

July-07

“CELEBRATE MARRIAGE”

The Program Consists Of Four Components:

The Language of Love

- The Real “ME”
- Getting to know you
- I finally understand
- Getting to know myself
- Communicating on a feeling level
- Listening with your heart

Happily Ever After

- Fairytales can come true
- Is this all there is?
- Romance & wedding day memories
- Disharmony caused by unmet expectations/communication breakdown

Love Conquers All!

Working through disharmony:

- We can be great!
- Passion Power!
- Love is a choice
- Sexuality, passion

Marriage Takes Three

- A Lovers' Triangle
You Me and God
- Practical insights to keeping God
the center of your marriage

"CELEBRATE MARRIAGE"

9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	GATHER/OVERVIEW
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	LET THE LOVE BEGIN! - Warmer/Introductions
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE - The Real "ME" - Getting to Know You - I Finally Understand
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	LUNCH
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	HAPPILY EVER AFTER - Fairytales can come true - Is This All There Is?
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	LOVE CONQUERS ALL - We Can Be Great!
3:00 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.	BREAK
3:20 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	MARRIAGE TAKES THREE - A Lovers' Triangle
4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	CLOSING

"CELEBRATE MARRIAGE"

An Enrichment Day For Married Couples

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

GATHER/OVERVIEW

- *Let The Love Begin!*

THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE

- *The Real "ME"*
- *Getting To Know You*
- *I Finally Understand*

L U N C H

HAPPILY EVER AFTER

- *Fairytales Can Come True*
- *Is This All There Is?*

LOVE CONQUERS ALL

- *We Can Be Great!*
- *Passion Power*

B R E A K

MARRIAGE TAKES THREE

- *A Lovers' Triangle*

C L O S I N G

LET THE LOVE BEGIN!

10 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

OBJECTIVE: To share excitement, welcome and relax the couples, provide an overview of the day and encourage them to be open and honest.

Program Accessories:

- A. Bible and Celebrate Marriage Banner (if available)
- B. Complete copy of CM outline/Presenter's Talks
- C. Tape player/tape or CD "Working Man's Hero" with ending song, "Grow Old Along With Me" (Mary Chapin Carpenter), suggest soft background instrumental music during exercises
- D. Roster of couples and Sign in Sheet
- E. Name Tags; Pens; Workbooks; Pamphlets; copies of "Good News"
- F. Salt packets and candle(can use tea lights or votives)
- G. Marriage Encounter and Marriage Enrichment information

Program Insights:

- A. Make sure ALL couples sign in – late-comers can sign in during lunch or break
- B. Couples registering at door can either pay \$30.00 cash or check (Family Life Office)
- C. Each person receives workbook, pen and name tag
- D. Beginner presenters may read sections of talks; "off the cuff", spontaneous (brief, informal, personal) sharings are encouraged
- E. Program is most effective when shared by 2 couples (splitting the presentations)

I. Warm Welcome

(5 min)

- A. Introduction/Background/Apostolic History
 1. Name, parish, children, job, apostolic history
 2. Why we are here? Be informal and excited/passionate
 - a. Married couples are an endangered species!
 - b. We believe in marriage and want to make our marriages better
 - c. Church recognizes the importance of enriching couples who are trying to live a committed, faithful, happy marriages
 - d. No such thing as a "perfect" marriage – key word is WORK. None of us will ever have it all together – Marriage is a journey not a destination-a "work in progress"
 - e. We are here as catalysts to offer personal insights – the quality of the day depends on you – get out what you put in – be open and honest
 - f. Communication is key to intimate relationships and the program's focus

II. Nuts and Bolts

(10 min)

- A. Explain facility details: bathrooms, phones; lunch time – full day experience
- B. Things needed: Workbook, pen, nametag
- C. Things not needed: cell phones, beepers, lap tops; work related materials
- D. Program Format- 4 components to the day; each consists of mini-presentations
 1. Brief presentations on married lived experiences
 2. Written reflection – physically separate if possible
 - a) Writing provides opportunity for freedom, honesty and concentration
 3. Couple reflection time - Presenters will be time- keepers
 - a) Exchange workbooks or read reflection to each other
 - b) Follow directions for discussion on strongest feelings
 - c) Reinforce honesty and openness
 - d) Emphasize that it is a **FULL day** experience ending with renewal of vows

