

From “Happy Together”

In *Happy Together: the Catholic Blueprint for a Loving Marriage*, at the end of Chapter 2:

See page 29, LISTEN TO GOD’S STORY. Read the faith stories of married couples that we find in the Bible.

See page 30, REFLECT ON YOUR STORY, for more conversation starters.

Wisdom of Our Catholic Tradition

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us:

“The covenant between the spouses is integrated into God’s covenant with man: ‘Authentic married love is caught up into divine love.’” #1639

*“Therefore a man
leaves his father and his mother
and clings to his wife,
and they become one flesh.”*

Genesis 2:24

The Catholic Church Cares About Your Marriage

The United States Catholic Bishops have launched an initiative in support of marriage. They want to help couples live their vocation and they want to remind society that marriage is a gift and a blessing. To this purpose they have written a pastoral letter:

Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan (Nov. 17, 2009).

Check their website: www.foryourmarriage.org for additional resources designed for couples at all stages of their marriage.

Prepare for your next date by reading Chapters 1 and 2 of *Happy Together: The Catholic Blueprint for a Loving Marriage*.

SIX DATES for Catholic Couples

Date One

Once Upon A Time...

Before You Begin

As you enjoy your time alone together as a couple, look over this booklet and choose one or more of the activities that you find most interesting to the two of you. When you reflect on the questions and share your thoughts with each other you may uncover disagreements. If any of the activities threatens to take the fun out of your date, set it aside and agree to discuss the issue at another time.

Treasure Box

As you make dating a ritual in your marriage we encourage you to capture the good times for the future. Select a special container or “Treasure Box.” In this box place mementos from your dates. You can store love notes, pictures, ticket stubs, etc. Date each item. Years from now you and your children will cherish the memories of the happy moments you created for yourselves through your dates.

“The heart of marriage is memories.”

-Bill Cosby

Memories

Share with each other your memories as you answer these questions.

- ♥ What do you remember about the first time you saw each other? What did you think? What did you feel?
- ♥ Do you remember where you were when you first said: "I love you" to each other?
- ♥ What do you remember most vividly about your wedding? Do you remember what you promised each other on your wedding day?
- ♥ What are some of your most joyful moments together?
- ♥ What are some of the tough times you've experienced together?
- ♥ What are your dreams for the future?

Your Love Story, The Movie

If your love story were a movie, what would its title be?

In the movie of your love story, what events would you like to relive over and over? Describe them and explain why.

If you were the editor of your love story, the movie, what portions of your life together would you like to edit out and retake? Describe these and explain why you would like to change them.

Reflections

- ♥ God said to Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply. Do we see our parenting role as part of our partnership with God? If we are not parents, in what way is our love fruitful?
- ♥ As a couple, what is the role that God calls us to play in his love story?

Our love story is connected to God's love story.

How Are We Doing?

Growing in love requires learning to **Welcome and Accept** each other. This means paying attention to your spouse, showing respect, seeking understanding, and being patient.

You are likely to encounter the situations below. Take turns describing what you do in these situations and how you feel about it.

1. How do you say "goodbye" to each other in the morning when you leave home; and how do you greet each other when one or both of you comes home from work?
2. How does your spouse show patience toward you?
3. How do you welcome your spouse's suggestions and advice?
4. What do you do when you and your spouse have differences of opinions?

Action for This Week

Write down one action each of you will take this week to be more accepting and patient with the other.

Husband

Wife