



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF YOUNGSTOWN

October 18, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Next month, I will be traveling to Columbus with all the priests of Ohio and then to Baltimore with all the Bishops of the United States. One of the main topics for discussion at both of these meetings will be the National Pastoral Initiative for Marriage. The U.S. Bishops have decided to place a special emphasis on marriage over the next several years, in order to strengthen marriages and protect the institution of marriage in our nation's laws and policies.

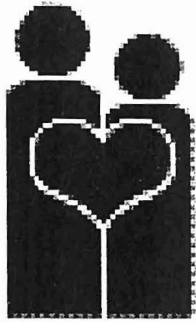
The sacred institution of marriage, as an indissoluble union of man and woman entered into for the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children, is severely under attack in today's society. As Catholic members in society, we all have the obligation to defend and protect the dignity of marriage in the face of grave threats that seek to undermine marriage and family life. Safeguarding the union of man and woman in an exclusive, indissoluble marriage is essential for a just and peaceful society.

As one initiative that I am undertaking together with the Presbyteral Council to strengthen the institution of marriage, I invite those who have been married civilly, but not in the Church, or those who are cohabiting with the intention of marriage to consider having your marriage recognized and blessed before the Church. As we approach World Marriage Day / Valentine's Day 2010, if you are currently living in a union not blessed by the Church, please see today's bulletin for more information on how to begin the validation process. We desire to lift up the sanctity of marriage in our faith community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all married couples who generously foster a civilization of love and life. Thank you for your daily contribution to Church and society.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Gregory V. Murray, SJ".



World Marriage Day

Sunday, February 14, 2010

Valentine's Day

In Preparation for World Marriage Day 2010...

Couples who are married civilly or who are cohabiting and intend to marry are invited to inquire about the recognition and blessing of their marriage before the Catholic Church.

A celebration near World Marriage Day 2010 will be held for those completing their preparation for marriage in the Catholic Church.

Return the form below by October 30th to inquire about beginning the process for the recognition of your marriage before the Church.



All inquiries are confidential.

We are interested in beginning the marriage validation process in the Catholic Church.

Name (man) _____ Signature _____

Name (woman) _____ Signature _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Parish _____

Return by Oct. 30 to:
Diocese of Youngstown
World Marriage Day /
Valentine's Day 2010
144 W. Wood St.
Youngstown, OH 44503
(330) 744-8451