III. Warmer/Ice Breaker:

(15 min)

- A. Presenters share obstacles(what they need to let go of) that might prevent them from getting into the day in a few words
- B. What specific grace they need from the Lord in order be fully present to their spouse
- C. Assure them that this is an optional sharing – anyone wishing not to share can pass
- D. They need to believe that God will pour down His graces and we need to accept them

Component I - THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE 10:30 a.m.-12:30 a.m.

First Presentation - The "REAL ME" 10:30 a.m.-11:15 a.m.

OBJECTIVE: A self-examination of who we are as individuals. To help couples define and understand their dominant personality style. To take a realistic look at the way they present themselves to others; and the effects of their behavior on their relationship. To discover themselves and insights into spouse.

I. Introduction

The first component is the Language of Love, and the first presentation is "The Real Me". We will take a good honest look at who we are by defining our personality styles and how we behave that affects our relationship both positively and negatively.

Before we can truly know and love another person, it is essential that we truly get to know and love ourselves. In this presentation we will learn that it is essential to accept and understand who we are on an honest and open level.

Read Scripture – Genesis 1: 26-27

II. Personality Style Sharing

(10 min)

- A. Presenters share their dominant personality style
- B. The behaviors associated with my personality style– early childhood formation
- C. Positive and negative effects of my behaviors on my spouse

III. Personality Assessment Sharing

A. Introduce and explain the exercise thoroughly

1. Only one check per number
2. Add up checks at end to discover your dominant personality style
3. You may have a mix of all three – but there should be one dominant

B. Encourage them to separate to do exercise (5 min)

1. Be honest – answer to who you are NOW; not who you WANT to be
2. Read the resource information about the three personality styles

C. Share exercise with spouse, discuss insights, discoveries (10 min)

Component I - THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE

10:30 a.m.-12:30 a.m.

Second Presentation - Getting To Know You 11:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

OBJECTIVE: To truly get to know our spouse, by communicating on a feeling level.
To identify, describe and share feelings. To differentiate between ordinary, general conversation and intimate communication in marriage.

Read Scripture: Genesis: 2-18-25

I. Introduction

The second presentation is Getting to Know You. In this presentation we will become aware of the importance of communicating on an intimate level with our spouse—on a feeling level, not a surfacy, conversation level.

II. How we tend to communicate

(10 min)

- A. We might really think we are having intimate conversation, but are we really??
- B. Give personal examples of typical conversations
 1. (how was your day?, who called?, what's for dinner or on TV?, any bills in the mail?, plans for the weekend?, how did Johnny do on his math test?, did the neighbors sell their house?, and so on and so on....etc.
 2. In this style, we are "discussing" topics, thoughts and opinions- great surfacy conversations, not intimate communication where we share deep feelings or revealing inner self.
 3. If we only communicate on a general, surfacy manner, we will never get to truly know what's going on inside us or our spouse.
 4. The difference between conversation and intimate communication:
 - a. **Conversation** focuses on facts, general thoughts, ideas, judgements, issues and real life situations --- **SHARING OF INFORMATION**.
We are accepted and appreciated for what we think, what we know, **WHAT** we are.
 - b. **Intimate Communication** – focuses on real feelings which reveal our inner self, and makes us vulnerable to share deeply - **SHARING OF FEELINGS**.
We are accepted and appreciated for the real us – **WHO** we are.

