



February Jubilant Marriages for Priests & Deacons

This simple set of monthly resources are designed to help you as a Priest or Deacon to fortify the marriages of couples in your parish. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3. Choose **ONE** Sunday include married couples in a special way in a Homily. On that Sunday, add the Prayers of the Faithful intentions provided here, that are specific to marriage and family to your liturgy plans. **TWO**, add the Jubilant Marriages Tool Kit link and image to your digital communication sometime during the month. **THREE**, add the Matrimony Mindset content as often as you can in the parish Bulletin

1) *JM HOMILY HINTS for Sundays 2/8 & 2/22*

The monthly themed Homily Hints give you homily prep help to choose one Sunday to orient your preaching toward the health of married couples. Options are provided for 2 Sundays. Pick one, and strengthen the most important anchors in the life of the Church and society - married couples.

With JM Prayers of the Faithful - These Prayers of the Faithful intentions emphasize the need for God to pour His grace on marriage and family in a modern society that arrays powerful forces against both. In January we pray especially that couples and families will seek out ways to embrace the Spiritual Works of Mercy together.



2) *Digital Jubilant Marriages Tool Kit for Parishioners*

The digital JM Toolkit for Parishioners is packed with inspiration and resources for couples and families to enrich their marriages by doing the Spiritual Works of Mercy together.

Use this Tool Kit **COVER IMAGE** and **LINK**:

<https://public.files.capacity.com/b74c60b2-5d6b-4369-ae6a-8eed6e9bbb22/73067bb8-9373-4206-82d3-54fbf98fa9b0?FU=1765470280>

to easily share the valuable content with your parishioners.

Sharing options include: Parish e-newsletter, website, Flocknote, and/or a post on social media.

3) *JM Matrimony Mindset Weekly Bulletin Content*

Share this document link with your parish Bulletin Editor. Four short **marriage-strengthening** content blocks are included for you to offer as a regular feature in the parish bulletin. Use one or all four each month, or simply as space allows. **LINK**

Sunday Scriptures: 2/8

These Homily Hints are for the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A



In these readings we hear images of light in darkness connected to the actions of God and the actions of disciples. Jesus, sent by God as the light of the world, and faithful to the Hebrew scriptures in which he was raised, shows us the path of light. We hear descriptions of the acts of justice and mercy that allow us, disciples of Jesus, to shine. Plus, we are reminded that the action of the Spirit in us, the working of the power of God, is the foundation of faith and the source of light in every season of marriage. This month we are attentive to the experiences of couples in transition, grandparents, widow/ers, and late-in-life couples.

Reflections by: Tom and Celeste Mueller, who have been married for 42 years, have two children and two grandchildren. They worship and serve with the community at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, being formed and taught by Christ through the persons of those in poverty.

First Reading

Isaiah 58: 7-10.

First Reading:

Isaiah has clear guidance for couples walking in the light of Christ. "Share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless; clothe the naked when you see them and do not turn your back on your own." Grandparents and later-in-life couples can be uniquely equipped to be this sign of hope because their years and experience bring a keener perception of needs around them. They can offer the example of lived habits of attentiveness to others. Younger couples can look to those whose love has remained strong through years of fidelity and to those who have patiently waited for married love to bloom later in life to observe how to take a broader view of the world and a wider embrace of family and fellow humans.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalms 112: 4-5, 6-7, 8-9.

"The just man is a light in darkness to the upright."

Second Reading

In the second reading Paul affirms that God's power, visible in the action of the Spirit, is the foundation of our faith. The Spirit is always active, but when we experience our human vulnerability and times of uncertainty, we can see God's action more vividly. The world often offers little support for couples who are aging or experience marriage transitions, moments of vulnerability or uncertainty in their later years. In those moments, it is powerful to share feelings and fears with one another and reveal those vulnerabilities. In that act of intimacy couples can experience the power of God's presence strengthening and building their faith.

Second Reading

First Corinthians 2: 1-5.

