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# BOY MEETS GIRL

## THE CHRISTIAN WAY



BY THE REVEREND

# FRANK E. GARTLAND C.S.C.

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# BOY MEETS GIRL

## The Christian Way

An Exhortation To  
Chaste Christian  
Courtship



By THE REV. FRANK E. GARTLAND, C.S.C.  
(Former Editor of the Notre Dame Bulletin)

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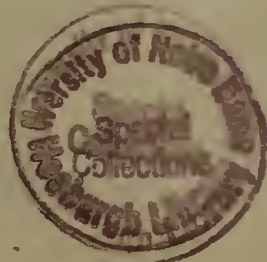
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# BOY MEETS GIRL

## The Christian Way

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### What's The Story?

*This is a pamphlet without any fooling. Its message is brief and very direct. It pleads with young men and women to respect themselves and one another. It begs them to wait—not to ruin their marriage by anticipating during the delightful but dangerous days of courtship the rights and privileges of the married state. It warns them that nothing in life is so tragic as to spoil a sacrament.*

*It is not sentimental; it is a message of common sense. It is not romantic; it is very prosaic. In what it demands it is not easy; it is full of the hard philosophy of the Cross. It is not cheap; it is Christian. It is the strong, yet tender doctrine of Our Blessed Lord. And like Him, it refuses to compromise with the wayward way of this world. It appeals*



*frankly to the sense of honor and to the pride of decent young men and women. It prescribes for them against the ills of concupiscence. It encourages them, in God's holy name, to be heroes and heroines and not to be worldlings weak and unwise. It reminds them that they are the Temples of God—temples which they should adorn with the precious stones and gems of every virtue: chastity, self-respect, respect for one another, sacrifice, courage and patience. Toward the end, it suggests a few practical, everyday, down-to-earth pointers about dates and courtship. These, if kept, will insure a strong and joyous courtship and a happy and holy marriage.*

*This exhortation to chaste, Christian courtship was given first as a sermon to the students of the University of Notre Dame. It was later printed in the Notre Dame Religious Bulletin and then reprinted in the Catholic Students' Bulletin which Father Gartland prepares every week for the YOUTH Section of Our Sun-*

day Visitor. *Though addressed directly to young men, this instruction and advice may be read with equal profit by young women also. After all, chaste, Christian courtship depends on the cooperation of both. To help the struggling young people who want to do the right thing to help themselves is the first, last and only purpose of "BOY MEETS GIRL—The Christian Way."*

*In its more convenient form as a pamphlet, it is dedicated to the Immaculate Mother of God. From her the author earnestly begs a blessing upon himself and the pamphlet and upon all its readers.*

## **A Place For Everything**

Some of you (who can never be satisfied) will not be content. You will say, as usual, that this is beating around the bush and that what you "really want to know" will remain unanswered. May I remind you that neither the pulpit nor the *Students' Bulletin* is the proper vehicle for discussing problems of sex. Besides that, nine out of ten of you know

—if not ninety-nine out of every hundred—what's right and what's wrong; and whenever you do encounter an honest doubt you can get the answer from the priest, in or out of confession, as you may prefer.

## **Two Kinds Of Courtship**

Now, *Christian* courtship is quite different from *pagan* courtship—courtship as thought of and practiced by the world—a world that does not know Jesus Christ—or at least does not love Him! When you get down to it, the difference stems from the contrary concepts of the nature and dignity of man and of marriage.

It is a sad observation, yet true, that too many of you are more inclined to accept the world's low standard for dates and courtship than the harder but infinitely higher and nobler standard of Our Lord. *The one aim of these remarks is to lead you back to the Christian ideal—if you have strayed from it: and to convince you that only by practising it will you be happy both before and after marriage.*



## The World Is Cheap

Take the nature of man. If you think of man as a high-grade animal or a cultured brute, you are not going to be very backward about taking liberties on dates and in courtship. And the farther you go, the more you will definitely regard your Catholic Faith as a burden, a brake, a nuisance, as an object of hatred and of rejection! Your conscience will harden! Your religion will cease to be a life-giving dynamo and the chief source of your strength, consolation and merit. You will begin to manufacture excuses. You will find no particular reason *not* to indulge your lustful passions, to sacrifice, to carry your Cross!

The world's cheap idea of the nature of man and marriage has progressively popularized and sought to justify psychologically such lowly and nice-sounding "escapes" as "good times," "companionate marriages," "birth control" and, of course, "divorce." In proportion as you "go" for the way of the world or let it

“suck you in,” you too will dive below the level of reasonable and of Christian living.

### **Dignity Or Disaster?**

But . . . If you regard *your girl and yourself as Temples of the Holy Ghost*—which you are—then you will be mighty careful not to pollute those Temples—either hers or your own! For, as Saint Paul plainly says, “If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy” And again: “This is the will of God: your sanctification: that you should abstain from fornication. That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. Not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles who know not God . . . For God hath not called us to uncleanness but unto sanctification. Therefore, he that despises these things, despises not man but God who also has given His Spirit in us.” (*I Thessalonians IV, 3*).

