



Office of Marriage
and Family Life

SEPTEMBER 2025

BUILDING MATRIMONY MINDSET IN YOUTH



PARISHIONER
TOOL KIT

MONTHLY RESOURCES & IDEAS

Jubilant Marriages Theme For SEPTEMBER

Generational HOPE - Building a Matrimony Mindset in Youth



Modern culture has increasingly drawn young people away from anchoring their lives with the blessing of Sacramental Matrimony.

The Jubilant Marriages Initiative focus for SEPTEMBER encourages couples, priests and parishes to be positive and proactive with the younger generation to help them discover and value the life-long, sacrificial, holy and hope-filled adventure of sacramental Matrimony.

Too many young adults are settling for the empty influences that promote co-habitation and selfish relationships. Young people need help to understand that they can find the HOPE and LOVE they long for in God's design for marriage.

Visit and share the link to the webpage: www.ArchSTL.org/Jubilant-Marriages with everyone in your parish. The page offers resource links to cultivate HEALTHY marriages that endure with generational impact that is powered by sacramental grace.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- [Jubilant Marriages Theme](#)
- [Scripture Reflection: 9/7& 9/21](#)
- [August Intercessions](#)
- [Jubilant Marriages Prayer](#)
- [Gratitude Couple: the Ventos](#)
- [Recommended Resources](#)
- [Events, Links, and More](#)
- [Ideas for Parents & Educators](#)
- [Hispanic Resources](#)
- [Helpful Contacts](#)

Jubilant Marriages Parish Teams

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.

Parishes can become a Jubilant Marriages "Accelerator" Parish at any time.

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 Accelerator Parish.

Sunday Scriptures: 9/7

Reflection for Sunday, September 7, 2025



The readings for the 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time (Cycle C) remind us that we cannot live the life of a disciple without the wisdom of God guiding us and leading us on the right path. Married couples need to discern God's will for them not only as individuals, but also as a couple united as one by the Sacrament of Matrimony.

These Scripture reflections are the fruit of reflections by Allen and Marian Love, and their 54 years of marriage. Allen is a Permanent Deacon. Marian is a Spiritual Director, who gives days of reflection and is an adjunct instructor at Aquinas Institute.

The Loves are members of Sacred Heart Parish in Valley Park.

First Reading

Wisdom 9: 13-18b.

First Reading - Wise Decisions

The author of the first reading points out the limitations of human wisdom. Human beings can discover new things about the world we live in and the universe through scientific study. We can also discover things about life through personal reflection and through our lived experiences. However, we cannot know God's desires or God's plans for our individual lives by our own efforts. Only with the spirit of God's wisdom can we begin to understand God's ways.

As humans, we want to be in control and can often hesitate to surrender our plans and decisions to God, and yet this is what God invites us to – a shared life -where God's love and wisdom bring us to the fullest life possible. This means listening for God when making decisions about vocation, career, relationships; what is it God desires in and for me, for others? Married couples face additional decisions that affect their relationship – decisions on where to live, finances, starting and raising a family, education, family vacations, saving for retirement and a host of other decisions in their married life. Married couples also have a powerful opportunity to witness to young people, demonstrating to them the richness of matrimonial life when decisions are submitted to God. God will provide the wisdom needed in each decision for all who are willing to walk in faith.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalms 90: 3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 and 17

Second Reading

Philemon 1: 9-10, 12-17

Gospel - Radical discipleship

"If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, cannot be my disciple." Jesus' opening words in today's gospel shock our senses as they surely did those in the crowd. Even more so than today, family at the time of Jesus was the crucial social network of relationships that provided support and security for daily living. We know that Jesus certainly did not mean 'hate' literally (or in the sense we take it today) because Jesus ties love of God and love of neighbor together as the two great commandments. Rather, Jesus uses exaggeration to convey that discipleship requires complete commitment to him and the building of the kingdom.

Gospel

Luke 14: 25-33

Life presents us with daily choices. Jesus calls all disciples to make choices that are consistent with his message and to prioritize them in support of the mission he has given to us. Young adults can hear in His words an echo of the admonition from the scriptures to "leave and cleave" in the Sacrament of Matrimony - putting God first, marriage second, and all other relationships flow from that commitment. Married couples are in a unique position in that their choices and prioritization can and should be collaborative. Shared values emerge and flourish through the couple's joint prayer and practice. Imparting the same values to the next generation not only can include praying together as a family, but also reaching out as a family to others in need.

