



UP TO THE SOURCE

Adoratio with St. John Paul II

FOR COUPLES

Created to Love

From the “Letter to Families” from Pope John Paul II, Feb. 2, 1994

“God creates by the power of his word: “Let there be...!”. Significantly, in the creation of man this word of God is followed by these other words: “*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*” (Gen 1:26). Before creating man, the Creator withdraws as it were into himself, in order to seek the pattern and inspiration in the mystery of his Being, which is already here disclosed as the divine “We”. From this mystery the human being comes forth by an act of creation: “*God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them*” (Gen 1:27).

God speaks to these newly-created beings and he blesses them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen 1:28)... No living being on earth except man was created “in the image and likeness of God”. Human fatherhood and motherhood, while remaining *biologically similar* to that of other living beings in nature, contain in an essential and unique way a “*likeness*” to God which is the basis of the family as a community of human life, as a community of persons united in love (*communio personarum*).

...The *primordial model of the family is to be sought in God himself, in the Trinitarian mystery of his life*. The divine “We” is the eternal pattern of the human “we”, especially of that “we” formed by the man and the woman created in the divine image and likeness. The words of the Book of Genesis contain that truth about man which is confirmed by the very experience of humanity. Man is created “from the very beginning” as male and female: the life of all humanity –whether of small communities or

of society as a whole—is marked by this primordial duality. From it there derive the “masculinity” and the “femininity” of individuals, just as from it every community draws its own unique richness in the mutual fulfilment of persons. This is what seems to be meant by the words of the Book of Genesis: “Male and female he created them” (Gen 1:27). Here too we find the first statement of the equal dignity of man and woman: both, in equal measure, are persons. Their constitution, with the specific dignity which derives from it, defines “from the beginning” the qualities of the common good of humanity, in every dimension and circumstance of life. To this common good both man and woman make their specific contribution. Hence one can discover, at the very origins of human society, the qualities of communion and of complementarity” (Letter to Families, n. 6).

“Prayer makes the Son of God present among us: “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” (Mt 18:20). Let us pray to Christ to remain in every human family... It is significant that precisely *in and through prayer, man comes to discover in a very simple and yet profound way his own unique subjectivity*: in prayer the human “I” more easily perceives the depth of what it means to be a person. *This is also true of the family*, which is not only the basic “cell” of society, but also possesses a particular subjectivity of its own. This subjectivity finds its first and fundamental confirmation, and is strengthened, precisely when the members of the family meet in the common invocation: “Our Father”. Prayer increases the strength and spiritual unity of the family, helping the family to partake of God’s own “strength”. In the solemn nuptial blessing during the Rite of Marriage, the celebrant calls upon the Lord in these words: “Pour out upon them the grace of the Holy Spirit so that by your love poured into their hearts they will remain faithful in the marriage covenant”. This “visitation” of the Holy Spirit gives rise to the inner strength of families, as well as the power capable of uniting them in love and truth” (Letter to Families, 4).

“How indispensable is *the witness of all families* who live their vocation day by day; how urgent it is *for families* to pray and for that prayer to increase and to spread throughout the world, expressing thanksgiving for love in truth, for “the outpouring of the grace of the Holy Spirit”, for the presence among parents and children of Christ the Redeemer and Bridegroom, who “loved us to the end” (cf. Jn 13:1). Let us be deeply convinced that this love *is the greatest of all* (cf. 1 Cor 13:13), and let us believe that it is really capable of triumphing over everything that is not love” (Letter to Families, 5).

Litany of Married Saints

Holy Mary Mother of God, and Saint Joseph of Nazareth, Spouses,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Joachim and Saint Anne, Parents of the Virgin Mary,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saints Aquila and Priscilla, Missionary Couple,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saints Anastasios and Theopista, Martyred Spouses,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saints Henry II and Cunegunda, Spouses and Emperors,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Stephen and Blessed Gisella, Spouses and Monarchs,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Isadore the Farmer and Saint Mary of the Head, Married Laborers,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Blessed John and Thecla Hashimoto, Married Martyrs and Parents of Martyrs,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Blessed John Yu Jung and Lutgarda Yi Sun-I, Spouses and Martyrs,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saints Louis Martin and Zélie Guérin, Spouses and Parents of Saints,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Blessed Victoria Rasoamanarivo, Faithful Wife,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Franz Jägerstätter, Husband and Martyr,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saints Luigi and Marie Beltrame-Quattrocchi, Spouses,	<i>Pray for us</i>



A Prayer for Couples by St. John Paul II

God, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth comes,
Father, you are love and life,
make every human family on earth become,
through your Son, Jesus Christ, “born of woman,”
and through the Holy Spirit, source of divine charity,
a true sanctuary of life and love
for generations that always renew themselves.

Let your grace guide the minds and deeds of the spouses
towards the good of their families
and all the families in the world.

Let the younger generation find strong support in the family,
for their humanity and their growth in truth and love.

Let love, strengthened by the grace of the sacrament of marriage,
prove stronger than any weakness or crisis,
through which our families sometimes pass.

Finally, we ask you through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth,
that the Church in the midst of all the nations of the earth
can fruitfully fulfill its mission
in and through the family.

You, who are life, truth and love,
in the unity of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

“The good God gave me a father and a mother worthier of heaven than of earth” (S. Thérèse of Lisieux, Letter 261).

