

# The REAL SECRET of SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE



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# *Why the Knights of Columbus Advertise Catholic Faith*

The reason is simple. We Catholics want our non-Catholic friends and neighbors to know us as we really, are and not as we are some times mistakenly represented.

We are confident that when our religious Faith is better understood by those who do not share it, mutual understanding will promote the good-will which is so necessary in a predominantly Christian country whose government is designed to serve all the people—no matter how much their religious convictions may differ.

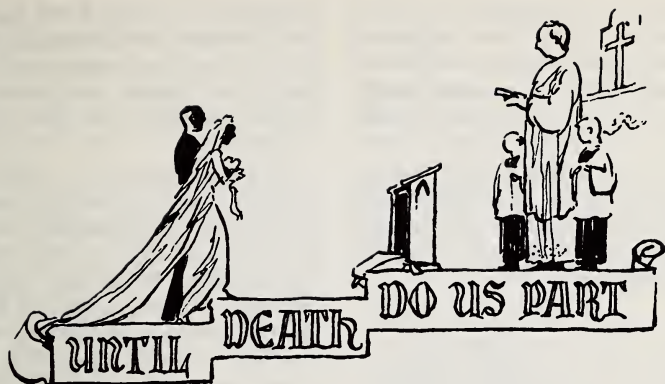
American Catholics are convinced that as the teachings of Christ widely and firmly take hold of the hearts and conduct of our people, we shall remain free in the sense that Christ promised (John VIII, 31-38), and in the manner planned by the Founding Fathers of this republic.

Despite the plainly stated will of the Good Shepherd that there be "one fold and one shepherd," the differences in the understanding of Christ's teaching are plainly evident. It has rightfully been called "the scandal of a divided Christianity."

If there is anything which will gather together the scattered flock of Christ, it is the nationwide understanding of the Savior, what He did and how He intended mankind to benefit by the Redemption.

To this end, we wish our fellow-Americans to become acquainted with the teachings of Christ as the Catholic Church has faithfully presented them, since the day the apostles invaded the nations of the world in willing and courageous obedience to Christ's command: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..." (Matt. XXVIII, 19).

**SUPREME COUNCIL  
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
Religious Information Bureau  
4422 LINDELL BLVD. ST. LOUIS 8, MO.**



Many people are convinced that marriage today is a gamble — with the chances of success not too good.

Nor is it easy to contradict this claim when we look at the appalling modern divorce rate, and at the many aspects of modern life which tend to undermine the principles on which successful marriages are founded.

Marriage is the most important act in the life of a man or woman. When it is a good marriage, it brings men and women to the fullness of the life God intended for them. When it fails, it leaves behind a trail of faded hopes and dreams and broken lives.

You can hear all sorts of explanations for today's marriage failures. Usually the husband and wife blame each other. Sometimes both acknowledge a share of the responsibility and say: "We just couldn't get along." And experts who study the problem can give innumerable reasons ranging from a conflict of personalities to the interference of relatives.

For those who are planning marriage... and those whose family life is not the peaceful, contented and secure thing it should be... it is vitally important that they know not merely what makes a marriage go on the rocks, but what it takes to make a marriage a success.

Certainly no one can find the secret of successful marriage without first having a clear understanding of what marriage is. Is it merely a civil contract, entered into by a man and woman mainly for companionship and social and material security? Is it the result of a purely physical attraction, and thoughtlessly embarked upon in the full bloom of youthful ardor? Is it the product only of a pleasant companionship which may not survive the trials and tribulations of family life?

No one can hope to realize the full fruits of a good marriage without first understanding what marriage is. To supply this answer is the purpose of this booklet.

No one can doubt the vital im-

portance of marriage as a social institution. Civil laws regulating marriage and divorce are established because society in general recognizes the need to preserve family life.

But it is indeed putting the cart before the horse to view the social aspects of marriage without first examining its spiritual meaning and purpose.



Marriage is not, as some seem to think, an institution set up by men to legalize the physical relationships of a man and a woman. It is instead a relationship established by God primarily for the generation and rearing of children.

God created man and woman to be physically attractive to each other. And while He endowed this relationship with a sense of gratification, He did so not to invent a means of carnal pleasure but to encourage the generation of new life.

Some might point out that God endowed other creatures with the powers of reproduction and that

this power is a natural and instinctive function. But there is a very great distinction between the mating of two human beings and the natural generation of other forms of life.

The man and woman who bring new life into the world provide the house for a human soul, created by God and made in His image and likeness. While the offspring of other creatures perish at death, the child of man has God's promise that his soul will continue to live after death — that his body will be raised from the dust and eternally reunited with his soul.

