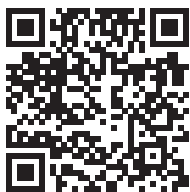




Amoris Laetitia Family
Year 2021 - 2022

Guide n.4

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Love in Marriage

Love in Marriage

1.

Love is...

HOLY FATHER

“You spouses have the gift of the grace of the sacrament that can make you perfect in love... And so let’s discuss this love! **Love is patient, love is kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way, it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right**”.

“Love is experienced and nurtured in the daily life of couples and their children. It is helpful to think more deeply about the meaning of this Pauline text and its relevance for the concrete situation of every family” AL 90.

“To love is also to be gentle and thoughtful (...) love is not rude or impolite; it is not harsh. Its actions, words and gestures are pleasing and not abrasive or rigid. Love abhors making others suffer (...). [Courtesy] is not something that a Christian may accept or reject. As an essential requirement of love, “every human being is bound to live agreeably with those around him” AL 99.

Julie and Gérard

Julie: “On our 17th wedding anniversary, we felt the need to take some time to shed light on the challenging areas of our life as a couple. Guided by a priest, we came out of the experience very enriched. At the end of it, the priest even asked us to pray for him”.

Gérard: “This retreat allowed us to shed light on many challenging areas. One day I was in difficulty because there had been a misunderstanding between us and when there is a misunderstanding, I frown and speak little. Then one morning when I woke up, I saw a gift in my closet, and I remembered that it was my birthday. I remember that I really appreciated it and showed it to the kids. I was just happy and the misunderstanding was gone.”.

“Unless we cultivate patience, we will always find excuses for responding angrily. We will end up incapable of living together, antisocial, unable to control our impulses, and our families will become battlegrounds” AL 92.

“Every day, ‘entering into the life of another, even when that person already has a part to play in our life, demands the sensitivity and restraint which can renew trust and respect” AL 99.



Reflection:

To love means to make gestures of love towards someone and, at the same time, to make ourselves 'lovable' by reflecting on our behavior and making it easy for others to love us.



Within the family:

"Love is..." Pope Francis highlights several characteristics of love. We choose one and make a commitment to try realizing it within our family.



As a community or group:

Let us offer families a time for a 'retreat' so that they can be guided in reexamining their relationships in light of the Hymn to Charity. (1 Cor 13:4-7).



Prayer

Lord, love is patient;
help me to be patient with others.

Lord, love is kind;
help me to always wish for the good of the other person
before my own, even if it costs something.

Lord, love is not jealous;
teach me to rejoice in the success of others.

Lord, love is not pompous;
give me the humility to recognize your gifts.

Lord, love is not boastful;
help me to put others at the center of my concern.

Lord, love is not rude;
help me to see Your face in others.

Lord, love does not seek its own interests;
allow me to savor the joy of giving freely.

Amen

2.

Love is more than a feeling

HOLY FATHER

“Love excuses all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Everything! Anything! It is love in spite of everything. To love means to rejoice for others, for their success. How important it is to teach children to celebrate the joy of others! A birthday, an achievement! Because it is good that the family is the place where joy is celebrated!”

“Throughout the text, it is clear that Paul wants to stress that love is more than a mere feeling. Rather, it should be understood along the lines of the Hebrew verb ‘to love’; it is ‘to do good’. As Saint Ignatius of Loyola said, ‘Love is shown more by deeds than by words’” AL 94.

“‘God loves a cheerful giver’ (2 Cor 9:7), Our Lord especially appreciates those who find joy in the happiness of others. If we fail to learn how to rejoice in the well-being of others, and focus primarily on our own needs, we condemn ourselves to a joyless existence (...). The family must always be a place where, when something good happens to one of its members, they know that others will be there to celebrate it with them” AL 110.

Julie e Gérard

Julie: “There was also another episode. Every morning, upon awakening, the children came to our room to say good morning. One morning, our youngest child, who was six at the time, witnessed this scene: I insisted saying goodbye to dad before going to work. He refused to return the greeting, since he was in a bad mood. Therefore the child looked at us for a moment and then said to me: “Mom, Dad understood that you have to go to work”. Faced with the wisdom of our son, I obeyed and we were reconciled with each other”.

