escrituras se llama *Lectio Divina*. Consta de cuatro pasos: *lectio* (lectura de las Escrituras), *meditatio* (meditación), *oratio* (oración) y *contemplatio* (contemplación).

¡Dios Los Bendiga!

Día uno

Adán y Eva: Podríamos ser nosotros

Lectio: Génesis 2:23; 3:1-24

Meditatio 1: ¡La Escritura revela que Dios hizo al hombre y a la mujer el uno para el otro! La exclamación de Adán de que “¡esta sí que es hueso de mis huesos y carne de mi carne!” señala el santo reconocimiento de que Dios deseaba que el hombre y la mujer fueran marido y mujer. Ahora, consideren cómo el pecado ha afectado el maravilloso plan de Dios para sus hijos.

Imagínense a Adán y Eva exiliados del Jardín del Edén un año después de haber comido el fruto prohibido. Se ganan el sustento diario con el sudor de su frente. Eva ya ha dado a luz a su primer hijo, sufriendo plenamente los dolores del parto. Hoy han dejado de arar los campos para descansar del calor del sol. Su conversación retoma el viejo estribillo: ¿quién tiene la culpa de haberlos llevado a este punto? ¿Quién es el causante de sus fatigas y trabajos?

Adán: ¿Por qué escuchaste a esa serpiente? ¿No te diste cuenta de que hablaba con lengua bífida?

Eva: Tú estuviste junto a mí todo el tiempo y no dijiste una sola palabra. Sólo le di una mordida. ¡Tú te comiste el resto!

Adán: Aun así, eso no cambia el hecho de que tú diste la primera mordida. Yo estaba seguro de que no ibas a dejarte persuadir. Pero ya que te dejaste, sentí que no tenía otra opción.

Eva: Ahora míranos. Sudamos y nos afanamos a diario, no somos felices aquí como lo éramos en el jardín... y es tu culpa.

Adán: Oh, no, no es mi culpa.

Eva: Quizás Dios pueda decirnos quién tiene la culpa. Podemos continuar con nuestra vida una vez que sepamos quién tiene la culpa.

Adán: Buena idea.

Adán y Eva buscan a Dios para encontrar la respuesta.

Dios: Ambos están equivocados al buscar al culpable. ¿Creen que uno es el villano y el otro es la víctima? Los dos son tanto el villano como la víctima.

Adán: No comprendemos.

Dios: Ustedes son mucho más similares que diferentes. No es importante considerar quién tiene la culpa. En vez de eso, consideren cómo pueden, juntos, trabajar para reparar el daño causado. Ambos han experimentado las consecuencias de la caída de la gracia. Juntos, como marido y mujer, pueden experimentar la redención.

Meditatio 2: (Pregúntense y reflexionen)

- **Recibir:** Fuimos llamados por Dios a ser cuidadores y custodios los unos de los otros y del mundo que él creó. ¿Valoro a mi cónyuge como un don personal de Dios para mí? ¿Nos deleitamos en las bendiciones que hemos recibido, como nuestro matrimonio? ¿O nos aferramos a bienes temporales que no son nuestros? ¿Cómo podemos simplificar nuestra vida, especialmente durante esta pandemia, y compartir con los menos afortunados las bondades que todos hemos recibido?

- **Prometer:** ¿Traemos a Dios a nuestras conversaciones? ¿Oramos juntos todos los días u oramos el uno por el otro con regularidad? ¿Discernimos juntos sobre el plan de Dios para nuestra familia y el número de hijos que él desea que tengamos? ¿Cómo podemos abrazarnos y sostenernos mejor el uno al otro, especialmente en tiempos difíciles?
- **Respetar:** ¿Le doy a mi cónyuge el beneficio de la duda? ¿Culpo a mi cónyuge de algunas cosas injustamente? ¿Cómo puedo respetar mejor a mi cónyuge en palabras y en obras? ¿Cómo honramos el plan de Dios para el amor conyugal? Por ejemplo, ¿hemos rechazado todos los métodos anticonceptivos y nos hemos comprometido a practicar la planificación familiar natural?

Oratio:

Dios nuestro, que al crear el género humano quisiste establecer la unión entre el hombre y la mujer, sostén en la fidelidad del amor a estos hijos tuyos, que están unidos por el pacto del matrimonio, para que siempre den testimonio con su vida del amor divino que los llevó a tu altar.
Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo,
Amén.

Contemplatio: Pasen unos momentos en silencio, agradecidos por el don de su matrimonio, y dejen que el Señor les hable directamente al corazón. Concluyan recitando lentamente juntos el Padre Nuestro.

Día dos

En el foso del león

Lectio: Daniel 6:16-28

Meditatio 1: Daniel fue arrojado al foso del león porque adoraba fielmente al único Dios verdadero. Sin embargo, Dios envió a su ángel a cerrar la boca del león para proteger a Daniel de cualquier daño.

