



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Heavenly Father,
Send your Holy Spirit
to open our minds and hearts.
With your grace,
grant us understanding of Your
gifts of human sexuality, marriage,
children, and family
according to Your divine plan.
Grow in us the virtues of chastity,
prudence, temperance, justice,
and fortitude.
Deepen our faith, hope, and love
so that we can love You and
our families and neighbors
as You love us!

Amen.

Reading (*Lectio*)

Read the following Scripture slowly, and if possible, out loud, two or three times.
(Matthew 20:20–28)

The mother of the sons of Zebedee approached Jesus with her sons and did him homage, wishing to ask him for something.
He said to her,
“What do you wish?”
She answered him,
“Command that these two sons of mine sit, one at your right and the other at your left, in your Kingdom.”
Jesus said in reply,
“You do not know what you are asking.

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Can you drink the chalice that I am going to drink?”
They said to him, “We can.”
He replied,
“My chalice you will indeed drink,
but to sit at my right and at my left, this is not mine to give
but is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”
When the ten heard this,
they became indignant at the two brothers.
But Jesus summoned them and said,
“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them,
and the great ones make their authority over them felt.
But it shall not be so among you.
Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant;
whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.
Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served
but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”



Meditation (*Meditatio*)

During this NFP Week, ask a few more questions:

After the reading, call upon the Holy Spirit to help you reflect in silence on one or more of the following questions:

- ❖ **What word or phrase caught my attention?**
- ❖ **What did the word or phrase “say” to me?**
- ❖ **What comforted me?**
- ❖ **What challenged me?**

During this NFP Week where we celebrate God’s gifts of married love and the gift of life and learn about the ethical methods of Natural Family Planning, ask a few more questions:

- ❖ Have I embraced the Lord God's truth about the nature of human sexuality, marriage, and children and do I help others to understand?
- ❖ When I don't understand Church teaching, especially about the nature of human sexuality and marriage, do I use the Catechism of the Catholic Church?
- ❖ Do I trust in God's design for my marriage?



Contemplation (*Contemplatio*)

Read the Scripture again, followed by this reflection:

- ❖ What conversion of mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me?
- ❖ Is my heart open to the Lord's grace?

Now, sit in silence and let the Holy Spirit speak to you.



Prayer (*Oratio*)

Praise the Lord and bring your concerns and petitions to Him.

After your conversation with the Lord, pause and be still in His presence. Allow yourself to love Him and receive His love.



Closing Prayer

Conclude your prayer with following psalm taken from today's readings (Psalm 126:1bc–2ab, 2cd–3, 4–5, 6):

When the LORD brought back the captives of Zion,
we were like men dreaming.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with rejoicing.

Then they said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."
The LORD has done great things for us;
we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the torrents in the southern desert.
Those that sow in tears
shall reap rejoicing.

Although they go forth weeping,
carrying the seed to be sown,
They shall come back rejoicing,
carrying their sheaves.

Lord help me to love like You!

Amen. <https://www.usccb.org/catechism-of-the-catholic-church>



Resources

Catechism of the Catholic Church at <https://www.usccb.org/catechism-of-the-catholic-church>

Church teaching on love and human sexuality:

This webpage summarizes Catholic teaching <https://www.usccb.org/topics/natural-family-planning/love-and-sexuality>

Humanae vitae: This papal document (encyclical) of the Catholic Church explains the nature of married love and the gift of life

https://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html

Married Love and the Gift of Life: This document of the U.S. bishops summarizes Church teaching on marriage, procreation, and responsible parenthood. See

<https://www.usccb.org/resources/Married%20Love%20Final%20Text%20Nov06%20for%20Website%20-%20Copy.pdf>

Natural Family Planning (NFP): Where to learn about the ethical methods of NFP and to learn a method see <https://www.usccb.org/topics/natural-family-planning>



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