Sunday Scripture 9/21

Reflection for Sunday September 21, 2025



The 1st Reading and the Gospel for the 25th Sunday of Ordinary Time (Cycle C) deal with the issue of living with divided hearts. We can subconsciously divide our lives into series of compartments – one for religion, one for politics, one for economics, etc. These compartments are carefully isolated from each other and we can move among them in such a way that the actions of one do not affect the other.

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First Reading

Amos 8: 4-7

Responsorial Psalm

Psalms 113: 1-2, 4-6, 7-8
"Praise the Lord, who lifts up the poor"

Second Reading

1 Timothy 2: 1 - 8

Gospel

Luke 16: 1-13

First Reading - Single Heartedness

Amos takes the merchants of his day to task for their hypocrisy. The merchants fulfill their religious obligations, but are eager to resume their dishonest business practices. Their business practices victimize the poor. Amos is attacking the separation they have created between worship of God and the proper treatment of other people. A true relationship with God always includes relationships with others; there is no separation. There is a single heartedness about a truly faith filled life with God. Married couples who pray together regularly, and who impart this to their children show intentionality towards single heartedness. This unity of faith and action can also be demonstrated when families reach out to help or serve others or act as good stewards of nature.

Second Reading - Intercessory Prayer

Paul instructs Timothy and the community to offer prayers for all people with special attention given to civic leaders. Paul stresses that it is God's desire to save every human being; and every human being is to be included in the intercessory prayer of the community. Married couples might begin a practice of family prayer at an early age. As children grow older and aware of a wider world, they can include prayers for leaders in public office, victims of violence, or those affected by natural disasters, for example.

Gospel - Only One Master

Jesus takes up this problem of divided hearts with his disciples – "No servant can serve two masters ... both God and money." Jesus does not condemn money or material goods, both are needed to sustain and nourish our lives. The problem with material things is compartmentalizing our attitudes toward them. When we do not keep them in the proper balance, they create obstacles that deaden our care for humanity. At times, without fully realizing it, we can rely on material things in ways that lead us to avoid true authentic relationships, and even our relationship with God. For example, this is a selfish trap that can lure young people away from the desire for marriage. Generosity with God and others is the antidote, no matter what age someone is. And marriage can be one of the most rewarding paths of generosity.

Intentional discernment about finances, possessions, service, and even time spent - together with spouse or family or friends - are key to single heartedness. From an early age, children are very observant taking in everything in their environment, including the actions of their parents. As the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith, parents demonstrate generosity and care for others by the way they live out their stewardship of the resources they have been given.

Jubilant Marriages Prayer Intentions For SEPTEMBER

01 Married Couples

We pray that married couples will foster a Matrimony mindset by sharing candidly with their teen and young adult children about the blessings of their shared life together through the power of Matrimonial grace.

02 Youth Vocations to Marriage

We pray that young adults will grow a renewed desire to build their lives on the foundation of faith and generosity - and follow God's call to the Sacrament of Matrimony or a religious vocation.

03 Parenting Holy Families

We pray that parents will be intentional through word and example to help children see the value of the Sacrament of Matrimony in their lives.





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

September Matrimony Gratitude Couple: Heather & Michael Vento



Michael and Heather Vento are the founders of The Image of God Institute.

Almost ten years ago, we welcomed young adults into our home to learn Theology of the Body. We invited friends, who were also blessed to receive this teaching, to share their stories and wisdom. With these witnesses, a larger team was formed. Together, we share the joy of this new springtime with Catholics of all ages who seek hope, healing and spiritual guidance - now also working in parishes.

The following four pillars describe the essential core values guiding the Image of God Institute.

- **Prayer** to Jesus through our Blessed Mother Mary is the foundation for all Institute activities.
- **Formation** focused on studying under the tutelage of JP II and Benedict XVI
- **Witnesses** (Couples, Singles, Religious) share how they are living this formation in their day-to-day lives
- **Discussion** provides opportunity for a steady growth in knowledge, understanding, and relationship

Discover more about the Image of God Institute at: <https://imageofgodinstitute.org/>

Why do I thank God for my Spouse?

From Michael: Why do I thank God for my wife, Heather?

I thank the Lord that Heather is an amazing woman of prayer that loves deeply, encourages, supports, and is truly the heart of our family. I'm especially grateful that she is the mother of our five wonderful children. Also, Heather is fun, and has introduced me to the love of traveling and many new adventures!

From Heather: Why do I thank God for my husband, Michael?

