



**Thursday of Respect Life Week
Marriage/Family Life
Grades 7-8**

Theme: The Love of Family

Goal: Marriage and family are a vital and important part of our society. Marriage numbers are decreasing around the world. And, there is much confusion about the nature of marriage and why people even ought to get married. Students will explore the benefits of marriage for individuals and society and learn how to have a successful marriage.

Materials: Catechism of the Catholic Church
Living Richly: Faith and Marriage ([video link](#))

Lesson:

***Background for teacher:** The topic of marriage has been highly politicized in our culture in recent years, resulting in a great deal of confusion. Add to that the reality that many children live in homes with unmarried parents, or divorced parents, or only one parent, or are being raised by grandparents/guardians.*

Some feel it is better not to teach about the reality of marriage as it might offend some students. Actually, it is found that the opposite is true. By teaching about the sacrament of marriage—a loving, permanent commitment between a man and a woman to each other and any children they may have—we allow students to realize that God did intend something special for us; that we are made for and capable of lasting, authentic love.

Discuss: Discuss the sacrament of marriage. Ask students to write a definition of marriage that includes not only the interests and benefits of the husband and wife, but also the responsibility toward any children they may have.

Is there one definition in the class that everyone can agree on? Now compare that definition with the one given in the Catechism of the Catholic Church #1601. Are they close?

Questions for Discussion

- What does marriage mean?
- How would you describe marriage?
- Why do you think marriage is important?
- Would you like to get married when you grow up?
- Why or why not?
- Why is family important?

Discuss: Marriage - *In marriage, Jesus calls spouses to a love that is **free, faithful, full, and fruitful**. Faithful love says, "I'll love you forever, no matter what." Free love says, "I choose to love you." Full love says, "I love you with my whole self." Fruitful love says, "I want to share our love with children, in a family."*

Questions for Discussion

What does it mean to be faithful in love?
What does it mean to freely choose to love?
What does it mean to give yourself fully in love?
How is love in marriage fruitful?

Prayer:

*God and Father of us all,
in Jesus, you have made us your sons and daughters
in the family of the Church.*

*May your grace and love help our families
in every part of the world be united to one another in fidelity to the Gospel.*

*May the example of the Holy Family, with the aid of your Holy Spirit,
guide all families, to be homes of communion and prayer
and to always seek your truth and live in your love.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Lesson adapted from the plans on the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Office of Life, Justice and
Peace website.*