



Homiletic Guide – Marriage Is a Trip and God Has the Map!

February 9, 2025 – The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time and World Marriage Day

First Reading: Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8 – Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord... I am a man of unclean lips... Here I am, send me!

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 138 – Lord, your mercy is forever.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 – By the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been ineffective.

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11 – The call of Simon, James, and John: “From now on, you will be catching men.”

The following notes are provided as a leadoff for your reflection—it is not necessary to address every bullet point in your homily. With that in mind, here are some thoughts to ponder:

- **As we continue on the journey of this Jubilee Year as Pilgrims of Hope, World Marriage Day reminds us that married couples are truly pilgrims of hope in their life together.**
 - Pope Francis already had this in mind when he announced the Jubilee Year. He said, “Looking to the future with hope also entails having enthusiasm for life and a readiness to share it... Openness to life and responsible parenthood is the design that the Creator has implanted in the hearts and bodies of men and women, a mission that the Lord has entrusted to spouses and to their love.” (Spes non confundit, 9)
 - It is that divine hope that makes it possible to say, “I do!” to the wedding vows, and to the possibility of having children together. It parallels the decision of Isaiah when he said, “Here I am, send me!” (Isaiah 6:8)
 - [Note: If you are a married deacon, you might consider giving a personal witness about how the virtue of hope has matured in you and your spouse through the course of your married life.]



- **Today's readings remind us that marriage is truly a call from God - a Vocation rooted in hope and humility.**
 - Although we may sometimes feel humbled and unworthy of our spouse's love, like Isaiah and Simon Peter felt unworthy of God's call to them, the Christian virtue of hope gives us courage to continue the journey together day by day.
 - Our own unworthiness is ultimately not an obstacle to making a commitment of love for life because the desire to love and to be loved has been implanted in our hearts by God. It is a deep longing that prepares us for the ultimate fulfillment of embracing the pure and perfect love of God for eternity.
 - This Vocation involves the offering of our whole selves permanently and without reservation—a gift of immense value that is wonderfully met by a reciprocal gift. In this way, it is different from other callings in life—see the [Bulletin Insert](#).
- **In the second reading, St. Paul's words encourage married couples to persevere in their love for one another by depending on God's grace.**
 - St. Paul says, "By the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been ineffective." (1 Corinthians 15:9)
 - He was talking about his vocation as an Apostle, but the same applies to married couples in their vocation, their call from God to love each other for life.
 - The world sees marriage as an audacious choice that limits human freedom, but couples who are married in Christian faith and hope understand that their love will be blessed by God's grace to endure any obstacle that may come. It is the freedom to be their best, at times despite themselves!





- **Countless Catholics nowadays are starting out their lives together as a couple without the benefit of God’s sacramental grace.**
 - Throughout human history, marriage has existed as a cherished and beautiful state in life because it builds on and protects the deepest longings of our hearts: to love, to be loved, and to care for our children.
 - Through his teachings, example, and redemptive sacrifice, Jesus raised marriage to a sacrament, offering married couples supernatural grace to strengthen their covenant love and their lives together.
 - We all need God’s grace to bring our human love to perfection. It’s a lifelong process, following the example of Jesus’ spousal love for us. He gave everything for us, pouring out his life—body and soul—which we receive in the nuptial feast of the Eucharist. Spouses grow in holiness when they do the same for each other and their children, day by day, in good times and bad, in sickness and health.
 - That is why the Church steadfastly proclaims that Christian marriage is holy, a gift from God to help make us the best version of ourselves, in Christ’s image.
 - There is never a bad time to seek a closer relationship with our Lord! For those who are already civilly married, we call it convalidation – a process to strengthen a committed marriage relationship that is already tinted with goodness and beauty in human terms (see *Amoris Laetitia*, 292-295) by adding the gift of God’s divine sacramental grace.
 - If someone you know is living in a committed relationship without the benefit of Christ’s sacramental grace, make a point to tell them on this World Marriage Day, “Marriage is beautiful, but it can be challenging at times. Why wouldn’t you want God’s grace in a sacramental marriage to help you through the rough spots? Do it for yourselves. Do it for the children. Do it for God and for the good of society.”
 - Truly, the hope-filled pilgrimage of marriage is a trip... and God has the map!



- The ***Radiate Love Marriage Initiative***

- The Catholic Church throughout California is progressing along the year-long *Radiate Love* initiative to deepen our appreciation for the gift of Marriage.
- Highlight any activities that the parish will be sponsoring in the coming months. **Emphasize that *all* are invited to explore the monthly resources on the website**, especially those for marriage enrichment or designed for faith sharing at home.

Note for homilists: This Homiletic Guide is intended to help you encourage your people to invest in their marital relationship, share the faith with their children, and open their hearts to recognize the ways the Lord is leading them to radiate love out to the world, especially through the witness of a sacramental marriage that radiates the covenant love God has for His people. The Marriage Fact Sheet 2024 offers some important background information for your review, but not necessarily to include in your homily. The social trends regarding marriage in California are not great right now, but it is important to be positive, practical, and personal.

This Homiletic Guide is one resource among many others designed for your parish ministries or your parishioners' home use. You may want to take some time to familiarize yourself with the resources for February (bulletin insert or announcement, prayer card, blessing, intercessions, videos, etc.) on the *Radiate Love* website: www.radiatelove.info. In particular, be sure to make use of the Intercessory Prayers and the Blessings after Communion at all weekend Masses.

