

From "Happy Together"

In **Happy Together: the Catholic Blueprint for a Loving Marriage**, at the end of Chapters 5 to 10:

See pages 71, 87, 100, 115, 127, and 141, LISTEN TO GOD'S STORY. Read the Scripture passages and hear how God teaches us to love each other.

See pages 71, 87, 100, 115, 127, and 141, REFLECT ON YOUR STORY, for more conversation starters.

Wisdom of Our Catholic Tradition

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us:

"By its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory." #1652

"Parents are the principal and first educators of their children. In this sense the fundamental task of marriage and family is to be at the service of life." #1653

"... and live in love, as Christ loved us ... "

Ephesians 5:2

The Catholic Church Cares About Your Marriage

*In 2005 the United States Catholic Bishops launched an initiative in support of marriage. They want to help couples live their vocation and they want to remind society that marriage is a gift and a blessing. Their pastoral letter: **Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan** (Nov. 2009) is available for free at USCCB.org. They offer additional resources designed for couples at all stages of their marriage at: foryourmarriage.org and portumatrimonio.org.*

Prepare for your next date by reading Chapter 11 of **Happy Together: The Catholic Blueprint for a Loving Marriage**.

SIX DATES for Catholic Couples

Date Five

The Blueprint of Love

Before You Begin

As you enjoy your time alone together as a couple, look over this booklet and choose one or more of the activities that you find most interesting to the two of you. When you reflect on the questions and share your thoughts with each other you may uncover disagreements. If any of the activities threatens to take the fun out of your date, set it aside and agree to discuss the issue at another time.

Memories

Share with each other your memories as you answer these questions.

- ♥ Recall a time when your spouse has stood by you.
- ♥ Recall a time when your spouse has comforted you.
- ♥ Recall the sacrifices your spouse has made to help you and to support you.
- ♥ Recall the sacrifices you have made for the relationship and the family.

Reflections

Below are the behaviors and attitudes that make up **the Blueprint for a Loving Marriage**. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being low and 10 being high) how would you rate yourself on the qualities listed? Place your rating in the box next to each one.

Six Qualities For a Loving Marriage	Behaviors and Attitudes	Me
ACCEPTANCE	I am patient with my spouse.	
	I accept the person that my spouse is.	
COMMITMENT	I am attentive toward my spouse.	
	I keep my commitments toward my spouse.	
SACRIFICE	I am interested in what my spouse needs and wants.	
	I accommodate my spouse.	
FORGIVENESS	I do not hold grudges.	
	I admit my shortcomings.	
HEALING	I listen without interrupting my spouse.	
	I comfort my spouse with touch and affirmations.	
SERVICE	I carry out my household and parenting responsibilities.	
	I volunteer in the community.	

How Are We Doing?

Growing in love requires learning to **Give Comfort** to each other. This requires showing empathy towards your spouse. It is giving verbal and physical comfort when your spouse is under stress or is ill.

You are likely to encounter the situations below. Take turns describing what you do in these situations and how you feel about it.

1. What do you do to comfort your spouse when he/she feels anxious?

2. What do you do when you want to receive comfort from your spouse?
3. What do you do when your spouse is sick and needs your help?
4. What do you do when you notice that your spouse is upset with you?
5. What do you do to help each other with childcare duties?

Action for This Week

Write down one action each of you will take to help the other cope with the stresses of life this week.

Husband	Wife

*Christ's love for the Church
is the Blueprint of Love.
Learning to love like Christ
is the source of our happiness.*

Simple Acts You Can Do Today

In **Happy Together: the Catholic Blueprint for a Loving Marriage**, find SIMPLE ACTS YOU CAN DO TODAY on pages 71, 86, 100, 114, 126, and 141. Take turns reading each section to each other. Discuss the acts you would like to incorporate in your marriage to improve your relationship.