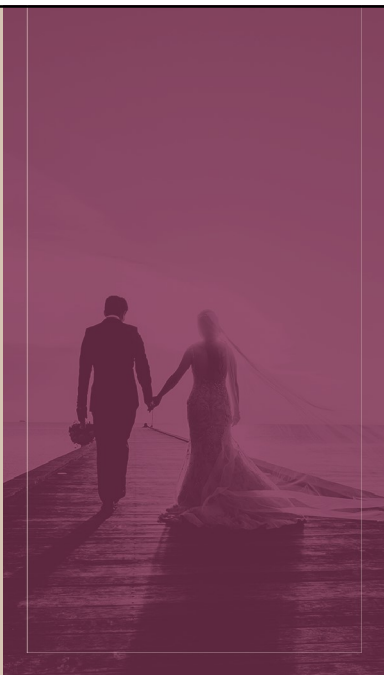


## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

- Prayer
- Housekeeping Rules
- The Pre-Cana Team



## TODAY'S PRE-CANA

- Today's goal
  - Go forth with the knowledge, tools, and resources to build a faith-centered marriage which has a relationship with God at its center
- Structure of the day
  - Short videos (witness couples, Dr. Greg Bottaro, Fr. Dan O'Reilly, Dr. Anne Nolte)
  - Exercises, discussion, reflection, and prayer
  - The concept of "rules"
- Agenda for the day

## TIMELINE FOR TODAY'S PRE-CANA

---

I.	Registration . . . . .	9:00 am
II.	Welcome and Introduction . . . . .	9:10 am
III.	Morning Break . . . . .	10:40 am
IV.	Blessings and Graces . . . . .	12:10 pm
V.	Lunch and Confessions ( <i>optional</i> ) . . . . .	12:30 pm
VI.	Welcome Back . . . . .	1:15 pm
VII.	Afternoon Break . . . . .	2:45 pm
VIII.	Wrap-up and Conclusion . . . . .	4:00 pm

## Meeting your fellow engaged couples . . .

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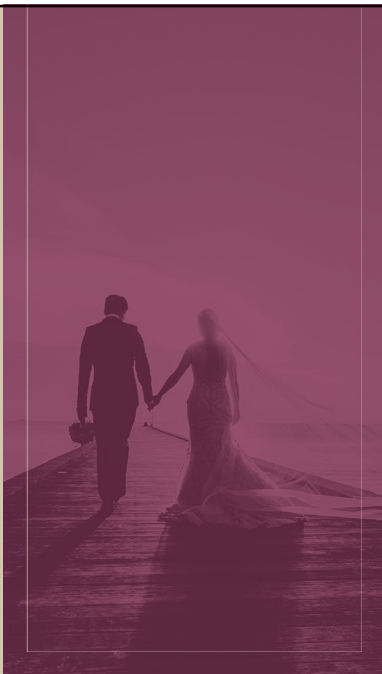
1. Share your Names and where you live.
2. Did you come from a small or big family?  
✓ *Are you Oldest? Youngest? Middle child? Only child?*
3. When and where are you getting married in the Catholic Church?
4. What if anything makes you feel blessed?

**I'M GETTING MARRIED IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH BECAUSE:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ My parents want me to
- \_\_\_\_\_ I want my marriage to be recognized by the Church
- \_\_\_\_\_ I want my marriage to last and I believe the Church has something to offer
- \_\_\_\_\_ I want the benefits of the grace of the Sacrament
- \_\_\_\_\_ I want God to be part of my married life
- \_\_\_\_\_ This is just what you do when you are a Catholic
- \_\_\_\_\_ I believe marriage is a sacred and holy institution
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is a nice "traditional" thing to do
- \_\_\_\_\_ I want Christ to be part of my marriage commitment
- \_\_\_\_\_ My fiancé/fiancée is Catholic, and I want to please him/her
- \_\_\_\_\_ I like all the beauty and ambiance of a Catholic wedding

