



Pope Francis:

“Faithfulness, perseverance, and fruitfulness are the three pillars of Christ’s love for His bride, the Church – three characteristics that are also at the heart of Christian marriage.” (Mass in Casa Santa Marta with Fifteen Married Couples, June 11, 2014)

Breaking open the theme:

When constructing a building, a blueprint is essential. When getting married, a bride and groom find the “blueprint” for their marriage in Jesus Christ. Looking at Jesus, husbands and wives see the “pillars” of their marital home, as Pope Francis so aptly described. Christ’s love is faithful: he will never leave or forsake his beloved, the Church. Christ’s love perseveres: he told his disciples, “I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Mt 28:20). Christ’s love is fruitful: “Whoever remains in me...will bear much fruit” (Jn 15:5). Fidelity, perseverance, and fruitfulness are the “pillars” that hold up the marital home, making it a place of peace and joy for all its members.

Reflection:

Runners know all about perseverance. There’s a moment in every run – maybe the 10 mile mark, maybe the **1-lap mark** – when the body protests, “No more!” and every pace is painful. But if you fight through the discomfort, on the other side is a second wind. Marriage, too, has moments where one more minute feels impossible. Veteran married couples advise to take a deep breath, say a prayer, seek help, but by all means, keep going! The best is yet to come.

Put it into Practice:

1 Pray: Read Psalm 136 together with your spouse; “God’s love endures forever” (NAB).

2 Reflect: Think back on a time when the going got tough. How did you get through it? Maybe you’re in a tough time now; don’t be afraid to ask for help.

3 Do: Reach out to another married couple you know and invite them to a night of prayer and fellowship.

Prayer for Married Couples:

Almighty and eternal God,
You blessed the union of husband and wife
So that we might reflect the union of Christ with his Church:
look with kindness on us.
Renew our marriage covenant.
Increase your love in us,
and strengthen our bond of peace
so that, [with our children],
we may always rejoice in the gift of your blessing.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.