



# MARRIAGE

“A friend is a friend at all times.” – PROVERBS 17:17

## OPENING ACTIVITY

### FAMILY OBJECTS

Some things have strong symbolic meaning. For example, a married couple’s wedding rings symbolize love and commitment.

But sometimes ordinary things can have special meaning, too. Your teacher will give the class a few objects. Explain how they symbolize family life.

When explaining, show your knowledge of family life. The more creative your answer, the better!



*In this exercise, a deck of cards could symbolize family life, because families grow closer together while playing games.*

## READING

Read “Louis and Zelig Martin,” and then answer the reflection questions according to your teacher’s directions.

### LOUIS AND ZELIE MARTIN

Louis and Zelig Martin were a married couple who embraced the purpose of marriage very well. So well, in fact, that they both were beatified, which is a major step toward becoming a saint. One of their daughters became a saint – St. Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower!



The point of every vocation (religious life, marriage, or priesthood) is to help people live in happiness with God, and a great marriage like that of Louis and Zelig Martin does that.

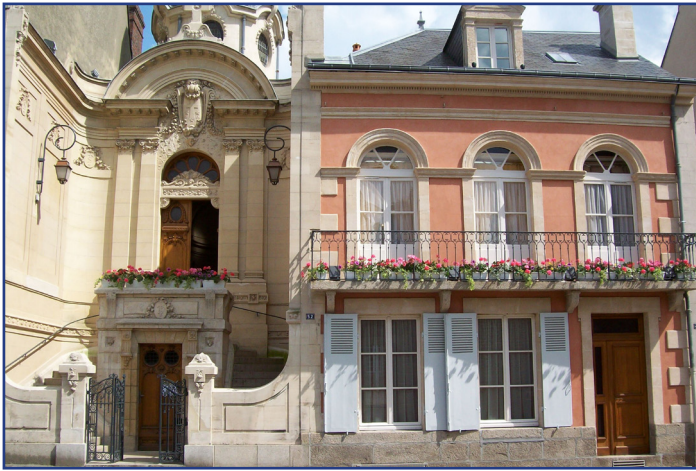
Before they were married, Louis and Zelig Martin were both strong, faith-filled, smart, and hardworking young adults. When they first met, Zelig felt like God whispered to her, “This is the husband I have destined for you.” Zelig was not interested in love at first sight or in fairytales, but her goal in everything was to do the will of God.

Louis was a good-natured man. When the two of them got married, Louis hoped that their friendship would lead them both to become more holy. Zelig wanted lots of children, and God did give them many. They were amazing parents—affectionate but strict, focused on education and discipline but full of warmth, happiness and play. Above all they taught their children the love of Our Lord. Daily prayers were said kneeling before a statue of the Blessed Mother, and many wonderful conversations were had about Jesus. Both Louis and Zelig worked hard for their family. Louis was a watchmaker and Zelig was a very well-known lace maker.



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## READING *continued*



*Home of Bl. Louis and Zélie Martin,  
Birthplace of Saint Thérèse*

*Image courtesy of Pierre-Yves Emile.*

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Even though they were good at so many things, not everything was easy. In fact, four of their nine children died when they were young. The Martins lived during tense political times and sometimes had to have soldiers living in their house with them. Some of these soldiers even stole from them. Most difficult of all, Zélie got cancer and was in great pain often for eight years.

Through all of their trials and joys of marriage, Louis and Zélie embraced the circumstances of life as the will of God and lived it with love and honor. Finally, at the age of 46, Louis Martin's, beloved wife and best friend left this life and went to heaven. Louis continued to raise his five daughters to love and follow God, until, at the age of 63, he died and joined his wife in heaven. In 2008, Louis and Zélie Martin were declared "Blessed" (the last step before being declared saints) by Pope Benedict XVI.

### BE CURIOUS:

1. What is the purpose of marriage?
2. What do you think makes a good parent?
3. What made Zélie and Louis' marriage so great?
4. What are some ways to make God a big part of family?
5. What do you think would be the hardest thing about Louis and Zélie Martin's life?
6. What would be the most exciting?

## EXPLORATION



### SECRET MISSION

Imagine that Louis and Zélie Martin received a secret mission note from the Pope when they were first married. What did this note say? Write it. Your description of the mission needs to show that you understand the purpose of family. Decorate an envelope for the secret mission.

Imagine that your own family received a similar secret mission letter from the Pope. What did this note say? Write it. Your description of the mission needs to show that you understand the purpose of family. Decorate an envelope for the secret mission.



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## VISUAL ART

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The Angelus is a traditional prayer prayed a number of times a day. Oftentimes a bell rings, and people stop what they were doing to pray.

- How does this couple show that they put God first in their life?
- What indication do you have from this scene that the couple helps each other?
- How can you tell that they are humbling themselves before God?
- What kind of a mood do the colors of this painting convey?



*The Angelus*

by Jean-François Millet

## SONG

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### TAKE MY LIFE, AND LET IT BE

Take my life, and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.  
Take my hands, and let them move  
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet and let them be  
Swift and beautiful for Thee.  
Take my voice, and let me sing  
Always, only, for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be  
Filled with messages from Thee.  
Take my silver and my gold;  
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my life, and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.  
Take my heart and let it be  
Dedicated Lord to Thee.



Video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FBvoRwNyB0>

Take my Love, my God I pour  
At thy feet thy treasure store.  
Take myself and I will be  
Ever, only for my King,  
Ever, only for my King.



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## MEDITATIVE PRAYER



*From 1993 World Youth Day*

### CHALLENGE TO YOUTH BY SAINT JOHN PAUL II

“Do not be afraid to go out into the streets and into public places, like the first Apostles who preached Christ and the good news of salvation in the city squares, towns, and villages. This is not time to be ashamed of the Gospel. It is the time to preach it from the rooftops.

“Do not be afraid to break out of comfortable and routine modes of living, in order to take up the challenge of making Christ known in modern “metropolis.” It is you who must go out into the by-roads and invite everyone you meet to the banquet which God has prepared for his people.

“The Gospel must not be kept hidden because of fear or indifference. It is has to be put on a stand so that people may see its light and give praise to the Heavenly Father.”

### PRAY TOGETHER

*Prayer for Generosity  
– St. Ignatius of Loyola*

Lord, teach me to be generous.

Teach me to serve you  
as you deserve,

to give and not to count the cost,

to fight and not to  
heed the wounds,

to toil and not to seek for rest,

to labor and not to ask  
for any reward,

save that of knowing that  
I am doing your will.

AMEN.