

Leader:

O God, we thank you for the gift of marriage
and for your presence in our lives.

On our wedding day we embraced each other
and together we embraced you as our partner
in our marriage dance.

Today, we ask you to help us listen to your music
so that we can dance with you to its rhythm
and together find joy in your presence.

Pause

Leader:

Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us:

All: Our Father, . . . Amen. +

Key Messages of Session Two

Spouses are imperfect people who, like dancers, sometimes step on each other's toes, lose the rhythm of the dance, or don't feel like dancing. Marriage is not immune to suffering. "Blessed are those who mourn" (Matthew 5:4). With this Beatitude Jesus invites us to embrace our humanness and our discomfort, and to turn to God for consolation.

Jesus also said, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake" (Matthew 5:10). Christian spouses may find comfort in the words of Jesus when pressured to conform to social values that are contrary to the Gospel.

Opening Prayer - Session Two

The **BEATITUDES:** A Couple's Path to Greater Joy

Your Marriage is a Dance

Begin the prayer with the following or similar words.

Leader:

The theme for this session is that
our marriage is a dance.

Let us quiet our minds and open our hearts
and take a moment to remind ourselves
that we are in God's presence.

Pause

+ In the name of the Father . . .

**All: We thank you, O God, for all the gifts
you have given us this day.
We thank you especially for our spouse
and for the gift that we are to each other.**

**As we prepare to enjoy this time together
we ask you to help us be aware of your
presence in our lives,
and help us to listen to your voice.**

Leader: *Reflection*

Our marriage is a dance,
and we are imperfect dancers.

Sometimes we step on each other's toes,
sometimes we lose the rhythm of the dance,
and sometimes we do not feel like dancing.

Jesus proclaimed:

"Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted," and
"Blessed are those who are
persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Marriage is not immune to suffering.
Disappointments, conflicts, and
misunderstandings are unavoidable.
At the same time marriage and family are
at the center of today's war of values and
each one of us is called to choose a side.

Marriage is a dance. Even though we
are imperfect dancers Christ is with us.
He stands by us to transform our
weaknesses into strengths.

He is the Good Shepherd
who leads us and cares for us.

Pause

Leader: Let us pray together Psalm 23.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.**

**Even though I walk through
the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff –
they comfort me.**

**You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy
shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.**

Psalm 23: 1– 6

Pause