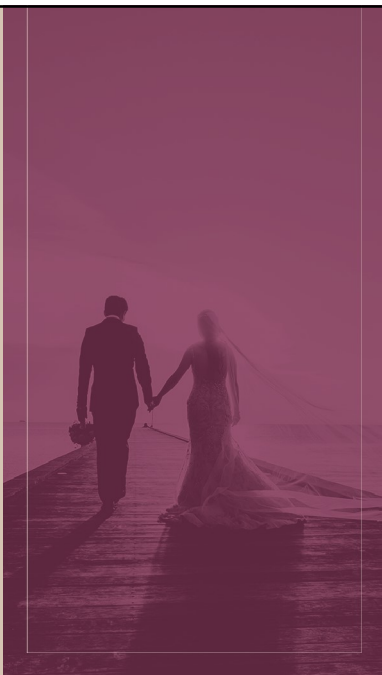
## Cardinal Dolan Video

(3:20 minutes)



## ACCEPTING THE INVITATION

- Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop and shepherd
- Join in love with...
  - Your beloved
  - God
  - Community
- Growing into your vocation of marriage
  - Premarital inventory
  - Online learning modules
  - Post-Cana resources and opportunities

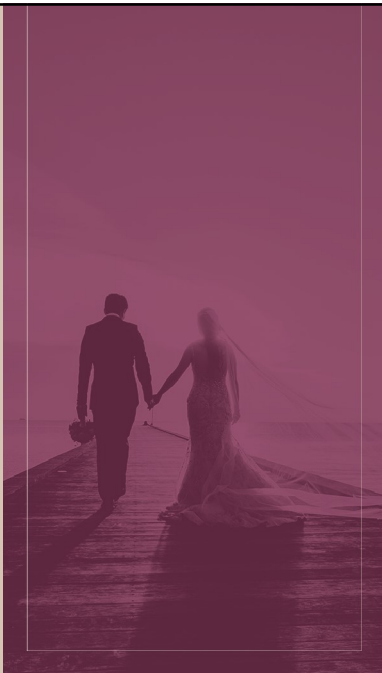
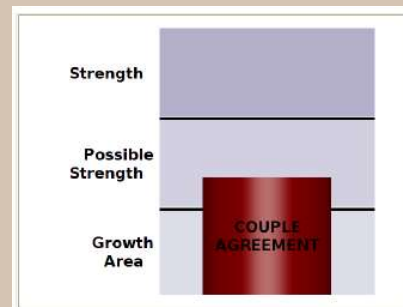
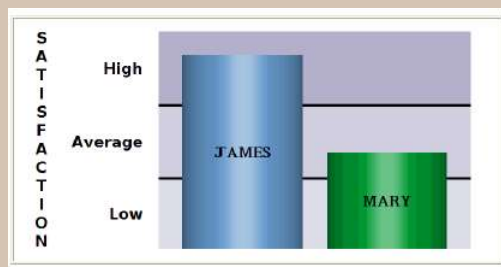


## PREPARE-ENRICH & CATHOLIC COUPLE CHECKUP

- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Strength & Growth Areas | • Relationship Roles    |
| • Communication           | • Spiritual Beliefs     |
| • Personal Stress Profile | • Marriage Expectations |
| • Conflict Resolution     | • Children & Parenting  |
| • Financial Management    | • Couple & Family Maps  |
| • Leisure Activities      | • Personality           |
| • Sex and Affection       | • Goals                 |

