

WALKING by FAITH

Grade 6 / Home Lesson

CHAPTER 23 TOGETHER IN LOVE

Objectives

- Explore how people create and maintain a good Christian marriage.
- Affirm that marriage is a partnership.
- Describe how the love of a family reflects the love of the Body of Christ.
- Associate the love of marriage with God's love.

Step 1: *We Are Invited* (Life Experience), pages 172–173

Brainstorm a recipe for a happy marriage. (Possible ingredients: love, consideration, patience, respect, understanding.) Explain to your child that in this chapter you will explore how men and women build good marriages and loving families. Pray together the opening **Prayer** on page 172.

Read the title, **Together in Love**, and the text on the page. Focus on the commitment that Ernesto and Marianne have made to each other. Ask: Before this couple married, how did they show their seriousness about marriage? (They talked about their dream of a life together, including having a home and children.)

Explain that the word *nuptial* means wedding. A nuptial Mass is a celebration of Matrimony during Mass. The Rite of Marriage, which begins after the homily, includes in part the exchange of vows, the (nuptial) blessing, and the exchange of rings. Invite your child to share his or her experience of nuptial Masses.

Point out that sometimes the celebration of Matrimony occurs outside of Mass. This may happen when the bride and groom are of different faiths or denominations or if a deacon officiates at the ceremony. A deacon may witness a Catholic marriage but may not preside over the celebration of the Eucharist. The Rite of Marriage is valid whether celebrated with a Mass or without.

Have your child look at the painting on page 173 and recall with your child that at the wedding at Cana, Jesus miraculously turned jars of water into wine. Read the **Landmark**, and tell your child that in the parable of the ten virgins (*Matthew 25:1–13*), Jesus speaks of himself as a bridegroom; five young women brought oil for their lamps, and five did not. In time those who had not brought oil had to look for more. While they were gone, the bridegroom came, and the young women who had enough oil joined him for a great wedding feast.

Have your child read the text on page 173 to discover how Ernesto and Marianne keep their marriage strong. Ask: What does Ernesto mean when he says you have to communicate? (to share thoughts and feelings, to solve problems)

Explore with your child examples of sacrifices family members make for one another. (Answers may include doing a chore instead of watching TV and helping a child with homework instead of playing a game.)

Step 2: We Explore (Doctrine), pages 174–177

Ask your child to describe some of the examples of marriage found in movies and television. Discuss why and how some of those images might not be realistic.

Read **A Lifelong Partnership** on page 174 and refer to the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook to clarify the highlighted term. Ask: What are the two purposes of marriage? (to grow in holiness and love and to welcome and educate children)

After reading **Catholics Believe** explain that a married couple's love for each other is meant to remind us of Christ's love for the Church and our duty to love and serve one another. The greatest thing a married couple can do for the Church and the world is to love each other.

As part of the **Activity**, have your child note the couple in the photograph of the stained-glass window.

Ask your child to read **A Love Like Christ's Love** to find out what the Letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians say about marriage. Ask: According to these letters from Scripture, what are the duties of married people and their children? (Wives and husbands should love each other by helping each other grow in holiness. They should give positive support to their children, and children should honor and obey their parents.) How do loving families strengthen the Church? (Possible response: They provide examples of peace, love, and justice.)

Read **Saints Walk with Us: Saint Birgitta**, and point out that Birgitta's love for her husband and children and her concern for others reflected Christ's love for each of us. One of her daughters, Catherine, became a saint, too.

Have your child look at the photograph on page 175 and remind him or her of the marital responsibility to welcome and educate children. Ask: How do parents care for their children? (Possible answers: love them, feed them, pray for them, teach them many things.) How does the Church community help? (Possible answers: supports the parents, welcomes and educates children, provides good examples of Christian living.)

Continue reading the text on page 176, **The Vocation to Marriage**, to discover reasons marriages can fail. Ask: What choices do some couples make that could lead to their marriage's failing? (They are not prepared for the commitment; they are unable or unwilling to give full consent to the covenant; they don't share the ideals of marriage.)

Point out that the Church recognizes that some marriages fail, and the Church grants *declarations of nullity* that say that a sacramental marriage never existed. It says that for one of many reasons the marriage was invalid according to Church law. If granted a declaration of nullity by the Church, a person may go on to marry again (after proper counseling) and remain a full participant in the Church.

Ask your child to read **Scripture Story: Bless Our Marriage**. Ask: Tobiah and Sarah pray for unselfish love and ask God to bring them together for a noble purpose. What could that noble purpose be?

Read **Our Moral Guide**, and discuss the meaning of fidelity. Invite your child to respond to the question. (Your child should observe that marriage is a lifelong commitment and both partners must be able to depend on each other and trust each other. Lead your child to observe further that love dies when there is no trust, but it grows when people make promises and keep them.)

Read **Part of God's Story of Love** on page 177 to learn how God's love for us mirrors the love between man and woman. Use the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook to clarify the highlighted term. Ask: According to Genesis what is the story of love between man and woman? (God created man and woman to be companions to each other and to care for the world.) According to the Book of Revelation, at the end of time what love awaits us? (the kingdom of God in its fullness and glory) Why do you think the second coming is described as a wedding feast? (Possible response: because wedding celebrations are joyful events.)

Call attention to the photograph of the fiftieth wedding anniversary celebration. Explain that the fiftieth anniversary is called the *golden anniversary*. Discuss with your child why this is a great accomplishment.

Have your child do the **Activity** on this page.

Step 3: We Reflect (Integration of Faith into Everyday Life), page 178

Review the material taught in this lesson by completing the sections: **Recall, Think and Share, and Continue the Journey.**

Read and discuss **We Live Our Faith: At Home and In the Parish.** Try to follow through on these suggestions.

Refer to the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook for clarification and review of all highlighted terms.

Complete **Unit 6 Review** on pages 180–181 in your textbook.

Complete pages 45–46 in your **Faith Journal.**

Step 4: We Celebrate (Prayer and Conclusion), page 179

Point out the bride and groom in the bottom picture on page 179. Have your child describe the festive scene and compare it to wedding receptions he or she has attended. Call attention to the photograph of the wedding ring. Ask: Why is a ring the perfect symbol for marriage? (The ring is an unending circle symbolizing the unending love of the couple.)

Read **Love and Witness.** Explain that the Church community supports the couple by providing programs, such as Marriage Encounter, to enrich a couple's relationship. The Church also provides support for families in crisis, resources for educating families, and prayer groups.

Take a moment to call to mind all married couples in your family and among your friends. Then pray the closing **Prayer** for them.