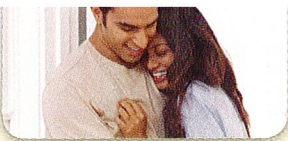
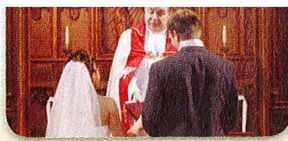


## Looking Ahead

In this chapter, the Holy Spirit invites you to ►



**EXPLORE** the Church's hopes for newly married couples.



**DISCOVER** God's plan for love and life in marriage.



**DECIDE** how to be a true sign of Christ's love.

CHAPTER

# 16



## The Sacrament of Matrimony

**?** What qualities are necessary to maintain a close friendship with someone? How would you define love?

Here is the way Saint Paul described for the community at Corinth what love is and what it is not:

*Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. . . . So faith, hope, love remain, these three, but the greatest of these is love.*

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7, 13

**?** Have you heard this passage before? What does it tell you about the challenges of loving your family members or your friends?



## Disciple Power

### Chastity

When we exercise self-control with God's grace in our relationships, the Holy Spirit forms the virtue of chastity in us. This means that we can appropriately integrate the gift of our human sexuality according to God's calling for us. In other words, we respect each other as persons and not as objects to be used.

# THE CHURCH FOLLOWS JESUS

## A Marriage Blessing

When a man and woman are married in the presence of a priest within the celebration of the Eucharist, the rite concludes with a solemn blessing. Here is a portion of that beautiful blessing:

May the peace of Christ live always in your hearts and in your home.

May you have true friends to stand by you, both in joy and in sorrow.

May you be ready and willing to help and comfort all who come to you in need.

And may the blessings promised to the compassionate be yours in abundance. . . .

May you find happiness and satisfaction in your work.

May daily problems never cause you undue anxiety, nor the desire for earthly possessions dominate your lives.

But may your hearts' first desire be always the good things waiting for you in the life of heaven. . . .

May the Lord bless you with many happy years together, so that you may enjoy the rewards of a good life.

And after you have served him loyally in his kingdom on earth, may he welcome you to his eternal kingdom in heaven.

*RITE OF MARRIAGE*

### Activity

Think of an older married couple you know.

Discuss with a partner what parts of the blessing seem to have been fulfilled in their life together. Then think of a newly married couple. Write a note or card to them expressing your hopes for them, letting the solemn blessing above be your guide.



# God's Plan for Love and Life

Just as there are different types of relationships, there are different kinds of love. For example, there is the love between friends and siblings. There is also the love between parents and children, and there is yet another unique kind of love between a man and a woman who commit to an exclusive and faithful love over a lifetime in marriage. These are the kinds of relationships planned by God since the creation of Adam and Eve, our first parents. Each kind of love expresses being a “gift of self” to another. Every expression of love has at its source the love of God.

**?** How do you express your love for your friends, for your siblings, or for your parents?

## Expressions of Love

With each kind of relationship, there are certain appropriate ways to express love. The appropriateness of the expression depends on the kind of relationship. Friends, for example, might express their love with a handshake. This might demonstrate friends who walk on equal ground, enjoying each other's company.

Parents show love for their children, for example, by caring for them. This love can be expressed with a hug, kind words, or providing material needs and wants (like chocolate chip cookies!). Because parents are responsible for raising their children, the relationship is not one between equals.

There is also the love between spouses. When a man and woman have strong feelings and are sexually attracted to each other, God calls them to recognize this unique expression of their love in a marriage commitment (read Tobit 7:11–13). The unique expression of married love is called **conjugal love**.

For Catholic couples, they celebrate the Sacrament of **Matrimony** to become married. The Sacrament of Matrimony is the celebration of a baptized man and a baptized woman who join themselves to each other in a lifelong bond of spousal and mutual love. The Sacrament of Matrimony is one of the two Sacraments at the Service of Communion.

### FAITH FOCUS

Why does marriage have a unique expression of love?