Gospel:

Couples in any stage of married life, can have experiences that stand in contrast to each other. On the one hand each person has rich gifts to offer from his or her experiences of life and relationship. On the other hand, there is a temptation to become tentative and uncertain as we face the changes that come with age. The Gospel today speaks directly to that reality, urging us not to shrink away from the world, but to trust and make visible the seasoning and light we have to offer to a world so desperately in need. A key opportunity is for mature couples to connect with younger couples, inviting them into the actions of justice and mercy described by Isaiah. Perhaps, for example, invite a couple who is in a different season of life who is in your family or neighborhood to serve at a food pantry with you. If you are the mature couple, offer to help to care for their children so that the couple can serve more easily. Helping together enables all involved to see a wider world of need and draw energy and courage from each other's vitality. Together we become salt and light, living signs of hope.

Gospel

Matthew 5: 13-16.

Sunday Scripture 2/22



These Homily Hints are for the First Sunday of Lent (Cycle A)

The familiar readings for the First Sunday of Lent offer images that help us reflect on the devious ways that temptation and sin have afflicted humans through history, and continue to torment us today. Recognizing both the reality of sin and the superabundance of God's grace enables the virtue of courage or fortitude to grow and deepen within individuals and couples, especially through our Lenten practices to build self-awareness and other-centeredness.

Reflections by: Tom and Celeste Mueller, who have been married for 42 years, have two children and two grandchildren. They worship and serve with the community at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, being formed and taught by Christ through the persons of those in poverty.

First Reading

Genesis 2: 7-9; 3: 1-7

Responsorial Psalm

Psalms 51: 3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 and 17.

" Be Merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned."

Second Reading

Romans 5: 12-19

Gospel

Matthew 4:1-11

First Reading:

This reading can apply to many couples under the title: "The Blame Game." Couples can easily fall into the habit of blaming each other for whatever goes wrong, from lost car keys to infidelity. Even the interpretation of the passage can sometimes blame women for the "fall." During the aftermath of their temptation, and in their daily life outside of Paradise, God invited the first couple to cultivate fortitude for honest self-reflection. Temptation and sin, with the cunning of a serpent, continues to wind its way into every life. Most often, it is trivial annoyances that sow seeds of discord. This Lent, practice a pause before a word of blame comes to your lips. Remember that we are all tempted, we all offend one another, knowingly or innocently, and we all sin. And remember that we are all held in the wide embrace of God's mercy. Cultivate the fortitude to extend God's mercy to each other, especially in marriage and family relationships.

Second Reading:

In his letter to the Romans, Paul provides the theological assurance that though we wrestle with temptation and sin, the abundance of God's mercy and forgiveness in Jesus Christ outweighs anything and everything that could trip us up. As we practice the virtue of fortitude day by day, we can rest in the knowledge that through Jesus "acquittal and life came to all." We have God's own strength to sustain us.

Gospel:

The account of Jesus' temptations in the desert reminds each of us of the devious ways of temptation: Satan offers what looks good at first glance, things that humans need or crave: food, trust in providence, material success. Jesus' response is not simply a physical act of resistance, but a clear-eyed view of a much bigger story, a much greater good: God's story and intent for humankind.

For mature married couples, temptations may not be the flashy ones of youth, but subtle distortions of what are actual needs. In later years, married spouses may be tempted to discouragement or despair at unfulfilled dreams or their expectations of marriage. They may be tempted to give in to a sense of boredom, "Is this all there is?" Or they may be tempted to withdraw from the needs of family or community, to choose comfort or distractions. Jesus invites us, no matter our age, to find the joy in the challenge and the excitement of living God's dream for us. We can choose the fortitude to seek and trust what God is offering each day, and each moment. Lent gives us an opportunity to deeply renew our prayer so that, like Jesus, we may be strengthened by God's promises. God is ready to open our eyes each day to the deeper gifts in our marriages and families

Jubilant Marriages Prayers of the Faithful: FEBRUARY

01 Married Couples

We pray that God's grace will sustain all married couples, especially grandparents and older couples, that they may courageously and joyfully offer their gifts to the world.

