

March 2, 2025



Celebrating Marriage and Family



www.radiatelove.info



What is Radiate Love?

Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding, turning water into fine wine, because he believes marriage is beautiful and worth celebrating. The love of husbands and wives images the love between Jesus and his Church, as both spouses are called to lay down their lives for the other and their children.

Under the title “Radiate Love,” the bishops of California invite every Catholic to celebrate the beauty and goodness of marriage and family. We invite all families to radiate their love to the world—parents, grandparents, children, spouses, sisters, and brothers. This initiative will include monthly reflections, prayers, videos, and other materials to help families become witnesses of God’s love. Find out more at www.radiatelove.info.

Theme for March 2, 2025 Humble Pie

- Radiate Love – A Prayer for Marriage
- Intercessions and Blessing after Communion
- Homiletic Guide
- Bulletin Insert
- Bulletin Announcement
- Social Media Posts
- Recommendations for Parish Ministries and Families



An Initiative by the Bishops of California



RADIATE LOVE **A PRAYER FOR MARRIAGE**

Heavenly Father,

We praise you and thank you for your great gift
of the Sacrament of Marriage.

Help all married couples witness to its beauty
through a life of love, joy, patience,
and generous self-giving.

Help families to exercise faithfulness and mercy,
to be one in heart, mind, and body,
accepting children lovingly as gifts from you.

When family life presents challenges
or is lacking in peace and understanding,
teach us the beauty of forgiveness
and bearing one another's burdens.

Strengthen our love so that it endures not only through
the triumphs but also through the heartbreaks of married life.
And bless our homes and our families so that others will see
your generosity and faithfulness guiding our lives.

Deepen our communion at home and with the Church,
so that we may radiate love as a living sign of everlasting hope.

We ask these blessings in the name of Jesus, our Lord.

Amen.



"Celebrating Marriage and Family"

radiatelove.info



Intercessions and Blessing for the Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time – March 2, 2025

General Intercessions

For all who are impacted by mental health challenges, that God may bless them with his grace and consolation, and that Catholics everywhere will accompany and support them by promoting mental and spiritual wellness. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all families, that through their love and generosity with each other, they may foster vocations to the priesthood, religious life, marriage, and lay ecclesial ministry. Let us pray to the Lord.

For married couples, that Christ may lead them to understand the gifts of sacrifice and forgiveness as they grow in their love for each other. Let us pray to the Lord.

Prayer for Vocations

After reciting the Prayer after Communion, invite everyone to stand and offer the following prayer together:

Loving God,
You speak to us and nourish us through the life of this Church community.

In the name of Jesus, we ask you to send your Spirit to us so that men and women among us, young and old, will respond to your call to service and leadership in the Church.

We pray especially, in our day, for those who hear your invitation to be a priest, consecrated religious, or to marriage.

May those who are opening their hearts and minds to your call be encouraged and strengthened through our enthusiasm in your service.
Amen.



Homiletic Guide – Humble Pie

March 2, 2025 – The Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Sirach 27:4-7 – The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 92 – Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:54-58 – In the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Gospel: Luke 6:39-45 – Remove the beam from your own eye before addressing the splinter in your brother's. Every tree is known by its fruit; a good person produces good fruit.

The following notes are provided as a leadoff for your reflection—it is not necessary to address every bullet point in your homily. With that in mind, here are some thoughts to ponder:

- **Marriage requires investing time and effort to sustain the relationship while overcoming together a lifetime of whatever challenges may come.**
 - Both the first reading (Sirach 27:6) and the Gospel (Luke 6:43-45) speak about how the quality of a tree is known by the fruit it produces. The first reading is especially insightful: “The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had.”
 - Investing time and effort in one's marriage is essential to reap the benefit of a “marriage tree” that continually produces the best fruit. The ways to invest are no great secret: attentive listening, quality time or date nights, empathy, acts of loving kindness and affection, mutual service, praying with and for each other, making plans together, affirmation, and sharing your inner world with each other.
 - In the face of adversity, a healthy tree bends and grows in new ways. So, too, a healthy marriage, where the strength of each person, rooted in mutual vulnerability and respect, builds a life and love that can endure the test of time.



