

THEME 4: SACRAMENT OF CHRIST'S LOVE

Relationship to Lived Experience

Reflection

She felt that the world was crashing around her when she learned of her husband's affair. Still, she was determined to fight for her marriage, and he wanted desperately to heal what he had damaged. Popular wisdom was not on their side, and people let her know it, too. After tears and late-night talks, some angry exchanges, and lots of counseling and prayer, she and her husband reconciled. She would say it was faith that made the difference, but mostly they don't explain their decision to others. They just say, "We're married." That was ten years ago, and new friends would never guess what they went through. Most couples will not be so severely tested, but a failure to be forgiving can make even small faults—leaving the cap off the toothpaste, poor hygiene, or weak cooking skills—destructive to a marriage.

Discussion Questions

1. During the course of their marriage, many couples will experience at least one major challenge that threatens to break up the marriage. Besides infidelity, examples include an addiction to drugs, alcohol, or pornography; domestic abuse; and serious financial mismanagement. How could a Christian respond when a friend or family member is experiencing difficulty in marriage? How have you responded in such a situation?
2. What are some of the joyful things about being married? What are some of the challenges? Can something be both joyful and challenging?
3. How can the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage sustain couples in difficult times?
4. How did you learn about the importance of being married in the Church? How could religious education of children and youth about Christian marriage be improved?

Journaling Questions

1. One way that I could be more giving toward my spouse is _____. Here's how I will do it . . .
2. A difficulty I am dealing with now in my marriage is _____. With whom will I talk about this?
3. How has the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage sustained you in difficult times?
4. Read one of the articles on "For Every Marriage" or the "Marriage Rx" at www.foryourmarriage.org. What new ideas did you gain for your marriage?