

A Recipe for Married Life

Fr. Anthony Coniaris

1. An exhaustive study of police records shows that no woman ever shot her husband while he was doing the dishes. Learn to serve each other in humility and love.
2. Shakespeare said: "He does not love who does not show love." Show love. Express it every day. Always let the other person know each day he/she is loved and appreciated. Don't ever take for granted your love for each other.
3. Cultivate humility. "Love does not insist on its own way," says the Bible. No one except God is right all the time. Learn to apologize, to place each other first.
4. Consider the words of Dr. Carl Rogers: "When I walk on the beach to watch the sunset, I do not call out 'A little more orange to the right, please,' or 'Would you mind giving us less purple in the back?' No, I enjoy the always different sunsets as they are. We do well to do the same with people we love."
5. Resist the impulse to give up when things get tough. Persevere! Studies have shown the best marriage for most people was the one they were in. It could be saved if they wanted it and had worked harder at it.
6. Tell each other at least once each day: 'I love you.' Learn to surprise each other with spontaneous expressions of love.
7. Never let the sun go down on your anger. Talk about your differences, forgive each other and forget before the day ends.
8. Never yell at each other unless the house is on fire. Love is kind. A soft answer turns away wrath.
9. Treat each other as a king or queen. You were crowned as such by God in the wedding. If He see you as such, can you fail to see and treat each other as such?
10. Learn to listen. Eighty-seven percent of couples polled say their biggest problem is in listening to what the other is saying. To love is to listen. To listen is to love.
11. Never place anyone, except God, before your spouse. He or she comes first. Everyone and everything else comes second, third, fourth.
12. Your aim is not to be pleased, but to please your beloved, to give yourself to your chosen one as Christ gave Himself for the Church.
13. Let there be healthy spaces in our togetherness. Learn to do things together but also to allow your partner to have a life of his or her own.
14. Finally, blend all of these ingredients into a beautiful whole through the mix of prayer. As our Lord blessed and blesses your marriage, allow Him to continue to do so by having Him as the guest in your thoughts, deeds and actions. Be active in your church. Live your faith. Grow in love that is both human and divine.

PRAYER OF THE MARRIED

My bountiful God, I beseech Thee, listen to my humble prayer, that I may ever feel that the married state is holy and that I must keep it holy. Grant Thy grace that I may never sin against the faithfulness and love of this marriage. Foster between us the spirit of understanding and of peace, which no strife, quarrel or misunderstanding, may arise between us. Grant us health and our daily bread, whereby we may serve Thee more. Amen.

(*Prayer Book for Orthodox Christians*, compiled and translated by Very Reverend Dr. Mateja Matejic)

For more information on the Orthodox Church, please contact:

St. Vladimir Orthodox Church
Ann Arbor, MI
(734) 475-4590
www.stvladimiraami.org
stvladimiraami@yahoo.com