

First Steps Into Marriage

CONGRATULATIONS ON STARTING YOUR MARRIED LIFE TOGETHER!

As you begin this exciting journey together, remember what a great mission has been entrusted to you. God, who has united you through His Sacrament of Marriage, will give you all the grace you need to be the living expression of God's love for your spouse. This love will bless the world in countless ways as it radiates from your home.

In this first stage of your married life, you have the opportunity to set a foundation that will help you through the future seasons of your marriage. This guide contains some of the best tips we have collected.



"The married couple are therefore a permanent reminder for the Church of what took place on the cross; they are for one another and for their children witnesses of the salvation in which they share through the sacrament."

POPE FRANCIS

SET UP SUSTAINABLE HABITS OF CONNECTING AS A COUPLE.

Find daily, sustainable rituals of connecting physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Examples of rituals include prayer and a hug before work, or catching up over a beverage before bed.

HAVE ONGOING COUPLE MEETINGS.

Make a list of essential points of business you need to discuss, and go through the list together at the end of the week. These topics are not to be discussed on a date!

MAKE FRIENDS WITH SOME GREAT COUPLES.

intentionally invite over couples with marriages that inspire you. Bonus points if they are from your parish.

DISCUSS DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE.

Now that the wedding is over, it's time to do even more dreaming together! Write down your hopes for your future, and prioritize them together.

GROW RELATIONSHIPS BUT SET BOUNDARIES WITH FAMILY.

Have honest conversations about your hopes for your new family's relationship with extended family, especially around holidays. Be sure your marriage comes first, and that you are honoring each-other's relationships.



KEEP DATING YOUR SPOUSE.

Those spontaneous adventures and planned efforts that made courtship romantic do not need to stop. Plan date nights to continue pursuing each other.

PRACTICE THE "WE" MINDSET.

Before saying yes to commitments of time, money, or energy, consult with your spouse.

HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS FOR MARRIED LIFE.

Embrace each day as an opportunity to choose love, regardless of what you are feeling. Your marriage will probably not be "happily ever after," but it will be beautiful as you learn more about loving your spouse everyday!

REMEMBER THAT BOTH OF YOU ARE BROKEN...DIFFERENTLY.

Instead of focusing on the ways you wish your spouse would change, focus on the ways you can grow for the sake of your spouse. Strive to show your spouse the gentle, merciful response that God gives us.

BE OPEN TO CHANGE.

Be prepared to make sacrifices and lifestyle changes that you did not expect in order to prioritize your marriage. This is especially important as children enter the picture.



GET USED TO APOLOGIZING AND FORGIVING.

Begin offering apologies and forgiveness for small things, after acknowledging openly the offense or disappointment.

BE WISE ABOUT WHAT YOU SAY ABOUT YOUR SPOUSE.

Be careful that you only share sensitive information about your spouse or marriage with people who have the best interests of your marriage at heart and in a way that respects your spouse's dignity.

CRAFT A ROUTINE TO RESPECT EACH PERSON'S NEEDS.

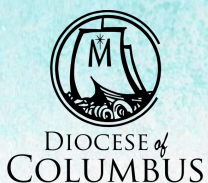
You both likely need different things to be your best selves. Talk about how you can best accommodate each-other's needs for alone time, investment in hobbies, family time, etc.

KEEP UP WITH YOUR INDIVIDUAL PRAYER LIFE.

You will probably need to set up new routines for prayer that fit your new season of life. Find a sustainable rhythm that works for you!

PRAY AND FAST FOR YOUR SPOUSE.

Choose a specific intention for your spouse each day, and bring that intention to your prayer. You may want to add fasting or another sacrifice.



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