

8th Grade: Marriage

OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVE:

To trust in God's plan of complementarity in marriage. To be grateful for my own gender attributes.

MAIN CONCEPTS:

- God established marriage between a man and a woman who both have unique differences.
- The unity of the differences in marriage (man and woman) is what brings forth life through conception and continues to be necessary to the nurturing of that life (the child).
- It is the difference in approach that males and females take which is particularly edifying to a family rather than rigid roles.
- In marriage, the spouses image God's love more fully together than apart.

PLANNING DIRECTIONS:

Choose the components you wish to use given the time you have and the needs of your students.

INTRODUCTION

2 min

Summarize today's theme.

Through these vocation units we hope to become familiar with the four kinds of vocations that God calls people to so that now and later in life you will be able to follow God's call to you. Today's focus is on marriage.

MARRIAGE

"Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." - 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

OPENING ACTIVITY

FAMILY CHRISTMAS CARD

Closely examine the following three paintings. What is going on in each painting? Discuss which would make a good family Christmas card photo. Why or why not?



Scene of Adolfo Pinto's Family by Jose Ferraz de Almeida Júnior



Parental Joy by Kirill Vikentevich Lemokh



Casta Painting: No. 15. From Mestizo and from Indian; Coyote by Miguel Cabrera

VOCATION LESSONS | 8th Grade: Marriage

OPENING PRAYER

2 min

The Bible says:

"Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." - 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

Pray a simple prayer from the heart or:

Thank you, Lord, for love. How can we truly act with love? Only in you, Lord. Enable us to love our families well and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Amen.

OPENING ACTIVITY

10 min

FAMILY CHRISTMAS CARD

1. Display the images of family.
2. Have the students discuss whether or not each picture would make a good family Christmas card photo.
3. Discuss what kind of a message the artist is displaying about family.
4. Vote on which one would make the best Christmas card.

MARRIAGE

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DIFFERENCE MATTERS

1. Read through the reading pages individually, in small groups, or as a class. Note that address from Mother Teresa can be used instead of the collection of quotations, if desired.
2. Use the questions to spark class discussion, or assign students to write answers to the questions.
3. Quiz the students a bit to see if they grasp the concepts. If it is helpful, refer to the Vocation Glossary found at www.vocation-lessons.com/glossary.



MARRIAGE

ESTABLISHING THE CONCEPTS

THE BEAUTY OF MARRIAGE



The following passages focus on men and women, their unique roles, and their complementarity.

“God has created each one of us, every human being, for greater things—to love and to be loved. But why did God make some of us men and others women? Because a woman’s love is one image of the love of God, and a man’s love is another image of God’s love. Both are created to love, but each in a different way. Woman and man complete each other, and together show forth God’s love more fully than either can do it alone.”

- **Blessed Mother Teresa**

“To be pure, to remain pure, can only come at a price, the price of knowing God and loving him enough to do his will. He will always give us the strength we need to keep purity as something as beautiful for him.”

- **Blessed Mother Teresa**

“Today marriage tends to be viewed as a form of mere emotional satisfaction that can be constructed in any way or modified at will. Unfortunately this vision also influences the mentality of Christians, promoting a tendency toward divorce or separation.”

- **Pope Francis**

“Dear young people, don’t be afraid to marry. A faithful and fruitful marriage will bring you happiness.”

- **Pope Francis**

“It takes three to make love, not two: you, your spouse, and God. Without God people only succeed in bringing out the worst in one another. Lovers who have nothing else to do but love each other soon find there is nothing else. Without a central loyalty life is unfinished.”

- **Fulton J. Sheen, *Seven Words of Jesus and Mary: Lessons from Cana and Calvary***

“When a man loves a woman, he has to become worthy of her. The higher her virtue, the more noble her character, the more devoted she is to truth, justice, goodness, the more a man has to aspire to be worthy of her.”

- **Fulton J. Sheen, *Life Is Worth Living***

“Our hearts were made for You, O Lord, and they are restless until they rest in you.”

- **St. Augustine**

“Lust indulged became habit, and habit unresisted became necessity.”

- **St. Augustine**

“Those whose hearts are pure are the temples of the Holy Spirit!”

