

SEASON 3 MARRIAGE (March –May 2015) (by MarieAnne Maurel)

1. REFLECTIONS ON TEMPTATION. (Week 1 season3)

Firstly as we all know marriage is a **vocation**.

The **goal** of marriage is **unity** with your **spouse** and **God**..

However married couples face temptations through:

1. **lack of faith**
2. **work and family commitments**

Married life requires **discipline**, **sacrificing oneself for the good of the other**.

It requires **forgiveness** from one another, **changes in areas of prayer and spirituality**.

2 TRANSFIGURATION (Week 2 season 3)

We hear the word TRANSFIGURATION from the Bible, when Jesus was transfigured on the mountain in the presence of his 3 Disciples Peter, James and John.

What does the TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS have to do with our MARRIAGE?

What does JESUS EXPECT from our MARRIAGE?

First and foremost we need to TRANSFORM OUR MARRIAGE into a UNION OF LOVE.

The Blessed Trinity is a **COMMUNION OF LOVE** between **FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT**....the **TRI-UNION GOD**.“This is my beloved **SON**.....**LISTEN TO HIM**”.

Men and Women are created in this image. The image of GOD. We too are called to live a married life of LOVE...Love towards our spouse.

Peter, James and John witnessed Jesus in both his human and Divine Nature (resurrected body). Although they were close to him they were still afraid.

We too are afraid of change ...Change of IDENTITY, Change of FRIENDS SACRIFICES in our daily lives etc.....which Married Life calls for.

In our broken world love will transform suffering and difficult situations that arise in married life.

The TRANSFIGURATION teaches us yet another message for our MARRIAGE.

We cannot always remain on a highThe high we were on - on our Wedding Day .

We have to go back down the mountain and deal with the daily events and routines of life.

On a mountain we see further than on flat land. A hill may appear very small from a mountain. God leads us to his heights. In a similar way we should look at our difficulties from God’s perspective .How easily our difficulties can be solved with his help and Love

Looking at our married lives from this point of view ...we realize that we **Need to change our way** of seeing things and live the married life GOD intended us to live.

3. REFLECTIONS ON TURMOIL (WEEK 3 Season 3)

In the gospel of John Chapter 2 13-25 we read how Jesus is in conflict with the money changers in his Father's house. Jesus **speaks the truth and is sincere as he directs this criticism towards the money changers in the temple.** Jesus is speaking for their good.

Conflict in a relationship can be either **a seed or a stone.**

Conflict seen as a seed can be called "constructive criticism".

This criticism gives us a vision of what we have done wrong and how we can grow and improve or correct the situation by not doing it in the future.

Conflict seen as a **stone** in our relationship **has a negative impact on our marriage.**, because nothing good can be brought out from this conflict. We can call it **destructive criticism** or **unfair criticism** which is full of jealousy, emotional blackmail, comparisons, name calling, character assassination and above all.... a lack of forgiveness

Unfortunately **over fifty percent of marriage breakups are due to unmanaged conflict situations.** Managing conflict is not easy. Marriage guidance courses such as Retrouvaille specifically deal in this area and show couples how to deal and control these areas of conflict.

During this past week, have you thought of how you can deal and handle your areas of conflict in your home, workplace and in other places?

Do you realize that we need to change if we need to deal with these situations?

Are we able to forgive, have tolerance and patience?

(Last week we handed out the topic Turmoil as part of Season 3 on the year of the family.. We trust that you, your family and friends have discussed and reflected on this topic).

SEASON 3 -YEAR OF THE FAMILY - MARRIAGE (Recap)

Let us recap on the 3 pages we have received these last weeks of Season 3: Year of the family on Marriage.

You will remember so far we have reflected on Temptation, Transfiguration, and Turmoil. We hope that you have considered the questions and responded in a positive manner.

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However married couples face temptations through:

3. lack of faith

4. work and family commitments

Married life requires **discipline, sacrificing oneself for the good of the other.**

It requires **forgiveness** from one another, **changes in areas of prayer and spirituality.**

2. REFLECTIONS ON TRANSFIGURATION

HOW DOES THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS HAVE TO DO WITH OUR MARRIAGE.?

Since we were **created in the image of the Triune God, Father Son and Holy Spirit who is perfect love** We need to try and help change our broken world into one of love.

1. By not **being afraid of changing and moving from our comfort zone and realizing that we cannot always remain on the high** of our wedding day.
2. By **seeing things & living the married life as God intended us to live it .**

3. REFLECTIONS ON TURMOIL

How we **should turn conflict into a SEED** “constructive criticism”

& not a **STONE** e.g..... unfair or destructive criticism

We need to **grow from constructive criticism** by correcting and improving the situation and not doing it in the future

4. REFLECTIONS ON GOD IS LOVE.

Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI said that God loved us first. It is our duty to respond to God’s call by returning love not only to God, but to our married relationships.

