

Marital Love and the Divine Love of God

Using Sophia SketchPad to Teach about Christian Marriage

Learning Goals

- › Marriage is a reflection of the Divine Love that is God, who is Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- › God's love is an unbreakable bond of life-giving love that man and woman share in when they join together in marriage.
- › A loving home with a father and mother is the model chosen the Lord, and therefore the ideal environment in which to raise a child.
- › Sin weakens husbands and wives by promoting selfishness, which damages their ability to love one another.
- › The state of marriage in our world today does not reflect how God created and intended it to be.
- › Jesus suffered and died on the Cross to save us from sin – and all of its effects, which includes the effects of sin on marriage.



Connection to the Catechism of the Catholic Church

- › CCC 1603-1608
- › CCC 1639-1640
- › CCC 1655-1658
- › CCC 1826-1829



Vocabulary

- › Divine Love
- › Blessed Trinity
- › Marriage
- › Dignity
- › Sin
- › Love
- › Vocation
- › Theology of the Body
- › The Theological Virtues



Chastity Strand

BIBLICAL TOUCHSTONES

He said to them, "Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so."

MATTHEW 19:8

So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

- B. Have students turn to a neighbor and take turns sharing one thing that they learned from the video about marriage and one question they have about the marriage

DAY TWO

Warm-Up

- A. Explain to your students that early in his pontificate, St. John Paul II gave a series of talks over a period of five years that reflected upon human nature and marital love. These reflections were rooted deeply in Scripture. They were later collected into one book titled *Theology of the Body* and have had a great impact on the way we think about our origins (where we came from and how we are meant to be), our nature (how and why we are like the way we are today), and our destiny (where we're going, God's plan for us) as human beings.
- B. This is St. John Paul II's thesis, or main idea, for his teaching. Project and have a student stand and read aloud the following quote from St. John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*:
- “The body, in fact, and only the body, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It has been created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it” (*Theology of the Body* 19:4).
- C. Ask your students the following questions:
- › What does St. John Paul II suggest is capable of making the invisible visible? *The human body.*
 - › What does St. John Paul II mean by “invisible”? *The spiritual and divine.*
 - › What does St. John Paul II mean by “visible reality”? *The physical, material world around us that we can see and touch and use our senses to know.*
 - › What does the Pope suggest the human body will make visible? *The mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it. In other words, God Himself.*

Activity

- A. Show again the marriage video located at SophiaSketchPad.org. Ask your students to look for and write down on their own paper evidence from the video that supports St. John Paul II's thesis for *Theology of the Body*.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

- B. Ask for students to share what evidence they found in the video. Answers will include that marriage is a reflection of the Divine Love, The Trinity is an unbreakable bond of life-giving love, when man and woman join together in marriage, we see in their communion a reflection of the Trinity, marriage brings together that which was made to be together – a man and a woman, along with many other examples from the video. Accept other reasoned answers.
- C. Ask rhetorically how we discover, as the Pope puts it, this mystery that is God hidden from all eternity. It begins by studying the way that God made us, male and female, united in marriage. Jesus pointed us in the direction to begin our exploration of the mystery of God when He was challenged by the Pharisees about divorce. Jesus' teaching here is hard, but nonetheless true and the roots of Theology of the Body.
- D. Project and have a student stand and read aloud Matthew 19:3-8:
- “Some Pharisees approached him, and tested him, saying, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?’ He said in reply, ‘Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator “made them male and female” and said, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.’ They said to him, ‘Then why did Moses command that the man give the woman a bill of divorce and dismiss [her]?’ He said to them, ‘Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.’”
- E. Ask your students the following questions:
- ▶ How does Jesus respond to the Pharisees' first question about the lawfulness of divorce? *He quotes the Scripture passages in Genesis that explain the creation of mankind as male and female and how God joined them together to become one flesh in marriage. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate. Man cannot and should not undo that which God has made.*
 - ▶ What is the reason Jesus gives for why Moses allowed divorce? *It is because of the hardness of our hearts. Our own stubbornness and refusal to follow God's divine law was what lead to Moses' allowance of divorce.*
- F. Explain to your students that the most important part of Jesus' answer is the last line, “from the beginning it was not so.” Whatever the state of marriage in our world today, it was not how God created nor intended it to be. Jesus suffered and died on the Cross to save us from sin – and all of its effects, which includes the effects of sin on marriage. As we saw in the video, marriage forms an unbreakable bond of love between the husband

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

and the wife. From the beginning, this was God’s plan for man and woman, for marriage and for family.