### FAITH VOCABULARY

#### **complementarity**

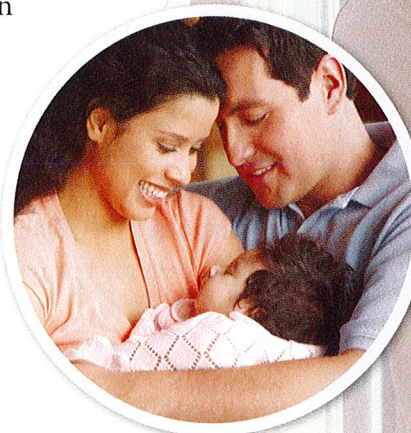
Complementarity is living with and for each other as equal in dignity and unique in gender, helping each other according to God's plan for both genders.

#### **conjugal love**

Conjugal love is the unique expression of sexual love between a husband and a wife, who freely give their whole selves to each other.

#### **Matrimony**

The Sacrament of the Church that unites a baptized man and a baptized woman in a lifelong bond of faithful love as a sign of Christ's love for the Church.

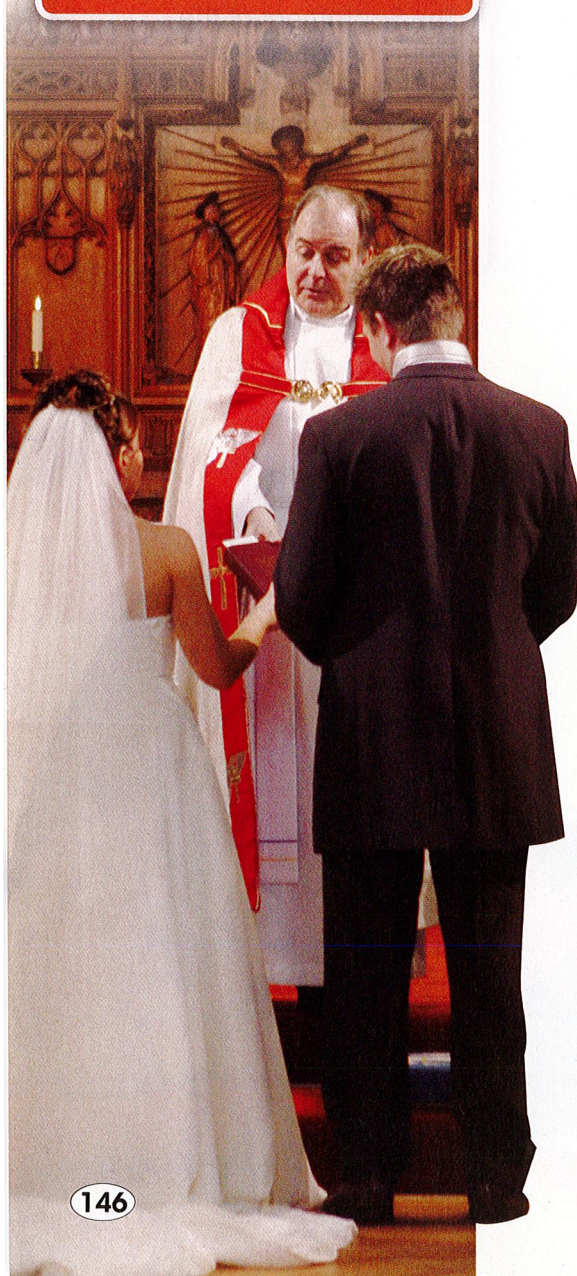




# Faith-Filled People

## Blessed Louis and Zélie Martin

The parents of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux were only the second married couple beatified by the Catholic Church. They saw their engagement as being open to the will of God. Married in 1858, they dedicated their marriage to serve God. Blessed with nine children, they are honored as a true model of Christian spouses.



## A Married Couple's Bond

Marriage is like no other loving relationship. Through marriage, a man and a woman make the promise to love before fully expressing their love. In doing so, they express their **complementarity** with respect to and exclusively for each other.

Marital love is expressed according to the two unique genders. In this expression of love, spouses honor the equal dignity of being male and female. Their vowed love is a complete giving of themselves to one another, the promise to love freely, faithfully, fully, and forever.

Conjugal love is to be exclusive, permanent, unbreakable, and faithful. Their love expresses two important aspects of their relationship: their bond as a couple and their openness to accept and raise children.

The married couple becomes a sign of Christ's love for the Church. Christian married love, like Christ's love for the Church, is a sign of the faithful and unbreakable love of God for his people.