Too many marriages, unfortunately, are entered into primarily for the physical pleasures offered by such a relationship. It is among such people that the advocates of birth control find their most enthusiastic supporters. It is sad but true that in our so-called modern times, the Catholic Church stands almost alone in its opposition to this degrading vice, and is often called bigoted and narrow-minded on the subject by some who profess to be Christians.

Actually, the law against birth control is not a law of the Catholic Church. It is God's law and binding upon married people of every faith. When God endowed men and women with the physical power to generate children, He obviously desired them to use this power for that purpose. Exponents and practitioners of birth control are therefore obviously defying both the natural and the supernatural laws.

God also has made the marriage relationship attractive in other than purely physical ways. In the happy marriage, the husband and wife each contribute to the other's contentment. There is an exchange of affection—a union of hearts—a meeting of minds. The personality of one merges with the personality of the other, to their mutual happiness and benefit. In times of joy their pleasure is mutual and twofold; in times of crisis, the comfort and consolation of one is imparted to the other.

All too often, a man and woman embarking on married life will recognize their union as a partnership between themselves...but overlook the more important fact that they are also parties to a partnership with God.

To make this partnership invit-

ing and rewarding, God has endowed the married state with numerous blessings and many pleasures. He expects in return that men and women will use the physical attributes he has given them for the purpose He obviously intended—the begetting of children and the rearing and training of such children to walk in righteous pathways and live consecrated and useful lives.

The Catholic doctrine concerning marriage is not, as some people imagine, merely a set of regulations invented by the Church. Marriage is an institution founded by God Himself. In this, as in other divine laws and commandments, the Church merely interprets and explains the laws for the guidance and benefit of those who wish to live as God willed that they should.

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“...matrimonial faith demands that husband and wife be joined in an especially holy and pure love, not as adulterers love each other, but as Christ loved the Church... The love, then, of which we are speaking is not that based on the passing lust of the moment nor does it consist in pleasing words only, but in the deep attachment of the heart which is expressed in action, since love is proved by deeds. This outward expression of love in the home demands not only mutual help but must go further; must have as its primary purpose that man and wife help each other day by day in forming and perfecting themselves in the interior life; so that through their partnership in life they may advance ever more and more in virtue, and above all that they may grow in true love towards God and their neighbour...”

Pius XI.

# A SACRED CONTRACT

It is obvious from the modern divorce records...and from the vulgar humor so often applied to marriage...that many people do not regard matrimony as a holy state.

In this attitude they completely ignore the fact that the proper union between man and woman was ordained by God, and that its holiness has been reaffirmed repeatedly since the beginning of the Christian era.

The marriage contract is not, as some seem to think, a license from the Church or the state to legalize the cohabitation of a man and a woman. It is entirely possible for a completely valid marriage to be consummated, in fact, without the offices of either the Church or the civil authorities.

The priest, minister or judge who performs a marriage ceremony is actually only a witness. The contract is between the bride and groom who enter into the marriage union. They and they alone make the contract.

Like any other contract, a proper matrimonial pact must be voluntarily entered into and must equitably protect the interest, rights and welfare of all parties

concerned. In the case of the man and the woman, this means that each gives to the other all the proper rights of the conjugal relation. This involves not merely cohabitation, but love, assistance, fidelity and the benefit of all of the special and individual talents which the contracting parties may possess.



God is not only the author of matrimony, but must be a partner to any true marriage contract. For when He created man and woman...and told them to "increase and multiply and fill the earth..." He was establishing a contract obligation for all men and women who

might henceforth unite in marriage.

It is amazing how many people who profess to be Christians... who claim to believe Holy Scripture... are parties to divorce and remarriage. It is impossible to see how they can reconcile such professions of faith with such behavior.

We are told in Genesis that "a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." We are reminded of this by Christ in the New Testament (Matthew 19:5-6), with the added admonition: "What therefore God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

The sanctity of matrimony... and the kind of love that should prevail between man and wife... are graphically described by St. Paul, who said: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered himself up for her... even thus ought husbands also to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own flesh, loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh; on the contrary, he nourishes and cherishes it as Christ also does the Church (because we are members of his body, made from his flesh and from his bones.) 'For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery—I mean in reference to Christ and to the Church." (Eph. 5:25-32.)

St. Paul clearly implied in these words that a man and wife should imitate in their relationship to each

other the relationship of Christ to His Church. As Christ established only one Church, a man should have but one wife. Christ would never divorce Himself from his Church, and no man should divorce himself from his wife. Man should guard his wife with loving care, as Christ guards His Church. And as the Church is obedient and true to Christ, so should the wife be obedient and true to her husband.

