

**SUGGESTIONS FOR MEDITATIONS ON FR. RUPNIK'S IMAGE
"THIS MYSTERY IS GREAT"**



1.

«For this reason a man shall leave (his) father and (his) mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.»

This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church! » (Eph 5:31-32)



1st step: Let us observe the image

What do I see?

I observe the details

In the love of a man and a woman there is a mystery that is veiled, hidden.

2nd step: Notions from Amoris Laetitia

- «**Marriage is a vocation**, inasmuch as it is a response to a specific call to experience conjugal love as an imperfect sign of the love between Christ and the Church». (AL n. 72)
- «**Christ the Lord “makes himself present to the Christian spouses in the sacrament of marriage’ and remains with them.** In the incarnation, he assumes human love, purifies it and brings it to fulfilment». (AL n. 67)

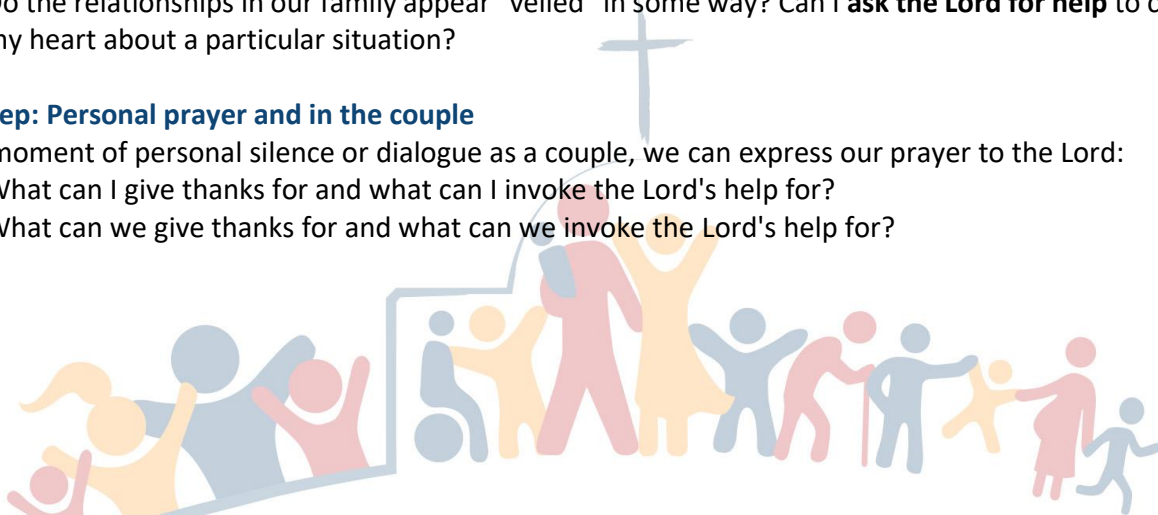
3rd step: Contemplation

- **Our "yes"** to forming a family is our response to God's call to live out love in marriage and family. It is a "yes" that we are called to renew every day. In the Sacrament of Matrimony, with their "yes", a man and woman ask the Lord **to transform their love**, so that it may be purified and grow towards its completeness.
- Do the relationships in our family appear "veiled" in some way? Can I **ask the Lord for help** to change my heart about a particular situation?

4th step: Personal prayer and in the couple

In a moment of personal silence or dialogue as a couple, we can express our prayer to the Lord:

- What can I give thanks for and what can I invoke the Lord's help for?
- What can we give thanks for and what can we invoke the Lord's help for?



2.

«The Spirit which the Lord pours forth gives a new heart» FC n. 13



1st step: Let us observe the image

What do I see?

I observe the details

St. Paul's hand removes the veil: now we understand that the love between the bride and the groom is a reflection of the infinite and indissoluble love that Jesus has for the Church, his Bride, and that God has for humanity.

The love that is lived within the family reveals an image, albeit veiled, of the infinite love of God, which is a "nuptial" love.

