

British prayer book for spouses includes 'Prayer Before Making Love'

LONDON - A prayer for couples to recite "before making love" has been included in a new British book of prayers for married couples.

The 64-page "Prayer Book for Spouses" contains prayers for every station of family and married life, including engagement, planning a family, raising children and caring for sick and dying relatives.

The booklet, published by the Catholic Truth Society, a London-based publisher and charity, also includes a "Prayer Before Making Love."

The prayer reads: "Father, send your Holy Spirit into our hearts. Place within us love that truly gives, tenderness that truly unites, self-offering that tells the truth and does not deceive, forgiveness that truly receives, loving physical union that welcomes.

"Open our hearts to you, to each other and to the goodness of your will," it says. "Cover our poverty in the richness of your mercy and forgiveness. Clothe us in true dignity and take to yourself our shared aspirations, for your glory, forever and ever. Mary, our mother, intercede for us. Amen."

Auxiliary Bishop Paul Hendricks of Southwark, chairman of the truth society, told Catholic News Service Sept. 1 that he thought the inclusion of the prayer was "a bit brave but very good."

He said it was important that the church affirmed the value of marriage and the family and that the prayer might help Catholics recognize that God is at the heart of the relationship between the spouses.

Bishop Hendricks said he was delighted by the overall quality of the publication, which "has got some beautiful prayers in it."

“The prayers remind us what is fundamental to the relationship,” he added. The book “is very thorough and I’m very glad to see that.”

The prayers, written by a variety of authors who are unnamed, are interspersed with sections of Catholic teaching on marriage and the family.

The book, which costs approximately \$3, encourages its readers to view marriage as an exclusive and lifelong relationship and as a fundamental value to the common good.

“To all those who, in our times, consider it too difficult, or indeed impossible, to be bound to one person for the whole of life, and to those caught up in a culture that rejects the indissolubility of marriage and openly mocks the commitment of spouses to fidelity, it is necessary to reconfirm the good news of the definitive nature of that conjugal love that has in Christ its foundation and strength,” it says.

Readers may purchase ,“Prayer Book for Spouses” on the Web at: www.cts-online.org.uk; by sending an e-mail to: orders@ctsonline.org.uk; or by writing to: Catholic Truth Society, 40-46 Harleyford Road, London, SE11 5AY, England. No books are mailed without prepayment.