III. Just what is a feeling?

(5 min)

1. A feeling is a **spontaneous** inner reaction that we have no control of.
Key word – spontaneous
 - a. Feelings have no morality, since they are spontaneous, they come and go and **FEELINGS ARE NEITHER RIGHT NOR WRONG! REPEAT**
 - b. It's perfectly normal to have uncomfortable feelings, (shame, anger, resentment, jealousy, lust, etc.), just as ones we are more comfortable with (happy, joyous, content, fulfilled, etc.)
 - c. Give personal examples

IV. Why are feelings important?

(5 min)

1. Feelings define who we are and the only way we will get to truly know our spouse is to share feelings
2. **WE ALL HAVE FEELINGS, like it or not!** Dismissing feelings or not placing importance on them will lead to negative behaviors, resentments and possible physical and emotional stress.
We should never bury feelings or dismiss them, ("Oh it's OK; it was nothing; it's not important; I'll get over it").....
Our feelings are VERY important. **REMEMBER: WE ALWAYS BURY FEELINGS ALIVE...** They fester deep inside of us and eventually, if not shared, they will surface and explode like an emotional volcano, most always in a destructive, inappropriate manner and at a unlikely time, when it may cause conflict or separation.
3. Unshared, buried feelings can cause serious emotional and physical illnesses.

V. Why is it difficult to share feelings?

(5 min)

1. When we share on a feeling level, we expose ourselves to possible reactions or rejection, we sometimes even surprise ourselves with how we feel on a certain subject. We might be afraid to "go there" and the less said the safer.
2. We have been conditioned NOT to share feelings by society, childhood formation, job situation (more prevalent in men). Give personal examples.
3. (Big boys don't cry; macho image; family protector role, woman should be quiet polite and ladylike, etc.)

VI. How do we know when we are sharing feeling or a thought (5 min)

1. Feeling vs. thought rule.
If you say I THINK THAT or FEEL THAT you are expressing a thought or judgement....some examples..... I feel that you are always late -thought
2. Always say I FEEL and follow with a feeling word. Some examples: I feel or think that you are always late / I feel annoyed that you are always late.

VII. Share positive benefits in communicating difficult subjects on a feeling level. (eg.money, children, sex, in-laws, household projects, illness, etc.) (benefits: deepening love/respect; increased closeness; trust building; self worth/ security)

VIII. Explain handout and exercise (attempt to discover and identify feelings)

(15 min)

1. Next to each area, write one or two feeling words to get in touch with feelings
2. Refer to feeling sheet on page 11 for guidance
3. Separate to write; then get together to share your responses
4. Should be spontaneous, don't think or ponder too long
4. Be honest...**REMEMBER FEELINGS ARE NEITHER RIGHT NOR WRONG!**
6. **IMPORTANT: This is NOT a problem solving exercise.** Focus on labeling and describing your feelings to your spouse. Note how the same topic can evoke different feelings in you and your spouse

Component I - THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE

10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Third Presentation - I Finally Understand

11:35 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

OBJECTIVE: To understand our spouse better by listening with our hearts and identify negative listening patterns we have developed.

I. Introduction

(5 min)

The third presentation is I Finally Understand. In this presentation we will look at the way we listen to each other. We will address our negative listening patterns and non verbals. Our goal is to begin to listen to our spouse with our hearts, with total empathy and understanding.

II. Read Matthew. Chapter 13; verse 3-9 and 13-15

1. Give brief personal insight into the parable of the sower; perhaps how often your words fall on rocky ground, or hard soil...

III. What is Listening with the heart?

(5 min)

1. There's a definite reason why God gave us two ears and one mouth---so we can listen more and talk less! - (James 1; "**Be quiet to listen and slow to speak**)
2. Listening with the heart is the key to intimate communication. To make room in our hearts to listen beyond our own judgements and feelings and beyond what we understand in our heads.

To go beyond the words and absorb the feelings of our spouse

IV. Differences in the way men and women communicate

(10 min)

1. It is clear that men and women speak two different languages. When God created Adam and Eve, it was clear He had a sense of humor. He made us so different in every way, physically, emotionally and mentally.....then expected us to live happily ever after.....!! **WE ARE "WIRED" DIFFERENTLY!**
2. One example of how different we are is how we relate a story to one another.
 - A. Statistics tell us that women use a minimum of 10,000 words a day and men use a mere 4,000 words a day!
 - B. Give example of how different you relate a story to one another and effect
 1. Woman embellishes, ALL the details, beats around the bush until she gets to the point. Man might loose interest, get frustrated or annoyed
 2. Man, just gives just the facts, short sweet answers. Woman might need to pull out information, get annoyed and frustrated
3. How you listened with your heart when you were dating?
 - A. Intently, hung on every word, interested in EVERYTHING he/she had to say
 - B. The effect that listening with your spouses heart had on you
4. How you listen now and what may have caused negative listening patterns to become a habit. (e.g.; touchy subjects; past history, no quality time, etc.)