- **Note:** If you are a married deacon, you might consider giving a personal witness about how the virtue of forgiveness has matured in you and your spouse through the course of your married life. But do not dwell on specific actions you or your spouse took that required forgiveness—this is neither a confession nor a trial. Also be sure the focus is on Christ’s love, not your own virtue. Don’t forget to get permission from family members if you intend to share any details about them.
- **Catholic spouses and parents are called to be a light of love, forgiveness, and good counsel for their families. It takes humility and perseverance, with God’s help and mutual correction, to develop the skills and virtues of married life and parenting.**
 - Human pride makes it difficult to receive feedback on the things we have not done well, especially in important relationships where the stakes are high. Jesus offers wise counsel to humbly recognize our own shortcomings as the starting point for any conversation about the other’s imperfections (Luke 6:41-42).
 - Even though “mutual correction” conversations can be hard, they get easier with practice! When done well—grounded in the unconditional love and forgiveness of Christ, with the follow-through of trying to do better—they serve to build trust and intimacy. “When fully trained, every disciple will be like his teacher.” (Luke 6:40)
 - Similarly, parents must recognize that ignoring or glossing over the inappropriate behavior of their children is not doing them any favors. Just like adults, they need both correction in love and forgiveness when they mess up.
 - St. Paul’s words in the second reading are encouraging to parents: “Be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)





- **God desires for every marriage to flourish and grow in love. Through the Sacrament of Marriage, couples unite their personal hopes and dreams with God’s desire for them.**
 - Made in the image and likeness of God, every human being was created in love, by love, and for love. Because of this, our greatest fulfillment in life comes from loving as God loves—definitively, unconditionally, faithfully, and fruitfully—whether in marriage, consecrated life, or ordained ministry.
 - While not all people are called to marriage, those who are do best when they honor God’s call to love—and forgive—as He does, exemplified by Christ’s love for us. Yet in our fallen nature, we tend to place conditions and limitations on our initial commitment—usually to our own detriment or that of our family.
 - On the contrary, the Psalm today says, “They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.” (Psalm 92:14) By planting our relationship firmly in the Lord’s house through the grace of sacramental marriage, God supplies what we need to return time and again to restore our covenant relationship in the image of His love.
 - This sacramental grace is real, and it shows—married Catholics in the U.S. are 30% less likely to experience divorce than their peers in other Christian denominations (General Social Survey, 2016-2022), and the more we live sacramental lives through the Eucharist and Reconciliation, the better we do!
- The ***Radiate Love Marriage Initiative***
 - The Catholic Church throughout California is progressing along the year-long Radiate Love initiative to deepen our appreciation for the gift of Marriage.
 - Highlight any activities that the parish will be sponsoring in the coming months. **Emphasize that all are invited to explore the monthly resources on the website**, especially those for marriage enrichment or designed for faith sharing at home.



Note for homilists:

This Homiletic Guide is intended to help you encourage your people to invest in their marital relationship, share the faith with their children, and open their hearts to recognize the ways the Lord is leading them to radiate love out to the world, especially through the witness of a sacramental marriage that radiates the covenant love God has for His people. The [Marriage Fact Sheet 2024](#) offers some important background information for your review, but not necessarily to include in your homily. The social trends regarding marriage in California are not great right now, but it is important to be positive, practical, and personal.

This Homiletic Guide is one resource among many others designed for your parish ministries or your parishioners' home use. You may want to take some time to familiarize yourself with the [resources for March](#) (bulletin insert or announcement, prayer card, blessing, intercessions, videos, etc.) on the Radiate Love website: www.radiatelove.info. In particular, be sure to make use of the [Intercessory Prayers](#) and the [Blessing after Communion](#) at all weekend Masses.





Every marriage relationship goes through stages and seasons, and every couple has to find their own way to navigate the storms that may come. Before the storms start, virtuous habits help form the foundation for love and care in any family. Pope Francis says that alongside please and thank you, an essential phrase for family life is “I’m sorry.” Owning our mistakes and trying to do better is hard, but it gets easier with God’s help and by forming the habit of forgiveness.

