

The Sacrament of Marriage and Its Graces — Marriage at Cana

New Beginnings

Preparation for Meeting By Presenting Couple

Purpose of Presentation: Using the background ideas from A and B, the purpose of this month's Image talk is to share with our groups how we can become aware of the potential we always have in our marriages for a "new beginning". We must share our own experiences and feelings about some of the low points we've suffered through and how our experiences of Christ in our marriage or the Sacramental nature of our marriage has enabled us to reach a "new start" in our coupleness.

Method: A. Do your written personal reflection and dialog on the following questions.

1. How have I experienced forgiveness, love and understanding in our marriage and how does it make me feel?
2. When have we experienced a "new beginning" in our relationship? How did it make me feel?
3. When I hear the marriage vows repeated, how do I feel? "I, N., take you, N., to be my husband (wife). I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life."
4. How do I feel about being willing to give (to be unselfish) to you?

Select one of these questions for dialoging at your Image meeting and two for phoning to couples in advance.

- B. Using the following outline fit the feelings and experiences you have discovered through your dialog into a workable talk.

The Meeting

Dialog and Sharing Question: See question 1 under method.

Sharing Time: Voluntary sharing of couple experiences and feelings brought out during the dialoging.

Suggested Scripture Reading: 1 John 4: 7-16. Like the couple at Cana we are often unaware of Christ's presence in our marriage, but the results are there if we look for them.

Background Ideas

A. Marriage at Cana

1. The bride and groom at Cana were not aware of the role that Christ played in their lives (John 2: 1-11). Likewise, we in our marriages are often unaware of Christ's presence.
2. Christ's presence at the Cana marriage gave it a special quality — the best wine in abundance. When we can let Christ into our marriages we also have a special quality in our relationships.
3. Christ at the Cana wedding was aware of and responsive to the existing problem.
Are we always aware of Christ?
Are we always aware of being married?

B. Sacrament and Its Graces

1. Sacrament = Christ (God) in our marriage.
2. Sacrament = Continuing growth as individuals and as a couple.
3. God's relationship to man is said to be like the relationships of a man and wife, e.g. concerned and loving, giving.

Outline of Talk

I. Introduction — (2 minutes.)

After explaining that the topic of the talk is "New Beginnings", each spouse tells how he feels about the potential for new beginning in his marriage relationship. How does this potential make you feel? Hopeful? Enthused, doubtful? Why?

II. Body — (15 minutes.)

Each spouse shares one or two instances from his marriage when he had a really difficult time. How did you feel at this time of crisis or conflict? Describe the circumstances and your feelings completely. Then explain how you were able to find a "New beginning" after the low point. How were you able to achieve this "New beginning"? How did you feel about it then? How do you feel about it now?

III. Conclusion — (3 minutes.)

Each spouse shares how he feels about Christ's presence in his marriage (even if unrecognized) making "New beginnings" always possible. Looking back, do you see miracles that Christ (God) has worked in your relationship?

Using your outline, write out your talk.

Remember, the most important part of your talk is you and what you share of yourself and your feelings. If you are open and honest, your talk will be great and the atmosphere will be set for your group's evening of private dialog and group sharing.

Limit your talk to 20 minutes.