People who look upon divorce with easy tolerance are often critical of the Catholic doctrine on marriage and divorce. They argue that the Church is not realistic... that no allowance is made for bad marriages which they contend only a divorce can correct. They think, for instance, that the Church should revise its precepts against birth control so that the number of children might be limited to fit the family budget. They don't like the attitude of the Church on mixed marriages. They declare that the Church should revise its doctrine and rules to conform to the changing needs of modern society.

But, the Church asks—if it was adulterous for a man to put away his wife and marry another in the time of Christ, is it not also adulterous today? When God commanded that man and woman "Increase and multiply and fill the earth," He did not say "if you can afford it."

The commandment that a man "cleave unto his wife" does not suggest that this allegiance shall last only until a more attractive woman comes along. It does not say that this union can be broken be-

cause the wife doesn't measure up to the husband's expectations. It leaves no room for a disgruntled wife to pack up and leave because her husband's income is too small to fulfill her desires.

Successful marriage... a truly Christian marriage... demands love and loyalty, a spirit of tolerance, the willingness to make sacrifices large and small. It calls for understanding and cooperation, and above all for faith in God and trust in one another.

Those planning marriage should contemplate the state of matrimony for what it really is—a lifetime career—and should prepare ac-

cordingly. Failure to understand the obligations, privileges and pleas-



tures of marriage often causes a marriage failure which might have been avoided with proper preparation.

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“...it is hardly necessary to point out what an amount of good is involved in the absolute indissolubility of wedlock and what a train of evils follows upon divorce. Whenever the marriage bond remains intact, then we find marriages contracted with a sense of safety and security, while, when separations are considered and the dangers of divorce are present, the marriage contract itself becomes insecure, or at least gives ground for anxiety and surprises. On the one hand we see a wonderful strengthening of good will and co-operation in the daily life of husband and wife, while, on the other, both of these are miserably weakened by the presence of a facility for divorce. Here we have at a very opportune moment a source of help by which both parties are enabled to preserve their purity and loyalty; there we find harmful inducements to unfaithfulness. On this side we find the birth of children and their tuition and up-bringing effectively promoted, many avenues of discord closed amongst families and relations, and the beginnings of rivalry and jealousy easily suppressed; on that, very great obstacles to the birth and rearing of children and their education, and many occasions of quarrels, and seeds of jealousy sown everywhere...”

Pius XI.



# MARRIED THREE TIMES AND "ALWAYS FOR LOVE"

You might think...from our magazines, movies, newspapers and radio...that our generation has "fallen in love with love."

Teen-age girls swoon at the sound of a fuzzy-toned crooner's voice. A glamorous woman makes her third, fourth or fifth trip to the altar and drooling feature stories proclaim that this, at last, is "the great romance." Brazen infidelity is often excused because the guilty ones were "deeply in love."

Actually, the thing which is so widely glorified today is not love at all, but sex. And at least one bold purveyor of cheap fiction declares that sex is the most important thing in life, and therefore the most essential ingredient in saleable fiction and drama.

Both love and sex have their proper place, for both are God-given attributes of man. But where love can exist without the element of sex, the power of sex is abused and misused where it lacks the dominating influence and control of love. Sex is not a consideration at all, for instance, in our love for God, for our parents, for our children. It is an expression and fulfillment of love between a man and a woman when it is a genuine love which is pleasing in the eyes of God.

The faithfulness of partners in marriage is a question seldom discussed. Those who are unfaithful try to keep their sin a secret. Those who remain faithful regard infidelity as something decent people don't do. But enough evidence does get into circulation to prove that marital infidelity is not a rare and isolated event, but a growing social epidemic.

But whether infidelity is successfully concealed, or publicly exposed, it is a great and ugly evil which every husband and wife should look upon with horror and scorn. It is, first of all, a hideous desecration of a God-given power and a scarlet sin. It is a murderous destroyer of family life and a cruel form of injustice upon the betrayed spouse. It is a betrayal of the trust of the children of either of the parties concerned. And finally, it is an attack upon the very foundations of human society.

Some people claim that their family life is strictly their own business. But that isn't true. From each family there flows a tiny spring that empties into the moral reservoir of society. The family is the source where the waters of this reservoir are either purified or pol-

luted. Pollution imperils the moral health of every social institution.

Few generations have been marked by such widespread invitations to infidelity. Popular humor makes light of the behavior of the man who "cheats" on his wife, or the wife who betrays her husband. Obscene, suggestive and pornographic literature is tolerated as never before. The sexual allure of women is brazenly exploited in almost every phase of visual and pictorial art. The man who steals the affections of another's wife is often regarded as a modern Romeo, and the woman as a lucky one who found "a greater love."