Gerard: “Yes, our children mean a lot to us. Every day, when I come home from work, I greet them and kiss them individually, all four of them”.

“It does not matter if (others) hold me back, if they unsettle my plans, or annoy me by the way they act or think, or if they are not everything I want them to be. Love always has an aspect of deep compassion that leads to accepting the other person as part of this world, even when he or she acts differently than I would like” AL 92.

“Married couples joined by love speak well of each other; they try to show their spouse’s good side, not their weakness and faults...Love does not have to be perfect for us to value it...Love coexists with imperfection. It “bears all things” and can hold its peace before the limitations of the loved one” CfAL 113.



Reflection:

I think of the diversity that exists among the members of our family, how everyone has unique gifts and a different path in life.



Within the family:

I will endeavor to rejoice in the success of others and recognize them with joy. I share with others what I would like to rejoice in today.



As a community or group:

Those who wish can share a characteristic of love, described in the Hymn to Charity, which struck them most and in which they find greater appreciation or difficulty.

Prayer

Lord, love is not quick-tempered;
remove from my lips words that may hurt.

Lord, love does not brood over injury;
give me a loving gaze.

Lord, love does not rejoice over wrongdoing;
open my heart to the needs of my brothers
and sisters.

Lord, love rejoices with the truth;
guide us in our steps towards You.

Lord, give us the joy of feeling loved by You
with a love that forgives all things,
hopes all things, and endures all things.

Only in this way will we be able to desire giving
your Love to every brother and sister.

Amen



3.

The power of love

SANTO PADRE

“It is the power of love that overcomes every threat, that helps us resist and remain strong and dependable. Love allows children to say of their own parents: I know mom and dad will always be there, I can count on them and I can trust their love!”.

“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Here we see clearly the countercultural power of a love that is able to face whatever might threaten it.” AL 111.

“Those who know that they are trusted and appreciated can be open and hide nothing (...). On the other hand, a family marked by loving trust, come what may, helps its members to be themselves and spontaneously to reject deceit, falsehood, and lies” AL 115.





Reflection:

Let us reflect on how the Lord is in my and our family life, a steadfast and dependable presence.



Within the family:

Let us recall together the times when we have trusted one another, when we have been able to admit our own difficulty or to understand with love someone else's difficulty.



As a community or group:

Let us think of something we can do as a community at Sunday Mass so that everyone feels welcomed when they arrive and greeted when they leave.

Prayer

Blessed is the family that walks
in the presence of the Lord.

Blessed is the family based on love,
that thinks, speaks and acts with love.

Blessed is the family that prays together
to praise the Lord, to thank Him,
to entrust Him with every concern,
to ask Him for guidance
in the small and big choices.

Blessed is the family where disagreements
do not become a crisis,
but an opportunity to grow in dialogue,
in respect, in welcome,
in listening, in forgiveness.

Amen

Invitation to read *Amoris Laetitia*

“Love in the Marriage “

Amoris Laetitia, 89-119

Link to the Apostolic Exhortation **AMORIS LAETITIA**



Julie and Gérard with their children



Family Love: Vocation and Path to Holiness

Heavenly Father,

We come before You to praise You
and to thank You for the great gift of the family.
We pray to You for all families
consecrated by the Sacrament of Matrimony.
May they rediscover each day
the grace they have received,
and as small domestic Churches,
may they know how to witness to Your presence
and to the love with which Christ loves the Church.
We pray to You for all families faced with difficulty and suffering
caused by illness or circumstances which only You know.
Sustain them and make them aware
of the path to holiness upon which You call them,
so that they might experience Your infinite mercy
and find new ways to grow in love.
We pray to You for children and young people:
may they encounter You and respond joyfully
to the vocation You have in mind for them;
We pray for parents and grandparents: may they be aware
that they are signs of the fatherhood and motherhood of God
in caring for the children who, in body and spirit, You entrust to them;
and for the experience of fraternity
that the family can give to the world.

Lord, grant that each family
might live their specific vocation to holiness in the Church
as a call to become missionary disciples,
in the service of life and peace,
in communion with our priests, religious,
and all vocations in the Church.

Bless the World Meeting of Families.

Amen.

Official prayer for the *X World Meeting of Families*

22-26 June 2022

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