

## **Beloved Couple's Guide – Session 1: Does Marriage Matter?**

*"And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, 'Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?' He answered, 'Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning 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. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.'"*  
—Matthew 19:3-6

### **OPENING PRAYER**

*Heavenly Father,*

*Through the intercession of the Holy Family,*

*help us treasure the gift of marriage*

*that reflects the love of Christ for the Church,*

*where the self-giving love of husband and wife*

*unites them more perfectly and cooperates in your plan*

*for new life created in your image.*

*Help us support men and women in their vocation of marriage, especially in difficult times when they join their sufferings to the Cross.*

*Help us uphold the institution of marriage in our society as the place where love is nurtured and family life begins.*

*Help us acknowledge that our future depends on this love and your providential care for us.*

*Amen.*

### **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. The human heart desires the unique, special kind of love found in marriage. How did the presenters describe this kind of love?
2. Studies show that marriage leads to happier lives, psychological well-being, greater sexual satisfaction, higher incomes, and longer life spans. If this is the case, why do you think so many marriages break up and fewer people are getting married today?

3. When someone asked Jesus what the Law said about marriage, he went beyond the question of Law and brought them back to God's plan for marriage in the Book of Genesis. The first creation story in Genesis 1 ends with God making us male and female. The second creation story in Genesis 2 ends with God bringing the man and woman together to become one in marriage. How is this a sign of divine love in the world?

### **Go Deeper Questions**

1. St. John Paul II said: "As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live." What do you think he meant by this?
2. There is a movement today to rediscover courtship, and one of the arguments is that the style of dating today better prepares people for divorce than for marriage. What evidence do you think supports this argument?
3. The Church is often criticized in the public because of her vision of the human person and the family. Why do you think that is?
4. What are some things that you can do to prepare for marriage or strengthen your marriage to be sure that it lasts a lifetime?

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Almighty God,*

*We aspire to the ideal of marriage*

*that you established long before any other cultural*

*or governmental statutes existed.*

*Your Holy Scriptures say,*

*"From the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female';*

*'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother*

*and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one';*

*So they are no longer two but one.*

*What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."*

*Bless our efforts to protect and nourish the union you have ordained.*

*Amen.*