God said **I am the truth, the life and the way. In another He said the “ truth will set you free.”**

This is a hard saying for many marriages where trust and honesty no longer exist in **situations of adultery and other untruthful situations e.g.... addictions such as alcoholism gambling etc.**

We know that trust in the first placed is difficult to gain and even more difficult to regain **since honesty and truth form the bedrocks of marriage.**

To regain trust, we have to work hard at it and have courage. We need to rebuild honesty, communication, concern and consistency .

In the **first place** we should be **working at our marriage**, every day. We should **not allow** our relationship to **lapse** into a situation of disrepair or close to that state. Working at our marriage helps others to encounter the risen Christ in us – the married couples.

If we set good examples in our public life it helps others to see or encounter God within us . We become carriers of the love of Christ.

The question is? does your love for one another “enhanced a willingness to forgive and be forgiven?”

Please come forward and collect next week’s page the topic being “generosity”

We have copies of the last 3 pages.....

A small silver collection for the cost of these booklets will be most appreciated.

Week 5 Cycle 3 Year of the family

GENEROSITY IN MARRIAGE

If you were asked the question What do you understand by the phrase “Generosity in marriage” What answer would come first to your mind? For most people, the immediate answer would be : the financial generosity.” of one spouse towards the other. In -other – words, how much money “ **GENEROSITY THROUGH MATERIALISM** Although this is a good action,..... it can often be actions of insincerity. **Actions to buy the other spouse overfor our own selfish needs.**

More importantly the question should be re-phrased

- 1.How generous is the married couple towards each other with their time.?
- 2.How much time is each spouse spending with each other.?
3. Are they spending quality time with each other?

The generosity of time – quality time spent in each others company, has far reaching spiritual effects ... not only for the spouse, but for the entire family, who, IN TURN, show others how a spiritually Christian FAMILY LIVES ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD.

“Anyone who loves his life will lose it , anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life” (John 12:35)

This biblical saying is NOT easy.

Christian marriage is a way of discipleship, of following in Jesus’ footsteps and carrying our cross.....AND DYING TO ONESELF.

This is a painful, and lifelong process which we commit ourselves on our wedding day. This FIDELITY or LOYALTY to our spouse which we pledge, does not only involve SEXUAL INFIDELITY BUT DYING TO OUR SELF-CENTRE ACTIONS throughout our married life.

Infidelity - takes on many forms of self-centredness e.g indulging in alcohol, excessive time at work or with friends, too much attention given to children or volunteer work.

Although some actions, might appear as innocent actions, we are IN FACT robbing our spouse of quality time together. We have been disloyal or infidel

In conclusion: if we LIVE our married lives to MEET OUR NEEDS our marriage will NOT SUCCEED.

Let us take on the challenge, and live our married life ...in LOVE AND FIDELITY.

REFLECTION ON MARRIAGE SERVICE (6TH & Final week) 2ndMAY 2015

During the last 6 weeks you have received pages on the following topics:

WEEK 1 **TEMPTATION** - increasing our faith in family, work and other social commitments - thus avoiding temptation in our married life.

WEEK 2 **TRANSFIGURATION** - not been afraid of changing from our comfort zone by living a married life that Christ intended us to live.

WEEK 3 **TURMOIL** - how to deal with conflict in our marriage by always making constructive criticism and not destructive criticism. Also being able to forgive , .have tolerance and patience in these situations.

WEEK 4 **GOD IS LOVE** - married couples who encounter God become carriers of love of Christ in their families and society.

WEEK 5 **GENEROSITY** - Being generous with our time for each other - being there for each other.

You will remember that two weeks ago you collected a page on “Service” in marriage. There was no reflection on this topic. Let us now reflect on this topic.

Marriage is about mutual service in response to what the Triune God has done for us in Jesus Christ.

We are to love unconditionally – in other words, husband and wife have to serve one another without reservation - always humbling ourselves - being at each other’s feet: just, as Christ unselfishly did , for his disciples at the Last Supper .

We are further reminded by St Paul in the book of Ephesians that husband and wife are to be subjected to one another out of **reverence** to Christ, **in love, humility and generosity in Christ, in our dealings with each other.**

As our 3rd season on marriage has come to a close, the Church challenges us to live out the core message of each topic and embrace them in our daily married life.

Pages will be placed at the back of the church, **for those who are still in need of them.** A small monetary offering **if possible** will be most appreciated.

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God bless you all, and thank you for listening to me during these last few weeks.