

## ***Made for Each Other: Parish Night Outline***

This parish night outline is provided as a suggested framework for use by clergy or pastoral leaders in facilitating group conversation of the themes from the USCCB's *Marriage Unique for a Reason* video "Made for Each Other."

### **1. Introduction**

Write this quotation on the board before participants arrive. It will serve as a conversation-starter.

*"This partnership of man and woman constitutes the first form of communion between persons."  
- Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World), #12*

Once you have roughly the number of people that you expected at the gathering, ask them to introduce themselves to the people they are sitting near, and to discuss the quote with one another. Ask them to discuss how they understand the word "communion." How would they define it? How is it different from "community"? Give this about five minutes.

### **2. Preliminary Discussion Question**

Ask participants to consider the following question: How has the definition of legal marriage changed in America such that today the word does not communicate what it should (lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman)? Think broadly— from the acceptance of no-fault divorce to the changes of the "sexual revolution," etc. Give the participants some time to talk with one or two people near them about this, then ask someone to share their thoughts. (Let this person know in advance, if possible, that you will be seeking their feedback first). Allow a free discussion to follow. If there are not many comments, you may want to offer your own observations.

### **3. View *Made for Each Other* (12 minutes)**

### **4. Post-Viewing Discussion**

These are three main points to frame your discussion:

1. Men and women are "made for each other"
2. Sexual difference is essential to marriage
3. Men and women have a different *way* of being *the same* (explanation follows!)

Firstly, you may ask participants to consider how man and woman are made "for" each other rather than as simple separate, self-sufficient individuals. How does both sameness and difference play into our relationships with one another? How does sameness and difference help love to grow and children to thrive?

Next, given what came up in the previous question, why does the Church say that this

sameness and difference of man and woman is *essential* to marriage (i.e. makes marriage *be* marriage and not another relationship)? How is a healthy, deep friendship between two women, for example, a completely different thing than marriage?

Finally, it's time to do a bit of philosophy. Ask the participants what it really means to be human. What makes us be the kind of thing that we are? How would you explain what "human being" is to an alien? Have participants discuss this in pairs or small groups. Then, taking that information, ask how the definition they came up with can help explain why the term marriage should be reserved to the unique reality of the union between one man and one woman.

#### **5. Other questions or comments**

If they ask, yes, the couple in the video are actors working off a script. Another topic you may want to bring up is how both reason and revelation attest to the importance of sexual difference in human life and relationships.