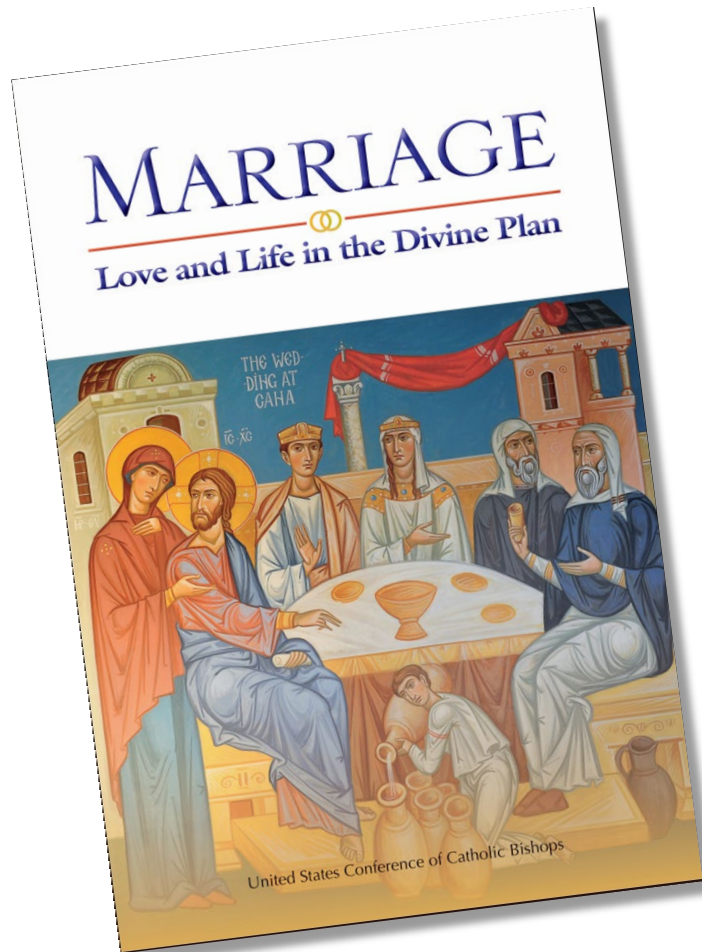


MARRIAGE

Love and Life in the Divine Plan



Overview Presentation

THEME 1: A Natural and Supernatural Gift

- Marriage is a natural blessing or gift
 - Given by God the Creator
 - To be received with gratitude to God and lived according to His plan
 - Calling the spouses to give themselves to each other and to accept each other completely



THEME 1: A Natural and Supernatural Gift

- Marriage is a natural blessing or gift
 - Benefiting the community
 - Through the bearing and raising of children
 - Serving the needs of others
 - Witnessing to God's love



THEME 1: A Natural and Supernatural Gift

- The natural blessing of marriage was distorted, but not lost, by original sin.



THEME 1: A Natural and Supernatural Gift

- Christ restored and elevated marriage.
 - Marriage between two baptized people is a sacrament.
 - Christian marriage is a sign of Christ's love for the Church.
 - Christian spouses help each other to grow in holiness and lead each other to heaven.



THEME 2:

Unique Union of a Man and a Woman

- Creation stories in Genesis show that:
 - Man and woman are created in God's image, “male and female He created them” (Gn. 1:27)
 - Men and women are equal in dignity
 - Both sexes are necessary for God's plan



THEME 2:

Unique Union of a Man and a Woman

- A man and a woman—husband and wife—uniquely complement each other; they are made for each other (“bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”—Gn. 2:23).
 - The differences between men and women are more than biological.
 - They are also evident in the ways that men and women think, act, and communicate.



THEME 2:

Unique Union of a Man and a Woman

- Only a man and a woman can form the intimate union of love and life called marriage.
 - The couple is called to love like God by giving themselves to others.
 - Their union is unique because of its potential to bring new life into the world.



THEME 3: Communion of Love and Life

- Men and women, created in God's image, are called to love like God.
- As God is a communion of persons—the Trinity—husband and wife form a communion of persons within their family.



THEME 3: Communion of Love and Life

- Marriage is a unique communion of persons:
 - Brings together the totality of a man and a woman: body, mind, soul
 - For two, inseparable purposes: unitive (love-giving) and procreative (life-giving)



THEME 3: Communion of Love and Life

- In exchanging marital consent the spouses:
 - Establish a partnership for “the whole of life”
 - Vow exclusive fidelity
 - Promise to be open to the procreation and nurture of children
 - Are empowered to make a “total gift of self” to each other



THEME 3: Communion of Love and Life

- Sexual intercourse signifies the marital covenant; each act must be open to life.
- Contraception is wrong because it separates the unitive and the procreative purposes of marriage.
- Natural methods of family planning respect God's design for married love.



THEME 4: Sacrament of Christ's Love

- Spousal love participates in, and makes present, Christ's love for his Church



THEME 4: Sacrament of Christ's Love

- Christ's love for the Church is the model for marital love; thus, marital love is to be:
 - total
 - faithful
 - permanent
 - life-giving
 - self-giving



THEME 4: Sacrament of Christ's Love

- Matrimony and Holy Orders: Sacraments at the service of communion
 - Directed toward the service of others
 - This service leads to personal salvation



THEME 4: Sacrament of Christ's Love

- *Grace* of the Sacrament of Marriage: Jesus will help the couple to continue in love even when it seems impossible.



THEME 5:

Foundation of the Family and Society

- Marriage is the foundation of the family and society
- Marital love is life-giving to:
 - children, the supreme gift of marriage
 - extended family
 - neighbors and the wider community



THEME 5:

Foundation of the Family and Society

- Husband and wife create a “domestic church” that mirrors the gathered Church:
 - Characterized by care for each other and growth in faith
 - Children are taught how to pray, follow the commandments, and grow in virtue
 - Members are nourished by the Eucharist



THEME 5:

Foundation of the Family and Society

- Familial love overflows to embrace the world.
- Through service to society, the family helps to build up the Kingdom of God.



THEME 6:

Journey of Human and Spiritual Growth

- Human and spiritual growth go together (“Grace builds on nature”).
- Spiritual growth—growth in holiness—means growing in virtue.
- For married couples, the goal is to image Christ’s love for His Church.



THEME 6:

Journey of Human and Spiritual Growth

- Foundational virtues:
 - Faith
 - Hope
 - Charity



THEME 6:

Journey of Human and Spiritual Growth

- Moral virtues:
 - Prudence
 - Justice
 - Fortitude
 - Temperance



THEME 6:

Journey of Human and Spiritual Growth

- Marriage is a vocation:
 - A call from God
 - As necessary and authentic as other vocations in the Church
 - A specific way to respond to the universal call to holiness
 - An imitation of Christ's self-giving love



THEME 7: School of Love and Gratitude

- Recognizing each other as God's gift is an ongoing call.
- This recognition leads to gratitude which helps the couple to persevere in charity.



THEME 7: School of Love and Gratitude

- Gratitude opens the spouses to receive further gifts, especially the gift of children.
- Spouses are called to be open to anyone in need.



THEME 7: School of Love and Gratitude

- Spouses are grateful to God for the gift of the Eucharist:
 - Christ dwells with the couple
 - He sustains and renews their marriage covenant



THEME 7: School of Love and Gratitude

- Growing in Christ's love changes the Christian couple.
 - They become a sign of the Kingdom of God.
 - They become a blessing and gift to each other and to the world.
 - They become a sign of hope in Christ's power to transform hearts.