How can married people combat this attack upon their virtue and decency? How can they be sure that the pure love which prevailed at the time of their marriage will remain strong enough to resist all temptations as they walk through the years together? How can they protect the beauty and splendor of their beginning love against the sly and sinister invitations to enjoy illicit experiences?

The virtue of chastity is, of course, the answer. It is a virtue

which should most earnestly be cultivated by both husband and wife. It is the absence of chastity on such a widespread scale that is today permitting greedy people to popularize obscenity and indecency.

These peddlers of smut and sexual debauchery try to ridicule the chaste person as a prude or a religious "nut." They say that such people are not modern, that they're not "on the beam," that they are not "hep." And it often happens that the chaste person finds himself the only one of a crowd of presumably decent people who resents an attack upon chastity.

No one can be truly good and truly happy without chastity. It is therefore important to the husband and wife... and to young people, too... to know what chastity means and how it strengthens and protects the individual against the temptation to infidelity and immorality of all kinds.

Chastity is the product of reverence. And once we understand the meaning of reverence, the meaning of chastity becomes quite clear. Reverence is a deep respect combined with love and awe, and sometimes with fear. Our reverence for God combines all these elements. And we must have reverence for ourselves — for our body and our soul.

The body of a man is a temple of God — created by God to house the human soul. And the soul, we are assured, is made in God's own image and likeness. When we defile our body by immorality, we defile the temple of God. And at the

same time we defile the soul which is God's image and likeness.

Canon Sheehan described reverence not only as the guardian of chastity and purity, but as the



secret of all religion and all happiness. "Without reverence," he said, "there is no faith, nor hope, nor love. Reverence is the mother of each of the Commandments of

Sinai — reverence of God, reverence of our neighbor, reverence of ourself.

"Humility is founded on it; piety is conserved by it; purity finds in it its shield and buckler. Reverence for God, and all that is associated with Him, His ministers, His temple, His services — that is religion. Reverence for our neighbor, his goods, his person, his chattels — that is honesty. Reverence for ourselves — clean bodies and pure souls — that is chastity."

The allurements to infidelity and immorality are all about us. But we will have the power to resist them if we will but remember that our bodies are the temple of God . . . our souls His image and likeness . . . and His helping grace the armor plate which no evil can pierce, no temptation destroy.

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'If families, particularly those in which there are many children, have not suitable dwellings; if the husband cannot find employment and means of livelihood; if the necessities of life cannot be purchased except at exorbitant prices; if even the mother of the family to the great harm of the home, is compelled to go forth and seek a living by her own labour; if she, too, in the ordinary or even extraordinary labours of childbirth is deprived of proper food, medicine, and the assistance of a skilled physician, it is patent to all to what an extent married people may lose heart, and how home life and the observance of God's commands are rendered difficult for them; indeed, it is obvious how great a peril can arise to the public security and to the welfare and very life of civil society itself when such men are reduced to that condition of desperation that, having nothing which they fear to lose, they are emboldened to hope for chance advantage from the upheaval of the state and of established order.'

Pius XI.

# BUT...IS IT A SACRAMENT?

A man and woman contemplating marriage usually devote a good deal of thought and attention to the practical problems involved in such a union.

But it is unfortunate that many do not meditate as deeply and thoroughly as they should upon the meaning of matrimony as a holy institution. Too often they see the material aspects and benefits of the married state without fully comprehending its spiritual significance.

Marriage, in Catholic eyes, is a Sacrament. Non-Catholics, even though they may regard marriage as a holy state, disagree with this article of Catholic faith.

Those seeking marital happiness will find it profitable, however, to examine the reasons why the age-old Catholic Church recognizes the sacramental character of matrimony. From this study you can better understand the Catholic teaching concerning many aspects of marriage and family life.

It is argued that the Bible does not specifically refer to marriage as a Sacrament. It is true, of course, that the Scriptures do not give convincing evidence in the matter, but St. Paul definitely implies that marriage is of sacramental character, and Christian teaching since the time of Peter supports this belief.

Before forming an opinion on the matter, let us find the answer to the question. *What is a Sacrament?*

A Sacrament is an *external* sign of the *invisible* grace conferred by Christ on those who receive a Sacrament. The Apostles, for instance, could not see the Holy Spirit when Christ said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit." And while Christ could have transmitted the Holy Spirit to them without these words or any external sign, He did speak the words and He breathed upon them so that their human senses would comprehend what was taking place.