Note: This is a sensitive topic to discuss. Many students today come from different family situations that may include divorce and remarriage or single parents. It is important to be compassionate to these situations and affirm the goodness and love that God still brings forth from them. However, this does not minimize God’s original plan for humanity and marital love, which Jesus seeks to restore in our hearts.

Formative Assessment

Have your students choose one statement, phrase, or idea from the video or discussion that they think is the most important to understanding marriage. Have them write down the sentence on their own paper and explain in a brief paragraph why they believe that it is important. Circulate the room and observe as students write, and assist as needed. Collect paragraphs when complete.

DAY THREE

Warm-Up

- A. Ask your students to name the Theological Virtues and list them on the board: Faith, Hope, and Love (also called Charity).
- B. Project on the board and have a student stand and read aloud 1 Corinthians 13: 2-3, 13:
“And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing. So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”
- C. Ask your students the following questions:
 - ▶ What does St. Paul say will happen to him without love? *He will be nothing or gain nothing.*
 - ▶ Which of the Theological Virtues is the greatest? *Love.*
- D. Project on the board and have a student stand and read aloud *Catechism of the Catholic Church* paragraph 1827:

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

“The practice of all the virtues is animated and inspired by charity, which ‘binds everything together in perfect harmony’; it is the form of the virtues; it articulates and orders them among themselves; it is the source and the goal of their Christian practice. Charity upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love.”

- E. Ask your students the following questions:
- ▶ What is the relationship between charity (love) and all of the other virtues? *They are animated and inspired by Charity (love).*
 - ▶ What is the source of the Christian practice? *Charity (love). It upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love. In other words, the virtue of Charity (love) perfects our human love and makes it mirror the Divine Love that is God.*
- F. Explain to your students that the fruits of Charity (love) are joy, peace, and mercy (CCC 1829). In a marriage rooted in virtue, the spouses and their children are joyful, at peace, and merciful to one another, ultimately reflecting God’s own love for us with each other.

Activity and Assessment

- A. Arrange students into pairs or trios. Cut out and distribute strips from **Handout C: Catholic Wisdom on Faith, Hope, and Love** and **Handout D: Faith, Hope, and Love in Marriage**. Give each group 3-4 strips, making sure they have at least one from each category, faith, hope and love.
- B. Have each group re-write in their own words the statements on their strips in the space provided on **Handout D**.
- C. Then, have each group consider each statement might lead joy, peace, and mercy in a marriage. Have them record their answers in the space provided.
- D. Circulate the room and spot check for understanding, assisting as needed.
- E. When complete, ask for a few volunteers to share aloud their findings.

Eucharist Video Pre-Viewing Activity

Directions: Complete the pre-viewing activity before watching the video. In the left column, write words or phrases, or draw a picture of what comes to your mind in connection to the term. In the right hand column, write at least two questions you have about the term.

Term	Words, Phrases, or Pictures Associated with This Term	Questions You Have About This Term
Divine Love		
Blessed Trinity		
Marriage		

Term	Words, Phrases, or Pictures Associated with This Term	Questions You Have About This Term
Dignity		
Love		
Vocation		

Marriage Video Fill-In-The-Blank

Directions: Watch the Eucharist video once. Then, after watching it a second time, complete the following questions.

