

Lord, we ask for the grace to become your evangelising witnesses in thought, word and action,

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

*If anyone would like to offer a prayer intention, please do so ...*

*... Lord, hear our prayer.*

**We pray together the Lord's Prayer, *Our Father...***

### **Final Prayer**

**As our time of prayer together comes to an end we say together.....**

*If the Blessed Sacrament IS exposed*

Lord Jesus, thank you for this time we have spent in your presence.  
Thank you for the many gifts you have given us. We ask that all married couples may know a deeper love and unity, spiritually accompanying and supporting each other in their vocation.  
Confident of your unending love, we place our prayer before you. Amen.

*If the Blessed Sacrament is NOT exposed*

Loving Father, thank you for this time we have spent in your presence.  
Thank you for the many gifts you have given us. We ask that all married couples may know a deeper love and unity, spiritually accompanying and supporting each other in their vocation.  
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **A Gospel reading to take home for further reflection and prayer**

'Every year his parents used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies. They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, "My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you." "Why were you looking for me?" he replied. "Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?" But they did not understand what he meant.

He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart'. **Luke 2: 41-51a**

# Marriage and Family Life

## A Holy Hour

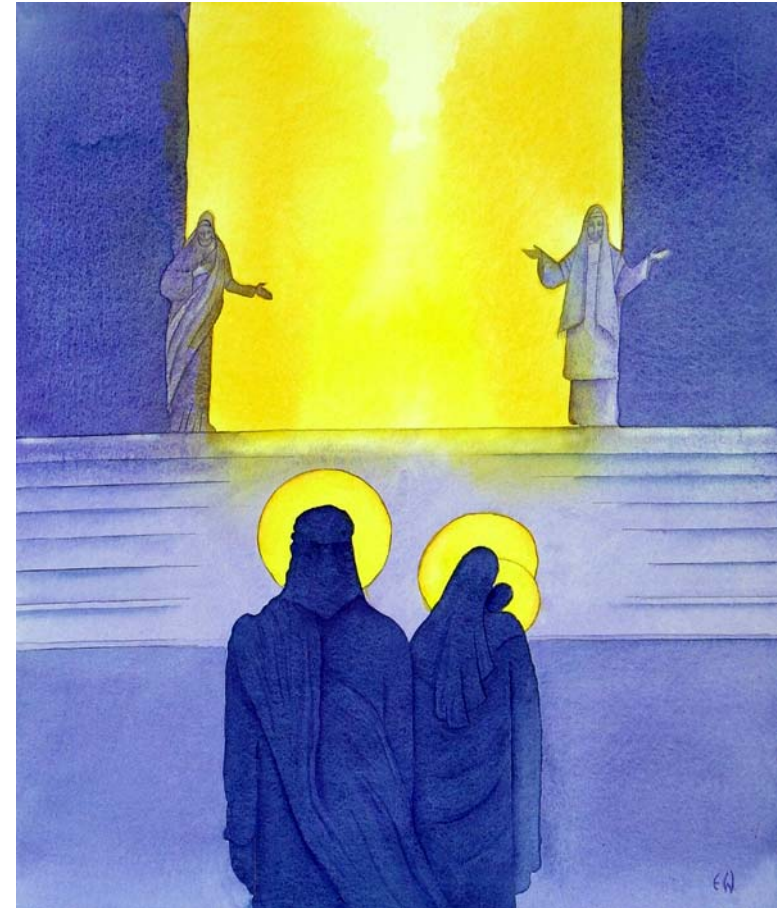




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*Called into God's wonderful light*

**Booklet Seven**

**Holy Hour Seven**  
**Marriage and Family Life**

**Prayer focus:** Tonight we celebrate the vocation to which many of us are called – marriage and family life. We thank God for the families in which we grew up, our parents, siblings, spouses, children and our wider family. We thank God, too, for the Holy Family, our model and guide.

**Suggested hymns:**

A new commandment; Bind us together; God is love, his the care; Here in this place (Gather us in); Let there be love; O the love of my Lord; One bread, one body; The King of Love; This is what Yahweh asks of you; Ubi Caritas; We are one in the spirit; Where there is love and loving kindness.

**Welcome and introduction** (1 min)

**Hymn** (3 mins)

**Scripture reading Song of Songs 8:6-7** (ending with "no torrents drown.")  
*Love no flood can quench*

**PAUSE** (1 min)

**Reflection** (3 mins)  
**(Pause briefly after every point).**

- We thank you Lord for the loving and merciful covenant existing between us since the earliest times.
- Thank you Lord for your fidelity and tenderness, even though many times we stray away onto other paths, other roads.
- Thank you Lord, for reminding us, in this moment, that your love is stronger than death, a love no waters can quench.

**Silent prayer** (5 mins)

**Scripture Ephesians 5:21-28** (ending with "...himself.")  
*Give way to one another in Christ.*

**PAUSE** (1 min)

As we spend the next few moments in silence, let us give thanks for the loving relationships in all our lives and if you are married, especially call to mind your spouse. Let us also ask for renewed grace in all our relationships and to love one another as Christ loves us, His Church.

**Silent prayer** (5 mins)

**Hymn**

**Gospel reading Luke 2:41-51a** (ending with "...her heart.") (2 mins)  
*Jesus is found in the Temple*

**PAUSE** (1 min)

**Reflection**  
**(Pause after every point)**

- Lord Jesus, we thank you for the gift of spousal love between husband and wife.
- Lord Jesus, we thank you for the gift of families, and they way they witness to your love, despite the many difficulties they face.
- Lord, in these next few moments, whether we are married or not, we seek the grace to grow and deepen the loving commitment to others that we have made in our lives; to parents, children, brothers and sisters and friends.

**Silent prayer** (10 mins)

**Renewal of marriage vows for couples present** (Optional)

**Litany of praise and intercession**

Loving Father, we praise and thank you for the spousal covenant between Christ the Bridegroom and the Church, His Bride.

**Father, we praise and thank you for your love.**

Thank you Jesus, for the way in which marriage witnesses to your love and mercy,  
**Father, we praise and thank you for your love.**

Thank you Lord, for all the people to whom we have made deep and loving commitments in our lives,  
**Father, we praise and thank you for your love.**

Thank you for the gift of the sacrament of marriage,  
**Father, we praise and thank you for your love.**

Lord, we ask you for every blessing on our family and friends,  
**Lord hear our prayer.**

Lord, we bring before you all the needs of our parish and Church,  
**Lord hear our prayer.**

Lord, we ask you for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life,  
**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Lord, we ask you to bless all those you call to the vocation of marriage and all lay single people in their daily lives and commitments,  
**Lord, hear our prayer.**