



Diocese of Worcester
Office of the Bishop
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

June 26, 2007

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I write to inform you about an initiative of the Massachusetts Catholic Conference (MCC) that concerns the institution of marriage. It has been titled, "The Future Depends on Love." My brother bishops in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and I believe that the moral and cultural atmosphere that is seriously eroding the traditional understanding of marriage both as a social institution and a divinely instituted sacrament demands such an important educational undertaking.

The purpose of the marriage initiative is four-fold: 1) to educate and inspire Catholics about the vocation of marriage and its importance in the Church and in society; 2) to motivate and equip, you, the Catholic laity, to become well-informed and articulate participants in the public debate on marriage and family; 3) to influence public policy and legislation by faithful and public witness to those foundational moral values that inform the Church's teaching about marriage, family and the common good of society; 4) help fellow Catholics, family members, neighbors and friends retrieve the "common sense" and traditional understanding of marriage as the life-long union of a husband and wife, open to the gift of children.

There will be three essential elements of this marriage initiative: 1) prayer 2) education 3) public witness. To emphasize how important the power of prayer will be to the ultimate success of this initiative, prayer cards depicting the Holy Family will be made available to you at the Lord's Day Masses on the weekend of July 7-8, 2007. I would ask you to offer this prayer for the success of this important initiative.

During this summer, the method and content for implementing the elements of education and public witness will be developed by the staff of the MCC. I have asked Cynthia Dobrzynski, the director of our Family Life Office and Allison LeDoux, the director of our Pro-Life Office, to coordinate our diocesan implementation of this marriage initiative.

One of the momentous moral and social issues of our time is the defense and promotion of marriage and the family, realities that are essential to the common good of society. The Catholic Church, in fulfillment of Christ's mandate to be "the light of the world," wishes to shed the light of natural moral reason and the teaching of Christ on this matter of utmost importance. I ask you, the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Worcester, to assist me and the other bishops of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in re-affirming and promoting vigorously the beauty of marriage and the truth of the insight that the "Future Depends on Love."

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Robert J. McManus

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus, S.T.D.
Bishop of Worcester