02 Youth & Faith

We pray that God will empower married couples in every season of life to guide children and young adults to choose paths of mercy, justice, and generosity for all in need.

03 Honoring Wisdom Figures

We pray that when the world dismisses those who are aging, that young Catholics will seek the light and wisdom shining through the mature couples, widows, and widowers in their lives.



Matrimony Mindset for FEBRUARY Parish Bulletins:

Copy and paste the following **CONTENT SECTIONS** and **LOGO IMAGE** as a regular feature in the parish bulletin - as often as space allows. These weekly words of inspiration and encouragement are part of the Archdiocese Jubilant Marriages Initiative with the goal to fortify and energize Catholic Married couples to be Holy, Healthy and Happy in every season of life. This month we are encouraging couples to embrace the spiritual works of mercy within their marriage and as something they can do together.



Or use this [LINK](#) for a word document download of the same content.

MATRIMONY MINDSET - FORTITUDE FOR DIFFICULT SEASONS (WEEK #1)

"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

(1 Corinthians 13:7-8)

Marriage Motivation Tip: *In trials—financial stress, health issues, or conflicts—remember your vows are a participation in Christ's unbreakable love for the Church. Lean on God's grace through daily small acts of kindness and forgiveness to build resilience together.*

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, who joined us as one flesh, strengthen our marriage in these difficult days. Grant us the fortitude to bear hardships with patience, to forgive as You forgive, and to trust in Your presence. May our love endure as Your love endures. Amen.*

Couple Conversation Question: *What is one specific challenge we're facing right now, and how can we invite God more intentionally into supporting us through it this week?*

MATRIMONY MINDSET - STRENGTH IN TIMES OF TRANSITION (WEEK #2)

"Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." (Mark 10:9)

Marriage Motivation Tip: *Transitions like job changes, moves, new babies, or health shifts can unsettle your rhythm—use them as opportunities to reaffirm your commitment. Create new shared routines (like nightly prayer) to anchor your unity in Christ amid change.*

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, guide us through this season of change. Help us to hold fast to each other and to You, adapting with faith and charity. Keep our marriage rooted in Your unchanging love as we navigate these new paths. Amen.*

Couple Conversation Question: *How has the current transition affected our daily life together, and what small habit could we start to strengthen our bond during this time?*

MATRIMONY MINDSET - EMPTY NEST SEASON (WEEK #3)

"A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

Marriage Motivation Tip: *With children gone, rediscover your spouse as your primary companion. Invest in date nights, shared hobbies, or ministry together—your marriage, with Christ as the third strand, can flourish in this new freedom.*

Prayer: *Lord, as our home grows quieter, fill our hearts with renewed joy in one another. Help us cherish this season as a gift, growing closer to You and each other in love and service. Strengthen the threefold cord of our marriage. Amen.*

Couple Conversation Question: *What dreams or activities did we set aside while raising our family, and how might we pursue one together now that we have more time?*

MATRIMONY MINDSET - WITH THE LOSS OF A SPOUSE (WEEK #4)

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

Marriage Motivation Tip: *As a widow/er, your sacramental bond endures in prayer and memory—continue offering Masses, in prayer for your spouse's soul, and living virtuously as a witness to your lifelong fidelity. Find support in the Church community and entrust your solitude to God's faithful companionship.*

Prayer: *Eternal God, who joined us in holy matrimony, comfort me in this season of aloneness. Help me carry our love forward through prayer and good works. Grant eternal rest to my spouse, and sustain me with Your presence until we are reunited in heaven. Amen.*

Couple Conversation Question: *(For couples in preparation, or surviving spouse journaling) How can we draw grace and strength from our marriage sacrament even if one of us is called home first?*



Pray

THE JUBILANT MARRIAGES PRAYER WITH YOUR PARISHIONERS

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.

*Prayer Cards are available from
the Office of Marriage & Family Life*



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OF ST. LOUIS