

DEVOTIONS FOR
MARRIED COUPLES



WHAT
GOD
HAS JOINED
Together
STRENGTHENING
YOUR SACRED BOND

DAN & DANIELLE BEAN

Marriage is one of God's most beautiful gifts to us. Through this sacrament, God invites couples to participate in his divine love, creating a bond that reflects Christ's relationship with the Church. This devotional is designed to help you and your spouse explore and strengthen that sacred bond.

As we begin this journey, remember that God is already at work in your marriage. God chose you for each other and continues to pour out his grace upon your relationship. Let these reflections be opportunities to recognize and respond to his presence in your life together.

Dan and Danielle Bean

A SACRED BOND

Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate.

MARK 10:9

MARRIAGE MODELS: MARY AND JOSEPH

The Holy Family shows us how God works through married couples to accomplish his divine plan. Though their marriage faced innumerable challenges, Mary and Joseph remained faithful to each other and to God's calling, protecting and nurturing the sacred bond that God had forged between them.

The phrase “what God has joined together” reveals a beautiful truth...your marriage is not just about you and your spouse. God is actively present as the author of your love story. He doesn't simply bless your union from afar; God is the one who joins you together, and he remains intimately involved in your relationship.

When Jesus says, “...no human being must separate,” he reminds us that marriage is meant to be permanent. But these words offer more than a command; they also give us hope. As God himself has joined you together, as a married couple, he also gives you the grace to stay united through life's challenges. When you face difficulties, as every marriage does, you can lean on God's strength, not just your own.

FOR REFLECTION:

- How have you experienced God's presence in your marriage?
- What challenges in your marriage could you invite God to help you face together?
- In what ways can you better protect and nurture the bond God has created between you?

PRAY TOGETHER:

Lord, we thank you for joining us together in marriage. Help us to recognize your presence in our relationship each day. When we face challenges, remind us that you are the author of our life together and the source of our unity. Give us the grace to protect and strengthen the bond you have created between us. Amen.

DO TOGETHER:

1. Take a few quiet moments to each write down ways you've seen God working in your marriage recently.
2. Look at your wedding photos or video together, paying particular attention to the moments of your vows and blessing.
3. Write down one way you can each help strengthen your marriage this week, then pray together for God's help in following through.

TRADITION SPOTLIGHT:

Many Catholic couples frame their marriage certificate alongside their wedding photos. Consider creating a small prayer space in your home featuring these visible reminders of your sacramental bond, making it a place where you can pray together and renew your commitment to each other.

THE *Little* THINGS

[Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7

MARRIAGE MODELS: SAINTS LOUIS AND ZÉLIE MARTIN

The parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux demonstrated how ordinary daily life can be filled with extraordinary love. They found holiness in running their household, caring for their children and supporting each other through life's challenges.

Have you ever noticed how the smallest gestures can make the biggest difference in your marriage? A gentle touch as you pass in the kitchen, a quick “I love you” text during the workday or simply pausing to really listen when your spouse tells you about their day. These small moments of connection are like tiny threads that, woven together over time, create the beautiful tapestry of married life.

St. Paul tells us that love “bears all things,” and marriage gives us daily opportunities to live this out. When your spouse leaves their coffee mug in the sink again or forgets to pick up milk on the way home, these are chances to choose love over irritation. When bigger challenges arise—health concerns, financial stress or parenting difficulties—we are called to bear these burdens together, supporting each other with patience and understanding.

The beauty of a Catholic marriage is that we don't face these challenges alone. God is present in your marriage sacrament, ready to strengthen and guide you both. When you feel tested, remember that the same God who joined you together gives you the grace to love as he loves, bearing all things with a generous heart.



FOR REFLECTION:

- When was the last time a small gesture from your spouse made a big impact on you?
- What “little things” tend to irritate you about your spouse? How might God be inviting you to grow through these challenges?
- In what ways do you see Christ’s presence in your daily married life?

PRAY TOGETHER:

Lord, thank you for the gift of our marriage. Help us to see the opportunities to show love in small ways today. Give us patient hearts that bear with one another’s imperfections and trust in your grace to strengthen our love. Amen.