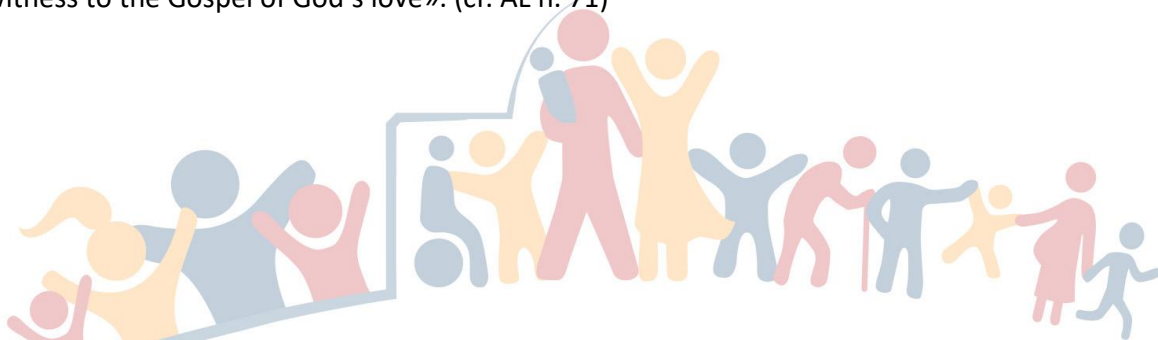
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2nd step: Notions from Amoris Laetitia

God's infinite love is a reality so great that in the beginning mankind could not understand, nor imagine how great God's love could be for each one of us (cf. Father Rupnik's explanation). After God gave up His Son for us and after Jesus offered to die on the Cross to save us, then God's love appeared concrete to us and we began to perceive **the mystery of such a great love.**

This is why Saint Paul can begin to lift the veil and we can catch a glimpse of some aspect of God's love in the love between a man and a woman.

- The truth «of the love of man and woman, (...) is fully illuminated only in the love of the crucified Christ. (...) "Marriage based on an exclusive and definitive love becomes an icon of the relationship between God and his people, and vice versa. **God's way of loving becomes the measure of human love**"». (AL n. 70)
- "Scripture and Tradition give us access to a knowledge of the Trinity, which is revealed with the features of a family. The family is the image of God, who is a communion of persons. [...] Jesus, [...] not only returned marriage and the family to their original form, but also raised marriage to the sacramental sign of his love for the Church (cf. *Mt* 19:1-12; *Mk* 10:1-12; *Eph* 5:21-32). Through the Church, **marriage and the family receive the grace of the Holy Spirit** from Christ, in order to bear witness to the Gospel of God's love». (cf. AL n. 71)





3rd step: Contemplation

The love we live in our family reveals a "veiled" image of "God's way of loving," but with the power of the Holy Spirit, we can lift the veil more and more and grow, day by day, in our ability to love.

- What frailties can I try to overcome?
- What are the fragile aspects of our relationship and how might we try to overcome them?

4th step: Personal prayer and in the couple

In a moment of personal silence or dialogue as a couple, we can express our prayer to the Lord:

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- What can we give thanks for and what can we invoke the Lord's help for?



3.

“They have no wine.” (Jn 2:3)



1st step: Let us observe the image

What do I see?

I observe the details

The jars: they are made of stone; they had been filled with water, now they are empty.

2nd step: Notions from Amoris Laetitia

- «Even if I have faith so as to remove mountains, **but have not love, I am nothing.** (...) The word “love”, however, is commonly used and often misused. [...] Love is experienced and nurtured in the daily life of couples and their children». (Cf. AL nos. 89-90)
- «The life of every family is marked by all kinds of crises, yet these are also part of its dramatic beauty. Couples should be helped to realize that surmounting a crisis need not weaken their relationship; instead, it can improve, settle and mature the wine of their union. **Life together should not diminish but increase their contentment; every new step along the way can help couples find new ways to happiness.** Each crisis becomes an apprenticeship in growing closer together or learning a little more about what it means to be married. There is no need for couples to resign themselves to an inevitable downward spiral or a tolerable mediocrity. On the contrary, when marriage is seen as a challenge that involves overcoming obstacles, **each crisis becomes an opportunity to let the wine of their relationship age and improve.** [...] Each crisis has a lesson to teach us; we need to learn how to listen for it with the ear of the heart». (AL n. 232)