Family life teaches us humility, awareness of our failings, and the things we all need to work on, such as communication, affection, empathy, and prioritizing each other’s needs. Knowing when and how to employ these virtues takes time and practice, with a willingness to forgive and encourage when mistakes are made. Jesus reminds us to eat humble pie whenever necessary: “Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother’s eye.”

Jesus goes on to say that every tree is known by the fruit it produces. In His divine wisdom, God invites couples to deepen their roots, prune the dead branches, and grow through any rocky ground to produce the best fruit. Mutual vulnerability and respect amid differences are the keys to a more profound and enduring love. When the moment arrives to humbly give and receive forgiveness, the Holy Spirit pours out grace on our will so we can grow in holiness and love. Healthy role models and companion couples give witness on how to live humbly and mercifully, and the Church stands ready with a variety of [ministries and resources](#) to help you grow together. In this jubilee year of hope, don’t hesitate to take advantage!

“Neither spouse can expect the other to be perfect. Each must set aside all illusions and accept the other as he or she actually is: an unfinished product, needing to grow, a work in progress.”

Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia, 218

Servant of God [Chiara Corbella Petrillo](#)

Chiara Corbella, born January 9, 1984, in Rome, Italy, met her husband Enrico on a pilgrimage, and both were active in the charismatic renewal. When their first two children, Maria and Davide, were diagnosed with life-limiting conditions in utero, Chiara and Enrico chose to carry and cherish them for the duration of their short lives. Both passed shortly after birth. Chiara spoke about her experience of welcoming her children at pro-life events, and the gift of their lives.

During her third pregnancy, Chiara was diagnosed with terminal cancer. She chose treatments that would protect both her and her unborn son, Francesco, who was born healthy. Despite her illness, Chiara radiated joy and faith. In fact, [this picture](#) was taken just days after her terminal diagnosis. She passed away on June 13, 2012. Chiara is an outstanding example of hope and trust in the promise of the resurrection.

Reflection question for couples: Heroic love like Servant of God Chiara is never just a spontaneous choice—it is the fruit of a lifetime of practice. What are some specific ways you can love each other better this week?

Reflection question for families: Human life is God’s most precious gift to us! What are some of the things you most appreciate about the gift of having each other as a family?

Scan to Learn More!



Downloadable Files



Prayer Card

[English](#) | [Spanish](#)



Bulletin Insert

[Download Here](#)



Additional Resources

If your parish is unable to print and enclose a bulletin insert this weekend, consider sending it as a parish email or FlockNote, or simply add the following announcement within the bulletin itself:

Bulletin Announcement

Humble Pie

In His divine wisdom, God invites couples to deepen their roots, prune the dead branches, and grow through any rocky ground to produce the best fruit. Mutual vulnerability and respect amid differences are the keys to a more profound and enduring love. When the moment arrives to humbly give and receive forgiveness, the Holy Spirit pours out grace on our will so we can grow in holiness and love. Learn more and share the Good News about marriage and family life at: www.radiatelove.info



www.radiatelove.info

Social Media Post

“The family is, so to speak, the domestic Church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children.” – Second Vatican Council Lumen Gentium #RadiateLove

When the moment arrives to humbly give and receive forgiveness, the Holy Spirit pours out grace on our will so we can grow in holiness and love.
#RadiateLove





Recommendations for Parish Ministries and Families

Humble Pie – March 2, 2025

For Parish Pastoral Leaders

The major themes that flow from the readings this weekend include:

- Just as a tree shows through its fruit the care it has received (Sirach 27:6), marriage requires investing time and effort to sustain the relationship through the challenges of life. A committed love can overcome great obstacles and hardships, be they economic, spiritual, emotional, or related to children or health. When guidance or a positive role-model is needed to get through a difficulty, the Church stands ready to assist.
- “They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.” (Psalm 92:14) Sacramental marriages have been planted in the house of the Lord, and it is God’s desire that they all flourish. It takes time and effort, and it really makes a difference—active Catholics in the U.S. are 30% less likely to experience divorce than their peers in other Christian denominations!
- The mission of Catholic parents is to raise their children in the love of Christ, a path of holiness and generosity. Ignoring or glossing over their children’s inappropriate behavior does not help them—they need correction in love, as difficult as it may be. St. Paul’s words are encouraging to parents: “Be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)
- Similarly, the Gospel encourages both the husband and wife to look to Christ as their master: “when fully trained, every disciple will be like his teacher.” (Luke 6:40) Jesus calls them to humbly recognize their own shortcomings as the starting point for any conversation about the other’s imperfections. Thus, when they mutually speak words of correction, they will not come across as self-righteous or paternalistic but rather humbly offering an invitation to better care for one another.





