

Office of Marriage and Family Life

**JULY 2026**

**DATING  
YOUR  
SPOUSE**



**JUBILANT  
MARRIAGES**

**TOOL KIT**

**MONTHLY RESOURCES & IDEAS**

[www.ARCHSTL.org/Jubilant-Marriages](http://www.ARCHSTL.org/Jubilant-Marriages)

# Jubilant Marriages Theme For JULY

## *Dating Your Spouse to Build Marriage Bliss*



The Jubilant Marriages Initiative focus for JULY invites couples, priests, and parishes to encourage and empower couples to make time to go on “dates” together on a regular basis.

Time spent together one-on-one is the lifeblood of relationship. Unfortunately in the busy-ness of family life, it can fall to the last spot on the priority list...or fall off the list entirely.

This toolkit includes resources to help couples take time for dates, knowing that these shared moments can ignite or sustain the sparkle of romance between them.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Jubilant Marriages Theme
- JULY Intercessions
- Scripture Reflection: 7/12 & 7/26
- Links and Ideas
- Jubilant Marriages Prayer
- Ideas for Parents & Educators
- Hispanic Resources
- Helpful Contacts

Each marriage requires intentional and generous effort. Use the ideas included in this Toolkit to be a springboard for your own creativity. The most important take-away is to set aside time – routinely – to play...and pray...together! You won't regret it!

### **Be Part of a Jubilant Marriages Parish Core Team at Your Parish!**

You and your spouse are invited to work with your pastor to build a Jubilant Marriages team at your parish - to fortify and energize couples in an intentional way.

Contact Paul Duker at the Office of Marriage and Family Life: 314.792.7178 (Cell: 314.303.5060) to register and get started as a Jubilant Marriages Parish.

## Jubilant Marriages Prayer Intentions JULY

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### 01 Married Couples

We pray that married couples will grow in intimacy and lifelong friendship that shines bright - so their relationship is a tangible sign of God's love to the world.

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### 02 Parents & Families

We pray for moms and dads to find courage and strength to set strong family intentions - making prayer and family time a first priority in their homes.

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### 03 Parish Community

We pray that married couples in our parish, are blessed with strong and resilient relationships, so that their joy and generosity -- empowered with God's grace -- continues to enrich our community and beyond.



# Sunday Scriptures: 7/12

*Reflection for Sunday, July 12, 2026*



*These reflections are for July 12, the 15th Sunday of Ordinary Time - Year A  
Try reading and discussing these before, or after, Sunday Mass*

The readings this week inspire reflection on how, as we increase and deepen our intimacy with God, it can produce the fruit of greater intimacy in our relationships, especially between married husbands and wives.

These Sunday Scripture thoughts to ponder are offered by Marriage Ministry team at the St. Louis Archdiocese Office of Marriage and Family Life.

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## First Reading

Isaiah 55:10-11

### **1st Reading: Isaiah 55:10-11**

*Just as rain and snow descend from heaven to water the earth and accomplish God's life-giving purpose, so His word never returns empty but transforms every heart that receives it. In marriage, spouses can become like gentle rain for one another—speaking words of encouragement and truth that soften hearts, deepen trust, and cultivate the warm intimacy God intends for their union.*

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## Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 65:10, 11, 12-13, 14

### **Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 65:10, 11, 12-13, 14**

*God lavishly waters the earth, preparing it with care so that it bursts forth with abundance and joy. Married couples are invited to nurture their shared life with attentive love and generosity, creating a fertile home where affection grows freely and the warmth of mutual care produces a harvest of lasting intimacy.*

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## Second Reading

Romans 8:18-23

### **2nd Reading: Romans 8:18-23**

*Present sufferings are as nothing compared to the future glory God will reveal in us, as all creation groans in eager hope for redemption. For married couples, the ordinary trials and longings of life together become part of this hopeful labor—through patient love and shared vulnerability, they foster deeper emotional and spiritual closeness that anticipates the fullness of joy in Christ.*

