



## Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth

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January 15, 2019

Dear Brother Bishops,

My greetings to all of you in this new year - and new decade - of the Lord. I write to inform you of the upcoming observance of National Marriage Week (Feb. 7-14, 2020) and World Marriage Day (Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020). Every year, it is an opportunity to focus on building a culture of life and love that begins with promoting and defending marriage and the family.

National Marriage Week USA is part of an international event seeking to mobilize individuals, organizations, and businesses in a common purpose to strengthen marriage in communities and influence the culture. For information and resources, visit [nationalmarriageweekusa.org](http://nationalmarriageweekusa.org).

World Marriage Day (Sunday, Feb. 9) is another internationally recognized event held every year on the second Sunday of February. For more information, visit [wwme.org/wpd-wmd](http://wwme.org/wpd-wmd).

On behalf of the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, I would like to highlight a few resources that we are pleased to offer your dioceses and parishes to assist in the celebration of these events.

***Preaching Resource*** – We are pleased to provide a preaching resource based on the scriptural readings for Sunday, Feb. 9 (enclosed). We hope these reflections and questions will inspire a homiletic theme on the sanctity of marriage with reference to the readings for the fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

***Bulletin Insert*** – The bulletin insert can be reproduced for distribution at parishes during National Marriage Week. This year's theme seeks to demonstrate how "spouses are consecrated and by means of a special grace build up the Body of Christ and form a domestic church" (*Amoris Laetitia*, n. 67).

***Virtual Retreat for Couples*** – This retreat offers married couples an opportunity to pray and reflect about marriage in God's plan. The theme chosen for this year is *Stories from the Domestic Church*, featuring testimonies of couples who live out the call of love within their immediate and extended families.

***Call to Prayer for Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty*** – During National Marriage Week, dioceses and parishes might consider promoting Friday, February 7 (First Friday) or February 14 (Valentine's Day) as a day of prayer and sacrifice for this intention: "May married couples recognize their calling by marriage to build up the Body of Christ and form a domestic church."

***For Your Marriage and Por Tu Matrimonio*** – An extensive collection of resources for couples who are married or preparing for marriage can be found in English and Spanish at [ForYourMarriage.org](http://ForYourMarriage.org) and [PorTuMatrimonio.org](http://PorTuMatrimonio.org). Both sites manage Facebook pages, which will

provide daily content, including the virtual retreat for couples, during National Marriage Week: [facebook.com/ForYourMarriage](https://facebook.com/ForYourMarriage) and [facebook.com/PorTuMatrimonio](https://facebook.com/PorTuMatrimonio). Numerous resources for marriage can also be found on the USCCB website [usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/index.cfm](https://usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/index.cfm).

***Marriage: Unique for a Reason*** – This USCCB website offers resources to assist with the education and catechesis of Catholics on why marriage is unique and why it should be promoted and protected as the union of one man and one woman. Video and print materials can be found at [marriageuniqueforareason.org](https://marriageuniqueforareason.org).

***Made for Love*** – A Catholic audio storytelling podcast series, featuring stories of real people living out the call to love. It can be accessed at [madeforlove.podbean.com](https://madeforlove.podbean.com) or on iTunes under “Made for Love”.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to highlight these resources in celebration of marriage. I would be grateful if you would share this information with the clergy, religious, and lay leaders of your diocese. May these upcoming observances foster an ever-deeper appreciation for the gift of marriage and the blessings of family life. May the Lord reward you for proclaiming, defending and witnessing to the beauty and gift of marriage and the family.

With gratitude and prayerful best wishes for a fruitful new year,

Fraternally yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol and followed by the name "Salvatore Cordileone" in a cursive script.

Most Reverend Salvatore Cordileone  
Archbishop of San Francisco  
Chairman, Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth

*Encls.*