Sample ideas for parish programs and activities:

- The Radiate Love website has identified numerous Catholic organizations and resources that can support couples and families to overcome some of the challenges they may face. Some groups also provide strategies for parishes to implement a comprehensive ongoing accompaniment that addresses a variety of needs systematically. The theme for this month provides an opportunity to review how well those resources are being made available, and also to do some promotion within the parish.
- Since the pandemic, loneliness and depression have increased among all age groups, affecting not only those who are single but also married couples. Furthermore, mental illness in one's spouse, child, or parent can be a heavy burden to bear. The USCCB has developed a National Mental Health Campaign including a Novena and recorded roundtable discussions with bishops and experts. Consider including a bulletin announcement about this topic or make flyers available to parishioners.
- As a separate concern, violence and abuse have no place whatsoever in a covenant relationship modeled on God's love. Tragically, they remain a common experience for many couples and families. This would be a great time for the parish pastoral staff to watch and discuss the webinar series on Best Practices to Support Families Impacted by Intimate Partner Violence and other resources from Catholics for Family Peace.





For Parish Catechetical Leaders (PCLs) and K-8 Catechists

Catechists and parents should be encouraged to deepen their understanding of the way God calls people in marriage to nurture the holiness and well-being of their spouse and children.

- PCLs: when you communicate with the parents and families you serve this month:
 - Share with them the parish or diocese's social media, reminding them that married love is a call to form a domestic church, where encouragement and forgiveness characterize the experience of mutual correction in love.
 - Encourage them to make time this month to share and discuss the monthly reflection and “Learn, Pray, Do” activities, focusing on how they can improve their skills and habits to work through disagreements more constructively.
- Catechists, take some time to learn about:
 - As Christians, we are called to live in the truth of God (CCC, 2465-2470); in marriage and family life we should be truthful to each other, yet there is also a degree of discretion, knowing when and how to keep something to ourselves without dishonesty, for the good of the other (see Fr. Mike Schmitz, Day 320)
 - Pope Francis says that the best way to correct someone is with open arms, not a pointed finger; read his talk and reflect on how it could apply to your own life.
 - When families are confronted with the mental illness of a loved one, they often question how best to show forth God's truth and love; set aside time this month to learn about A Catholic Approach to Supporting Persons with Mental Illness, or take it to prayer with the USCCB's Novena for Mental Health





- Catechists: Incorporate a 5 to 10-minute reflection, discussion, or activity into one of the catechetical sessions this month, drawing from the materials and resources in this *Radiate Love* packet. Some options might include:
 - Select a few verses from the Gospel (a tree is known by its fruit, Lk 6:39-45) and do a *lectio divina* with the children. Pflaum's Gospel Weeklies provides age-appropriate content you may find useful.
 - Use the Saint of the Month (*Servant of God Chiara Corbella Petrillo*) as a group conversation starter.
 - Offer gospel-themed coloring pages (i.e. here and here) for the younger kids.

For Parish Youth and Young Adult Ministry Leaders

The recommendations for PCLs and catechists also apply to parish youth and young adult ministry leaders. This month would be a great time to focus on the attitudes, skills, and qualities that are needed to make marriage work. Conduct a session on one or more of these topics:

- Conflict resolution with a spouse: 25 ways to fight fair
- Speaking the truth in love: humility and compassion in fraternal correction
- Getting help for oneself or a family member struggling with mental health
- Domestic or intimate partner violence: prevention, and how to help a survivor

For Catholic Couples and Parents

Families and couples are encouraged to visit the Families and Married Couples sections of the Radiate Love website. In addition, the following resources are on topic this month:

- USCCB – For Your Marriage and Por Tu Matrimonio
 - Four Elements of Conflict Resolution
 - The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work
- USCCB Webinar – Promoting Peaceful Relationships at Home

