

# A Christian Declaration on Marriage

*Reprinted from the [National Council of Churches](#) website.*

As we celebrate the 2000th anniversary of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, entering the third millennium, we pledge together to honor the Lord by committing ourselves afresh to God's first institution-marriage.

We believe that marriage is a holy union of one man and one woman in which they commit, with God's help, to build a loving, life-giving, faithful relationship that will last for a lifetime. God has established the married state, in the order of creation and redemption, for spouses to grow in love of one another and for the procreation, nurture, formation and education of children.

We believe that in marriage many principles of the Kingdom of God are manifested. The interdependence of healthy Christian community is clearly exemplified in loving one another (John 13:34), forgiving one another (Ephesians 4:32), confessing to one another (James 5:16), and submitting to one another (Ephesians 5:21). These principles find unique fulfillment in marriage. Marriage is God's gift, a living image of the union between Christ and His Church.

We believe that when a marriage is true to God's loving design it brings spiritual, physical, emotional, economic, and social benefits not only to a couple and family but also to the Church and to the wider culture. Couples, churches, and the whole of society have a stake in the well being of marriages. Each, therefore, has its own obligations to prepare, strengthen, support and restore marriages.

Our nation is threatened by a high divorce rate, a rise in cohabitation, a rise in non-marital births, a decline in the marriage rate, and a diminishing interest in and readiness for marrying, especially among young people. The documented adverse impact of these trends on children, adults, and society is alarming. Therefore, as church leaders, we recognize an unprecedented need and responsibility to help couples begin, build, and sustain better marriages, and to restore those threatened by divorce.

Motivated by our common desire that God's Kingdom be manifested on earth as it is in heaven, we pledge to deepen our commitment to marriage. With three-quarters of marriages performed by clergy, churches are uniquely positioned not only to call America to a stronger commitment to this holy union but to provide practical ministries and influence for reversing the course of our culture. It is evident in cities across the nation that where churches join in common commitment to restore a priority on marriages, divorces are reduced and communities are positively influenced.

Therefore, we call on churches throughout America to do their part to strengthen marriage in our nation by providing:

- Prayer and spiritual support for stronger marriages
- Encouragement for people to marry

- Education for young people about the meaning and responsibility of marriage
- Preparation for those engaged to be married
- Pastoral care, including qualified mentor couples, for couples at all stages of their relationship
- Help for couples experiencing marital difficulty and disruption
- Influence within society and the culture to uphold the institution of marriage
- Further, we urge churches in every community to join in developing policies and programs with concrete goals to reduce the divorce rate and increase the marriage rate.

By our commitment to marriage as instituted by God, the nature of His Kingdom will be more clearly revealed in our homes, our churches, and our culture. To that end we pray and labor with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

May the grace of God, the presence of Christ, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit be abundant to all those who so commit and be a blessing to all whose marriages we seek to strengthen.

*Bishop Anthony O'Connell, Chairman, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Committee on Marriage and Family Life*

*Dr. Richard Land, President, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, Southern Baptist Convention*

*Dr. Robert Edgar, General Secretary, National Council of Churches (Name withdrawn 11/17/2000)*

*Bishop Kevin Mannoia, President, National Association of Evangelicals  
November 14, 2000*

Read more at <https://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/christianity/2000/12/a-christian-declaration-on-marriage.aspx#dWX6chuCmdoTgriD.99>