

**Love is Our Mission**  
**The Family Fully Alive**  
**Grades 7-9 Lesson**



**Goal:**

Marriage numbers are decreasing around the world. And, there is much confusion about the nature of marriage and why people even ought to get married. Students will explore the benefits of marriage for individuals and society and learn how to have a successful marriage.

**Lesson:**

*The topic of marriage has been highly politicized in our culture in recent years, resulting in a great deal of confusion. Add to that the reality that so many children live in homes with unmarried parents or divorce parents or only one parent, and we are often left believing that it is better to not teach about the reality of marriage rather than offend any student.*

*Actually, the opposite is true. By teaching the truth of marriage—a loving, permanent commitment between a man and a woman to each other and any children they may have—we allow students to realize that God did intend something special for us; that we are made for and capable of lasting, authentic love; and that even if they do not have this example at home, they can still aspire to it as adults. Rather than offending, this teaching is liberating.*

**Watch:**

“What is Marriage” video from Jason Everett gives an overview of Catholic teaching on marriage. He states that this image of marriage he presents may not be what you are used to seeing at home or in the “real world”? Why is that? He also states that what you have seen does not mean that is all there is to marriage. He claims that each person is designed to desire total, self-sacrificial love. What does that mean? Do we have examples of that?

“Marriage and Family” and “Marriage and Baby” share the experiences of Jackie and Bobby, the couple whose wedding we saw in “What is Marriage”. They talk about the everyday challenges in marriage. From what you see in the videos, what do you think is the greatest challenge in marriage? How can you overcome this challenge? What brings the greatest joy in marriage? How can you work to have more of those joy-filled moments?

“Beloved” shares stories from married couples about their lives together. And, it asks fundamental questions about human nature. Do we all have an innate desire for lasting love? How does our desire for human love reflect our desire for God’s love? What does faith and religion have to do with romance and marriage? *(This video is a bit more academic than those above.)*

**Activity:**

“3 Queens” provides a look at the great vocation of motherhood from the perspective of their kids.

“The Importance of Fathers” discusses the role of fathers and what happens when they are absent.

The inherent connection between marriage and children has been lost in our culture. But, since the beginning of culture, one of the main reasons that people married, and definitely the only reason the state was involved, was to make sure that both the mother and the father of the children stayed together and stayed with the children.

Ask students to write a definition of marriage that includes not only the interests and benefits of the husband and wife, but also the responsibility toward any children they may have. Is there one definition in the class that everyone can agree on? Now compare that definition with the one given in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1601. Are they close?

**Pray:**

## Prayer for World Meeting of Families

God and Father of us all,  
in Jesus, your Son and our Savior,  
you have made us your sons and daughters  
in the family of the Church.  
May your grace and love  
help our families  
in every part of the world  
be united to one another  
in fidelity to the Gospel.  
May the example of the Holy Family,  
with the aid of your Holy Spirit,  
guide all families, especially those most troubled,  
to be homes of communion and prayer  
and to always seek your truth and live in your love.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.  
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!