## Essential Qualities

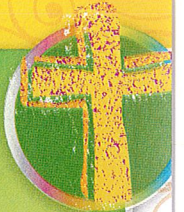
In the Letter to the Ephesians, Paul encourages husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the Church. He equally encourages wives to respect their husbands. This mirrors the love and respect that exists between Christ and his Church (read Ephesians 5:21–27).

When a husband and wife nurture and cherish each other in this way, they become a living Sacrament. They are a living sign through which Christ works in the world. The married couple with their children are a domestic Church, or "Church of the home." The family listens to God's Word, prays together, and serves one another with generosity and compassion. All baptized Christians are called to serve as Jesus did, to be a living sign of God's saving presence, as the one family of God.



How does your family live like a "Church of the home"? In what ways do you contribute?

When selfishness and materialism replace service and communion, marriages and families are not successful and can lead to separation or divorce. Because married love is mutual, it requires the cooperation of both spouses. Divorce is painful for not just the married couple but for the entire family. Sadly, divorce is a reality in many families. Many divorced persons wish to remain faithful to the Church and to raise their children in the Catholic faith. The Church continues to support them as baptized members and prays for a resolution of their difficulties.



## Marital Love

Marriage is both a natural institution and a sacred union. Marriage is God's plan for a man and a woman to express their spousal love in a lifelong loving relationship. In the Sacrament of Matrimony, Christ joins together the bride and the bridegroom in a holy bond that symbolizes the marriage of Christ and his Church.

## Sacred Union

In the Book of Genesis, God's plan for love and life is revealed when he created humanity in his image, both male and female as equal in dignity yet unique in gender (read Genesis 2:22–24). Christ the Lord raised marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament (read John 2:1–11). Unlike any other Sacrament in the Latin Rite, the couple to be married are the ministers of the Sacrament. By their free consent before the Church, a baptized man and a baptized woman offer themselves as a gift to the other. They become one according to God's plan. Jesus echoed this when he reminded the Pharisees of the words from the Book of Genesis:

*So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.*

MATTHEW 19:6

## A Saving Reality

The marital love between spouses is a “saving reality” (read Isaiah 54:5–8, 10). This means that a husband and wife are to work for the good of each other and be open to life, to accept and raise children. Acts such as adultery, contraception, divorce, and polygamy are contrary to the dignity of marriage.

Through the Sacrament of Matrimony, the married couple enters into a covenantal relationship in which their love is sealed and strengthened by the grace of God (read Hosea 2:21–25). The married couple is to become a communion of love in the image of the Holy Trinity.

### Activity

With a partner, read one of these Scripture passages and report to your class what it taught you about Matrimony. Jot your notes for your report here.

**Genesis 2:22–24**

**Hosea 2:21–22**

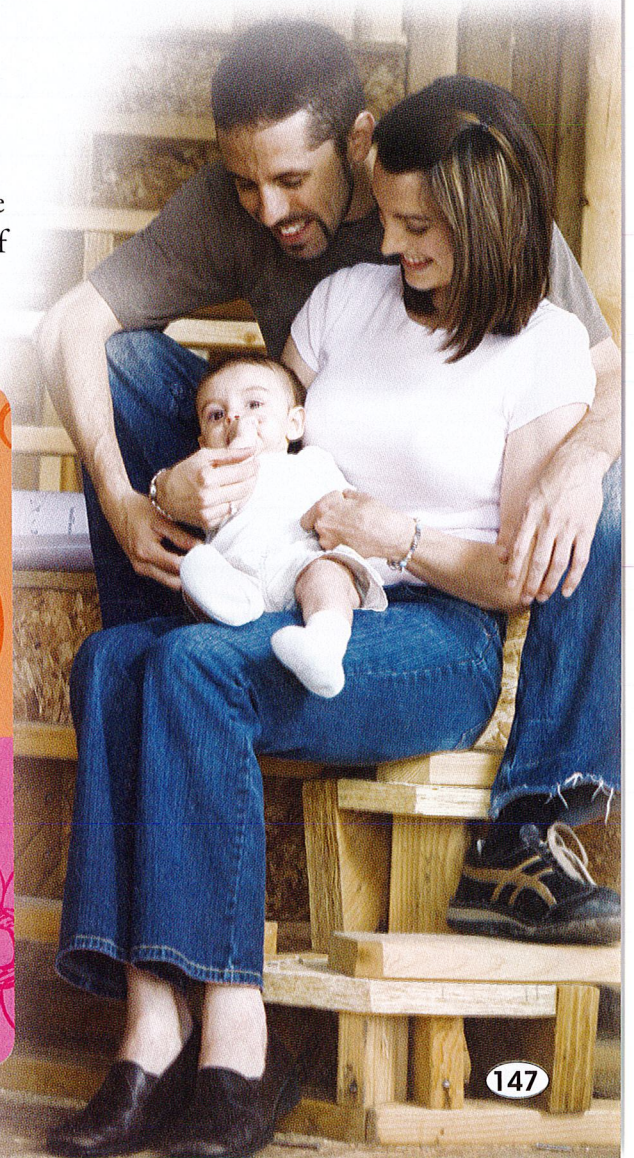
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# I FOLLOW JESUS

