



Adoption is a Love Story

COMPANION REFLECTION FOR MADE FOR LOVE:
EPISODE 7, LOVE IN ADOPTION

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,
You are the Author of life and love.
You have called us by name
and made us our sons
and your daughters,
and you know your plan for our lives.

If it be your will,
bless those who are pursuing adoption,
give them generous hearts,
and send them a child to love
and with whom to share your great love for us.
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Listen



Kate was pregnant and in shock. Deborah, Elizabeth, Bethany, and their respective husbands, all felt an ache that their arms were empty after years of hoping for a child.

This episode highlights the gift of adoption and its complexity in real life.

Take time to listen to Made for Love: Episode 7, Love in Adoption: <https://soundcloud.com/usccbclips/love-in-adoption>

Allow time for silent reflection and sharing thoughts with partners or small groups after listening to the podcast.

Further Reading

Bethany Meola, featured in the podcast, used to work for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as the Assistant Director for Marriage and Family Life and Laity in the Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth. Since this article was written, Bethany and her husband have adopted a baby girl.

All Love Bears Fruit

Fruitfulness is part of the very definition of love: "It is the nature of love to overflow, to be life-giving" (USCCB, [Marriage: Life and Love in the Divine Plan](#), p. 13). True love is never closed in on itself, seeking its own interests. Instead, love goes out, seeking the good of the other. This truth about love – that it is *always* fruitful – is particularly meaningful for married couples like me and my husband, who have not, so far, been blessed with children.

Every child is a living, breathing, walking, talking billboard proclaiming loud and clear: "Love Is Fruitful! Marriage Is Fruitful!" According to St. John Paul II, children are a "living reflection" of their parents' love (*Familiaris Consortio*, no. 14). And yet a child – the "supreme gift" of marriage – is not the only fruit of married love.

In fact, the first fruit of marriage is the *marriage bond itself* (World Meeting of Families catechesis, no. 105). When my husband and I said “I do” on our wedding day, a new family was born. In that moment, we were no longer two individuals, but became a union – a “we” – shaped by and also striving toward God’s own way of loving: total, faithful, and fruitful.

What does the fruitfulness of a childless marriage look like? In many ways, the same as that of a marriage with children: spousal love expressed in many different ways, such as forgiving each other after being hurt, making small daily acts of generosity, praying together, affirming each other, and opening our home to those in need of community.

One difference is that we are relatively more available for acts of service and hospitality than are couples raising children (WMOF catechesis, no. 103). For example, my husband and I look after an elderly widow without local family. We bring her groceries every week and check in frequently. And we’re involved in various ministries in our local church. Could we do this if we had children?

Possibly. But the fact is, our time is not taken up (rightly) by the needs of children. And on the flipside, we need people to serve, to live out our marital fruitfulness in concrete ways!

And then there is the profound, and often hidden, fruitfulness of suffering. Every marriage – and every person – will travel through the “valley of tears” at some point. The world may say that suffering is sterile, but Jesus teaches us the opposite: “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit” (Jn 12:24). Jesus also said, “Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit” (Jn 15:5). True sterility, then, is not the absence of children; it is the deliberate closing off of one’s marriage from the fruitfulness of the Holy Spirit and openness to the will of God.

May we all live “in active readiness for God’s will” as it unfolds in our own lives (WMOF catechesis, no. 102) so that we can be the “rich soil” ready to receive the word of God “with a generous and good heart” and bear much fruit: “a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold” (Mt 13:8).