External signs are used, of course, in the transmission of all Christ's Sacraments... just as Christ used external signs to make the meaning of His teaching clear to the human senses of His followers. The graces conferred by the Sacraments are, of course, invisible.

In the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians (V:23-24), the Apostle compared the marriage of a Christian man and woman to the union of Christ and His Church. The husband was described as the head of the wife "even as Christ is the head of the Church"...and "...as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything."

In admonishing a husband and wife to submit to each other, St. Paul obviously did not mean that they should do this merely for their own material enjoyment and welfare. He clearly meant that it is the will of Christ that they should do so, and the only conclusion that may be drawn from this is that marriage is a spiritual union.

The Apostle would scarcely have likened the union of a husband and wife to the union of Christ and His Church if matrimony were not a sacred relationship and part of God's plan for the world. And common sense also tells us that Christ, having provided graces for mankind through Sacraments to meet other needs, would not have neglected to provide spiritual assistance for us in so vital and complex a matter as the married state.

These conclusions are well supported by tradition dating from the earliest Christian times and preserved in the historic Catholic Church. Non-Catholics do not accept tradition and insist that the Scriptures contain all Christian truth. The fact remains, however, that tradition has accurately recorded early Christian writings and customs which reflect the life and teaching of Jesus. Among these are references to the sanctity of matrimony.

Tertullian, for example, writing in the early part of the third century, said: "Where shall we find power to declare the happiness of that marriage which the Church arranged, the offering confirms, the blessing seals, the angels proclaim

and the Father ratifies?" St. Ambrose declared in the fourth century that marriage is sanctified by Christ in the Savior's words: "They shall be two in one flesh."



If Christ did not regard marriage as a sanctified state, why did He refer to the union of man and wife as "What God hath joined together"? For if God joins man and wife together, matrimony is the result of a divine act whether the Scriptures say so specifically or not. And if such a union were not sacred in the eyes of God, why should He warn "let no man put asunder"?

Christ gave us each of the Sacraments for a special purpose. They are to provide grace for human needs—to help and strengthen and purify us. Is it reasonable to believe that Christ, knowing the many complexities and problems of married life, would fail to provide a Sacrament to meet the needs of such an important part of our lives?

Catholics are strongly fortified for the problems of married life by the realization of the Sacramental character of their marriage. They recognize that matrimony is not merely the union of a man and woman...not merely a contract between two individuals...but a union and a contract between the husband and the wife in which they intimately cooperate with God.

There are good marriages, of course, between men and women outside the Catholic Church who are not willing to concede that matrimony is a Sacrament, but who do regard it as a holy state. Unfortunately, however, large numbers of people embark upon mar-

ried life as if it were a purely materialistic career concerning only themselves, and with its success being largely a matter of luck. It is marriages of this sort which cause so many broken hearts and homes.

If you are planning marriage, we urge you to consider this step as a great adventure — not merely an adventure with your partner in marriage, but an adventure with Christ. And if you are already married...and not making a success of it...it is not too late to seek the grace of Christ which will help to put your family life on a firm and contented basis.

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“...since, everything must be referred to the law and mind of God, in order to bring about the universal and permanent restoration of marriage, it is indeed of the utmost importance that the faithful should be well instructed concerning matrimony; both by word of mouth and by the written word, not cursorily but often and fully, by means of plain and weighty arguments, so that these truths will strike the intellect and will be deeply engraved on their hearts. Let them realize and diligently reflect upon the great wisdom, kindness, and bounty God has shown towards the human race, not only by the institution of marriage, but also, and quite as much, by upholding it with sacred laws; still more, in wonderfully raising it to the dignity of a Sacrament by which such an abundant fountain of graces has been opened to those joined in Christian wedlock that these may be able to serve the noble purposes of wedlock for their own welfare and for that of their children, of the community and also for that of human relationship.”

Pius XI.

# GOD'S FAMILY PLAN

Many a home has broken up over a conflict of authority between husband and wife . . . or through the failure of one or the other to assume his or her share of family obligations.

This need not happen if there is a proper understanding of the distinctive part God has designed for the husband and the wife to play in the family life.

The family needs a head, and God designed man for that role. He is endowed, for instance, with greater physical strength than the woman, so that he may till the soil and perform the many other chores of the family bread-winner. He is not only stronger, but more aggressive and combative, so that he may be able to defend the lives of his loved ones and the family property against predatory attacks.

Woman is different from man not only in the structure and conformation of her body, but in the talents with which God has especially endowed her for her part in the family life. It will always be true in marriage that the greatest giving will be on the part of the wife. For through pregnancy and child raising, she loses much of the independence which it is the man's privilege to retain.

