



Podcast Reflection

“IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH” CARING FOR SPOUSES WHEN ILLNESS STRIKES

Companion Reflection to *Made for Love: Episode 2, Love Meets Silence*

Opening Prayer:

God our Father, we give you thanks for the gift of marriage: the bond of life and love, and the font of the family.

The love of husband and wife enriches your Church with children, fills the world with a multitude of spiritual fruitfulness and service, and is the sign of the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, for his Church.

The grace of Jesus flowed forth at Cana at the request of the Blessed Mother. May your Son, through the intercession of Mary, pour out upon us a new measure of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as we join with all people of good will to promote and protect the unique beauty of marriage.

May your Holy Spirit enlighten our society to treasure the heroic love of husband and wife, and guide our leaders to sustain and protect the singular place of mothers and fathers in the lives of their children.

Father, we ask that our prayers be joined to those of the Virgin Mary, that your Word may transform our service so as to safeguard the incomparable splendor of marriage.

We ask all these things through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Sts. Joachim and Anne, pray for us.

Suggestions for Married Couples:

- Keep building your support networks as you age. Make sure you ask many people who can give at least a little time rather than depending on one or two people to do it all. Draw from church groups, neighbors, friends, relatives, community support, and support groups of persons with similar illnesses. Try to have at least five good support friends, or more, to ensure that one will usually be available to lend a hand. Depending too much on the same group of people can burn out the entire group.
- Develop a mutually respectful relationship with your doctor(s). The less stress you feel about your medical care and frustration of dealing with the system, the better your chances for recovery.
- The primary caregiver needs care too. If you are the caregiver, treat yourself with as much kindness and care as you do your ill spouse.
- Take advantage of support groups for people with your illness. Look into partnering with a “patient navigator” to help you move through the medical system. Hospitals often sponsor support groups or can link you with a mentor.

After listening to *Made for Love: Episode 2, Love Meets Silence* (available at www.marriageuniqueforareason.org/podcast), allow time for reflection on the following questions:

- What struck you most about the podcast?
- Can you relate to any part of Terry’s story?
- Like Terry, have you been able to recognize God’s presence in difficult moments in your life? Looking back now, can you recognize ways God was with you in the times when you most needed it?
- How can you be a better support for a caregiver you know?



This reflection was created as a companion piece to *Made for Love: Episode 2, Love Meets Silence*, an initiative of the USCCB’s Marriage: Unique for a Reason. Find this podcast and more at www.marriageuniqueforareason.org/podcast. “Prayer in Defense of Marriage” was originally published on www.USCCB.org and is also available in Spanish at www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/prayer-defense-of-marriage.cfm. The “Suggestions for Married Couples” is an excerpt from “Overcoming Obstacles: Illness,” originally published on USCCB’s For Your Marriage website.

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