DO TOGETHER:

1. Take turns sharing three “little things” you appreciate about each other perhaps a habit, mannerism or daily kindness that often goes unnoticed.
2. Choose one small way to show extra thoughtfulness to your spouse today.
3. Before bed tonight, share with each other one moment from this week when you felt especially loved or appreciated.

TRADITION SPOTLIGHT:

The wedding rings that Catholic couples exchange during their marriage ceremony symbolize their permanent, faithful commitment. Consider making it a daily practice to touch or kiss your wedding ring while saying a brief prayer for your spouse—a simple way to renew your marriage promises and keep your spouse in your prayers throughout the day.

THE HEALING POWER OF *Forgiveness*

...be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.

EPHESIANS 4:32

MARRIAGE MODELS: SAINTS PETER AND FEVRONIA

This 13th-century couple demonstrated extraordinary forgiveness through life's challenges. When faced with criticism and opposition from Peter's noble family, they responded with patience and kindness, maintaining peace in their marriage through mutual understanding and forgiveness.

Every marriage experiences moments of hurt. Sometimes it's small things—a forgotten promise, a careless word or a moment of impatience. Other times the wounds run deeper—betrayed trust, harsh words spoken in anger or long periods of emotional distance. In these moments, we face a choice: hold on to hurt or choose the path of forgiveness.

The Church teaches us that forgiveness isn't just about saying "I'm sorry" and moving on. True reconciliation involves acknowledging the hurt, expressing genuine contrition and working together to rebuild trust. This mirrors the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, where we not only confess our sins but also make a firm purpose of amendment. In marriage, this might mean not only apologizing but making concrete changes to avoid causing the same hurt again.

Sometimes, we hesitate to seek forgiveness because we feel vulnerable or afraid. Will our spouse reject our apology? Are we "the loser" by making the first move toward reconciliation? But remember: Every time we choose forgiveness, we imitate Christ's love. He doesn't wait for us to be perfect before offering his mercy, and he gives us the grace to extend that same mercy to others, especially our spouse.

FOR REFLECTION:

- What makes it difficult for you to ask for forgiveness from your spouse?
- How do you feel when your spouse takes the first step toward reconciliation?
- In what ways can you make your home a place where forgiveness flows freely?

PRAY TOGETHER:

Lord, thank you for your endless mercy. Help us to be quick to forgive and slow to take offense. Give us humble hearts to acknowledge our faults and the courage to take the first step toward reconciliation. Unite us more deeply through every challenge we face together. Amen.

DO TOGETHER:

1. Set aside some time to share with each other following an argument: “I felt hurt when...” and “I appreciate when you...”
2. Write down one area where you could each grow in showing patience or understanding.
3. Create a simple ritual for reconciliation in your marriage—it could be something as simple as sharing a hug when you’ve worked through a disagreement.

TRADITION SPOTLIGHT:

Many Catholic couples end each day with a simple examination of conscience together, followed by asking forgiveness for any hurts caused that day, even small ones. This evening practice, inspired by the Ignatian Examen, helps prevent small misunderstandings from growing into larger conflicts and allows couples to start each new day with a clean slate.

Marriage is one of God's most beautiful gifts. Through the Sacrament of Matrimony, God invites couples to participate in his divine love, creating a bond that reflects Christ's relationship with the Church. This devotional invites married couples to explore and strengthen that sacred bond.

These pages explore fifteen different aspects of married life, from daily acts of love to sharing faith, from navigating challenges to building a legacy. Each devotion offers a theme from Scripture, and a marriage model—an example of a holy couple. Plus, you'll find insightful reflection questions, a suggested prayer, and practical activities inviting you and your spouse to grow closer to God and one another.

Catholic authors Dan and Danielle Bean met in high school and married right after college. They have been married for thirty years, have eight children and live in the home they built together in New Hampshire. Though they each have worn many professional titles over the years, the ones they cherish most are husband, wife, father and mother.

WHAT GOD HAS JOINED *Together*



Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible, revised edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All Rights Reserved. No part of the *New American Bible* may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

By Dan and Danielle Bean. Design by Jamie Wyatt. Cover image: AdobeStock/New Africa. © 2025 Creative Communications for the Parish, a division of Bayard, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.



1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026
800-325-9414 • www.creativecommunications.com



MR4

bayard