



Choosing to L.O.V.E. Goal and Purpose

This retreat was designed to encourage and offer ongoing support to married couples, helping them choose to live their marital commitments every day.

A presenting couple and priest will speak on each phrase of the marital vows and invite the couples to explore the deeper meanings and challenges to live out their vows daily. Using the vows of marriage, the couples will practice acceptance of self: *I... the gifts and limitations given to us by God, our Creator; and acceptance of one's spouse: **Take you to be...** their gifts and limitations as well, recognizing that we shouldn't expect them to be what we ourselves *are not*: **PERFECT**. Using the covenant and sacramentality of marriage, they will look at the role and responsibility of being a **Husband/Wife**, both publicly and personally, and how that role develops throughout the marriage. As the ongoing ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony, the couples will consider practical ways of staying **True to one another** in spite of society's influence to act selfishly and independently. They will consider how their actions can either build truth, honesty, and faithfulness within their marriage or destroy the foundation through deceit and neglect. All couples experience moments of **Good times** as well as **Bad times**. This retreat offers the alternate perspective of seeing the challenges of married life as opportunities to draw closer to God and to one another, learning to find and be thankful for the sacred in the ordinary events of daily life and to draw on God's gift of sacramental grace during those extraordinarily difficult moments. The couples will be challenged to seek God's grace **in Sickness and in Health**, finding the constant of God's mercy to help them perform heroic acts of love, not only when a spouse is sick, but the same heroic acts of love when they are healthy. And the final challenge the couples will face is the challenge to **Love and Honor** their spouse **All the days of their life**. William Glasser's concept of *Choice Theory* is introduced at the beginning of the retreat, and the couples are challenged throughout the retreat to choose to love on a daily basis – regardless of whether their spouse is lovable. In the same way, choosing to honor your spouse is about everything you do and say concerning them, always acting with respect to who they are, a child of God and your chosen help-mate in life. As a covenant, these vows are meant to be lived EVERYDAY, even, and especially, when we would prefer NOT to do so. Living our vows means making the choice to love one's spouse, for the rest of one's life.*