Despite these divine specifications regarding the respective duties

of the husband and wife, it is not an easy thing for a man and woman to get along together. Those planning marriage, therefore, must begin with a great deal more than mutual infatuation if they are to make a success of their family life.

The family relationship is a dynamic one—a living, moving, maturing thing. It is not like the static relationship between a nut and bolt or a set of gears. The man and the woman must become one flesh. Their two lives must be fused into one and yet remain individually vital. They must be joined together without any loss of personality.



To make this possible, the two sexes must not only attract each other, but they must also repel each other. This, of course, sounds contradictory but it isn't. It is normal, for instance, for a man to

be attracted to a woman, yet no normal man would want to live in a scented boudoir or adopt feminine habits. It is also normal for a woman to be attracted to a man, yet she is repelled by various forms of masculinity. A man may love a woman but he doesn't want to be womanly. A woman may love a man but she doesn't want to be manly.

There are in family life masculine responsibilities which naturally are within the province of the husband. And there are feminine responsibilities, of which child-bearing is one, that are the obligations of the wife. But in matters involving any joint enterprise, God has designed man to be the leader and woman to serve in a supporting and cooperative capacity.

The nearest we can come to defining the difference between the love of a man for a woman and a woman for a man, is that a man's love must be considerate and the woman's love acquiescent.

The man who assumes the right, as head of the family, to be a petty tyrant, is obviously not considerate. Nor is the wife properly acquiescent who rejects the supporting role which God has assigned to her in His family plan. Sacrifice and great charity are needed on the part of both, and where these qualities are lacking we often see either the man or the woman, or both, invading the rights of the other and neglecting their own obligations as well.

No sensible person could look into the eyes of his own baby and

believe that this wonderful creature could be an effect of which he and his wife were the sole cause. Instead, the intelligent parent realizes that God has fashioned a new body and soul...and that the part played by the parents in its production was really only a small part.

Common sense and a due measure of humility remind parents that the child is a gift of God...that God has enlisted the aid of the parents to bring this life into the world...and that God has come into the family life as the partner in a great enterprise.

In this partnership between God and the family, there must be a complete and abiding trust. And there must be a firm trust between the husband and wife. This point is well illustrated by the story of a young married man who wished to assure his wife that she could place her trust in him.

"The strength of our family," he said, "will not depend upon my right arm, my foresight or my courage. If there is any reason why you can and should trust me as your husband, it is because I myself trust God. With God in our home to help us, we have no reason to fear what the future may bring to our lives and our family. I am the head of the family in one sense, but in a larger way both you and I are merely the agents of God — and God is the head."

No, God did not establish the institution called family life and then abandon it entirely to the care



and custody of men. Instead, He offers the unlimited bounty of His mercy and grace to all men and women who are willing to assume the obligations of matrimony and parenthood in the manner and to the ends for which God has designed them.

There is only one good plan for successful marriage...for a secure and contented family life...and that is God's plan. Homes are breaking up all over the land because men and women either do not understand—or will not follow—God's plan.

“Even the very best instruction given by the Church, however, will not alone suffice to bring about once more conformity of marriage to the law of God; something more is needed in addition to the education of the mind, namely a steadfast determination of the will, on the part of husband and wife, to observe the sacred laws of God and of nature in regard to marriage. In fine, in spite of what others may wish to assert and spread abroad by word of mouth or in writing, let husband and wife resolve: to stand fast to the commandments of God in all things that matrimony demands; always to render to each other the assistance of mutual love; to preserve the honour of chastity; not to lay profane hands on the stable nature of the bond; to use the rights given them by marriage in a way that will be always Christian and sacred, more especially in the first years of wedlock, so that should there be need of continency afterwards, custom will have made it easier for each to preserve it. In order that they may make this firm resolution, keep it and put it into practice, an oft-repeated consideration of their state of life, and a diligent reflection on the sacrament they have received, will be of great assistance to them. Let them constantly keep in mind, that they have been sanctified and strengthened for the duties and for the dignity of their state by a special sacrament, the efficacious power of which, although it does not impress a character, is undying.” Pius XI.

# THE CHILDREN — CENTER OF FAMILY CONCERN

George Bernard Shaw once said that if a man could live 300 years he would know everything. "Yes," Gilbert K. Chesterton remarked, "and if Shaw lived 300 years he would be a Catholic."

Shaw was, of course, making the point that history tends to repeat itself. In any 300-year period, he believed, all theories and revolutions prove themselves either true or untrue, either sane or insane. Chesterton had in mind, of course, that anyone who could have lived 300 years would have seen the logic of Christianity repeatedly reasserting itself. He would also see the need for an unchanging Church to perpetuate that logic through the centuries as the Catholic Church has done.

