

## **OCIA – Symbolon Lesson 15: Matrimony and Holy Orders We Believe, chapter 12 “The Priesthood”, and chapter 13, “Marriage.”**

### **Opening Prayer: A Prayer for the Discernment of Vocations**

Loving God, my Creator and my Father, life is your gift to me. Through Baptism, you invite me to share the gift of my life in service to others. Be with me as I choose each day to show Your presence in our world.

Give me the courage and generosity to respond to Your love, to Your call. Open my heart and my mind to know what your most holy will for me and my life is and give me the courage and perseverance to do it. Open the minds and hearts of all men and women that we may all share in your work of building the Kingdom – in the Church, our homes, families, workplaces, schools, and society.

Loving God, you have made me in Your image and likeness, and for this I shall praise You forever. Through baptism, You invite me to serve as Your son Jesus served. I offer You this day all that I have and all that I am in union with His saving cross. Through the intercession of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, all the angels and saints, humbly hear our prayers and grant your Church’s needs, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

### **Song: Servant Song**

#### **• Catechism References for Further Reflection:**

- Marriage in God’s Plan: CCC 1602-1605
- Marriage as a Model of Christ’s Union with the Church: CCC 1616
- Permanence of Marriage: CCC 1638-1640
- Grace of the Sacrament: CCC 1641-1642
- The Indissolubility of Marriage: CCC 1644
- Openness to Fertility: CCC 1652-1654
- Holy Orders: CCC 1536-1538
- Participation in the Priesthood of Christ: CCC 1546-1548
- Three Degrees of Holy Orders: CCC 1552-1554
- Effects of the Sacrament of Holy Orders: CCC 1581-1585

#### **• Questions for Discussion:**

- Why is marriage one of the seven Sacraments, according to the teaching of the Catholic Church?
  
- What is God’s plan for marriage? How does that differ from secular society’s view of marriage? What do we mean when we say love is not a feeling, but a choice – an act of the will? Why is that important in marriage?

- What is a vocation? How did you know what vocation God was calling you to? What does “self-giving love” have to do with the vocations of marriage and holy orders?
- What do we mean that Sacramental Marriage needs to be “free,” “total,” “faithful,” and “fruitful”? Can a marriage be “fruitful” if the couple is not able to conceive children? How can someone who takes a vow of celibacy and is married to Christ and His Church be “fruitful”?
- Why does the Church hold up Christ’s relationship to the Church as a model for the marriage relationship?
- What are the three degrees within the Sacrament of Holy Orders? How are Bishops, Priests, and Deacons supposed to bring Christ to the Church?

• **Weekly Gospel Reading: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time** [Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21](#)

Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and ministers of the word have handed them down to us, I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all.

He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring glad tidings to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.*

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."