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## Gospel

Gospel: Matthew  
13:1-23

### **Gospel: Matthew 13:1-23**

*The seed of God's word bears abundant fruit only in hearts that are open, receptive, and free from distraction, yielding a rich harvest for the Kingdom. In marriage, spouses can till the soil of each other's hearts through listening, prayer, and tender presence, helping God's word take deep root so their love grows strong, fruitful, and filled with warm intimacy.*

# Sunday Scripture 7/26

*Reflection for Sunday, July 26, 2026*



**The readings & Gospel for the 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time - Year A**  
**Try reading and discussing these before, or after, Sunday Mass.**

The readings this week inspire reflection on how, as we increase and deepen our intimacy with God, it can produce the fruit of greater intimacy in our relationships, especially between married husbands and wives.

These Sunday Scripture thoughts to ponder are offered by Marriage Ministry team at the St. Louis Archdiocese Office of Marriage and Family Life.

## First Reading

**1 Kings 3:5, 7-12**

### **1st Reading: 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12**

*God delights in granting wisdom to those who humbly seek it above all else, guiding our daily decisions with clarity and justice. Married couples, ask the Lord for a discerning heart together so that your shared conversations and choices deepen your intimacy and fill your home with loving warmth.*

## Responsorial Psalm

**Psalms 89: 2-3, 17-17, 18-19 (2a)**

### **Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 119:57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130**

*The Lord and His commands are our greatest treasure, more precious than gold and the source of true delight and life. Husbands and wives, treasure God's Word side by side; let it kindle compassion and affection that warm your marriage with ever-deepening intimacy.*

## Second Reading

**Romans 8:28-30**

### **2nd Reading: Romans 8:28-30**

*In every circumstance, God works for the good of those who love Him, shaping us to reflect the image of His Son. For married couples, trust that God uses both joys and trials to conform your hearts more closely to Christ, forging a tender, intimate bond radiant with His loving warmth.*

## Gospel

**Matthew 13:44-52**

### **Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52**

*The Kingdom of Heaven is of such surpassing value that we joyfully give everything to possess it. Spouses are encouraged to pursue Christ's Kingdom as your greatest shared treasure; in this pursuit your love grows richer, cultivating profound intimacy and joyful warmth in your marriage.*

# IDEAS FOR FUN SUMMER DATES

The month of July is full of great opportunities to date your spouse. Plan to spend time one-on-one with your spouse to build friendship, intimacy, and great memories together.

## FOOD AND FUN!

**July 1 - 31: July is National Picnic Month** Where will you picnic in July? Grab a blanket, some drinks and snacks and enjoy time together!

**July 4th: Celebrate America's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday!** St. Louis is full of fun options to enjoy American patriotic food and fun! **Find out more at the Explore STL [LINK](#)**

**July 7th: World Chocolate Day and National Strawberry Sundae Day** A great two-fer! Head to a favorite ice cream spot and go for the sundae with the berries on top!

**July 20th: World Lollipop Day** This is a great day to do a "retro" date and revisit some fun things you enjoyed in childhood. (Like bowling, putt-putt, ping-pong)

**July 21th: National Hot Dog Day** Fire up the grill and savor the old favorites or try new flavors of kielbasa, perros calientes, or brats. While you munch, perhaps plan a date to go to a minor league baseball game with the Gateway Grizzlies. Affordably priced baseball tickets with all the game-day fun. [LINK](#)



## FEASTS AND FAITH!



**July 12: Feast day of French married saints Louis and Zelig Martin.** Visit a local Farmer's Market, choose fresh produce, a French wine and a baguette and a lace tablecloth. Share a meal followed by slow dancing to some romantic French music. [Spotify Playlist Link](#). Discover more about the inspiring love story of this spiritual power couple. [LINK](#)

**July 16: Feast Day of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.** (Five of the Martin's daughters became nuns, four were Carmelites.) Attending one or all of the annual Carmelite Novena events can be a powerful spiritual summer date. **Dates this year: Saturday July 11 - Sunday, July 19.** Article about the event [LINK](#)

## FUN AND FROLIC!

**July 1 - 29 Wednesdays - The Whitaker Music Festival** at the Missouri Botanical Gardens. Bring a blanket and enjoy a picnic with live music. (no bottles allowed)

**July 6 - International Kissing Day** - Sometimes the sweetest romantic moments start with a kiss. Now you have a whole day to see how that works out.

