



Living the Faith

MARRIAGE STRENGTHENED BY GOD

Read – Reflect – Pray

Read:

“It can seem difficult, or even impossible, to bind oneself for life to another human being. This makes it all the more important to proclaim the Good News that God loves us with a definitive and irrevocable love, that married couple share in this love, that it supports and sustains them, and that by their own faithfulness they can be witnesses to God’s faithful love. Spouses who with God’s grace give this witness, often in very difficult conditions, deserve the gratitude and support of the ecclesial community.”

—CCC, no. 1648



In her teaching, the Church gives us a picture of family life that begins with the total gift of love between the spouses evidenced in their resolve to remain exclusively faithful until death. This promise, made before God in the midst of family and friends before an authorized priest or deacon, is supported by the continuing presence of Christ in the life of the spouses as he pours into their hearts the gift of love through the Holy Spirit. The couple does not walk alone and possesses the graced freedom to respond to all natural and supernatural help.

The couple needs to remember they have entered a relationship between persons. They come to one another with two loves, the one commanded by Jesus and the one caused by their attraction to each other. They are challenged to unite their personal love with Christ’s love. Their human love will survive more effectively the cultural challenges they face, as well as the psychological and economic ones, when it is merged with the powerful love of Christ, who wants them to succeed and whose divine grace is ever at their service.



Reflect:

In the marriages you have seen, how are God’s fidelity, tenderness, and love lived out? What helps married people live these ideals daily?

What married people in your life are witnesses to the power of the total gift of love in marriage? How?

Pray:

God our Father, we give you thanks for the gift of marriage: the bond of life and love, and the font of the family.

The love of husband and wife enriches your Church with children,
fills the world with a multitude of spiritual fruitfulness and service,
and is the sign of the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, for his Church.

The grace of Jesus flowed forth at Cana at the request of the Blessed Mother. May your Son,



through the intercession of Mary, pour out upon us a new measure of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as we join with all people of good will to promote and protect the unique beauty of marriage.

May your Holy Spirit enlighten our society to treasure the heroic love of husband and wife, and guide our leaders to sustain and protect the singular place of mothers and fathers in the lives of their children.

Father, we ask that our prayers be joined to those of the Virgin Mary,

that your Word may transform our service so as to safeguard the incomparable splendor of marriage.

We ask all these things through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Saints Joachim and Anne, pray for us.

—USCCB Prayer in Defense of Marriage

National Marriage Week is observed between February 7 and 14 every year. More information about National Marriage Week can be found at www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/national-marriage-week.cfm.