



# World Marriage Day

*In marriage, God brings a man and a woman together to love and support each other. Their love becomes visible in the children they bring into the world and in their acts of generous service.*



## The Promise

*On the day when your promise of commitment weighs heavily on your shoulders  
and you stoop beneath its burden,  
may the promise dance within you to strengthen you.*

*And when your embraces lose their warmth and become like rituals of duty,  
and the ghost of romance disappears behind a long day's toil,  
may the promise wrap around you and hold you close  
and surround you with love from its Source.*

*When the bitter winds of change transform your early loveliness  
into roughened hands and smile lines,  
may there come across your faces an easy knowing,  
a comfortable peace, a deep rooted-ness  
that connects you to the eternal promise of Love Beyond All Imagining.*

*May the new life of creation be yours.*

*May the comfort of the sunshine be yours.*

*May the soft earth nourish you and make you strong  
for one another and for your children  
and restore your resolve for promising.*

*And so may a soaking rain work these words of promise and peace into you,  
protecting you from harm  
and harboring you in the presence of one another for eternity.*

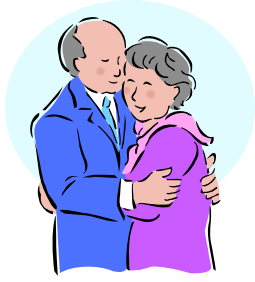
by Mary Jo Pedersen on [www.ForYourMarriage.org](http://www.ForYourMarriage.org)

This blessing is an adaptation of a beannacht, an ancient Hebrew form of blessing used to communicate the power of the Divine within families and later within believing communities. This beannacht is dedicated to married couples.

Find support and enrichment for your marriage at the United States Catholic Bishops' website  
[www.ForYourMarriage.org](http://www.ForYourMarriage.org)

FOR YOUR  
MARRIAGE

Provided by The Marriage and Family Life Office, Diocese of Columbus



## Becoming a Life Partner

One of the challenges of marriage is balancing individuality with togetherness. Spouses in a healthy marriage don't give up their own personality, interests, and opinions when they say "I do." But joining

your lives together means compromise.

### Life Partners need to:

#### 1. Blend personalities

The goal of marriage is not to become clones of each other but to:

- ◆ **recognize your similarities and celebrate them**
- ◆ **recognize your differences** — negotiate the troublesome ones, learn to live with the minor ones, and celebrate the ones that bring variety to your relationship

Check out how your differences blend and where they create tension. Examine who you are as individuals as well as your unique blend of togetherness.

#### 2. Understand how your Family of Origin influences you long after you've established your own home

Each of you brought into your marriage different childhood experiences and different models of marriage. Couples generally have many similarities and some differences in their backgrounds. Sometimes it takes years to understand each other's values and habits.

#### 3. Nurture your commitment

Commitment is not a "sexy" word or concept but it probably has more to do with making marriages work than anything except common values. Commitment is important because we act differently when we know that our futures are tied together. Commitment means you've promised to stay and work it through, not just today but forever.

#### 4. Build on common values

If you're not together on basic values like wanting children, honesty, fidelity to your spouse, and putting family before work, then no amount of learning or effort can resolve the conflict.

#### 5. Enhance communication skills

You've probably heard that good communication makes for a good marriage. You never know what issues will come up in marriage. Being able to discuss them is crucial.

#### 6. Learn to negotiate conflicts

Even though conflict may be rooted in poor listening skills, lack of affirmation, or clumsy expression of feelings, it deserves special attention because this is where couples most hurt.

#### 7. Draw upon your faith and spirituality

Spirituality influences how we view the world and relationships. For most people, the desire for a spiritual dimension in their life is strong, and finding a way to express it is a quest. We live out as best we can what we believe is a good life in conformity with our faith and values.

[www.ForYourMarriage.org](http://www.ForYourMarriage.org) (Adapted)

## 10 WAYS TO create A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

1. **Forget about getting your own needs met.** Getting your needs met is a failed concept for couples. Focus on your spouse and what you can do for her/him. This is the best way to bring out the best in both of you.
2. **Keep some meaningful rituals in your relationship.** Whether it's having a dinner conversation after work every night or taking a long walk, have something in place that allows you to stay in touch with each others' lives.
3. **Have a five-to-one ratio of positive to negative interactions.** There should be five hugs, compliments, or squeezes of the arm for every roll of the eyes, every criticism, or every episode of blaming.
4. **Be relentless in your pursuit of self-improvement and trying to be a better spouse.** Healthy marriages tend to grow and change. This means that you must be willing to try on new behaviors and to take some risks.
5. **Make your marriage full of special surprises.** Marriages are more alive and exciting when there are surprises sprinkled in. Surprise your spouse with a vacation, special date night, or anything else that excites them.
6. **Take great self care.** If you're all stressed out and unhappy, you're going to be a bear to be around! Make sure that you follow a program of self care that allows you to give energy to the relationship.
7. **Develop common interests that you can share.** You're going to be spending a lot of time together. Whether it's golfing, traveling, or shopping, find your common interests and make them pleasurable experiences.
8. **Focus on being kind and not on being right.** It's easy to spend time proving you're right. Focus on being kind instead and you'll argue less and enjoy each other more.
9. **When things get heated, commit to a plan that works.** Don't say things in the heat of the moment that may do damage to your relationship. Have a plan in place that may include: walking away, continuing the discussion later, or some relaxation response.
10. **Develop a network of support.** Whether it's friends or family, have people that you spend time with whom you can confide in and be with.

By Mark Brandenburg, author of *Fix Your Wife in 30 Days or Less (And Improve Yourself at the Same Time)*, on [www.SmartMarriages.com](http://www.SmartMarriages.com)