**July 17 - World Emoji Day** - This is a day to enjoy your favorite private jokes and the silly emojis that have special meaning for just the two of you. Text your spouse some silly love and have fun!

**July 30 - International Friendship Day** - One of the most precious gifts of marriage is that you get to share your life with a sweetheart who often is also your very best friend. Here's the day for a date in which you can celebrate just that!



## For Chocoholics and the spouses who love them...

For a delectable chocolate experience date anytime... plan a trip to the **Chocolate, Chocolate, Chocolate factory - hand-crafted chocolatier TOUR!** Get free tickets with this [LINK](#).



# RESOURCES FOR THE WINDING PATH

Summer is a great time for couples to **get healthy in body, mind and spirit - together!** If you need to reboot your relational resilience, or if you feel your marriage has grown stale or stagnant, check out some helpful podcasts and articles from Dr. Daniel Amen, founder of the world-renowned Amen Clinics.

## BODY: Four Feel Better Food Strategies



One of the ways that the Amen Clinics improve mental health is to help people eat foods that nourish their brains and bodies— such as colorful vegetables and fruits as well as healthy proteins and fats—and eliminate, at least temporarily, all of the potential troublemaker foods that could be causing negative reactions in their bodies, such as gluten, dairy, corn, soy, food additives and preservatives, and artificial sweeteners.

The article linked below gives 4 strategies through which individuals and couples can use food choices to improve brain health.

Find out more at the Amen Clinic website: [LINK](#)

## MIND: Dr. Daniel Amen and wife Tana Offer Mental Health Solutions for Relationships and More

Podcast: Bestselling authors, Dr. Daniel Amen and his wife, Tana, are personal Brain Warrior Guides helping people win the war for health and defeat anxiety, depression, memory loss, ADHD, addictions, disease, and obesity. Learn how to take control of brain and body to experience a full life.

[LINK](#)



Podcast hosts Daniel Amen, MD. and Tana Amen are changing the way we look at the brain.

## SPIRIT: Spend time with the Divine Healer

Married couples who are experiencing a dry spell, or a season of disillusionment can find a path out of the dark and can amplify the success of the practical steps mentioned above... by reaching out to the Divine Physician. Set a time to go to an **adoration chapel**, or just sit together in your parish church near the tabernacle and cast all your cares on Jesus. Pray for God to shower the grace of your Matrimony on the two of you and infuse in you the wisdom, understanding, forgiveness, and intimacy that you need.



## Jubilant Marriage Inspiration:

"Our secret to a lasting and fulfilling marriage — two things — one, marry your best friend and every day will feel great. Second piece of advice, have a short memory when it comes to disagreements and conflict. A great relationship means taking great time, communication and admiration for your partner through sickness, health, good and bad." — Dr. Daniel Amen



# Links & Events

Find Marriage enriching links, events, and information to help your marriage, or the marriage of someone you care about to be...JUBILANT!

## LINK



The Jubilant Marriages Initiative spotlights great ways that Priests, Parishes, Couples, and Singles can help Marriages be HOLY and strong within their parish community.

Visit [Archstl.org/Jubilant-Marriages](https://Archstl.org/Jubilant-Marriages) and explore the resources and options to enrich your marriage 1-on-1 or in groups at your parish.

## Marriage Enrichment



### **Happy 200 Anniversary Archdiocese of St. Louis!!**

Come celebrate our Bicentennial at Holy Mass with Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski at the Cathedral Basilica

**Date: July 18, 2026, at 10:00 AM**

Plus, join in the array of DIY **local pilgrimage opportunities** to celebrate and appreciate the growth and service of the Catholic Church in the St. Louis region over the course of 200 years. Details and information: [LINK](#)

### **A Great Date for a Good Cause**

Couples and families are invited to be part of the **2026 St. Louis Celebration of Life** with special guest speaker: Father Charlie Archer. Come cheer on the Biking for Babies missionaries as they ride their final leg of their 3,600 total miles. You can expect