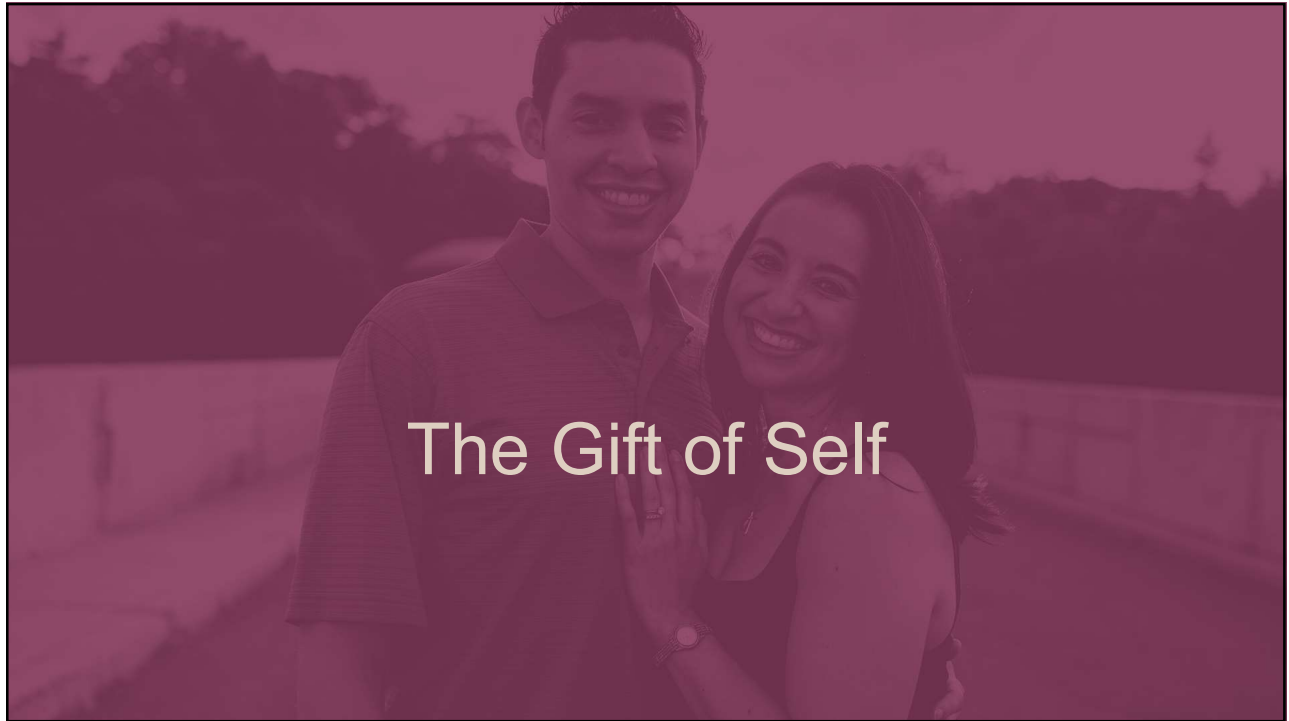
## EXAMPLE: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The **Finances** category refers to having realistic financial plans and agreement with one another in the area of finances. This category explores opinions about savings, having a financial plan, and spending habits.



## THE CONCEPT OF RULES

- Each person comes to marriage with rules
- Start by understanding the rules each of you are bringing to your marriage
- Together, begin discerning:
  - Which rules stay
  - Which rules get modified
- Marriage means creating a new, shared set of rules



## Gift of Self Video

(3:40 minutes)



## THE GIFT OF SELF

- Romance is just the beginning...We are drawn to something more.
- You are called and invited to follow the kind of love that Jesus proposes to us:
  - Making ourselves a gift to each other, “Lay down your life,” “Love one another as I have loved you.”
  - This means always having your spouse’s well-being at heart.



## WHAT IS OUR MARRIAGE ABOUT?

- Two people giving themselves to each other forms a new reality.
- The happiest marriages are couples who form this new reality as a kind of “team” – that has an identity that is bigger than the individual parts.



**Exercise: What is Our Marriage Going to Be**



**Couple Discussion**



Page 8



## Marriage as Vocation and Sacrament Video

(4:40 minutes)




## MARRIAGE AS YOUR VOCATION

- Marriage is God's love story for your life.
- Living according to God's plan is the best guarantee for having a happy marriage.
- Marriage is intended to be lifelong, life-giving, and loving wholeheartedly.
- Saying "I do" is your decision to make yourself a gift...to choose to put yourself in the hands of your spouse until death parts you.