Viewing marriage as they so often see it today, many young people wonder if the risks of matrimony are not too great. But truly to understand marriage, we must see it from the big view — from a perspective covering generations. Looking at it that way, we can realize that married life should not be what it so often appears to be in our modern life, but instead something truly beautiful and enduring.

The principal objective of marriage is, of course, the birth and rearing of children. It is the failure to keep this in mind which causes



so many marriage failures and the scandalous rate of divorce which prevails today.

Take the case, for instance, of Bill Smith and Helen Jones on the one hand, and Tom Barnes and Millie Carey on the other. Bill and Helen are in love with each other, and so are Tom and Millie. All four of them are young, at the height of their idealism and vigor.

So Bill marries Helen and Tom marries Millie.

The first few months, perhaps the first several years, are wonderful — a period occupied mainly with mutual adoration. But what happens when the ardor of the honeymoon has cooled? The natural tendency is for married people to “bank the fire” and try to extend its quiet warmth for the years ahead.

In the case of Bill and Helen, who are childless by choice, life is a narrow existence in which the climax has passed and all there is left is a prolonged anti-climax. They proceed from youth to old age and finally to the grave. Their love story, with all its beginning promise, ends in tragedy.

But how different is the story of Tom and Millie. Their romantic ardor cools, too, when the honeymoon period has passed. But this process of events is not tragic for them because they see their early vigor renewed in their children. They, fortunately, have the conception of marriage that covers generations, not just a fleeting moment.

Every man and woman approaching the matrimonial altar is the possessor of a valuable heritage of culture, wisdom and Faith. This inheritance has come to them from their fathers, who may have suffered unbelievable hardships to preserve it. Of what values are the struggles and achievements, the Faith and the culture of our fathers, if we allow their influence to die with their name and their memory in childless marriage?

Marriage is not merely a union of the bodies of a man and a woman. It is also, in God's plan, a union of all they possess in culture, wisdom and Faith... a union of all of their talents... a union of the entire personality of each. The parents blessed by this kind of a union can see all of their own inherited and acquired qualities renewed and regenerated in their children. And in this is abundant compensation for their own declining vigor and ardor.

Without this conception of marriage, the very reason and all of the adventure of matrimony are lost. Without it, marriage is merely a flash in the pan, a thrilling skyrocket that soon drops, charred and dead. If life means no more to us than that which begins at our birth and ends with our death, then we have no right to enter into marriage, for it is not true love that we can offer a mate. Instead, we are only asking another to join us in a requiem — to share our grave.

Certainly no one but the two people involved can respect a love that lives and dies so shortly. Christ surely, in His divinity, would not have made matrimony a holy union for such an utterly useless purpose. How can anyone defend the base practice of birth control when life has an eternal significance dating back to Genesis and extending forward to everlasting union with God?

Too often in the modern scheme of things, the child is an obstacle to the selfish indulgences of the parents. In the truly Christian

scheme of things, the child is the focus of family concern—the new messenger, the new apostle, to carry the flame through another generation.

Begetting children is only one of the Christian responsibilities of parents. Rearing them rightly is an equally binding obligation. This is a task which involves a vast amount of Faith, love, sacrifice and many duties which at times assume frightening proportions even for the most thoroughly consecrated, patient and efficient parents.

In the ideal Catholic home, the parents must seek constantly to train their children in the meaning of life and its relationship to God. Christmas does not mean merely tinsel and toys, but the story of the birth of Jesus. Easter does not mean merely a new dress and hat, a new suit and shoes, but the glorious story of Christ's resurrection and the significance of this event in the lives of men.

The children are reminded by the gift-giving at Christmas of the constant beneficence of God. Throughout Lent they are made to realize the positive values of suffering. They are trained to see in the life of Jesus all of the virtues of the Christian way of living. They are made acquainted with the qualities of the Savior and encouraged to emulate them. They are educated in their play, and in their little arts, to a Christian pattern which is the ultimate plan for their adult life.

God did not make the begetting of children an easy, simple thing. It is accompanied by pain for the

mother, fear and worry for the father. Nor is the proper rearing of children a lark, as any experienced father and mother knows. Children don't behave according to "the book"—not even according to the Bible. Each one is different from the other—each one is a problem of his or her own.

People without children usually can tell you everything about raising them. And there is no lack of advice on what to feed a child, how to regulate his play, what to do when he misbehaves. Magazines and newspapers are full of such counsel, some of it undoubtedly valuable as a psychological guide for directing the thoughts and efforts of little ones.