Imaginemos la perspectiva del león, cuya boca había sido cerrada por Dios:

“Este es un nuevo tipo de compañía, este Daniel que se ha metido en mi espacio. Hemos dado vueltas cautelosamente uno alrededor del otro todo el día, vigilándonos uno del otro. Mi objetivo es siempre el mismo: reducir a mi presa para saciar mi apetito. Siempre estoy listo para atacar al primer signo de debilidad en mi presa, cualquier presa, bestia o humano.

Pero, extrañamente, no estoy ansioso por devorar a esta persona de carne humana, que es vulnerable y está vigilante a la vez. *No* me inclino a seducirlo o atrapararlo, con mi acercamiento cuidadoso, mis ojos astutos, mi fuerza siempre alerta.

Este hombre me confunde y me desconcierta. ¿Qué tiene de diferente?

Dios Todopoderoso, Dios de Daniel, cerraste mi boca y abriste mi corazón. ¿Qué me está pasando? Un día, muy pronto, hasta podría estar dispuesto a yacer con un cordero”.

Meditatio 2:

- **Recibir:** “Tener y sostener” es muy diferente de “atrapar y devorar”. ¿Cómo escudo o protejo a mi cónyuge de caer en las trampas que le pongan otros o sus propias debilidades?
- **Prometer:** En nuestra relación como pareja, ¿cuándo he actuado como el león, listo para atacar, en lugar de proteger? Un viejo proverbio checo dice: “Si tengo que morderte, déjame morderte con mi corazón”. ¿Cómo puedo decir la verdad con ternura y bondad, y no con brutalidad?
- **Respetar:** Durante esta pandemia, muchas parejas han sufrido nuevas limitaciones y confinamientos estrechos que han puesto a prueba su relación. ¿He atacado a mi cónyuge verbal, emocional o físicamente? ¿Cómo pueden mis palabras, mis pensamientos y mis acciones transformarse por la gracia de Dios para respetar mejor a mi cónyuge?

Oratio:

Dios nuestro, que al crear el género humano quisiste establecer la unión entre el hombre y la mujer, sostén en la fidelidad del amor a estos hijos tuyos, que están unidos por el pacto del matrimonio, para que siempre den testimonio con su vida del amor divino que los llevó a tu altar.
Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo,
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Día tres

El camino de Emaús

Lectio: Lucas 24:13-35

Meditatio 1: El primer domingo de Pascua, dos discípulos desilusionados regresaban a casa desde Jerusalén. La crucifixión de Jesús los había aplastado y apabullado. Todo parecía perdido. Entonces, un extraño se unió a ellos en el camino. Imaginemos que los dos discípulos eran marido y mujer. Sólo uno de los dos, Cleofás, es nombrado. Para ayudarnos a profundizar en la historia, demos a la mujer un nombre, Judith, y una voz.

“No me gusta cuando una tercera persona se une a nosotros en un viaje, especialmente otro hombre. Es costumbre que los dos hombres caminen delante, y que la mujer vaya detrás. Sin embargo, esta vez era diferente. El extraño estaba a veces a mi lado, otras veces al lado de mi esposo, Cleofás.

Mientras Cleofás y yo hablábamos de lo que había sucedido en Jerusalén, caminábamos tomados de la mano, mirándonos de rato en rato, y compartiendo estos momentos más profundamente que nunca. El extraño caminaba entonces detrás de nosotros, aunque no de manera amenazante, sino protectora.

En cierto momento, comenzó a explicarnos las Escrituras. Hablaba con entusiasmo y caminaba con paso vivo a nuestro lado. De repente, se adelantó de un salto y caminó mirando hacia nosotros. Sus ojos brillaban y su voz estaba llena de sentimiento.

Fue entonces cuando comencé a sentir que se estaba desarrollando algo supremamente importante, pero no sabía qué. Mientras el extraño hablaba, todo empezó a aclararse ante mí. Le susurré a Cleofás: 'Invítalo a quedarse con nosotros cuando llegemos a Emaús'. Quería escuchar más.

Cuando llegamos, él tomó el pan y lo bendijo. Cuando tomamos el pan de sus manos, se sintió como la comida más importante que jamás hubiéramos comido. Comencé a orar: 'Ayúdame a tomar esta comida dentro de mí y nunca dejes que me abandone'. Alcé la vista, y él se había ido. '¡Era... el Señor!' exclamé. '¡Sí! Volvamos a Jerusalén', replicó Cleofás".