## YOUR CATHOLIC WEDDING

- The Questions Before the Consent
  - Bride and groom individually pledge their intention
- The Exchange of Consent
  - The Marriage Vows
- Promising in the presence of God and the Church:
  - To love each other faithfully for the rest of their lives
  - This forms an unbreakable covenant
- The bride and groom are the ministers to one another.




## MARRIAGE AS A SACRAMENT


- Marriage between baptized persons (man and woman) is a supernatural reality – a sacrament.
- Christ raised marriage to the level of a sacrament.
- Every sacrament confers grace; in marriage:
  - Strengthens couples to overcome obstacles
  - Bear burdens and crosses
  - Become better spouses (and parents)




## DREAMS FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

- Many times our dreams fall by the wayside, but... they really shouldn't.
- Marriage can fulfill your dreams!
- What dreams do you want to create together for your marriage?

**Exercise: Who Do You [as a Married Couple] Want to Be**

**Couple Discussion**



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Page 10

Let's Take a Short Break



# Communication & Common Challenges Video

(5:45 minutes)



## RULES: THE COMMUNICATION STYLE WE WERE TAUGHT

- Communication is difficult when we've been taught conflicting rules about how to do it.
  - Rules on expressing emotion
  - Rules on resolving conflict



**Exercise: What Kind of Communication Style Did We Grow Up With?**



Page 11





## HEALTHY COMMUNICATION

- Rules of expressing
- Rules of empathy/listening

**E** Exercise: Forming a new Married Identity on Social Media?



Page 12



## NEGATIVE FORCES

- Lashing out in Anger
- Blaming the other
- Shutting Down (the silent treatment)
- Using offensive language
- Ignoring the issue
- Giving ultimatums
- Seeking solace or comfort from others

- Forgiveness
- Humility
- Objectivity
- Empathy
- Not judging and making assumptions
- Managing emotions
- Treating the other with respect
- Compromising when possible

## POSITIVE FORCES



<https://media.istock.com/mpr/AAFAAQAAAAAAAAAQAAAAAGNlY45NGMILTvmOWYNGIZIiHNTVILTgwOTU3NzQwYWJkOA.jpg>



[www.simplyonemarriage.com](http://www.simplyonemarriage.com)

<https://01.wp.com/simplyonemarriage.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/forgiveness-says.jpg>

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- Reflecting on our own conflicts/disagreements
- Resolving conflicts in healthy ways:
  - ✓ Humility
  - ✓ Objectivity
  - ✓ Empathy
  - ✓ Not judging and making assumptions
  - ✓ Managing one's emotions
  - ✓ Always treating the other with respect



**Exercise: Dealing with difficult situations in our relationship**



Page 12



## WHAT IS YOUR “LOVE LANGUAGE”?

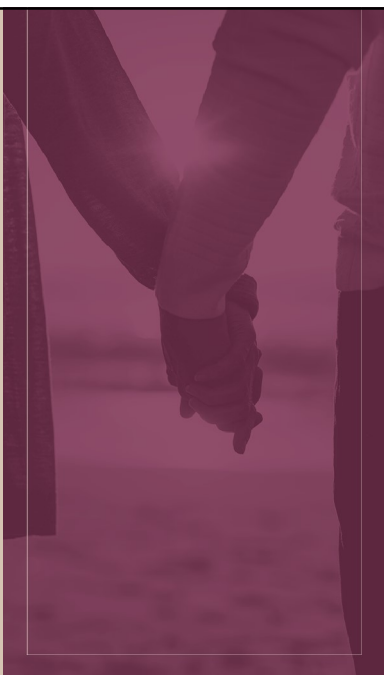
1. Words of affirmation
2. Quality time
3. Gifts
4. Acts of service
5. Physical touch