As you can see from these words of Saint Paul, you have, besides a tremendous dignity, a *fearful responsi-*

*bility*—the responsibility of never degrading the Temple of God. This problem never hits nearer home than in the question of dates and courtship, because there you are immediately concerned with human bodies, with Temples of God. And in handling the question, you must be realistic and honest enough to acknowledge the presence and strength of unruly passions, and the tendencies of the lower man forever urging you to defile those temples! Is it any wonder that Saint Paul once exclaimed to his beloved spiritual children “*With fear and trembling, work out your salvation!*” (*Philippians, ii, 12*).

Yes, you must be ready to face the facts; and you must be willing to listen to God’s own inspired word. Even though it is true that you are only “a little lower than the angels” in dignity (*Psalms viii, 6*), it is also unfortunately true—and you know it from your own observation or experience—that you are “vessels of iniquity” (*Romans, vi, 13*) and “vessels of wrath fitted for destruction.” (*Ro-*

*mans*, ix, 22). Ask yourself; ask anyone; ask the whole world, if it is not very *easy* to profane God's Temples! And yet reflect: What does God say? "If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the Temple of God is holy, which (temple) you are." (*I Corinthians*, iii, 17).

You must not underrate these words of Saint Paul. Listen to this.

### **A Frightful Example**

One night, in Old Testament times, "Baltasar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his nobles and every one drank according to his age. And being now drunk, he commanded that they should bring the vessels of gold and silver which Nabuchodonosor his father had brought away from the Temple that was in Jerusalem, that the king and his nobles and wives might drink in them . . . and they drank in them . . . In that same hour there appeared fingers, as it were of the hand of a man, writing over against the candlestick upon the surface of the wall of the king's pal-



ace; and the king beheld the joints of the hand that wrote . . . And this is the interpretation of the word . . . God hath numbered thy kingdom and hath finished it . . . thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting . . . Thy kingdom is divided and is given to the Medes and Persians . . . The same night Baltasar the Chaldean king was slain." (*Daniel V, 1-30*).

If God did not hesitate to slay a pagan and voluptuous king because he profaned a chalice of gold set aside for the service of the temple, do not think He will not avenge you—who know so much more by the fullness of Revelation and the teaching of Christ and His Church—*if you defile His Temples!* God gives you His word that He will destroy you! *And that destruction need not be death:* most often, following sinful dating and courtship, it is the destruction of peace and joy in marriage. For further details consult your local newspapers.



## The Positive Side

Once convinced that you and your girl are Temples of God, you will do everything you can, *in a positive way, and at any price*, to retain or regain your personal purity and to protect the modesty and loveliness of the girl you respect—even as *St. Joseph kept himself spotless and safeguarded the virginity of Mary the Mother of God!*

You will keep ever in mind the natural and necessary relationship between *your conduct now* and *your status later in marriage*. If you want the girl you go with now to be the best wife she can be for you and the best mother she can be for your children; if you yourself want to be the best husband you can be for her and the best father you can be for your children, there are no two ways about *this: you and she cannot spoil one another now on your dates and in courtship!*

If you are selfish, loose, crude, animalistic and unreasonable *now*, do

not expect that you are going to be unselfish, highminded, gentlemanly, spiritual and controlled in marriage. That isn't the way the walk up the aisle to the altar works. *The Sacraments—matrimony included—do not change nature, they elevate it—* IF IT IS DISPOSED TO BE ELEVATED.

Living up to the Christian ideal of holy purity obviously implies the greatest caution and prudence with regard to such things as kissing, embracing, dancing and drinking. Not that any one of these things is wrong in itself, but *you can never forget—* much as you would like to—*the fact of concupiscence.* That fact means that *human nature is upset*, that the law of the flesh is ceaselessly fighting the law of the mind. Because of this fact, it is *all too easy to ignite the passions.* (Leave liquor alone or be *very moderate.*) And it is all too hard not to follow the “simple” way of the world which ignores the struggle, tries to forget, pretends, *sells the priceless Christian heritage of life divine for the sordid mess of sense-*

*nerve-and-muscle life lived in the barnyard.*

## **A Sensible Program**

Not to wind up in this pigsty, *you need a program.*

(1) You will consecrate yourselves to the Mother of God and Saint Joseph.

(2) You will frequently tap divine grace at its fonts in this world—Mass and Holy Communion, confession and prayer.

(3) You will never be too much alone.

(4) You will understandingly break away at the first sign of danger.

(5) You will not overemphasize the merely physical, bodily aspect of dates and courtship *but will rather, in proportion, also cultivate your mutual interests of mind and heart: a taste for good reading and music, conversation and sports.*

(6) You will learn how to walk—and like it.