- Free dinner
- Inspiring speakers
- Fun for the whole family
- Baskets and 50/50 raffles

and an invitation to answer God's call to your own personal mission, all while we celebrate life together! [LINK](#)

Date: **Saturday, July 18** 4:30 – 8 PM CT

Location: **St. Joseph Parish**

567 St. Joseph Lane  
Manchester, MO 63021

**BIKING FOR BABIES**  
**Celebration of Life**  
Saturday, July 18, 2026  
4:30-8 PM, including free dinner  
St. Joseph Parish, Manchester, MO

## **Sunday Matrimony Moments**

**A weekly framework to grow closer as a couple.**

Take time each Sunday to:

- 1) Be inspired by SCRIPTURE
- 2) Get MOTIVATED to improve your marriage
- 3) PRAY a short prayer together, and
- 4) Have a CONVERSATION to build connection between you.

**Matrimony Moments content is created for placement in parish bulletins each week...but couples are encouraged to print and use these prompts at home, or in a small group. Use this [LINK](#).**





# Options to Read & Watch:

Discover some valuable reading and viewing for JULY. From Movie Night, to Date Night, to story-time before bed, get inspired to have a strong and intimate marriage full of confidence and hope.

## MOVIE NIGHT: *Cinderella Man*

(From the [MovieGuide Review](#)) CINDERELLA MAN, based on a true story, is about the family and boxing career of James Braddock, who made one of the greatest comebacks ever in 1934 and 1935. After brief success in the late 1920s, some hand injuries stop Braddock's career, and the Great Depression leaves his family destitute. Things look extremely bleak for Jim, his loving wife Mae and their three young children. Then, in the spring of 1934, Jim gets a chance to fight a heavyweight contender (whose scheduled opponent can't fight) and goes on to win as Heavyweight Champion.

CINDERELLA MAN is a positive and uplifting movie. The inspiring story has a very strong Christian worldview that extols family, faith, prayer, determination, and integrity. In addition to much boxing violence, be prepared for foul language, mostly coming from the hero's gregarious boxing manager.

Media-wise caution is advised. Rated PG-13

Get streaming info to watch *Cinderella Man*: [LINK](#)



## Date Your Spouse From Your House

### *52 Budget-Friendly Ways to Go Out While Staying In*

Book by Sarah Excell

With little kids and little money, it might be time to redefine how you do date night. Inspired by an episode of *The Bachelor*, Sarah set a goal to date her husband every Friday night. Over time, she accumulated a year's worth of no-fuss, at-home date ideas—complete with a playful titles for each idea that can double as a date card...if you want to go full Bachelor with it!

The good news is the only people who risk interrupting your one-on-one time are the people who call you mom and dad...but if all goes according to plan, they're tucked soundly in bed. The best news is...your first date card is knocking! [LINK](#)



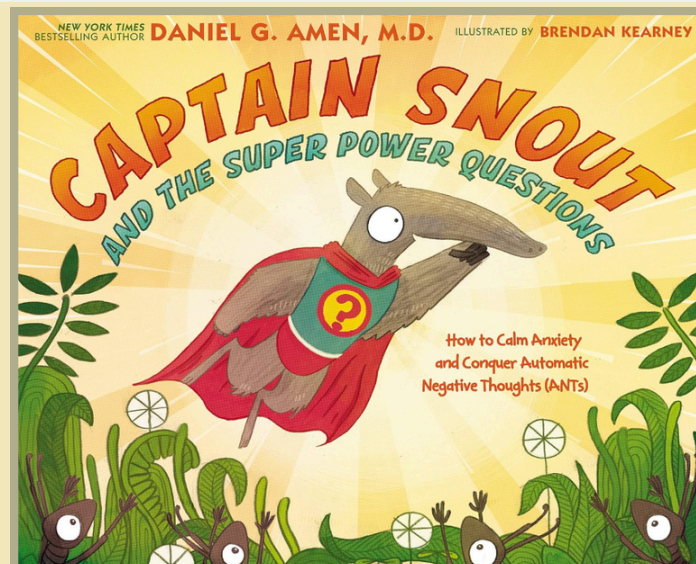
## CHILDREN: Captain Snout

And the Super-Power Questions

By Dr. Daniel Amen

Captain Snout and the Super Power Questions encourages children to live a happier and healthier life with a more positive outlook. This motivational picture book by Dr. Daniel Amen, New York Times bestselling author and board-certified child psychiatrist, offers children a way to address their negative thoughts. It actually is also a great read for parents too. Anyone who deals with negative thinking can benefit from the wisdom of Captain Snout.