**Exercise: Understanding  
our “Love Languages”**



Page 13



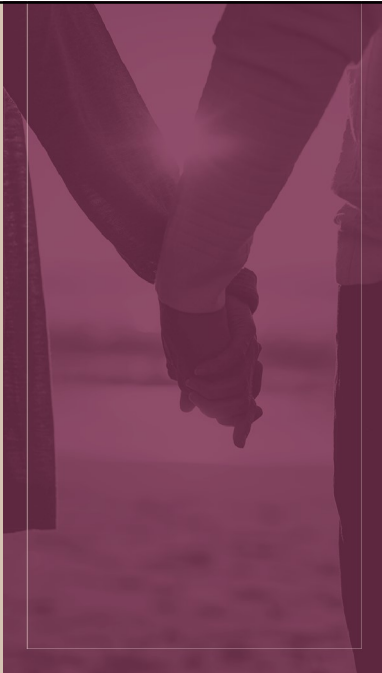
## BLESSINGS AND GRACES

- Blessing of Engaged Couples
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) available for Catholics during lunch period
- Grace before lunch

## Lunch and Confessions


Enjoy the community!

Be back at 1:15 p.m.



### WELCOME BACK!

- *The Joy of Love*
  - Intimacy and family according to God's plan, using NFP
  - Spirituality – the path that leads to joy
- Let's begin with two exercises that highlight working together as Husband and Wife



## **RULES: Working together as Husband and Wife**

Am I generous, or hesitant, or unwilling?


- Rules about how we spend our time
- Rules about how we spend money
- Rules about how we engage with extended family

**E** **Exercise: Time, Money, and Extended Family**

**D** **Couple Discussion**



Page 18



## **A FEW DISCUSSION POINTS**

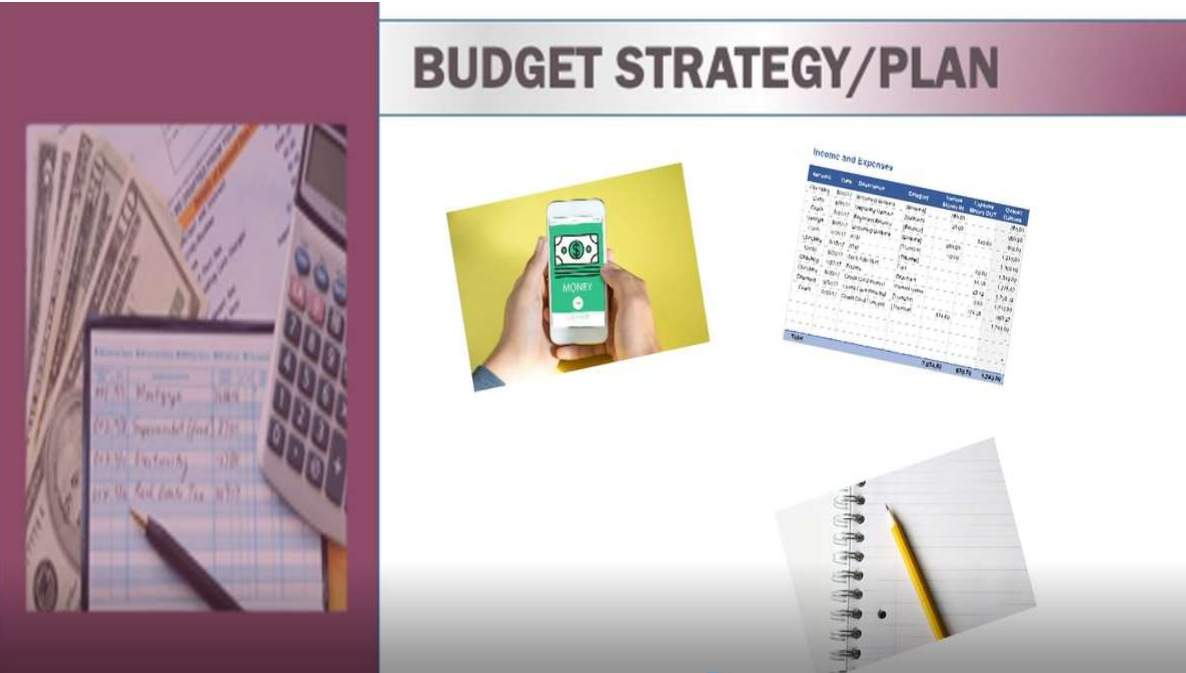
- Do you consult on large purchases? And if so, what's the minimum amount that both spouses must agree on?
- What if a friend or family member asks to borrow money? Do you consult your spouse?
- Will you have separate or joint bank accounts and credit cards. What if a spouse wants to make discretionary purchases without the other spouse knowing?
- Do you file separate or joint tax returns?

