



## **Marriage and Family Key Issues and Key Questions**

### **Cultural Realities**

- There have been seismic changes in cultural realities facing married couples and families
- Positive realities include greater attention to interpersonal relationships, promotion of the dignity of women, and the Church's emphasis on the family to help build a just society
- Negative realities include cultural "hostility" to marriage and family, re-defining marriage, frenetic "busyness," and pervasive pornography (especially the internet)
- Challenges to marriage as identified by the US Bishops are cohabitation, divorce, same-sex unions and contraception

**Reflection Question:** Given these cultural realities, how do we support and strengthen marriage and family in our culture today?

### **Theological Foundations**

- Theological foundations for marriage and family are found in the very beginning of Sacred Scripture - God created male and female in "His image" and found His creation to be "very good" (Genesis 1:31) and God creates men and women as "suitable partners" (Gn. 2:23)
- The Catholic Church understands marriage as a covenant that is a permanent, faithful, and fruitful partnership between one man and one woman
- The Church also recognizes the challenges of living out this unbreakable union and acknowledges that it can be difficult at times

**Reflection Questions:** How can those who are married be living witnesses to the sacrament of marriage as a life-long and life-giving commitment?

### **Other Issues and Challenges**

- Fewer people have a true understanding of marriage and family in our society and as Catholics we are called to fully realize the importance of the vocation to marriage
- Parishes are called to promote the vocation of marriage through regular preaching on marriage, catechesis on marriage for all ages, formation of the engaged, and support of married couples from early to mature marriages

**Reflection Question:** How can we as a Church of southeastern Wisconsin better support couples living out their vocation to marriage?

### **Small Group Task: Key Initiatives, Quick Hits, Innovative Ideas**

In light of the key issues and questions articulated above, identify how to strengthen the mission of the Church in the area of **Marriage and Family** through:

- **2-3 Key Initiatives**
- **1-2 Quick Hits**
- **2-3 Innovative Ideas**