Michael and I love hockey, the Lord of the Rings and many common interests, but that's not why I most thank God for him. Michael is our spiritual leader. He prayed for his vocation years before we met. He prayed through our dating and engagement and he continues to pray every day. Our family has a depth and abundance the world cannot offer, enriching life whether we're going through trials or jumping up and down for the Stanley Cup victory.

Why do I thank God for my Marriage?

Michael: Why do I Thank God for my marriage?

I received my vocation when I met Heather for the first time in November 2005, knowing the Lord was calling me to speak with her at a friend's house. I thank the Lord that we both desire to pray, to live out St. John Paul II's wisdom in our marriage and family life, and share it with others (young adults and parishioners) through our Image of God Institute.

Heather: Why do I Thank God for my marriage?

My marriage isn't how I thought it would be. The imaginary husband of my youth was shallow and our life was easy...but I must admit that I like our reality much better. Marriage with Michael has brought not only the most amazing children we could imagine, but also intimacy, peace and joy that surpasses my understanding. Plus, we have fun together!

Couple Gratitude Challenge:

**Take a few moments to think of
why you thank God for your SPOUSE and
why you thank God for your MARRIAGE.
PRAY your thanks to God!
Then TELL your spouse!**

FEATURED RESOURCES:

Discover ways to enrich and strengthen your marriage and the marriages of others you care about - through resources and events that can power-up your relationship with JOY!



[Impact the Next Generation - Be a Matrimony Mentor](#)

Married Couples, consider getting trained as a Side-by-Side Matrimony Mentor for your parish. It is a mutually rewarding way to come alongside younger couples as they prepare for matrimony and experience the joys and struggles of life as newlyweds. Use this [LINK](#) to find out more.



Do you know a young person planning to get engaged?

The Archdiocese offers excellent in-person preparation for the Sacrament of Matrimony for young couples based on the **Joy Filled Marriage** Program by Ascension. It offers a great balance of preparation for the spiritual, relational, and practical experiences of Married life.

Visit www.MarriagePrepSTL.org to know more.



Image of God Institute

The Image of God institute provides valuable tools for young people to anchor their lives in a Theology of the Body lifestyle. Through TOB Intensive Weekends, Reading & Discussion Groups, Conferences & Seminars, and Parish-based experiences, people of all ages learn to apply the rich truth of life as a "gift" in daily living and relationships. Through the process, a Matrimony mindset emerges in a natural and lasting way.

Discover more: [Image of God Institute](#)



Ask Christopher West

Catholic Theology of the Body speaker and expert, Christopher West offers candid conversations about the intersection of life, relationships, sex and faith with his wife Wendy on their fun and engaging podcast. Enjoyable and valuable content for all ages.

Discover more: [Podcast link](#)



Events, Links, and More

Find Marriage enriching events, links, 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 for Priests, Parishes, Couples, and SINGLES to help Marriages be HAPPY and strong.

Visit Archstl.org/Jubilant-Marriages and look under the HOLY category for links to resources and ideas that empower couples in ways to cultivate a matrimony mindset that impacts generations.

Events & Info.



For couples in experiencing marriage difficulties, "**Retrouvaille**" is a proven & POWERFUL marriage renewal experience in which you can: rebuild your emotional connection, learn healthy communication methods, manage conflicts effectively, forgive and rebuild trust. *Rediscover your love!*

Upcoming "Retrouvaille" weekend in STL: September 12 - 14, 2025
Take the first step to a better marriage. [Register Here](#)

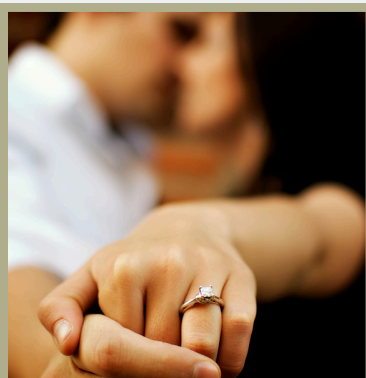
Testimonials

"We came to Retrouvaille thinking nothing would work. We have been given another chance."

"We'd been living apart for over six months, but through this program, we're gradually learning to rebuild our marriage."

Mark your calendar:

The next **Marriage on Tap STL** is **Wednesday, September 24, 2025** at Syberg's on Dorsett. The speaker will be Father Charlie Archer, and his talk is titled "Speaking the Language of Faith in Ordinary Family Life."



