



Retrouvaille

A Lifeline for Married Couples

Ireland

A Marriage Reflection

Every marriage, a husband and wife joining each other in love, is unique. Through marriage, we can help each other to become the best person that we can be and learn from each other's differences.

We sometimes forget that our spouse is not an extension of ourselves, nor should they be. No matter how close we feel, we still have different family of origin influences, different feelings and different expectations. It is important that we remember this and try to understand each other and accept the differences rather than trying to change each other.



Our marriage vows indicate that there will be challenges, or we would not be promising each other to stay together

'for better or worse'. It is precisely in those moments that we have an opportunity to encounter a love that is pure, without expectations or restrictions. It is an opportunity to say that our spouse is more important than any issue or difficulty that we may encounter. The commitment that we give to each other each day must, like the roots of a tree, be strong enough to let the storms of life pass through.

To sustain us on the marriage journey, it is essential that we have good communication. However, communication is often the first thing to go in a marriage when we encounter difficulties. A common block to reaching a solution during conflict is that our feelings have been hurt. We should remember that our spouse is not likely to want to cause this hurt, or to know how this hurt feels for us. It is therefore important to share our feelings and why something has hurt us. This increases our spouse's understanding of how we feel, and as we connect on a deeper level, we feel valued and understood. Retrouvaille primarily helps couples to communicate in a non-confrontational way.

Falling in love is easy but growing old together takes a lot of learning, listening and respect, as a continuous expression of our love. In the busyness of life, remember to give the little compliment that we often think to ourselves or do a little something extra that we know our spouse appreciates, for example prepare a special dinner, leave a note with some kind words or do an extra little job in the house. Life is every moment, every day – make the most of it and remember that our time for loving is short!

'This is what marriage is all about: man and woman walking together, wherein the husband helps his wife to become ever more a woman, and wherein the woman has the task of helping her husband to become ever more a man. This is the task that you both share.' -Pope Francis

A Journey of Hope for Marriage and Family Life

Retrouvaille is launching a new initiative to raise awareness of the support available to married couples as a legacy of the recent WMOF2018. The idea is for one Retrouvaille pull-up poster to journey across parishes in the Dublin Diocese (and later around the country) to raise awareness of this life-transforming peer ministry. Please help us to help others!

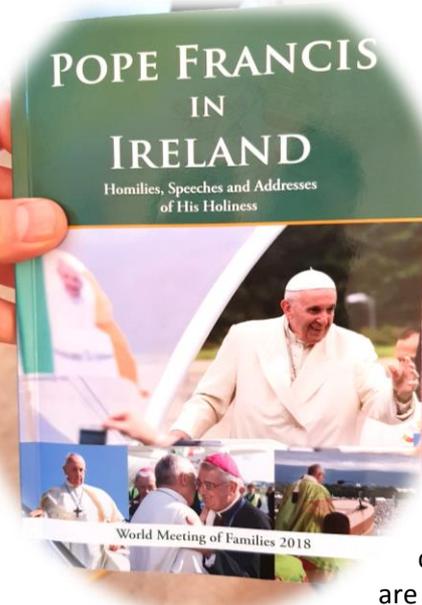
Parishes can request the 'Journey of Hope' mission to be brought to their parish by emailing retrouvaille.ireland@gmail.com. If you are a parishioner, please bring this initiative to your parish priest.

The pull-up poster (approx. 80 x 210cm) will be located in a visible area, for example inside the entrance of the parish/church with a small table with brochures beside for a couple of weekends. This can be concluded by a parish pulpit talk at the last weekend before the 'Journey of Hope' mission continues.



An Enrichment Day - The Joy of Love in Action

The Irish Retrouvaille Team had a great time at their recent enrichment day discussing marriage, WMOF2018 and servant leadership.



Fr Brian Kavanagh guided the team through the wisdom of 'Pope Francis in Ireland', further exploring the theme of happiness within marriage. He reminded us that one thing we all have in common is that we are seeking happiness!

"God has a dream for us and he asks us to make it our own. So do not be afraid of that dream! Dream big! Cherish that dream and dream it together each day anew." – Pope Francis

Marriage is an opportunity to give our own family a loving home and our children a bright future and break any negative patterns of the past. Our marriage calls us to help each other to achieve our goals in life and to become the best that we can be, with unity as the ultimate goal of married life. On this journey, it is important that we communicate honestly with our spouse, without blaming or projecting our needs onto each other. Retrouvaille focusses on effective

communication and provides spouses with a step by step guide where they can share their feelings, needs and expectations with each other in a safe environment.

"It was in the family [...] we learned to live together in harmony, to master our selfish instincts and reconcile our differences, and above all to discern and seek those values that give authentic meaning and fulfilment to our lives." – Pope Francis

The enrichment day heard a number of testimonies of servant leadership in action. Couples shared the reasons why they were committed to pass on the gift of hope that they once received. When you choose to serve, it is a life changing experience and benefits your whole life, family, people in need and the greater society. God does not call the qualified but qualifies the called.

The future and the past meet in the present. Life is a journey of growth but remember that the person I am destined to be is the person I decide to become!



A Marriage Thought

Without a proper support system in place for marriage and family life, people will move from one bad relationship to another because they take all their personal and couple baggage with them.

"A great relationship doesn't happen because of the love you had in the beginning, but how well you continue building love until the end." – Unknown

See the following recent articles that Retrouvaille has contributed to:

The Irish Catholic - State must do more to support marriage

<https://www.irishcatholic.com/state-must-do-more-to-support-marriage/>

Catholic Ireland – Don't make it too easy to "check out" of marriage says Retrouvaille

<https://www.catholicireland.net/dont-make-easy-check-marriage-says-retrouvaille/>

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