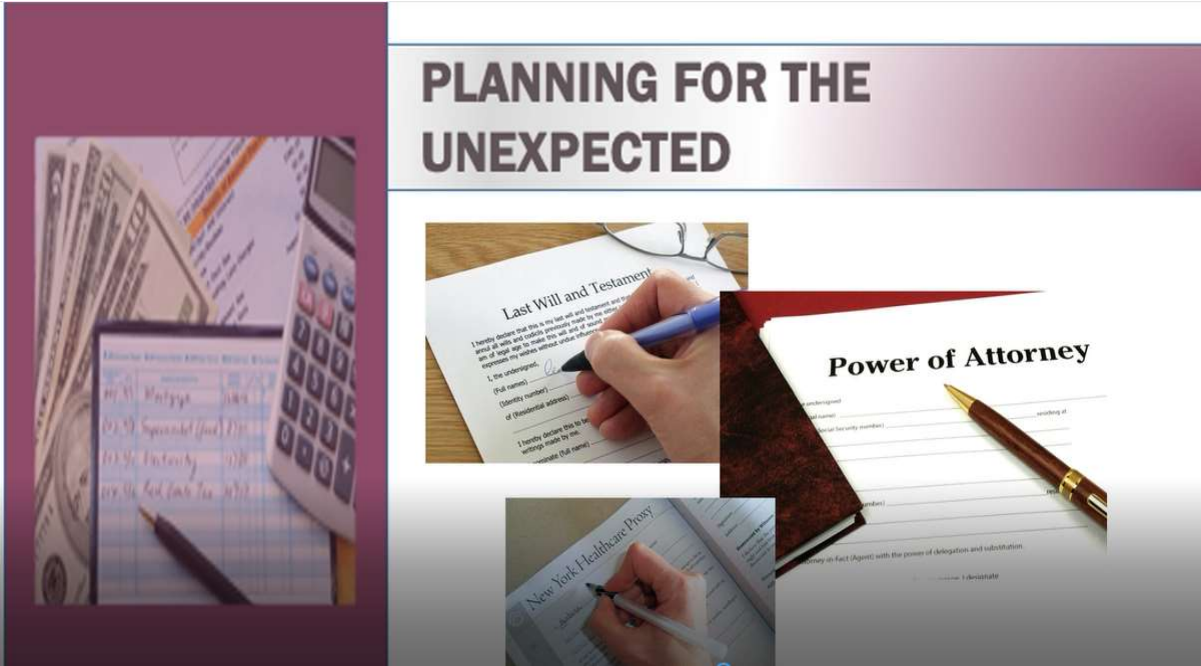


## THE THREE-TIERED APPROACH

1. One account is for **short-term emergencies**.  
✓ The goal is to have funds put aside for crises
2. A second account is for **important “big” purchases**
3. A third account is for your **retirement**:  
✓ This is money that you put away as part of a long-range financial plan  
✓ The goal is that you do not touch this money until you retire

## BUDGET STRATEGY/PLAN





## PLANNING FOR THE UNEXPECTED



## GIVING BACK TO GOD AND THE CHURCH

- God has blessed us with great gifts and grace.
- We have an obligation to support our Church and the poor among us.
- “How much should we give?”
  - ✓ A tough question we must each discern.