Meditatio 2:

- **Recibir:** ¿Cuáles han sido las experiencias espirituales más significativas que ustedes como cónyuges han vivido juntos? Quizás fue una peregrinación, la respuesta a una tragedia o un momento de alegría mientras desempeñaban un acto de servicio. Mirando hacia atrás, ¿sentían que ardía su corazón? Recuérdenle a su cónyuge ese momento, y por qué fue tan significativo para ustedes.
- **Prometer:** ¿Cómo se responsabilizan mutuamente por su crecimiento espiritual? ¿De qué maneras pueden ustedes, como pareja, esforzarse por alcanzar la santidad y ayudarse mutuamente a desear más a Dios?
- **Respetar:** Podrían ver esta semana como un camino a Emaús. Traten de no esperar la próxima cuesta. Como en la historia de Emaús, que este sea un momento para compartir su corazón, buscar significado y celebrar la presencia de Dios en su vida.

Oratio:

Dios nuestro, que al crear el género humano quisiste establecer la unión entre el hombre y la mujer, sostén en la fidelidad del amor a estos hijos tuyos, que están unidos por el pacto del matrimonio, para que siempre den testimonio con su vida del amor divino que los llevó a tu altar.
Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo,
Amén.

Contemplatio: Pasen unos momentos en silencio, agradecidos por el don de su matrimonio, y dejen que el Señor les hable directamente al corazón. Concluyan recitando lentamente juntos el Padre Nuestro.

Día cuatro

Habla la suegra

Lectio: Lucas 4:38-41

Meditatio 1: El Evangelio de Lucas nos habla de la curación de la suegra de san Pedro Apóstol. ¿Qué habría dicho ella?

“Mi hija se casó con Pedro, un pescador. Es un hombre alto y corpulento, gran conversador, propenso a gestos extravagantes y arrebatos emocionales. Es difícil no quererlo. Está lleno de energía y siempre listo para una aventura. Donde va su mente, allá va su cuerpo, de inmediato.

Siempre hay una multitud a su alrededor. Tiene muchos amigos, pero uno destaca por encima del resto. Su nombre es Jesús. Permítanme que les cuente sobre él.

Me encanta recibir gente en mi casa. No hay nada que me guste más que cuidar a las personas que amo. Pero recientemente estuve enferma y no podía atender a los demás. Entonces, un día Pedro me dijo que quería que conociera a su amigo.

Jesús no se parecía a nadie que yo haya conocido. Entró en la casa habiendo sacado ya el cántaro de agua del pozo. Me sonreía *a mí*, no más allá de mí. Parecía estudiarme. No pude atenderlos a él y los invitados por mucho tiempo. Finalmente, tuve que irme a descansar. Él entró y me tocó, y ahora me siento más completa que en mucho tiempo.

Puedo ver que Jesús está influenciando a Pedro. Pedro me mira más profundamente a los ojos. Mira a su alrededor para buscar a los perdidos y ayudar a los necesitados. Se ha convertido en un mejor esposo, padre e hijo.

Pedro no es perfecto, pero se está volviendo más noble, bueno y libre. Se está convirtiendo en el hombre que estaba destinado a ser”.

Meditatio 2:

- **Recibir:** Reflexionen sobre sus fortalezas y debilidades individuales. ¿Cómo han enriquecido sus dones su matrimonio? ¿Cómo han desafiado sus debilidades su matrimonio? Oren juntos por la sabiduría de saber cómo poner estos dones a disposición de Dios. Dejen que él transforme las debilidades con su gracia.
- **Prometer:** Como pareja, ¿qué límites debemos establecer? ¿Qué reglas y expectativas debemos ajustar, a medida que tanto nuestros padres como nuestros hijos se hacen mayores o nuevas circunstancias exigen que nos adaptemos?
- **Respetar:** ¿Cómo respetamos a los miembros de nuestra familia extendida y sus matrimonios? Si tenemos suegra o suegro, ¿cómo podemos respetarlos y honrarlos a ellos y a su matrimonio al tiempo que mantenemos nuestra independencia y sentido de identidad como pareja? Si tenemos hijos casados, ¿cómo puedo amar y respetar a mi yerno o mi nuera y encontrar un equilibrio entre mantenerme al margen y entrometerme en el matrimonio de mis hijos?

Oratio:

Dios nuestro, que al crear el género humano quisiste establecer la unión entre el hombre y la mujer, sostén en la fidelidad del amor a estos hijos tuyos, que están unidos por el pacto del matrimonio, para que siempre den testimonio con su vida del amor divino que los llevó a tu altar.
Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo,
Amén.

Contemplatio: Pasen unos momentos en silencio, agradecidos por el don de su matrimonio, y dejen que el Señor les hable directamente al corazón. Concluyan recitando lentamente juntos el Padre Nuestro.

Día cinco

Marta y María

Lectio: Lucas 10:38-42 o Juan 11:1-54

Meditatio 1: Estas famosas hermanas de la Biblia pueden ayudarnos a reflexionar sobre la cooperación y aceptar las diferencias del otro como pareja casada. Vuelven a aparecer cuando muere su hermano, Lázaro. Marta corre a ver a Jesús, mientras María espera hasta que la llamen. Una es proactiva, la otra es pasiva. Sin embargo, las dos demuestran que están comprometidas con Jesús.