The domestic Church, or Church of the home, is the model for every Catholic household of faith. A Catholic family can be a living sign of Christ in the world. God dwells in all families even though no family is perfect. It is the responsibility of every family member to make Christ's love visible to those in and outside the home.

## MY CHURCH OF THE HOME

What would your family be like if it was a true sign of Christ's love? Write or draw your dreams here. Include the good things that are happening and the things you would like to see. Be sure to express your role.

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## MY FAITH CHOICE

This week, I choose to express my love for my family and friends according to God's plan for love and life. I will

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Pray, "Holy Spirit, guide me to be a chaste person who loves and serves other in your image. Amen."

# Chapter Review

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What does the Catholic Church teach about the unique meaning and purpose of marriage?

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2. What are the essential qualities necessary for conjugal love?

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3. How is the sacred union of the marriage of a baptized man and a baptized woman like the love between Christ and the Church?

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## ▶ TO HELP YOU REMEMBER

1. Marriage is part of God's plan for love and life in which a man and a woman form a lifelong bond with openness to life.
2. Spousal love is to be exclusive, permanent, unbreakable, and faithful.
3. Matrimony unites a baptized man and a baptized woman to be a living sign of Christ's love for the Church.

# Signs of Christ's Love

*Our prayers for married couples help them live their vocation to be signs of Christ's love in the world. This prayer recalls that blessing.*

**Leader:** Let us pray for all who have been consecrated in the Sacrament of Matrimony to serve the Church.

**Reader 1:** May the peace of Christ live in their homes.

**All:** Bless them, O Lord.

**Reader 2:** May they have true friends to help them.

**All:** Bless them, O Lord.

**Reader 3:** May they not care too much about material things.

**All:** Bless them, O Lord.

**Reader 4:** May they enjoy their work and solve their daily problems.

**All:** Bless them, O Lord.

**Reader 5:** May they be ready to help all who are in need.

**All:** Bless them, O Lord.

**Leader:** We now pray aloud for the married couples we know.  
*(Pause for students to add intentions.)*  
May God reward them with a long life and with eternal happiness.

**All:** Amen.

BASED ON THE RITE OF MARRIAGE



# With My Family

## This Week ...

**In Chapter 16**, "The Sacrament of Matrimony," your child learned:

- ▶ Marriage is a natural institution and sacred union between a man and a woman, who share in a lifelong commitment.
- ▶ Spousal love is to be exclusive, permanent, unbreakable, and faithful.
- ▶ In Matrimony, a baptized man and a baptized woman are united in a lifelong bond of faithful love as a sign of Christ's love for the Church.
- ▶ Through the virtue of chastity, we respect each other as persons, not as objects to be used. We integrate the gift of our sexuality according to God's plan.

**For more** about related teachings of the Church, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1601–1666, and the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, pages 277–292.

## Sharing God's Word

**Read together** Ephesians 5:1–32; 6:1–4. Emphasize that each of us is to live in the light of Christ. Husbands and wives are to imitate the sacrificial love between Christ and the Church. Parents and children are to love each other with honor and respect.

## We Live as Disciples

**The Christian home** and family form a school of discipleship. Choose one of the following activities to do as a family, or design a similar activity of your own:

- ▶ During family talks, discuss with your children the joys and struggles in marriage and what you are doing to create a household of faith. Plan regular outings together to strengthen your family bonds.

- ▶ Help your child to be sensitive to their friends who may be experiencing difficulties at home. Allow them to participate in some of your activities.

