



### **The Two Shall Become One: The Sacrament of Reconciliation and Marriage**

God calls most men and women to the married vocation. This is a great honor and an immense challenge. To fulfill this marvelous calling we need Christ's help; we need his Spirit's power.

#### **Responsibilities to God:**

- Have I gone to Mass every Sunday?
- Have I participated at Mass or
- Have I daydreamed or been present with a blank mind?
- Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?
- Have I read the Bible?
- Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more part of the way I think and act?
- Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?
- Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?
- Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life, to be a proper husband/wife and parent?
- Have I been financially generous to the Church?
- Have I participated in parish or religious activities?
- Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?

#### **Responsibilities to my spouse:**

- Have I cared for my spouse?
- Have I been generous with my time?
- Have I been affectionate and loving?
- Have I told my spouse that I love him or her?
- Have I been concerned about the spiritual well-being of my spouse?
- Have I listened to my spouse?
- Have I paid attention to his or her concerns, worries, and problems? Have I sought these out?
- Have I allowed resentments and bitterness toward my spouse to take root in my mind? Have I nurtured these?
- Have I forgiven my spouse for the wrongs he or she has committed against me?
- Have I allowed misunderstanding, miscommunication or accidents to cause anger and mistrust?
- Have I nurtured critical and negative thoughts about my spouse?
- Have I manipulated my spouse in order to get my own way?
- Have I tried to bully or overpower my spouse?
- Have I spoken sharply or sarcastically to my spouse?
- Have I spoken in a demeaning or negative way?

### **Responsibilities to my spouse (cont.):**

- Have I injured my spouse through taunting and negative teasing?
- Have I called my spouse harsh names or used language that is not respectful?
- Have I physically abused my spouse?
- Have I gossiped about my spouse?
- Have I undermined the authority and dignity of my spouse through disrespect and rebelliousness?
- Have I been moody and sullen?
- Have I bickered with my spouse out of stubbornness and selfishness?
- Have I lied or been deceitful to my spouse?
- Have I misused sexuality?
- Have I used sexual relations solely for my own selfish pleasure?
- Have I been too demanding in my desire sexual fulfillment?
- Have I been loving and physically affectionate in my sexual relations or
- Have I used sexual relations in a way that would be demeaning or disrespectful to my spouse?
- Have I refused sexual relations out of laziness, revenge or manipulation?
- Have I refused to conceive children out of selfishness or material greed?
- Have I used artificial means of contraception?
- Have I had an abortion or encouraged others to have one?
- Have I masturbated?
- Have I flirted or fostered improper relationships with someone else, either in my mind or through words and actions?
- Have I committed adultery?
- Have I misused alcohol or drugs?
- Have I been financially responsible?

### **Responsibilities to children:**

- Have I cared for the spiritual needs of my children?
- Have I been a shepherd and guardian as God has appointed me?
- Have I tried to foster a Christian family where Jesus is Lord?
- Have I taught my children the Gospel and the commandments of God?
- Have I prayed with them?
- Have I been persistent and courageous in my training and teaching?
- Have I disciplined them when necessary?
- Have I been lazy and apathetic?
- Have I talked with them to find out their problems, concerns and fears?
- Have I been affectionate toward them?
- Have I hugged them and told them that I love them?
- Have I played or spent time with them?
- Have I been impatient and frustrated with them?
- Have I corrected them out of love in order to teach them what is right and good?
- Have I treated them with respect?
- Have I spoken to them in a sarcastic or demeaning way?
- Have I held resentments against them? Have I forgiven them?
- Have I been of one heart and mind with my spouse in the upbringing of our children? Or have I allowed disagreements and dissension to disrupt the training, educating and disciplining of our children?
- Have I undermined the role of authority in the eyes of my children by speaking negatively against God, the Church, my spouse or others who hold legitimate authority over them?

**Responsibilities to children (cont.):**

- Have I been a good Christian witness to my children in what I say and do? Or do I demand one standard for them and another for myself?
- Have I been properly generous with my children regarding money and physical and material well-being?
- Have I been miserly?
- Have I been extravagant, thus spoiling them?

**Responsibilities to society and others:**

- Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate?
- Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?
- Have I held resentments and anger against those with whom I work, relatives or friends? Have I forgiven them?
- Have I been unethical in my business dealings?
- Have I stolen or lied?
- Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?
- Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?
- Have I paid my taxes?
- Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my “political” enemies, either local, national or international?
- Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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