## **RULES: TRUSTING AND SHARING** *(Mind, Body, Spirit)*

- What have you learned is okay to hold back?
- How does our trusting and sharing integrate our lives in marriage?

**E** Exercise: What Is Okay to Hold Back?

**D** Couple Discussion



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Page 19

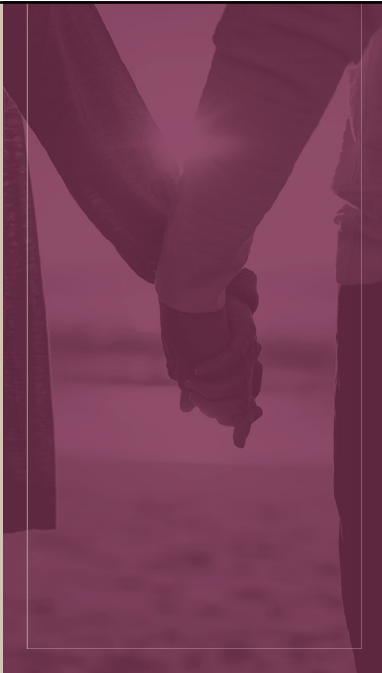


# **Married Love and Intimacy**

*Theology of the Body*


# Married Love and Intimacy Theology of the Body Video

(3:10 minutes)



## MARRIED LOVE AND INTIMACY

- Marriage images the Trinity.
- Males and females are complementary and have equal human dignity.
- An intimate partnership of life and love constitutes the heart of married life.
  - Mentally, emotionally, psychologically, sexually, and spiritually




## THEOLOGY OF THE BODY

Free, total, faithful, & fruitful sex mirrors the love of God, leading to greatest happiness.

- This is why the Catholic Church objects to contraception.
- Natural Family Planning (NFP) respects God's plan for sex. It enables couples to use science to understand their fertility and determine when they should engage in or refrain from having sex, depending on their desire and discernment to start or expand a family.

**D** Couple Reflection and Discussion



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Page 20



## The Gift of Fertility

(and NFP)

# The Gift of Fertility

(and NFP)

## Video

(5:24 minutes)



### **LISTENING TO AND LIVING GOD'S PLAN FOR SEXUAL LOVE**

- Two Aspects or Purposes of Marital Sex
  - Procreative aspect (life-giving)
  - Unitive aspect (love-giving)
- Living Out this Call and Journey
  - Self-knowledge
  - Self-discipline and commitment
  - Reliance on God and Grace



## NFP EVOLUTION TO FERTILITY AWARENESS-BASED METHODS

- Traditional NFP methods
  - Foundational natural and scientific methods developed by 20th century scientists/doctors
  - Church teaching provided the moral aspect
- Fertility Awareness-Based Methods (FABMs)
  - Mainstreams the goodness of NFP and expands to more holistic women's health
  - With the prevalence of apps, a broader audience is attracted
- FEMTECH adds sensors, automation & software:
  - Digital data provides options not available with manual process
  - Continue to build upon the original foundations
  - New opportunities to live according to God's plan



## INTEGRATION & OPPORTUNITIES



## GETTING EDUCATED . . .

- Family Life Office's Fertility Awareness (NFP) webpage: [archny.org/family-life](http://archny.org/family-life)
- The Gianna Center [chsli.org/gianna-center](http://chsli.org/gianna-center)
- FEMM Health [femmhealth.org/](http://femmhealth.org/)
- Fertility Awareness websites & social media (e.g., FB groups)



In-person  
Sessions



Instructor-led  
Distance Learning



Online  
Self-paced  
learning

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FAMILY LIFE



## FERTILITY AND CHILDREN

- Communicating about fertility awareness
  - ✓ Researching methods, apps, devices
  - ✓ Considering online or in-person support
- Dialoging and expectations about children and family size
- Parenting LIKE or NOT LIKE your parents