Marta: Todo el mundo parece tener una opinión de nosotras: yo soy todo trabajo y ella es toda oración. En realidad, la vida no es tan simple, y me molesta que me describan de esa manera. Cierto, a veces actúo antes de pensar. Y prefiero actuar en lugar de sentarme y cavilar demasiado sobre las posibles soluciones a un problema.

María: A mí tampoco me gusta que me caricaturicen. Es verdad que te apresuraste a ver a Jesús cuando murió nuestro hermano, y que luego Jesús lo resucitó de entre los muertos mientras yo me quedaba en casa. Pero independientemente de nuestras diferencias, es justo decir que “cualquier cosa que *tú* puedas hacer, **nosotros** podemos hacerlo mejor”.

Lázaro: Mis queridas hermanas, miremos a nuestro Señor para ver el mejor camino a seguir. Piensen en esto: ¿Por qué Jesús me devolvió a la vida? Por qué fui elegido es un misterio, pero quizás aquí hay una pista.

Jesús ya había perdido a José, su padre en la tierra, y a su primo, Juan el Bautista. Jesús aceptó ambas muertes como la voluntad de su Padre. Sin embargo, en mi muerte, Jesús reconoció una oportunidad para glorificar a su Padre celestial volviéndome a la vida (cf. Juan 11:4). En cierto sentido, parece que actuó como María durante la muerte de su padre y su primo, pero pareció actuar más como Marta cuando me resucitó de entre los muertos. Se necesita la sabiduría de Dios para saber cuándo es el momento de la aceptación paciente y cuándo es el momento de la acción heroica.

Meditatio 2:

- **Recibir:** Conversen sobre cómo complementan el uno al otro sus inclinaciones naturales. Si son propensos a la inercia, oren pidiendo el valor para actuar. Si son propensos a la impulsividad, oren para tener paciencia para reflexionar. Consideren una forma de actuar y orar juntos.
- **Prometer:** Hablen a su cónyuge sobre algo que han estado contemplando o soñando durante mucho tiempo. Conversen sobre qué pasos pueden adoptar, y ayúdense mutuamente para poner sus ideas en acción.
- **Respetar:** Tómense un momento para reflexionar sobre cómo su cónyuge los ha ayudado activamente a crecer como personas, tal vez alentándolos a probar algo nuevo, ampliar sus perspectivas, desarrollar una habilidad o abandonar una inclinación pecaminosa. Compartan sus pensamientos con su cónyuge y agradézcanle por el impacto positivo que ha tenido en su vida.

Oratio:

Dios nuestro, que al crear el género humano quisiste establecer la unión entre el hombre y la mujer, sostén en la fidelidad del amor a estos hijos tuyos, que están unidos por el pacto del matrimonio, para que siempre den testimonio con su vida del amor divino que los llevó a tu altar.
Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo,
Amén.

Contemplatio: Pasen unos momentos en silencio, agradecidos por el don de su matrimonio, y dejen que el Señor les hable directamente al corazón. Concluyan recitando lentamente juntos el Padre Nuestro.

Día seis

Hacedores de tiendas para Dios

Lectio: Hechos 18

Meditatio 1: Cuando los judíos fueron expulsados de Roma, Priscila y Aquila, una pareja casada y hacedores de tiendas de campaña, fueron a Corinto, donde conocieron a san Pablo. Como compañeros de oficio, se hicieron amigos cercanos y compañeros de viaje. Esta pareja nos habla de su amigo, san Pablo.

Priscila: ¿Saben lo difícil que es coser una tienda de campaña? Trabajamos con cuero y lino, pero también tejemos pelo de camello y de cabra para hacer tiras de tela, que luego cosemos para unir las. La tela es áspera y pesada. Hacer un agujero una vez es difícil; prueben a perforar en línea recta repetidamente. Se necesita habilidad, determinación y práctica.

Aquila: Un extraño llamado Pablo se apareció en una de nuestras reuniones, y dijo que también era bueno haciendo tiendas de campaña. Demostró ser un experto hacedor de tiendas. Mientras cosía y trabajaba vigorosamente, nos hablaba de sus extensos viajes. Nos hablaba también de un buen amigo suyo, Jesús.

Ya antes habíamos oído hablar de Jesús, pero, con el tiempo, lo que Pablo decía sobre Jesús iba cobrando cada vez más sentido, y luego se volvió real para nosotros. Pablo nos ayudó a reconocer a Jesús como nuestro Mesías, el Cristo, aquel que vino a salvarnos.