V. Identify negative listening patterns you personally have developed

(5 min)

IV. Recap listening with your heart points:

(5 min)

- A. An openness to listening
- B. Eye to eye contact
- C. Physically present to our spouse
- D. Listening beyond the words to feelings
- E. **EXPAND – Be attentive to non verbals – only 7% verbal – 60% non verbals**

III. Explain Handout

(10 min)

- A. Check off listening patterns that apply to you
- B. Write a reflection on "How can I specifically be a better listener for you"?
- C. After writing time is up – gather together, share response and discuss

Component II- HAPPILY EVER AFTER

1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

First Presentation - Fairytales Can Come True 1:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

OBJECTIVE: To create an atmosphere and mentality in their minds that will rekindle the romantic memories of their beginning as a couple before marriage and newlywed stage. Reflection on qualities that attracted them to each other; wedding day memories; why they wanted to marry him/her.

I. Introduction

The first presentation in Component II is "Fairytales Can Come True". In this presentation we invite you to take a trip down memory lane with us as we share our beginnings and hopes and dreams...think back to your dating days and romantic memories.

Read Scripture: Song of Songs – 2: 8-13

II. We've only just begun!

(15 min)

- A. Briefly share how you met, how old, circumstances of meeting,
 - a. Keep it light, funny and non-redundant – touch on different aspects
- B. Briefly share on why you wanted to marry your spouse; was there a moment, an instance, a situation, when you knew you wanted him/her as your spouse.
- C. Share qualities that made your spouse loveable and irresistible
- D. Share wedding day memories and newlywed stage
 - a. Important to relate joy of being married, "happily ever after" mentality
 - b. Be aware that some couples did not have fond wedding memories so make sure you mention that they have an option in this exercise to reflect on wedding day memories, qualities that attracted them or why they wanted to marry him/her.

III: Why we do this: As married couples we are often too practical and busy to go back to our own love story... This reflection gives us the opportunity to discover the qualities and attractions that brought us together and keep us together.

IV: Explain Handout

(10 min)

- A. Exercise – "Our Wedding Day"
- B. Write a reflection on all or some of the points listed – share strongest feeling recalling these memories
- C. After writing time is up – gather together, share response and discuss

Component II- HAPPILY EVER AFTER

1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

Second Presentation - "Is This All There Is?"

2:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

OBJECTIVE: To help participants identify the obstacles in their relationship that prevent them from intimacy. To encourage them to face into their feelings honestly and courageously in these areas and to reinforce the critical value of feeling level communication

I. Introduction

The second presentation in Component II is "Is This All There Is?". In this presentation we will look at influences and formation that have "trained" us for marriage. Address our attitudes and unmet expectations that ultimately lead to disappointments and disharmony in marriage. We will also take an honest look at what areas in our life can attribute to disharmony and communicate openly on a feeling level.

Read Scripture: (Job; 6-11/13& Job 18-22)

II. The Honeymoon's Over!

(10 min)