**Exercise: Embracing  
Fertility & Children as Gifts**



**Couple Discussion**



Page 22



Let's Take a Short Break



# Spirituality Video

(4:59 minutes)



## RULES: FAITH & RELIGION

- Rules about expression of faith
- Rules about religious holidays
- Rules about family prayer
- Rules about individual prayer



**Exercise: Faith, religion  
and spirituality**



**Couple Discussion**



Page 25



## THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

- A daily process of encountering God as we live our journey to Heaven
- How do we do this?
  - Prayer
  - Learning about God
  - Receiving the sacraments
  - Living a moral and virtuous life



## OUR PRAYER LIFE

- Why pray?
- Praying individually, with spouse/family, and with the Church
- “The family that prays together, stays together” still works!



## A SACRAMENTAL LIFE

- Jesus gave us the sacraments as tangible ways to encounter God and receive his grace.
- The sacraments are ways for us to deepen our relationship with Christ and to participate in the mysteries of God.
- Through the Sacrament of Matrimony, you obtain the graces to strengthen and live out your marriage.



## WE ARE CREATED AS AN “IMAGE OF GOD” GEN 1:26-27

We have a mind (intellect) and a will

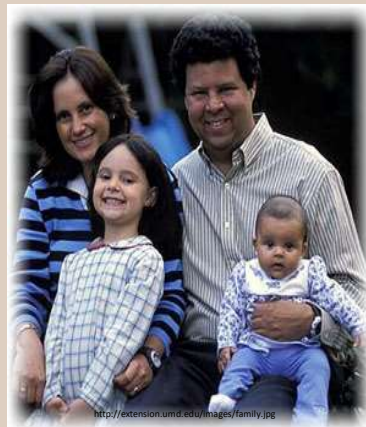
- *So we can know and love*

We are created *in relationship*

- *God’s own life is Trinitarian love, and He shared His love & His life with us*

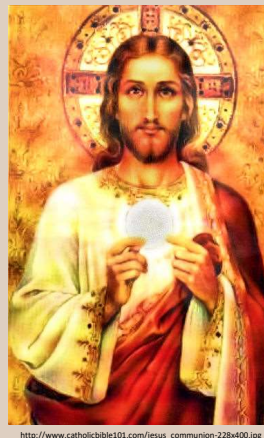
## LOVING WITHIN MARRIAGE

1. Love is a choice. (*Free*)
  - An act of free will.
  - The choice is based on knowledge [*uses intellect*].
2. The choice is a total gift of self. (*Total*)
3. The self-gift is permanent. (*Faithful*)
4. The self-gift is life-giving. (*Fruitful*).



## IMAGING TRUE (DIVINE) LOVE

1. Love is a choice. (*Free*)
  - An act of free will.
  - The choice is based on knowledge [*uses intellect*].
2. The choice is a total gift of self. (*Total*)
3. The self-gift is permanent. (*Faithful*)
4. The self-gift is life-giving. (*Fruitful*).





## FIVE STEPS OF THE EXAMEN PRAYER

1. Call to mind the presence of God.
2. Thank God for the day.
3. Think about what emotions you have felt throughout the events of this day.
4. Choose one emotion that stands out to you from today.
5. Make a decision based on this message from God.

[ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/how-can-i-pray](https://ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/how-can-i-pray)

## AN ACT OF COSMIC LOVE AT THE HEART OF CREATION

*It is in the **Eucharist** that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation. [I]t is the living center of the universe, the overflowing core of love and of inexhaustible life. Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the **Eucharist**, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. Indeed the **Eucharist** is itself an **act of cosmic love** ...The **Eucharist** joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation.*

*Pope Francis, Laudato Si (On Care for Our Common Home, 236).*

## - THANK YOU -

We hope each of you will more fully encounter Christ in the celebration of the Mass (Eucharist) this weekend!