




VIDEO 9

MATERNITY IS FOREVER:
ADOPTION



Adoption is not a
denial of feeling but
an act of love.

SUMMARY

In this ninth video, “Maternity is Forever: Adoption,” participants are invited to look at the reality of adoption, and the tremendous discernment, maturity, and strength it requires. Women who typically place their children for adoption fall into three categories: (1) those with a capacity for self-sacrificial love, (2) those for whom the conception was traumatic, and (3) those who are deeply connected to their faith and desire their child to be raised within the context of marriage. Adoption can only rightfully come about as a personal discernment, initiated by the woman herself. It can only emerge as an answer to the question, “What is the most loving thing I can do for my child?” When a mother knows the answer to that in her heart, she knows whether she should parent this child or whether she should place this child for adoption.

OPENING PRAYER

Most Holy Trinity, we praise and thank you for loving each one of us into life. We ask for the grace to receive anew the gift of our own lives, that we may live deeply out of our true identity as your beloved sons and daughters. We pray that each person may know themselves as chosen and loved, willed into being from the very beginning of time and held in existence at every moment by your love. Father, we ask you to fill us with your light and renew us with your peace. Holy Spirit, we ask for the courage to speak your Word of life; may our actions, words, and thoughts serve to uphold and protect the dignity and worth of every person, and may our lives give radiant witness to the truth of your love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to share something that is meaningful to you. Sharing an experience of importance is deeply humanizing and encourages the formation of trust between individuals. These connections are essential for maintaining community.

INTRODUCTORY QUESTION

When was a time when you felt welcomed into someone's life/home/heart?

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INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

The suggested Scripture passages and questions are offered as aides to prayer. You are not required to answer every question or reflect on every Scripture passage, but should follow the promptings of God. You may spend all of the allotted time reflecting on just one passage from Scripture or one reflection question and not write down a single word, and that's okay!

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

ROMANS 8:15-17

“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’, it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”

ROMANS 8:22-25

“We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.”

2 CORINTHIANS 6:18

“I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

GALATIANS 4:4-5

“But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”

JEREMIAH 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Was there a word, phrase, or idea that resonated with me? That was new to me?
2. Sister John Mary, SV says that “many people think that the obvious answer to the problem of abortion is adoption. But the reality is that, although it is a very beautiful option, today it is a very infrequent option.” How have I viewed adoption? Has this video changed or altered my understanding of adoption in any way? If so, how?
3. St. Paul writes, “We have received the spirit of sonship” (Romans 8:15). As baptized Christians, we are adopted sons and daughters of God. Have I pondered the profundity of this reality? Take time now to ponder the awesome truth that you are a beloved child of God, ransomed from death by the blood of Jesus. How does this understanding change the way I approach my life?
4. Sister Marie Veritas, SV says that “women often perceive adoption as the worst of their options, because they see it as being a ‘bad mother’, one who ‘gave their child away’. A woman often equates adoption with failure.” What are the times in my life when I felt that I failed? Was I tempted to let myself be defined by that perceived failure? How can my experience of failure help me to better understand many women’s struggle to consider adoption?
5. Sister Marie Veritas says, “Adoption is not a denial of feeling but an act of love” and that “it’s okay if a woman cries; it’s okay if she’s emotional throughout the process.” Why is it so important to make space for another’s emotions? How does attending to my own emotional state help me to more fully and authentically accompany others?
6. Is there a fruit from my prayer that I would like to share with others?

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Adoption can only rightfully come about as a discernment. It only comes about in answer to the question, ‘What is the most loving thing I can do for my child?’

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DISCUSSION

At the close of the time allotted for personal reflection, rejoin the group for discussion. This period of dialogue and conversation is intended to promote genuine understanding, reflection, and insight.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is there a fruit from your prayer that you would like to share with others?
2. Sister John Mary describes the three categories of women who typically place their children for adoption: those with a capacity for self-sacrificial love; those for whom the conception was traumatic; and those who are deeply connected to their faith and desire their child to be raised within a marriage. Discuss why these three groups might be most likely to choose adoption.
3. Sister Marie Veritas speaks about how “placing for adoption does not mean renouncing motherhood. Maternity is forever. Therefore, it is important to be sensitive to this reality when speaking about adoption. We never use the language of ‘giving up’ or ‘giving away’ a child, but rather ‘making a plan for the child’s life’ or ‘placing or entrusting the child with a family.’” Why is it so important to be sensitive in our language regarding adoption? How can the way we speak about adoption change the understanding of adoption?
4. Sister John Mary says, “It is...important to know that, although it might be tempting or seem like good advice, we have found that it is never helpful to suggest to a mother that she consider adoption, no matter how desperate her circumstances.” Does this come as a surprise to you? Why is it so important to allow a woman to initiate any discussion about adoption? Why must we never suggest adoption to a woman? How is this different than if a woman brings up considering an abortion?
5. Sister Marie Veritas says, “Our role is to allow ourselves to deeply experience the goodness of this woman, to reflect that goodness back to her, to be a place and person of encouragement, and most importantly, to hold out hope that God's plans for her and her child are good and beautiful.” How does our availability and openness create the space for a woman to discern freely and truly?

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CLOSING PRAYER

*Jesus, we praise and thank you for your goodness and mercy.
We ask for an outpouring of your Spirit upon the whole world.
We pray that every person may powerfully encounter your love today,
and that all will come to know that life is a gift to be cherished and
protected. We pray in a special way for all those who are discerning
adoption at this time; may they know your powerful presence, and trust
deeply in your love for them and their children.*

*We ask this in your name as we pray: Glory be to the Father, to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.*

Amen. Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of Life, pray for us.

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