- A. Mention 3 stages of relationship:
 - Romance, which they just heard – when my focus is my spouse - YOU;
 - Disharmony: when my focus is on ME;
 - Bliss – when my focus is on US.
- B. Share briefly what attitudes and expectations you had before marriage
 - a. Use examples of influences from childhood formation; society; media
 - b. Refer them to the "Marriage Attitudes" page and encourage them to do this exercise at home. instance, a situation, when you knew you wanted him/her as your spouse
- C. Share examples of how these unmet expectations and attitudes led to distance and loneliness in your marriage.
 - a. "honeymoon glow" faded: light disappointments: sloppy, controlling, hobby fanatic, workaholic/super-mom, less intimacy; preoccupied with, job, social obligations, sense of being taken for granted.
- D. Share the feelings attached to this lifestyle..... (lonely, hopeless, trapped, frustrated, sad, scared). And how you kept from sharing these feelings with your spouse and the results of this disintegration in your intimacy
- E. Explain handout "Is This All There Is"?
 - a. Tell them it is the same handout as the Feelings handout because most often the areas we have most difficulty sharing our feelings is are the same areas that cause us the most disharmony and unhappiness.
- F. Ask them to put a check next to any area that causes disharmony in their relationship...it is not uncommon to check all.
- G. Ask them to be honest and courageous and write a reflection on the one area that causes the STRONGEST feelings in them...the one they want to dismiss or deny.
- H. Refer to the Rules for fighting sheet in the back of their workbook....
- I. Encourage them to be loving, no blaming or judging...stick to the feelings and describe them in ways their spouse may understand as best as possible.
- J. This is most probably a new concept...may be difficult, give it your best

Component III - LOVE CONQUERS ALL!

2:30 p.m.-3:15 p.m.

First Presentation - "We Can Be Great"

2:30 p.m.-2:45 p.m.

OBJECTIVE: To offer them hope in understanding that every relationship cycles through disillusionment—it is normal and natural. To identify concrete ways to work through disillusionment to bliss; (love is a decision, feeling level communication). Give specific, personal examples in your own relationship.

Read Scripture; Luke: 4; 41-42

I. Introduction

The first presentation in Component III is "We Can Be Great". In this presentation we will address concrete ways to work through disharmony into bliss. Every relationship cycles through romance and disharmony....but there are ways to break out of this cycle and reach a higher stage of "bliss"- which ensures fulfillment and joy.

The first way to break out of disharmony is to realize that:

State with conviction that "Love is not a feeling—Love is a Choice. Explain that since feelings are spontaneous, with no morality and are fleeting, no relationship would sustain on that premise. **Love is a verb...an action word!**

Couples don't fall out of love....they stop working at it!

- A. Share how this statement affected you when you first heard it on the ME weekend and how you realized that you could "break out" of this rut by making a decision to love your spouse.
- B. Share how you make unconscious everyday decisions to love, with our kids, family, co-workers and our spouse. To see the goodness in them and try to overlook their flaws. It is an "other-centered" attitude rather than a "me centered" attitude—to respond in love rather than react in selfishness.
- C. Since your weekend you realize that making the choice to love your spouse or to let yourself be loved by them is the key to breaking out of disillusionment and living in bliss.
- D. Each spouse share a brief example of a simple everyday instance where you made a choice to love or be loved by your spouse
- E. Refer to "Love Conquers All-To Love Is A choice" exercise...Ask them to do this as a homework/date night activity.
- F. Stress the importance of continuing this day at home with the additional exercises.

Component II - LOVE CONQUERS ALL

2:30 p.m.-3:15 p.m.

Second Presentation: "Passion Power" 2:45 p.m.-3:15 p.m.

OBJECTIVE: To emphasize the importance of creating a sexual atmosphere through affection, small courtesies, just as we did before we were married and as newlyweds.
To realize the gift of our physical lovemaking and how life-giving our sexual union is to our marriage and the call to be "holy" in that unique, exclusive union.

Read Scripture: Corinthians 13; 4-13

I. Introduction

The second presentation in Component III is "We Can Be Great". In this presentation we will enhance our awareness of our sexuality, emotional and physical. We will address ways to enhance our passion and romance, ways that came so naturally to us before we were married. We will also reflect on what attracted us to our spouse in the beginning of our relationship and still does today.