Find out more about this powerful book: [LINK](#)



# Ideas for Parents & Educators

In July, we focus on the way married couples can **CHOOSE** the virtue of **JOYFULNESS** in marriage and family life.



## Holy Matrimony Role Models: Pierre and Juliette Toussaint

This holy couple were both born into slavery in Haiti and later settled in freedom in New York. They were profoundly generous with their time, resources, love and laughter. They raised their orphan niece as their own child. They persevered through many difficult trials. What sustained them? Their Catholic faith, joy and surprisingly...laughter.

This holy couple who endured the trials of life during and after slavery, are a powerful example to let the JOY of the Lord be our strength. Discover more of their story at: <https://catholicfamilymen.com/blog/serve-anonymously-with-your-wife/>

### For LITTLES



Invite little children to discover the virtue of **JOYFULNESS**.

- Pass laughter around in a circle. One person starts laughing (on purpose) and giggling and pass it on. Keep it going! Joy is contagious.
- Ask mommy or daddy to show you their "happy dance". Show them yours.
- Take photos with the family. Smile really big and say " JESUS!" instead of "cheese".

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### For MIDDLES



Pierre and Juliette overcame enormous difficulties, and yet while they were still not living on "easy street," they shared a married life together full of generosity and joy. Have children discuss the following story.

*"On one occasion, Pierre discovered that an affluent man he was acquainted with had been reduced to material poverty. The man, sick and suffering, craved a delicacy of food that he had formerly enjoyed and grown accustomed to, but now had no financial means to obtain it for himself. For several months Toussaint and Juliette sent his dinner, nicely cooked, in such a way that he could not suspect from whom it came. "If he had known," said Toussaint, "he might not have liked it; he might have been proud." Juliette further recounted that when Pierre went to see him periodically, the man would brag about his prestige, his good friends, and how every day somebody sends him a nice dinner cooked by a French cook. Sometimes the man would even describe the various food items one by one. My good husband would come home, and tell me, and we would laugh very much."*  
[Quotes from Memoir of Venerable Pierre Toussaint.]

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### For TEENS

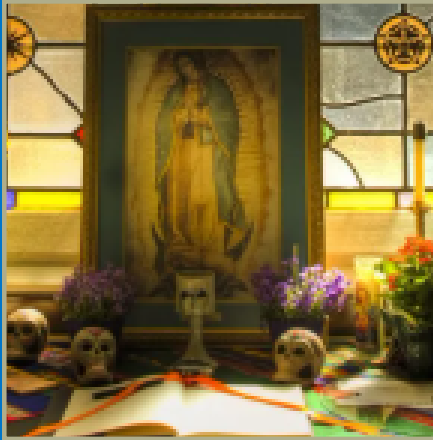


Teens can understand the injustice of slavery, but it can be harder to imagine people like the Toussaints choosing the power of joyfulness in the midst of difficulty.

Try a couple **role-playing situations** where the teens imagine themselves in a difficult or uncomfortable situation...and how they could choose to be authentically joyful (not sarcastic) in the midst of it. 😊 Possibly write down some situation descriptions on little cards for the teens to choose from.

# RECURSOS HISPANOS

Descubre eventos e información especialmente para parejas y familias hispanas casadas.



## [ARCHSTL Hispanic Ministry](#)

Visita la página del Ministerio Hispano en el sitio web de la Arquidiócesis para obtener información sobre preparación matrimonial, además de otros recursos y eventos en español.

