

For Immediate Release:

WITNESS TO LOVE LAUNCHES NATIONAL INITIATIVE TO MINISTER TO CIVILLY MARRIED COUPLES AND BRING THEM INTO UNION WITH THE CHURCH

First-of-Its-Kind Initiative, Launched on the First Day of National Marriage Week, Hopes to Inspire and Empower Civilly Married Couples and Others to Pursue Deeper Appreciation and Love of their Marriage

February 7th, 2019: Lafayette, Louisiana – Witness to Love, a Catholic marriage prep renewal ministry, announced the launch of their new civilly married initiative today, ahead of National Marriage Week. Witness to Love’s Civil Marriage Initiative is a comprehensive, highly-researched, collaborative, national effort to equip Catholic parishes and dioceses who desire to seek out, support, and inspire couples in civil unions to pursue a sacramental marriage. This is the first time in the history of the Catholic Church that a national initiative specifically for civilly married couples has come to fruition.

“This new initiative will provide an experience that is personal, inviting, timely, engaging and allows a space for growth and formation in the Sacrament of Marriage for couples in civil unions seeking convalidation in the Catholic Church,” said Mary Rose and Ryan Verret, founders of Witness to Love. “In a time when marriage rates are at an all-time low and divorce rates are skyrocketing, there is no more important and urgent need in the Church than to minister to engaged, married, and civilly married couples. We know that stronger marriages lead to stronger communities, and strong communities lead to a flourishing society. Witness To Love strives to inspire and empower couples who want to have stronger marriages, through community, knowledge and resources.”

“Couples get married under all kinds of circumstances, and oftentimes aren’t formed in their faith ahead of marriage or even during their marriage,” the Verrets continued. “We have seen incredible fruits through the work of Witness to Love for engaged couples - we can only imagine the great impact this new initiative will have.”

“This new initiative will take the work of Witness to Love to a new level and equip Catholic parishes and dioceses with the tools and resources they need to minister to civilly married couples. It will provide couples with the support and resources to pursue transformative sacramental marriage formation,” the Verrets concluded. “We’re excited to launch this powerful new initiative in time for National Marriage Week, in hopes that we can inspire civilly married couples and others to pursue deeper appreciation and love of their marriage.”

One major supporter of this new initiative is the Our Sunday Visitor Institute. Jason Shanks, President of the Our Sunday Visitor Institute, said of this new Witness to Love initiative: “The Our Sunday Visitor Institute is excited to support Witness to Love’s continued efforts in guiding and supporting couples in their journey towards a sacramental marriage. The grace of the sacrament is vitally important to both the couple, to the family, and to society as a whole. We at OSV are working to support innovative, creative projects and programs that can make a transformational impact in the lives of others - and this program is exactly that. We’re thrilled to be a part of this project and we encourage parishes and families to participate.”

For information or to schedule an interview with Mary Rose or Ryan Verret, please contact: Kate Bryan at: katebryan@revolutionizingmissions.com

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Witness to Love is an organization that provides churches with the tools and resources to transform existing programs of marriage preparation and sacramental marriage formation into dynamic marriage programs that foster both parish connection and nurture authentic accompaniment both before and after the wedding day. <https://witnessstolove.org>

Our Sunday Visitor Institute seeks to serve the Church by supporting and encouraging innovative and effective Church-related programs and activities that help Catholics fulfill their calling to discipleship, strengthen their relationship with Christ, deepen their commitment to the Church and contribute to its growth and vitality in the world. The three areas of special interest for funding are Unaffiliated Millennials, Hispanic Experience and Parent Project. <https://www.osvinstitute.com>