## Our Spiritual Journey

**Christ's sacrifice** is the paradigm of Christian living. Sacrifice, the giving of oneself freely out of love for another, gives expression to the paradox that Saint Francis of Assisi captured in the words, "It is in giving that we receive," which in turn reflects the infinite self-giving love of the Trinity, One Divine Person to the Others.



For more ideas on ways that your family can live as disciples of Jesus, visit

[www.BeMyDisciples.com](http://www.BeMyDisciples.com)



# Unit 4 Review

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## A. Choose the Best Word

Read each statement and circle the best answer.

- Which Sacrament uses the Rite of Anointing?
  - Holy Orders
  - Penance and Reconciliation
  - Matrimony
  - Eucharist
- Which Sacrament strengthens our faith and trust in God when we are ill?
  - Holy Orders
  - Anointing of the Sick
  - Penance and Reconciliation
  - Matrimony
- What are the Sacraments at the Service of Communion?
  - Baptism and Holy Orders
  - Confirmation and Holy Orders
  - Baptism and Matrimony
  - Matrimony and Holy Orders
- Which of these does not include anointing with oil?
  - Anointing of the Sick
  - Holy Orders
  - Eucharist
  - Baptism
- Which kind of love is to be exclusive, permanent, unbreakable, and faithful?
  - conjugal love
  - marital love
  - spousal love
  - all of the above

## B. Show What You Know

Match the items in Column A with those in Column B.

### Column A

- Holy Orders
- Penance and Reconciliation
- mortal sin
- diaconate
- marriage

### Column B

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. a gravely wrong action
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. God's plan for love and life
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. a Sacrament at the Service of Communion
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. degree of Holy Orders
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. a Sacrament of Healing

## C. Connect with Scripture

Reread the Scripture passage on page 117. What connection do you see between this passage and what you learned in this unit?

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## D. Be a Disciple

1. Review the four pages in this unit titled *The Church Follows Jesus*. What person or ministry of the Church on these pages will inspire you to be a better disciple of Jesus? Explain your answer.

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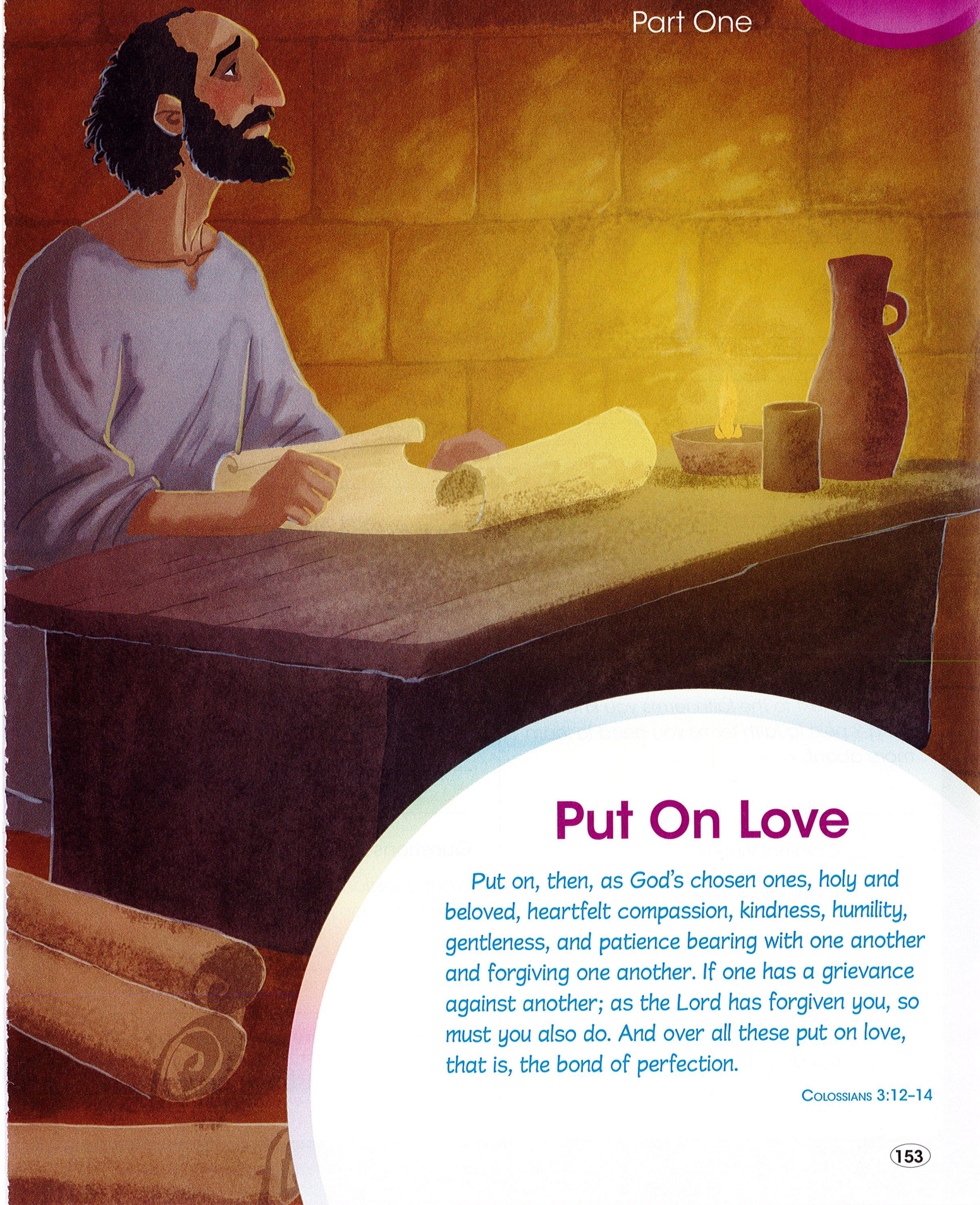
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2. Work with a group. Review the four Disciple Power virtues, or gifts, you have learned about in this unit. After jotting down your own ideas, share with the group practical ways that you will live these virtues day by day.