LA OFICINA DE MINISTERIO HISPANO Es un lugar donde nuestra misma fe, bautismo, comunión y misión en el Señor se hacen visibles. Junto con el Grupo de Líderes Pastorales Hispanos, y otras agencias arquidiocesanas, la oficina brinda apoyo directo a las parroquias con católicos hispanos en toda la arquidiócesis, ejerce su compromiso con la Evangelización, Pastoral de Conjunto, y la integración de la comunidad católica en la vida de la arquidiócesis.

Eventos actuales organizados por la oficina del ministerio hispano/  
Current events hosted by the office of hispanic ministry: [LINK](#)



## La Oficina del Matrimonio y la Vida Familiar Diócesis de Columbus recursos:

- [Recursos de gráfico de fertilidad](#)
- [Recursos de Integridad Sexual](#)
- [Recursos de Pareja](#)
- [Recursos Familiares](#)
- [Recursos para el Embarazo](#)

## Por Tu Matrimonio

Vida de Casados:

La vida matrimonial es una vocación. Todos los matrimonios pueden crecer en conocimiento, fe, alegría y amor.

ENLACE: <https://www.portumatrimonio.org/vida-de-casados/>





# Pray THE JUBILANT MARRIAGES PRAYER

Jesus, Your life, death, and resurrection was the greatest act of love of all time, pouring forth streams of life-giving grace in the Sacraments. Today, we ask you to renew our HOPE - through the daily lived Sacrament of Matrimony.

Inspire us to cherish the extraordinary value of the Sacrament of Matrimony in our families and communities to renew familial love among all people. Enable us to build a Culture of Matrimonial Love in our parish – to energize couples who are stable, support couples in distress, empower couples who carry heavy burdens, and rekindle a matrimony mindset in our youth.

Unleash the power of Matrimonial Grace in our parish - through the leadership of our clergy, the faithfulness of married couples, and the wisdom of the widowed, to inspire each parishioner to live as a joy-filled daily sign of the sacrificial love of God .

Amen.

*You are encouraged to pray this prayer in your home with your spouse and/or family.*  
Prayer Cards are available from the Office of Marriage & Family Life

# Who Can Help?



This handy contact page gives you at-a-glance ease to get help to implement Jubilant Marriages recommended resources or ideas in your own life or in your parish.

Description	Phone	Email Address
<b>Paul Duker</b> <i>Manager - Office of Marriage &amp; Family Life</i>	314-792-7178	paulduker@archstl.org
<b>Cathy Gilmore</b> <i>Jubilant Marriages Coordinator</i>	636-391-3999	cathygilmore@archstl.org
<b>Sr. Maureen Martin, ACSJ</b> <i>Family Life</i>	314-792-7612	srmaureenmartin@archstl.org
<b>Amy Buehrle</b> <i>Pastoral Associate - Northern Vicariate</i>	314-792-6512	amybuehrle@archstl.org
<b>Tammy Chumley</b> <i>Pastoral Associate - Western Vicariate</i>	314-792-6456	TammyChumley@archstl.org
<b>Jennifer Meehan</b> <i>Pastoral Associate - Southern Vicariate</i>	(314) 363-6945	jmeehan@archstl.org

✦ Get the Jubilant Marriages Tool Kit sent to your inbox each month. Sign up at: <https://archstl.flocknote.com/jubilantmarriage>



# About Jubilant Marriages

Guided under the leadership of Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski, Jubilant Marriages offers a new vision for couples and parishes in the Saint Louis Archdiocese to tap into the **MATRIMONIAL POWER** of Catholic Marriages. This initiative will enable Catholic Matrimony to be embraced as a daily lived sacrament and a powerful sign of God's presence.

*"The vision of Jubilant Marriages is to establish a **Catholic Culture of Holy Matrimony**; anchored in the truth that the loving relationship of a couple is a powerful sacramental Presence of God."*  
- Father Rosy Rosebrough

Started in spring 2025, the Jubilee Year of HOPE, monthly Jubilant Marriages themes continue to spotlight important ways each marriage can be holy, healthy, and happy - and provide practical information that helps married couples and parishes to thrive.

Visit [ARCHSTL.org/Jubilant-Marriages](https://ARCHSTL.org/Jubilant-Marriages) to discover more!