(7) You will gradually learn to

prefer to keep out of night-clubs and hot-spots because it will dawn on you that the saying, "the world is too much with us," really means something.

### **Confession A Special Help**

Falsely you think, "Priests do not understand the force of fallen nature." They do. The Mother of God is "our tainted nature's solitary boast." And St. Paul himself put it in writing for the world that he knew the sting of the flesh. As a matter of fact, because of their studies and the thousands of true-life dramas priests hear, *they happen to be the best qualified men in the world to understand and to sympathize. But they respect the truth and love Jesus Christ. They will not tell you black is white or that yielding to temptation is not a sin.*

### **Buck Up, The Saints Did**

Learn to buck up under pressure. Pray for the grace and strength of the saints!

Never make the stupid mistake of thinking the saints had a different nature, lived impossible and unreal



lives. *The saints had what it takes.* Learn your lesson from them. With regard to the problems that come up between you and your girl, *you will never "come through" unless by the grace of God and YOUR OWN Christian Heroism.*

Pray that your girl may be as strong as St. Agatha. Agatha said to the judge and her executioner: "I die gladly. Aren't you ashamed to touch my breasts—you who were nourished by your mother's breasts?" And, as for yourself, pray that you may be as strong as St. Thomas Aquinas. He was confronted by an attractive but evil girl and he drove her out of his room with a fiery fagot! *He would not dilly-dally with the occasion of sin!*

You may be tempted to think remarks such as these are "way out of focus," "that this is the twentieth century, Father: forget it." *Don't fool yourself.* If you don't see eye to eye with the saints, *you* are the one out of focus. *They knew and loved Jesus Christ. They saw the value of*



*their bodies and souls. They understood the language of heaven and hell.*

And do not drown yourself in a stream of false self-pity: "Why am I tempted so?" "I can't put up with these things five, six, seven years!" \*\*\* *Get your bearings.* There are thousands of young men and women your age, as healthy as you, as strong, as capable of love, who have vowed their chastity to God *for life*. Some of them are your own brothers and sisters!

## **No Cross—No Christian**

Remember Whose disciple you are. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me." \*\*\* Take up *your* cross . . . not Our Lord's, not anybody else's . . . *your own*.

*And what is your cross, if not these temptations, these things that go against your grain, these forbidden yet attractive pleasures? \*\*\* "And follow Me" . . . that is—along the road to Calvary: that hard, narrow,*

*steep and rickety road which leads to crucifixion of your flesh and its concupiscences!*

If you buckle under pressure now; if you spoil your Christian courtship; if you make an orgy out of dates, you wander off that road; you get onto the Broadway of self-indulgence, comfort, lust—the highway of sin, death, destruction, hell! *You throw away your cross, you cease to be a Christian. For, you must have a cross to be a Christian. You must carry it to the dreadful death of Calvary. Yes, DEATH! You and she must DIE!*

This is not sad. Bring on no flowers. Ring no mourning bells. Write no requiems. Listen once again to the great St. Paul: *“If you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live.”* It is again the Christian contradiction, the paradox of life and death. *“For he that shall save his life shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life, for My sake, shall save it.”*

It all leads to but one conclusion:

By the Cross, men of Notre Dame—the Cross of Chaste Christian Courtship—you will most assuredly suffer, but you have nothing worthwhile to lose and you have everything worthwhile to gain. Place yourself *willingly* upon it. Stretch out your hands. Invite the nails. Endure the agony. Give up the ghost. You will enjoy the Resurrection of a happy, holy, everlasting marriage! *God strengthen and encourage you!*

## **Consecration To The Blessed Virgin**

My Queen, my Mother, I give myself entirely to thee; and to show my devotion to thee, I consecrate to thee this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my whole being without reserve. Wherefore, good Mother, as I am thine own, keep me, guard me, as thy property and possession.\*

## **Prayer To Saint Joseph**

Guardian of virgins and father, holy Joseph, to whose faithful care Christ Jesus, innocence itself, and

Mary, Virgin of virgins, were committed; I pray and beg of thee, by these dear pledges, Jesus and Mary, free me from all uncleanness, and make me with spotless mind, pure heart and chaste body, ever most chastely to serve Jesus and Mary, all the days of my life. Amen.†

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\*“His Holiness Pius IX by a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, Aug. 5, 1851 granted to all the faithful who, with a fervent and contrite heart, shall say, morning and evening, one Hail Mary, together with this prayer, to implore of the Blessed Virgin victory over temptations, especially over those against chastity:

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†“The Sovereign Pontiff Pius IX, by a rescript of the S. Cong. of Indulgences, Feb. 4, 1877, recalling all indulgences hitherto given, granted to all the faithful who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say this prayer, an indulgence of 100 days, once a day.”



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