Queríamos ayudar a compartir esta buena nueva con Pablo. Así pues, comenzamos a trabajar en Corinto con él, luego nos mudamos a la comunidad de Éfeso, y finalmente regresamos a Roma. Junto con Pablo, cosimos el mundo. Fue un desafío contar la misma historia de Jesús: adaptarla a los corintios, a los efesios obsesionados con los romanos, a los atenienses siempre debatiendo. ¡Por no hablar de engazar a judíos y gentiles! Prueben a que un gálata y un tesalonicense se pongan de acuerdo en algo. Pero ¿saben qué? Es posible. El patrón lo es todo, y modelamos todo en Jesucristo, quien nos dio la plantilla.

Priscila: Si crees en Jesús, estás llamado a hacer tiendas. Nuestro matrimonio fue hecho para este trabajo, y para estos tiempos. Las palabras de Isaías son nuestro lema: “Ensancha el espacio de tu carpa, despliega tus lonas sin mezquinar, alarga tus cuerdas, afirma tus estacas” (Isaías 54:2).

Meditatio 2:

- **Recibir:** Como Priscila y Aquila, pocos de nosotros vivimos y trabajamos en el mismo lugar toda nuestra vida. Cada nuevo lugar y puesto es una oportunidad para compartir el llamado a la evangelización. ¿Cómo participan ustedes en ese llamado y misión como cristianos? ¿Tienen amigos que podrían beneficiarse de este compartir sobre su vida en Cristo? ¿Refleja su matrimonio lo que ustedes creen y profesan?
- **Prometer:** ¿Podemos ser hacedores de tiendas, cosiendo y remendando las áreas desgarradas y raídas de nuestra vida? ¿En qué parte de nuestra vida hay un borde desigual, donde debe haber sanación? ¿Hay un área de nuestro matrimonio o familia que necesite sanación? ¿O Dios nos está pidiendo que amplíemos nuestro matrimonio y nuestro hogar, nuestra tienda de campaña, para el don de más hijos, por vía natural o por adopción?
- **Respetar:** ¿Cómo puedo respetar mejor mis votos matrimoniales y, con ello, honrar a mi cónyuge y a mi familia?

Oratio:

Dios nuestro, que al crear el género humano quisiste establecer la unión entre el hombre y la mujer, sostén en la fidelidad del amor a estos hijos tuyos, que están unidos por el pacto del matrimonio, para que siempre den testimonio con su vida del amor divino que los llevó a tu altar.
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Día siete

Después de Caná

Lectio: Juan 2:1-11

Meditatio 1: La historia de las bodas de Caná es rica en significado para las parejas cristianas. Echemos un vistazo más de cerca a quien pudo haberse sentido desacreditado y ofendido por todo el incidente: el novio en sus bodas.

Lo que debería haber sido el mejor día de su vida, todavía lo atormentaba. ¿Cómo, después de un noviazgo tan auspicioso, podían haberse puesto tan amargas las cosas? La energía se había agotado en la concurrencia incluso antes que el vino. Él sabía que era de carácter malhumorado y ella en cambio de carácter animado, pero había parecido tener sentido para ellos alinear a sus familias, sus ocupaciones, sus vidas. Resultó ser una mala decisión. No podía dominarla a ella como podía dominar las vides.

El incidente del vino había sido la mejor de todas las ocasiones para ella, y también debería haberlo sido para él, pero se había sentido sumamente avergonzado. Sí, admitió, se había dado muy poco margen. Había hecho demasiadas promesas de proveer de vino a otros, y se había quedado corto en su propia boda. Fue un mal negocio; había hecho una apuesta comercial y había perdido. Pero entonces apareció Jesús. En el momento en que todos los ojos deberían haber estado puestos en él, el novio, ahora estaban fijos en Jesús.

Las mismas tinajas de vino yacían como recordatorio de ese día entre sus reservas. “Estas tinajas arruinaron el día de mi boda”, pensaba para sí al sumergir una copa en una tinaja. Removió el agua. “Yo también puedo sacar vino del agua, ¿no? Tomo plantones de uva, los siembro en filas por el campo, agrego la lluvia y, finalmente, llega el vino. Es sólo que no puedo hacerlo de inmediato, como lo hizo él”.

Arrojó el agua de la copa. Su mente volvía una y otra vez al día de la boda. Ella había mirado a Jesús con asombro y admiración. ¿Por qué no lo miraba a él con la misma admiración? Cuando ella lo miraba con amor, él vivía para esos momentos.

“Soy un hacedor de vinos, no un hacedor de milagros”, pensó para sí. “No puedo llenar una tinaja de piedra de una sola vez, pero sí puedo llevarle a ella mi vino, lenta y constantemente, en cada estación de mi vida”.

