

Leader:

O God,
you know our desire to be happy together.
You also know our tendency
to be self-centered
and unaware of each other's needs.

Help us grow in awareness of each other.
Help us remember that we are merciful
when we give our spouse what he/she truly needs.

Pause

Leader:

Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us:

All: Our Father, . . . Amen. +

Key Messages of Session Five

"Home is where the heart is," and marriage is a couple's home. Home is where we find understanding and compassion. Jesus preached, "Blessed are the merciful" (Matthew 5:7).

Compassion is the quality that leads spouses to put into practice Jesus' call to mercifulness. Being merciful starts with becoming aware of each other's needs and helping each other meet those needs. Through compassion we make our marriage our home.

Opening Prayer - Session Five

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

*Your Marriage
is Your Home*

Begin the prayer with the following or similar words.

Leader:

The theme for this session is that
our marriage is our home.

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*

On our wedding day we dreamed
of a making our life together our home,
the place where we wanted to be
more than anywhere else.

That dream gave us joy.
Jesus is telling us that to find
that joy we need to learn
to be merciful toward one another.
He said: "Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy."

Mercy is compassion.
When we show compassion
towards our spouse, our marriage
becomes a comfortable home,
the place where we and our children
taste the goodness of God's mercy.

Then the warmth of our love radiates
and everyone around us is touched
by God's mercy and compassion.
"Blessed are the merciful."

Pause

Leader:

Let us pray together the prayer of St. Francis.

All: **Lord, make me an instrument
of your peace,
Where there is hatred,
let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy;**

**O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying
that we are born to eternal life.**

Prayer of Saint Francis

Pause