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## Put On Love

Put on, then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience bearing with one another and forgiving one another. If one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-14

# What I Have Learned

What is something you already know about these faith concepts?

## Works of Mercy

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## natural law

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## the Beatitudes

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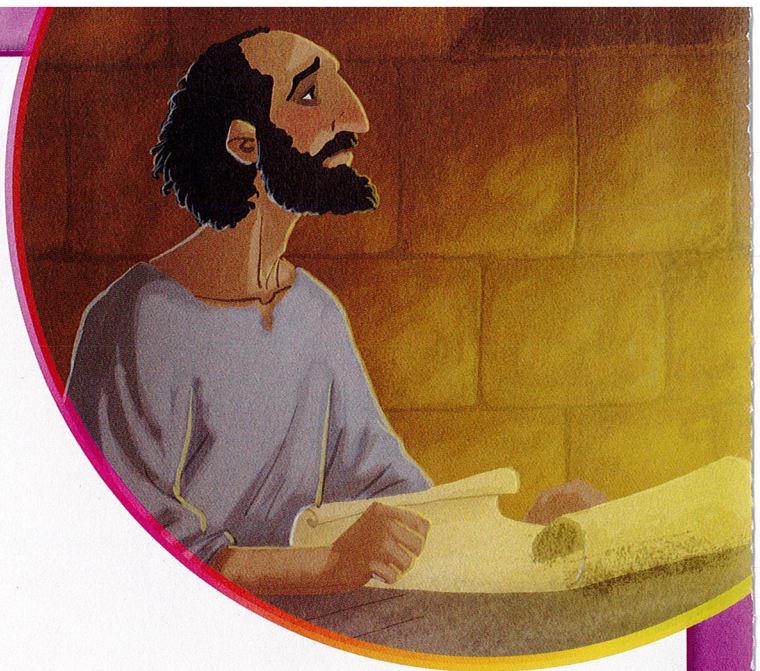
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# Faith Terms to Know

Put an X next to the faith terms you know.  
Put a ? next to faith terms you need to learn more about.

- \_\_\_\_\_ holiness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cardinal Virtues
- \_\_\_\_\_ Theological Virtues
- \_\_\_\_\_ conscience
- \_\_\_\_\_ Capital Virtues
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Golden Rule
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Shema
- \_\_\_\_\_ canonization



## The Bible

What do you know about Jesus' teaching on the Great Commandment?

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## The Church

What would you like to know about the requirements for sainthood?

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## Questions I Have

What questions would you like to ask about moral decision making?

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