



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

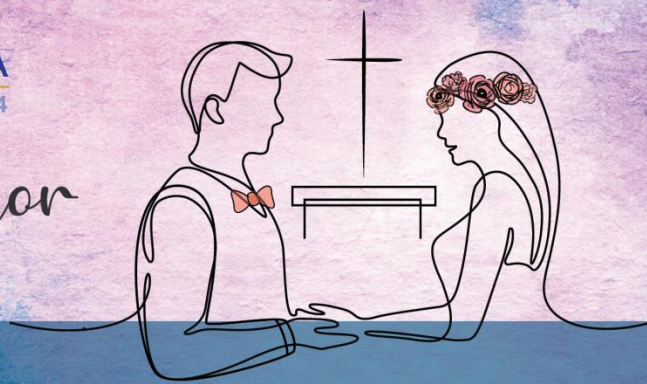
to have, to hold, to honor

For more information and resources, visit foryourmarriage.org

FOR YOUR
MARRIAGE



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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.