

## BELOVED: The Mystery and Meaning of Marriage Discussion Questions

### Episode 3: Love Revealed (34 minutes)

1. What are the ways that our culture typically thinks about marriage? How do you normally think about marriage? How are these consistent with or different than the Catholic idea that marriage is a reflection of God's love?
2. "Small things add up to big things." What sacrifices do you currently make for your beloved? What small sacrifices might you be able to do regularly for your beloved?
3. Do you agree that it is impossible, without grace, to give 100% of yourself to the other? Why or why not?
4. How is "faithfulness" in marriage broader than avoiding adultery?
5. What aspect of love (free, total, faithful, or fruitful) is currently or could be the biggest challenge for you in your relationship?
6. How do you relate to John Paul II's words, "Love is a constant challenge thrown to us by God."?
7. Who is a witness to you of married love lived well?
8. What is a way that your beloved loves you like Christ? Share with your beloved one way that he/she make you feel honored, cherished, valued, or appreciated.

#### **Episode 4: Total Gift of Self (48 minutes)**

1. The video shows a boxer training and describes how muscles grow when they are pushed to the limit and then rebuild. Have you experienced greater strength coming out of times of trial?
2. Pope St. John Paul II often said that the man cannot fully find himself except through making a sincere gift of himself. How have you experienced growth through serving others?
3. He also said, "Freedom exists for the sake of love" and therefore, the freer a person is, the greater the person's capacity to love. The video mentions selfishness, pride, and lust as things that restrict our freedom. What other subtle things can you think of that take away freedom?
4. How would you explain how virtues allow greater love than relying on feelings?
5. The video suggested that we often treat our beloved like we do the television, changing the channel when we find our beloved boring, annoying, or hurtful. Do you often find yourself wanting to change your beloved?
6. A woman in the video says that her fiancé described his greatest desire as "to be completely known." What are some ways you do not feel completely known or accepted by your beloved? How can your beloved help you feel more completely known?
7. The point of sex is two-fold: the deepening unity of the married couple and procreation and that these ends cannot be separated. The video describes that if the sexual act is not directed toward these ends, the act is perverted or distorted. What are examples of the sexual act not being directed toward these ends?
8. Consider your relationship in light of these teachings about a total gift of self:
  - a. If you are currently sexually intimate, what are some of the ways this might be hurting your relationship now and in the future? How would you describe the benefits of saving sexual intimacy for marriage?
  - b. If you are not currently sexually intimate, what are some things you can do as you prepare for marriage to ensure you not only keep this commitment, but also live God's plan for sexual intimacy once you are married?

### **Episode 5: A Sacramental Bond (34 minutes)**

1. The video describes that “you have been preparing for marriage your entire life.” What experiences have been good formation? Are there experiences that have negatively prepared you?
2. What are the three things that happen when a couple makes their marriage vows?
3. “Grace is very practical.” God comes into our day to day experience. Can you think of specific experiences of God’s grace in your life?
4. What complementary strengths do you bring to each other, so that the two of you, combined with God’s grace, create an amazing “spaghetti sauce”?
5. One speaker says that “marriage is an altar.” Altars are for sacrifice. What gets sacrificed on the altar of marriage?
6. For those called to marriage, the marriage relationship is the primary place that God helps us to grow out of our selfishness. How have you experienced this growth so far in your relationship?
7. Consider your faults that have come to the surface through your deep relationship with your beloved. Spend some time acknowledging your own faults to your beloved.
8. Instead of being discouraged by your and your beloved’s faults coming to the surface, how else could you react? [This would be a great time to pray and thank God for the shaping He is doing in your life.]
9. Probably many people coming to your wedding have not received this Catholic vision of marriage as the process of being shaped into a saint and revealing God’s love to the world. If you have been inspired, take time to brainstorm what you can do to give them this perspective.