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3rd step: Contemplation

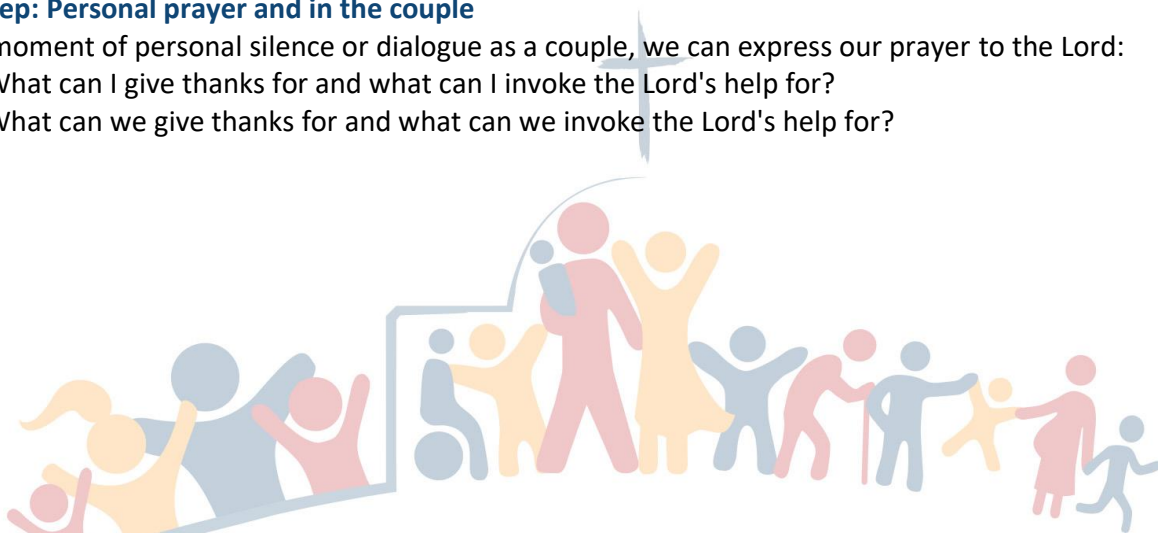
The water contained in the jars can be compared to our human love that, over time, seems to wear out. There are times or periods in our lives when we feel like there is little love left in our jars.

- Every crisis, whether big or small, can become "an opportunity to let the wine of their relationship age and improve". Am I really convinced about this? Can I believe it and keep hope alive, even in difficult times?

4th step: Personal prayer and in the couple

In a moment of personal silence or dialogue as a couple, we can express our prayer to the Lord:

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- What can we give thanks for and what can we invoke the Lord's help for?



4.

The Spirit which the Lord pours forth (...) renders man and woman capable of loving one another as Christ has loved us. FC n. 13



1st step: Let us observe the image

What do I see?

I observe the details closely

Father Rupnik has portrayed St. Paul as he pours the wine that came out as blood from Christ's side: it is the good wine of love, offered to humanity.

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2nd step: Notions from Amoris Laetitia

«The common life of husband and wife, the entire network of relations that they build with their children and the world around them, will be steeped in and strengthened by the grace of the sacrament. [...], whereby God showed the fullness of his love for humanity by becoming one with us. Neither of the spouses will be alone in facing whatever challenges may come their way. Both **are called to respond to God's gift with commitment, creativity, perseverance and daily effort**. They can always invoke the assistance of the Holy Spirit who consecrated their union, so that his grace may be felt in every new situation that they encounter». (AL n. 74)

3rd step: Contemplation

- I will reflect on my commitment to think creatively and persistently about new ways to love within my family.
- Let us reflect together on how we can cultivate our relationship with God, to recognize Him as the only source of Love from which we can always draw and thus return to fill our jars, our hearts.

4th step: Personal prayer and in the couple

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