

Love is Freely Given

January 2018

[Married love] is above all fully human, a compound of sense and spirit. It is not, then, merely a question of natural instinct or emotional drive. It is also, and above all, an act of the free will, whose trust is such that it is meant not only to survive the joys and sorrows of daily life, but also to grow, so that husband and wife become in a way one heart and one soul, and together attain their human fulfillment.

(Humanae vitae no. 9)

Reflection

Blessed Paul VI reminds us in his encyclical *Humanae vitae* that married love comes from God who is love. In fact, married love mirrors God's love. Divine love is freely given as a gift to us. We, in turn, should love others as God loves us. In choosing to love like God, we love in a way that is fully human.

Reflecting upon how God gave every man and woman this capacity to love like Him, married love is meant to reflect and participate in God's love, which empowers husband and wife to freely decide to love in good times and through life's challenges.

What does love freely given look like in your life? How can you love others more as God loves us?

Intercessory Prayer to Paul VI

God our Father,
fill all married couples
with your love.

Give them the grace
to love one another every day,
living out their vow to love
in good times and bad.

Help them to imitate your
freely given, sacrificial love,
that they may choose each day
to give of themselves,
reflecting your love for us
when you sent your Son to
die for our sins.

We ask this through the intercession of Blessed Pope Paul VI,
and in the name of Christ our Lord,
Amen.