- A. Ask the participants to reflect on the romantic affectionate things you did for your spouse before you got married....Is our marriage today still that passion filled and affectionate? Why Not? Is there some unwritten rule that tells us NOT to be passionate or affectionate after we get married? Is your marriage attractive to others?
- B. Share how you realized the importance of keeping the romance alive on the ME weekend and how you specifically you try to create a sexual atmosphere for your relationship; (date nights, love-notes, doing chores for the other to create quality time).
- C. Share the effect on your relationship and physical lovemaking when you are "spouse-centered". (man is like a microwave oven; a woman is like a crock-pot)
- D. Share how life-giving your physical lovemaking is and how fulfilling it is when you are working on your passion—more than a physical act---it becomes the most intimate form of communication.
- E. Refer to exercise " I'm Attracted To You
- F. Explain and ask them to fill out in place – 5/5

B R E A K

Component IV - MARRIAGE TAKES THREE

3:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m

First Presentation- "A Lover's Triangle – You, Me & God"

OBJECTIVE: To comprehend that a sacramental marriage is a visible sign of God's love;
An awareness that there are gifts that are present through the graces of the Sacrament of Matrimony. An awareness of God as the third partner in marriage and introduction to couple prayer.

I. Introduction

The first presentation in Component IV is "A Lover's Triangle – You Me and God". In this presentation we will become aware of how our marriage is a visible sign of God's love and that there are gifts that come from our sacrament. We will look at practical insights into living our marriage as a joy-filled sign and realize that God's presence in our marriage as the third person is the only sure way to fulfillment and joy.

A. We'd like to begin with an adaptation from Scripture....Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.

B. Read adaptation in front of book, invite them to read along.

C. Share how you are personally affected by this scripture and what it means in your marriage today.

II. Share your naivete to what your call to live as a sacrament was on your wedding day

1. Was your concentration on the reception and frills of the wedding day?
2. Did you realize the seriousness of your wedding vows for a lifetime?
3. Did you think the Sacrament was a one shot deal—a certificate & then over?
4. **Definition of Sacrament: an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace – we are called to to be that sign of Christ's love.**

III. Share your awareness of what living the Sacrament means to you today

A. On your wedding day you weren't receiving the sacrament of Matrimony, but you were becoming the sacrament

1. Your call is to reflect God's love through the everyday ways we our spouse.
 - a. Our love is not to be hidden – let is shine
 - b. Share personal, everyday, simple examples.
 - c. Share the effects of your love being a visible sign (people are drawn to you, family is closer, you can handle life's pressures easier, etc.).
 - d. Signs are meant to point you in the right direction---your sacrament is a sign to point the world to God's direction and unconditional love
2. Parallel between Married (living in the world) and Matrimonied (living in God's design)
3. Go over sheet and explain through a few personal examples

IV. Practical Ways to Live Our Sacrament of Matrimony

1. Gifts of Our Sacrament

- A. Share your awareness of the gifts of your Sacrament (parenthood, elevation, healing)
- B. State that the most powerful and most used gift of our sacrament is the grace of Healing
 - a. Healing and forgiveness is more than making a decision to love
 - b. Forgiveness is more than saying "I'm Sorry", it's saying "Please forgive Me"- that leads to complete healing
 - c. Share a brief instance of a healing in your relationship and how you felt the graces of your Sacrament working in the healing process
 - d. Effects of this healing experience- how you felt after the healing

2. Attending mass together as often as possible and receiving the Sacraments

- A. Share your faith journey, growth and awareness that without God as the center of your marriage, your life is less fulfilling and marriage less intimate
- B. The closeness sharing your faith has meant to you and others
- C. Being open to experiencing ongoing faith enrichments

3. Couple Prayer

- A. Share your faith journey and growing awareness that praying together as a couple has brought you closer to each other and to God.
- B. Share how you prayed before couple prayer (if applicable-as an individual; formal prayers; in petition; when you were in crisis, rarely, etc)
- C. Share how you have begun to pray as a couple and the effects on your relationship
- D. Share you got started in couple prayer (a quick prayer at bedtime thanking God for the blessings; meal time prayer with family, formal prayers; rosary, etc.)
- E. Share when and where you pray as a couple (before you go to work; read scripture, during the day, quick prayer on phone; at bedtime; etc.)
- F. Give specific, but simple examples – be joyful and convincing
- G. Encourage the participants to begin and mention the pamphlet on couple prayer, the couple bible and the resource list for further readings.
- H. Tell the couples this next reflection will be a very special one and the fruits of what they have worked so hard to achieve on the day.
 - 1. Explain handout... Our Lives are an Everlasting Covenant
- 2. How do I feel knowing you have committed yourself to loving me for a lifetime?
 - 3. Set the scene, by asking them to get close, perhaps look into each other's eyes and let the words sink into their heart keeping in mind their spouse
 - 4. Play song "Grow Old Along With Me" (15 mins)