Meditatio 2:

- **Recibir:** ¿Cómo he cambiado desde el día de mi boda? ¿De qué maneras he perdido el foco? ¿De qué maneras he crecido? Compartan con su cónyuge las maneras en que creen que han cambiado. Compartan entre ustedes lo que más aprecian de su cónyuge, pero de lo cual quizás hayan visto menos últimamente. Pidan volver a ver esa cualidad.
- **Prometer:** Al mirar la siguiente etapa de su vida, ¿en qué pueden trabajar para ser mejores personas, mejores cónyuges, mejores cristianos? Confíen en que Dios cambiará su agua en vino, si se lo permiten.
- **Respetar:** ¿Qué les hizo enamorarse de su cónyuge? ¿Qué los atrajo a la otra persona? ¿Qué ven y aman en su cónyuge ahora que no conocían el día de su boda? Compartan estas reflexiones entre ustedes.

Oratio:

Dios nuestro, que al crear el género humano quisiste establecer la unión entre el hombre y la mujer, sostén en la fidelidad del amor a estos hijos tuyos, que están unidos por el pacto del matrimonio, para que siempre den testimonio con su vida del amor divino que los llevó a tu altar.
Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo,
Amén.

Contemplatio: Pasen unos momentos en silencio, agradecidos por el don de su matrimonio, y dejen que el Señor les hable directamente al corazón. Concluyan recitando lentamente juntos el Padre Nuestro.

Caná se reimprime con permiso de *Possible Parables: Biblical Stories Re-Imagined*, de Jim Healy, Rooted in Love, 2010, 2020.

Este año, el Retiro matrimonial en el hogar fue creado por el Dr. Jim Healy (www.rootedinlove.org), quien fue el director de la Oficina del Ministerio de la Familia de la Diócesis de Joliet durante 30 años antes de retirarse de ese puesto el año pasado. El Dr. Healy se deleita en seguir escribiendo, dando conferencias y ofreciendo consultorías sobre temas de matrimonio y familia.

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Parish Resource: National Marriage Week 2021

February 7-14, 2021

Below are a few ideas for parishes, couples, and families to celebrate National Marriage Week. These suggestions may be adapted to observe social distancing guidelines.

For more information or inspiration, visit foryourmarriage.org or marriageuniqueforareason.org.

❖ As a Parish

- On World Marriage Sunday (February 14), host an Anniversary Mass or have a special marriage blessing at all weekend Masses. Share with clergy the Homiletic Resource that has tips on how to prepare a homily about marriage.
- Contact the married couples who are celebrating milestone anniversaries. Invite them to be honored at one of the Masses being offered for them. Send a card of congratulations from the parish – especially to elderly couples who may be homebound.
- Reach out to the newly married couples (5 years and under) and invite them to receive a blessing for their marriage at the weekend Masses. If possible, arrange for them to meet one another.
- Request couples in the parish to suggest marriage tips or words of wisdom for younger couples and publish them in the bulletin.
- Plan a Holy Hour of adoration for engaged and/or married couples at the parish or even virtually by live-streaming a prepared church altar or adoration chapel. Musical accompaniment, reflections on marriage from Scripture, Church teachings and writings of the saints can be interspersed throughout the hour. A worship aid can be made available to couples who sign up.

- Host a weekend one or two-day retreat for married couples at the parish, either in-person or virtually. Alternatively, share the Do-It-Yourself Marriage Retreat for couples to do on their own.
- Offer a guided viewing of the series *Marriage: Unique for a Reason* ([available in DVD with study guides](#)) in-person or make a few copies available for couples to view on their own.
- Host a couples' date night, either in-person or virtually. Include a guest speaker, a meal or hors-d'oeuvres (a virtual version could include a step by step recipe to follow together) and an opportunity to pray as a couple or go to confession. If possible, provide some form of childcare.
- Prepare a tool-kit with the suggestions for couples and families below. Also include any local resources, retreats, or opportunities for marriage enrichment provided by local chapters of marriage groups and ministries.
- Provide a suggested list of date night movies for in-home entertainment. [See these movie reviews by Catholic News Service](#) to vet the suitability of movies for recommendation. If your parish has a subscription to [FORMED.org](#), include suggestions from among the offered titles.

❖ As a Couple

- Re-read the readings that were proclaimed on your wedding day. Practice *Lectio Divina* by meditating on the Word of God together.
- Download the At-Home Marriage Retreat for Couples offered at [ForYourMarriage.org](#).
- Frame a copy of your wedding invitation or program. Hang it in a place in your home where it can serve as a reminder of your vows.
- Recall the friends and family members who were a part of your wedding day. Who have you lost contact with? Try connecting with them again. Who is in need of your prayers? Who has passed away? Pray for their souls.
- Did you have a first dance at your wedding? Recreate that moment by finding the song and dance together in your living room.
- Prayerfully re-read your wedding vows to each other. Take a moment to recommit yourself to the vows you made on your wedding day.
- Have a date night in. Get dressed up for dinner — look your best for your spouse! Order takeout from a favorite restaurant or try to recreate the meal that was served at your reception. Bonus: Get the kids involved by having them cook or serve as your waiters and waitresses for the night!