1. To understand how marriage is a reflection of Divine Love, we must look at _____ which is God in three divine persons: The _____, the _____, and the _____.
2. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as the _____ shared between them.
3. When man and woman join together in _____, we see in their communion a reflection of the Trinity.
4. Both man and woman are created in God's image with _____, but in many ways are different.
5. The life-giving love shared between spouses is made known in the _____ and _____ of _____.
6. A _____ with a father and mother is the model chosen by the Lord for an ideal environment to raise a child.
7. Jesus could have chosen to come to earth in any way that He wanted, but He chose to be raised by a _____ and a _____.
8. The union between man and woman in marriage is _____, just like the Trinity.
9. Love is not defined by _____ and is not simply a _____. Love is not even about _____.

10. Love is an act of _____.
11. Love _____ rather than possesses.
12. The consequence of the very first sin was to rupture the _____ between man and woman.
13. _____ weakens husbands and wives by promoting selfishness and damaging their ability to love one another the way God intended.
14. The Holy Spirit _____ the commitment spouses make to love one another, and Jesus grants them special _____ to resist sin and temptation.
15. Some people are called to priestly or religious _____, but most of us are called to _____.
16. When we love as God loves, marriage becomes a little _____ on earth, a reflection of the Divine love between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Catholic Wisdom on Faith, Hope, and Love

LOVE

Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good

ROMANS 12:9

LOVE

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

MARK 12:30-31

LOVE

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. If there are prophecies, they will be brought to nothing; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will be brought to nothing.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-8

LOVE

There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love.

1 JOHN 4:18

LOVE

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.

1 JOHN 4:7

LOVE

Pure love ... knows that only one thing is needed to please God: to do even the smallest things out of great love - love, and always love. (140)

ST. FAUSTINA

LOVE

“The proof of love is in the works. Where love exists, it works great things. But when it ceases to act, it ceases to exist.”

POPE ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

LOVE

“Lord, grant that I might not so much seek to be loved as to love.”

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

LOVE

“We cannot all do great things, but we can do small things with great love”

BL. MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA

LOVE

“There is no place for selfishness—and no place for fear! Do not be afraid, then, when love makes demands. Do not be afraid when love requires sacrifice”

POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II

FAITH

Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

MATTHEW 17:20

FAITH

Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen.

HEBREWS 11:1

FAITH

For we walk by faith, not by sight.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

FAITH

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God

EPHESIANS 2:8

FAITH

In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all [the] flaming arrows of the evil one.

EPHESIANS 6:16

FAITH

“Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.”

ST. AUGUSTINE

FAITH

“I believe though I do not comprehend, and I hold by faith what I cannot grasp with the mind.”

ST. BERNARD

FAITH

“To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible.”

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

FAITH

“Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.”

BL. MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA

FAITH

Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith.

ST. FRANCIS ASSISI

HOPE

Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:55-58

HOPE

Then Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid or dismayed, be firm and steadfast. This is what the LORD will do to all the enemies against whom you fight.”

JOSHUA 10:25

HOPE

Rather the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, those who put their hope in his mercy.

PSALM 147:11

HOPE

”We must have confidence in God, Who is what He always has been, and we must not be disheartened because things turn out contrary to us.”

ST. PHILIP

HOPE

”When we find ourselves in some danger, we must not lose courage, but confide much in the Lord; for where danger is great, great also is the assistance of Him Who is called our Helper in tribulation.”

ST. AMBROSE

Faith, Hope, and Love in Marriage

Directions: Re-write in your own words each Catholic wisdom statement on your slips. Then, consider how this piece of wisdom might lead to joy, peace, and mercy in a marriage. Write your answers in the space provided.

Catholic wisdom in your own words:

How might this Catholic wisdom lead to joy, peace, and mercy in a marriage?

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Answer Key

Handout A: Marriage Video Pre-Viewing Activity

Accept reasonable answers.

Handout B: Marriage Video Fill-In-The-Blank

1. The Blessed Trinity/Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. Bond of love
3. Marriage
4. Equal dignity
5. Receiving/raising/children
6. Loving home
7. Father/mother
8. Unbreakable
9. Pleasure or fun/feeling/commonalities or compatibility
10. Free will
11. Honors
12. Communion
13. Sin
14. Permanently seals/graces
15. Vocations/marriage
16. Heaven

Handout D: Faith, Hope, and Love in Marriage

Answers will vary.