Component IV - MARRIAGE TAKES THREE 4:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

Second Presentation: Renewal Of Vows and Closing

- I. **RENEWAL OF VOWS** – See separate document in Microsoft Word
 - A. The pastor or parish priest will renew the wedding vows – give him the sample to use.
- II. **SHARING AND CLOSING** (10 min)
 - A. Encourage couples to stay until the closing and sharing
 - B. Tell participants this is a very important part of the day
 - C. **Ask them to share on the question**
"What is the most significant thing that has happened in your relationship today".
 - D. It is a voluntary sharing – but let them know that something they say might help another person who is experiencing similar feelings.
 - E. Just as we were catalysts on the day, so too can they do the same just by sharing their honest thoughts and feelings.
 - F. Allow 10 minutes for sharing
 - G. **IMPORTANT – ASK THEM TO NOT THANK YOU** – Their hard work and dedication in enriching their marriage was a privilege for you and thanks enough. They give us hope for the future of marriage.
 - H. Make sure each person has submitted an evaluation
 - I. If they are interested in starting a parish-based "Celebrate Marriage" program, or helping present the day, make sure they put their name and number for contact
 - J. Make sure they leave with their pamphlets and the "give-away" gift
 - K. Give them your phone number and assure they can contact for any reason
 - L. Encourage them to attend the next WWME weekend or one in the near future, make sure they leave with trifold and information packet.
- M. **Marriage Renewal vows** can be found in the separate document. This version correlates with the Mystery of crowning in the Maronite Church.

N. Important: End with scripture from Matthew; 5; 13-16

- O. Give a passionate plea for them as you pass on the torch to them as missionaries of marriage. Give them the salt packet and candle and let them know they are the salt of the earth and the light of the world and their mission is to "shake and shine"! Feel free to adapt to your own words**
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For levity and humor you can interject these stories if you wish

To be read after "Getting To Know You Scripture"

The Lost Scriptures

This is the lost chapter from GENESIS....

Noticing that Adam appeared somewhat sullen, God asked, "What is wrong with you, Adam? Adam said, "I don't have anyone to talk to..to play with....to eat with....except the animals".

God said that he was going to make Adam a companion and that it would be a Woman.

God said, "This person will gather food for you, and when you discover clothing, she will wash it for you.

She will always agree with every decision you make.

She will bear your children and never ask you to get up in the middle of the night to take care of them.

She will not nag you and will always be the first to admit e was wrong when you've had a disagreement.

She will never have a headache and will freely give you love and passion when ever you need it".

Adam asked God, "What will a woman like this Cost?"

God replied, "An arm and a leg".

Then Adam asked, "What can I get for a rib? AND THE REST IS HISTORY!

To be read after "Is This all there Is" when group gathers back.

There once was a man and a woman who had been married for more than 60 years. They had shared everything, They had talked about everything. They had kept no secrets from each other, except that the little old woman had a shoe box in the top of her closet that she had cautioned her husband never to open or ask her about.

For all of these years, he had never thought about the box, but one day, the little old woman got very sick and the doctor said she would not recover.

In trying to sort out their affairs, the little old man took down the shoe-box and took it to his wife's bedside.

She agreed that it was time that he should know what was in the box. When he opened it, he found two crocheted doilies and a stack of money totaling \$25,000. He asked her about the contents.

When we were to be married", she said, "my grand-mother told me the secret of a happy marriage was to never argue. She told me that if I ever got angry with you, I should just keep quiet and crochet a doily".

The little old man was so moved, he had to fight back tears. Only two precious doilies were in the box. She had only been angry with him two times in all those years of living and loving. He burst with happiness.

"Honey", he said, "that explains the doilies, but what about all of this money? Where did it come from?"

"Oh", she said, "that's the money I made from selling the doilies...."