- Create a marriage memory box together and then go on a treasure hunt to find little things that represent your relationship: old love letters, honeymoon photos, ticket stubs from date nights, dried flowers, etc. Write down favorite memories and add them to the box. Keep it in a special place to add more items and revisit at a later time.

❖ As a Family

- Look through your wedding album or watch your wedding video. Share stories from your wedding day with your children.
- Make a family timeline beginning with your first date or your wedding day up to the present. Add pregnancies/birthdays, baptismal dates and other sacramental dates, family moves, vacations, new jobs, pets, etc. - anything that has impacted the life of your family.
- Get your crafting supplies out and make Valentine's Day cards for everyone in the family. On each card, write down some of the qualities you love most about each person. Hang up the cards for everyone to see!
- Speak with your children about the blessings and benefits of marriage (as appropriate to age).

❖ Selected Resources

- On marriage vows – *For Your Marriage* articles: [The Exchange of Consent](#), [Making “I do” Work, Till Death Do Us Part](#).
- On marriages in crisis – *For Your Marriage* [list of ministries](#) that help married couples in difficulty or crisis, *For Your Marriage*.
- On healthy sexuality within marriage – Paul VI, Encyclical Letter [Humanae Vitae](#), 1968.
- On divorce – USCCB, [Divorce and the Church's Healing Ministry](#), 2010.
- On lust and pornography – USCCB: [Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography](#), 2015 and [Clean Heart series of pamphlets](#), 2016, *For Your Marriage* [Help for Men and Women Struggling with Pornography](#)
- Pope Francis's [Catechesis on the Family](#), January 7, 2015 – November 18, 2015.
- USCCB, Pastoral Letter [Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan](#), 2009.
- USCCB, *For Your Marriage* website: foryourmarriage.org.
- USCCB, *Por Tu Matrimonio* website: portumatrimonio.org.
- USCCB, *Marriage Unique for A Reason* website: marriageuniqueforareason.org.



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Prayers of the Faithful: National Marriage Week 2021

Mass in Celebration of the Gift of Marriage

The following prayer intentions can be selected for use during the prayers of the faithful.

For Church leaders: that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit to continue to proclaim the unique meaning of marriage between a man and a woman as a sign of Christ and His Bride the Church. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all those who serve us in elected office: that they uphold and enact laws and policies that promote and preserve the dignity of marriage as the permanent, faithful, and fruitful union of a man and a woman. Let us pray to the Lord.

For an increase in faith during this time of pandemic: that like the man with leprosy, we may come to Christ with our burdens and receive the consolation that only the Lord can give. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all those suffering from troubled or broken marriages: that they may be fortified by the grace of the sacrament they have received in matrimony and obtain the assistance they need for healing. Let us pray to the Lord.

For our parish and community: so that, as a family of families, we may find ways to care for our married couples and support the families among us who are the domestic church. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all married couples: that they may strive daily to faithfully and lovingly live out their marriage vows, bearing witness to the love God has for each of us. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all those discerning a vocation to marriage: may they recognize the Holy Spirit working in their hearts and respond generously to the call of God. Let us pray to the Lord.

Prayer Intentions for National Marriage Week 2021

Monday, February 7

For an increased recognition and protection of the unique institution of marriage between one man and one woman, especially in our nation. Let us pray to the Lord.

Tuesday, February 8

For all engaged couples, that as they prepare for the sacrament of marriage, they may deepen their love for each other through deepening of their relationship with God who is Love. Let us pray to the Lord.

Wednesday, February 10

For all married couples, that in imitation of Christ the Bridegroom, they may love and honor their spouse through a total offering of their lives for the other. Let us pray to the Lord.

Thursday, February 11

For all couples who bear the cross of infertility or have lost a child, that they may be comforted by Christ and Our Lady who understand our suffering. Let us pray to the Lord.

Friday, February 12

For all married couples in our parish and community: may they strive daily to treasure each other as a gift from God and grow in holiness. Let us pray to the Lord.

Saturday, February 13

For all couples struggling in their marriages, may they entrust themselves and their family to the loving hands of God and receive the help they need. Let us pray to the Lord.

Sunday, February 14

For all married couples, that they may witness to the beauty of married life as a participation in God's love and inspire others to lovingly and faithfully live out their vocations. Let us pray to the Lord.



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Preaching Resource: World Marriage Sunday 2021

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 14, 2021

Below are a few suggested themes, reflective questions, and resources for preaching on World Marriage Sunday 2021. For more instruction or inspiration, visit foryourmarriage.org or marriageuniqueforareason.org.