- **St. Lucy**

“Don’t you long to shout to those youths who are bustling around you: Fools! Leave those worldly things that shackle the heart and very often degrade it. Leave all that and come with us in search of Love!”

- **St. Josemaria Escriva**

“Don’t say, ‘That’s the way I am—it’s my character.’ It’s your lack of character. *Esto vir!*—Be a man!

- **St. Josemaria Escriva**

From Mother Teresa's address to the
World Conference on Women in
Beijing, 1995



MARRIAGE

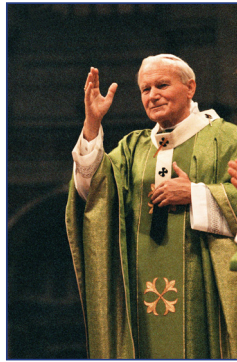
ESTABLISHING THE CONCEPTS, *continued*

"Deep within yourself, listen to your conscience which calls you to be pure... a home is not warmed by the fire of pleasure which burns quickly like a pile of withered grass. Passing encounters are only a caricature of love; they injure hearts and mock God's plan."

- St. Pope John Paul II

"Real love is demanding. I would fail in my mission if I did not tell you so. Love demands a personal commitment to the will of God."

- St. Pope John Paul II



Before he became pope, St. John Paul II wrote a famous book about sexuality and marriage called "Love and Responsibility."

Be Curious

- In your own words, what is the main message of these quotations, taken as a whole?
- Why does focusing on emotional satisfaction tend toward divorce?
- What does a friendship look like that is not focused on emotional satisfaction?
- What does a restless heart look like? How does one find rest in God?
- What are some of the common "worldly things that shackle the heart"?
- What is purity?
- What does it mean to be a temple of the Holy Spirit?
- If someone hopes for a good marriage in the future, what kind of personal commitment to the will of God could an 8th grader make now?

ESTABLISHING THE CONCEPTS,
Alternative Reading

From Mother Teresa's address to the World Conference on
Women in Beijing, 1995

Dear Friends,

I am praying for God's blessing on all who are taking part in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. I hope that this Conference will help everyone to know, love, and respect the special place of women in God's plan so that they may fulfill this plan in their lives.



Blessed Teresa of Calcutta
NEW DELHI, INDIA: (FILES) This undated photo shows Mother Teresa. Mother Teresa will be beatified, 19 October 2003, in a ceremony in St Peter's Square, Vatican. The beatification ceremony is the penultimate step to being canonised a saint and has been the shortest in modern history. Following the beatification, a second miracle has to be verified by the Vatican before Mother Teresa can be proclaimed a saint. AFP PHOTO (Photo credit should read RAVEENDRAN/AFP/Getty Images)

I do not understand why some people are saying that women and men are exactly the same, and are denying the beautiful differences between men and women. All God's gifts are good, but they are not all the same. As I often say to people who tell me that they would like to serve the poor as I do, "What I can do, you cannot. What you can do, I cannot. But together we can do something beautiful for God." It is just this way with the differences between women and men.

God has created each one of us, every human being, for greater things— to love and to be loved. But why did God make some of us men and others women? Because a woman's love is one image of the love of God, and a man's love is another image of God's love. Both are created to love, but each in a different way. Woman and man complete each other, and together show forth God's love more fully than either can do it alone.

That special power of loving that belongs to a woman is seen most clearly when she becomes a mother. Motherhood is the gift of God to women. How grateful we must be to God for this wonderful gift that brings such joy to the whole world, women and men alike!

EXPLORATION

15 min

A WORLD WITHOUT CHILDREN

1. Have the students consider the plot of P.D. James' futuristic novel *Children of Men*: In a not-too-distant future, for some unknown reason, men and/or women have become infertile.
2. Consider what the world would be like if we lost the gift of children. Have the students write for 8 minutes on this.
3. Discuss a world without children and the gift of God in being able to participate in creating life.



MARRIAGE

ESTABLISHING THE CONCEPTS, Alternative Reading, *continued*

Yet we can destroy this gift of motherhood, especially by the evil of abortion, but also be thinking that other things like jobs or positions are more important than loving, than giving oneself to others. No job, no plans, no possessions, no idea of "freedom" can take the place of love. So anything that destroys God's gift of motherhood destroys His most precious gift to women— the ability to love as a woman.