Jubilant Marriage Inspiration:

"When you realize you want to spend the rest of your life with somebody, you want the rest of your life to start as soon as possible."

– Movie: When Harry Met Sally

Save the Date... Plan a Date!



Check out this
great OCTOBER
Jubilee Year
DATE opportunity
for married
couples with
(or without)
the family.

Go for one day,
or spend several days!

A Mini "Camino" in STL

**A FUN WAY TO MAKE YOUR
MARRIAGE SPIRITUALLY STRONG!**

Or Plan a
Sunday Afternoon
DATE
at the
Saint Louis
Catholic Art Festival

September 13, 2025
10AM to 4 PM



Ideas for Parents & Educators

In SEPTEMBER, we focus on the way married couples can CHOOSE the virtue of HOPE in marriage and family life.



Holy Matrimony Role Models: Karol and Emilia Wojtyła

This extraordinary married couple from Poland ignited deep love and fervent faith in their son Karol, who later became Pope Saint John Paul II. The power of their witness - embracing their marriage as a daily lived Sacrament - planted the seeds in the heart of their son who later created what is now known as the Theology of the Body. This extraordinary teaching has inspired men and women from around the world to live as a gift, and experience *FREE*, *TOTAL*, *FAITHFUL*, and *FRUITFUL* matrimonial lives.

They taught their son how to have HOPE no matter the circumstance, and he went on to give HOPE to generations that followed after him.

For LITTLES



Invite little children to discover the virtue of HOPE

- Talk about what it means to have hope -- Knowing that we have a good future with God!
- Try practicing a daily affirmation of HOPE. Example: I put my HOPE in God that I will have all the strength I need for whatever happens today!

For MIDDLES



Discuss the difficult life faced by Karol and Emilia Wojtyla and their two sons.

How did Pope John Paul II have so much hope when he and his family faced so many difficulties? Watch this short video together: <https://catholic-link.org/john-paul-ii/>

Challenge: Have the children to think about something that is difficult in their own lives. Then ask them to think of a phrase to write down to help them "Cope with HOPE"

Example: Difficulty with a friend: "I hold on to HOPE that God can give me the strength to be kind to that person and not let their reactions get me down."

For TEENS



Pope John Paul II's mom was advised by a doctor to abort her second son to protect her own health. She and her husband felt strongly that their child deserved a chance at life no matter what.

Read this article and discuss together how the virtue of HOPE was evident in their marriage and in their decision to BE a gift and give their son life no matter the personal risk: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/44565/john-paul-iis-mom-chose-life-after-her-doctor-advised-an-abortion>

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.

Oportunidad Hispana Carismática

Programas del Centro de Renovación Católica – para participar, póngase en contacto con nosotros

<https://resources.archstl.org/article/181921/oportunidad-hispana-carismatica>



[Quinceañera!](#)

Estas Por Cumplir Tus 15 Años Y Quieres Tener Una Misa
¿Pero No Sabes Que Necesitas?

El rito de los quince años es más que una celebración del paso de niña a mujer, una herencia cultural y religiosa hispana y está relacionada con la familia, maternidad y fe.

<https://public.files.capacity.com/b74c60b2-5d6b-4369-ae6a-8eed6e9bbb22/452531cb-6769-4577-b152-452392dd9b41?FU=1721072528>

Que Brille El Amor

Recursos Gratuitos en Español del Consejo de Obispos de California:

ENLACE: Excelentes ideas e inspiración para parejas y familias hispanas.

[Que Brille El Amor](#)



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
Paul Duker <i>Manager - Office of Marriage & Family Life</i>	314-792-7178	paulduker@archstl.org
Cathy Gilmore <i>Jubilant Marriages Coordinator</i>	636-391-3999	cathygilmore@archstl.org
Sr. Maureen Martin, ACSJ <i>Family Life</i>	314-792-7612	srmaureenmartin@archstl.org
Amy Buehrle <i>Pastoral Associate - Northern Vicariate</i>	314-792-6512	amybuehrle@archstl.org
Tammy Chumley <i>Pastoral Associate - Western Vicariate</i>	314-792-6456	TammyChumley@archstl.org
Jennifer Meehan <i>Pastoral Associate - Southern Vicariate</i>	(314) 363-6945	jmeehan@archstl.org
Michael & Heather Vento <i>For more information about the Image of God Institute</i>	(314)-807-1617	michael@imageofgodinstitute.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*

Starting in spring 2025, the Jubilee Year of HOPE, monthly Jubilant Marriages themes will 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 to discover more!