First Reading: Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 32:1-2, 5, 11

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:31-11: 1

Alleluia: Luke 7:16

Gospel: Mark 1:40-45

❖ The Word of God

- The readings for the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time highlight our need for Jesus as the Divine Physician. The Old Testament reading from Leviticus lays out the law for those who have contracted leprosy: such persons would be declared unclean, turned out from society, and made to live apart from others in efforts not to spread the disease. If a person were to touch a leper, they would then be declared unclean as well, facing the same restrictions.
- Jesus, “moved with pity...stretched out his hand, *touched him*, and said to him, ‘I do will it. Be made clean.’” The act of Jesus actually touching a leper would have shocked those around him. Love reaches out and touches others. Jesus touches this man, regardless of the risk of being ostracized himself. True love does not count the cost. Jesus gives all for all, unreservedly because his love knows no limits.
- Every marriage is meant to be a little icon of the love of Christ and his bride, the Church. The love shared between a man and a woman in holy matrimony points us to the self-emptying, self-sacrificing love God has for each one of us.

- The vows that married couples make to each other illustrate what this love looks like lived out in the day to day experience: to have and to hold, exclusively, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, to cherish, to honor until death. A person gives everything to his or her spouse.
- The continuation of living life amid a global pandemic may have some married couples reflecting that this has been a season of “for worse,” “for poorer,” and “in sickness.” There are many married couples who are suffering right now: marital strain, illness, unemployment, etc. Christ sees your struggle. He loves you through your struggle. He promised us that we would suffer in being his followers, but he also promised us that he would be with us always, “until the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).
- The sacrament of marriage provides the grace necessary to weather the storms of marriage and family life. We can draw upon those graces of marriage to assist us. Just as the leper cried out to Jesus and begged him for his healing touch, so too, must we be unafraid to reach out to God and ask him for the grace to help us in living out our vocations.
- Likewise, we are called to bring the healing touch of Christ to others. As members of the Body of Christ we are his hands and feet. How can you support those around you? Is God calling you and your spouse to reach out to a younger married couple in friendship? Is a new mom that you know feeling overwhelmed, is a family who is unable to go out because they are caretakers of an elderly family member feeling isolated? How can you reach out to them? How can you bring the healing touch of Christ into the lives of others?

❖ Connecting to National Marriage Week

- *Marriage and family concerns everyone:* Each of us comes from a family. Each of us is a son or a daughter. In God’s plan every child is meant to be the fruit of his or her mother’s and father’s love for each other in the sacred bond of marriage. Therefore, conversations about marriage and the family in the public square concern all of us, and therefore the Church’s teaching on marriage and family is important for all of us.
- *Acknowledging the experience and pain of broken marriages and families:* Sadly, many of us have experienced or know family or friends who have experienced the pain of a broken marriage and family. Each experience is unique, and the Lord’s mercy is great. Regardless of our individual circumstances, we all have a role to play in God’s vision of the family. Ultimately, through baptism, all of us are part of the perfect family – God’s family – as beloved sons and daughters of God the Father.
- *To Have, To Hold, To Honor:* The theme for this year’s celebration of National Marriage Week recalls the vows spouses made to each other on their wedding day. This exchange of consent “is the indispensable element that ‘makes the marriage’” (CCC 1626). Couples are invited to meditate on how they live out their vows in their daily lives. National Marriage Week is an opportunity for married couples to reflect on how they have grown together since their wedding day and to ponder how they can continue to grow in loving and honoring their spouse.

❖ Concluding Points

On this World Marriage Day, we thank our heavenly Father for the gift and blessing of marriage and the family. As we strive to live our particular vocations and respond to the Lord's grace in our lives, let's also consider how we might dedicate renewed prayer and attention to marriage and the family. As a start, here are possible areas we might consider:

- First, we begin with prayer: Let's remember to pray with and for marriages and families throughout our nation: for marriages in crisis, for families struggling with unemployment, for broken or wounded family relationships.
- Second, let us reclaim Sunday as the Lord's Day, a day of rest when we can focus on being together as a family. The celebration of Holy Mass together is the first essential way to honor this day. But is there something more the Lord is inviting us to when we go back home? Set aside some time to pray a decade of the rosary, enjoy the outdoors together, play ball, eat dinner together, have a game night!
- And third, let us remember that the Church is the family of God and a family of families. As a family, how can we share Christ with other married couples and families? Do we have any friends and family members who are struggling in their marriage, alone during this time of isolation, or particularly afflicted by this pandemic? When was the last time we checked on our elderly neighbors? Is there someone in the parish that we haven't seen in a while? How can we – as a family – reach out to those who are in need?

❖ Selected Resources

- On marriage vows – *For Your Marriage* articles: [The Exchange of Consent](#), [Making "I do" Work](#), [Till Death Do Us Part](#).
- On marriages in crisis – *For Your Marriage* [list of ministries](#) that help married couples in difficulty or crisis, *For Your Marriage*.
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