God told us, "Love your neighbor as yourself." So first I am to love myself rightly, and then to love my neighbor like that. But how can I love myself unless I accept myself as God has made me? Those who deny the beautiful differences between men and women are not accepting themselves as God has made them, and so cannot love the neighbor. They will only bring division, unhappiness, and destruction of peace to the world. For example, as I have often said, abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace in the world today, and those who want to make women and men the same are all in favor of abortion.

Instead of death and sorrow, let us bring peace and joy to the world. To do this we must beg God for His gift of peace and learn to love and accept each other as brothers and sisters, children of God. We know that the best place for children to learn how to love and to pray is in the family, by seeing the love and prayer of their mother and father. When families are broken or disunited, many children grow up not knowing how to love and pray. A country where many families have been

destroyed like this will have many problems. I have often seen, especially in the rich countries, how children turn to drugs or other things to escape feeling unloved and rejected.

But when families are strong and united, children can see God's special love in the love of their father and mother and can grow to make their country a loving and prayerful place. The child is God's best gift to the family and needs both mother and father because each one shows God's love in a special way. The family that prays together stays together, and if they stay together they will love one another as God has loved each one of them. And works of love are always works of peace.

So let us keep the joy of loving in our hearts and share this joy with all we meet. My prayer for all of the delegates, and for every woman whom the Beijing Conference is trying to help, is that each one may be humble and pure like Mary so as to live in love and peace with one another and make our families and our world something beautiful for God.

Let us pray.

All for the glory of God and good of souls.

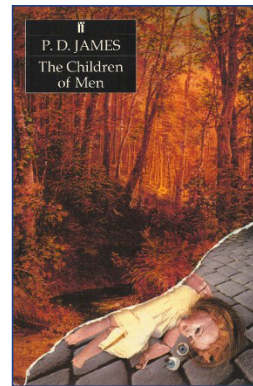
God bless you.

Mother Teresa, MC

EXPLORATION

A WORLD WITHOUT CHILDREN

1. The novel *Children of Men*, by P.D. James, is set in the not-too-distant future, when for some unknown reason, men and/or women have become infertile.
2. Consider what would happen in the world if men and women lost the gift of having children. Write three paragraphs describing what the world would be like.
3. Prepare to share with the class what you write.



VOCATION LESSONS | 8th Grade: Marriage



REFLECTIVE PRAYER

5 min

PRAYER FOR MY FUTURE FRIENDS

Have the students write a prayer for a future companion in one of the vocations.

Optional: direct the students to pray the prayer privately for one week.

VOCAL PRAYER

3 min

MAGNIFICAT

1. If you have not already introduced the Magnificat, explain it to them.

Priests and consecrated religious pray the Liturgy of the Hours throughout the day. Besides many psalms, the Liturgy of the Hours also has prayers and other scripture readings. Canticles are prayers within Scripture. The prayer we have here, called the Cantic of Mary, is prayed every evening. When Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth and both women were pregnant, it became very obvious that God was powerfully at work; Mary quoted a poem of Hannah's from the Old Testament, giving thanks to God for her son. This Cantic reminds those who pray the Divine Office of Our Lady and is a beloved transition from the work of the day into night. It is always followed by the Glory Be.

2. Students pray the vocation prayer: *Magnificat.*



MARRIAGE

REFLECTIVE PRAYER

PRAYER FOR MY FUTURE COMPANION(S)

You may be called to marriage, religious life, priesthood, or the single life. All of you are called to community. This is an opportunity to pray for the person or people who will be closest to you in your vocation. You can pray for them right now even though it is likely you have not even met them yet.

You can choose to write a prayer for your future spouse, a future spiritual director, a brother or sister in the religious life, your bishop if you become a priest, or your closest friends in your single life. Whatever you chose, make it a prayer.



VOCAL PRAYER

The Magnificat

My soul proclaims
the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor
on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations
will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty
from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help
of his servant Israel
for he remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be forever.
AMEN.