The child who does something contrary to the wishes of his parents may be moved by weakness, love, malice, ignorance, fear or imitation. Little Mike, for instance, constantly strays from the neighborhood, and some might call it willful disobedience. Actually, though, Mike just forgets. He is proceeding from one wonderful experience to another and he wants to see everything about him. Even on the way to the woodshed his fear of a spanking vanishes when he sees a passing butterfly.

Children are not, however, either saints or devils. They usually strike a happy medium in between. Most of them in fact, are merely repeating the things which made the grown men and women of today such a nuisance to their parents many years ago. Whether they are to develop good habits or bad ones

is often determined by the love, attention and time the parents are willing to devote to their proper rearing.

The vogue today in many homes is merely to tolerate the child in an adult world, forgetting that it is a child's world in which the little one lives. When they are small, the children are kept in play pens. When they cry and disturb Mother and Dad, they are bribed with toys to "pipe down." For their little problems, they are often treated as "cases" rather than individuals — with all the efficiency of a social worker instead of the loving solicitude of a parent.

Marriage and the raising of a family... with all the uncertainties and hazards it involves... is too frightening a prospect for some people even in quiet times. It is even more so in these days of the atom and H bombs, economic uneasiness, and the violent conflicts going on among nations and groups of our modern society.

These hazards are undoubtedly responsible for the postponement of many marriages and the tendency to delayed parenthood. Advocates of so-called "planned parenthood," in fact, use the argument of economic uncertainty as a justification for their un-Christian family limitation program.

Those who allow these hazards to stand in the way of their marriage... or use them as an excuse for not begetting children... are demonstrating an astonishing lack of trust not merely in themselves, but in God.

In giving dominion over the earth, God gave us the powers to make it a good world through Faith, love, intelligence, honesty and labor... or a bad world through unbelief, hate, ignorance, dishonesty and slothfulness. If the world we live in today is a bad world, it is because we are failing the stewardship God has entrusted to us.



The way out of this dilemma is not through race suicide... as represented by birth control and failure to marry... any more than suicide would be the way out of our personal difficulties.

The answer to the problems of our times is today... as it always has been... in the Christian home.

Hatreds, war, intolerance and greed could not flourish as they do today if we even approached the Christian ideal in our family life. And any solution of these problems will depend upon the extent to which our children are trained for living well in the sight of God.

We should, therefore, contemplate matrimony with respect for the mighty problems it may impose on us, but with trust in God that we shall be able to meet these problems for the benefit of mankind. Instead of evading the risks of marriage, we should regard them as a challenge to our Christian spirit and an invitation to serve God in a very special and blessed way.

"Yes," some will say, "that all sounds nice. But you have to mortgage your life to pay for children today. Frank Bell and his wife have four kids and they're broke all the time trying to feed and clothe them. Harry Sears and his wife don't have any children and they have a brand-new car, are paying for a home of their own, and can afford a little fun."

There is no doubt that a man and wife raising a family may have to sacrifice some of their personal pleasures to provide adequately for their loved ones. They will have to perform chores around the house that they would not have had to do if they had remained unmarried. They must carry on their shoulders,

the worry and concern for the health and safety of their loved ones. They may have heartaches that they would not have experienced in single life.

But think of the glorious compensations! We are, first of all, engaged in a partnership with Christ. We have the assurances that God will take care of any and every problem that is beyond our powers. We can have children with complete confidence that God will also be with them. And we know that in raising a family in accordance with Christian ideals we are fulfilling one of the principal purposes of our existence.

Many marriages that would have gone on the rocks have been saved by the coming of children. For in the eyes of their young, men and women have seen since the beginning of mankind, the greatest of God's creations—a creature with an immortal soul. Realizing this...and recognizing that God permits us to beget and rear such a creature...should make the secret of successful marriage an open secret to all who open their hearts and minds to the overpowering fact.

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"...it cannot be denied that the basis of a happy wedlock, and the ruin of an unhappy one, is prepared and set in the souls of boys and girls during the period of childhood and adolescence. There is danger that those who before marriage sought in all things what is theirs, who indulged even their impure desires, will be in the married state what they were before, that they will reap that which they have sown; (Gal. VI,9); indeed, within the home there will be sadness, lamentation, mutual contempt, strifes, estrangements, weariness of common life, and, worst of all, such parties will find themselves left alone with their own unconquered passions."

Pius XI.

# WHAT'S WRONG WITH DIVORCE?

Is divorce legitimate and proper when two people cannot make a "go" of their marriage? Is it right for a good woman to remain tied to a no-good husband, when she might have better luck if given another chance? Should a good husband have to spend his lifetime with a woman he doesn't love, respect or trust?

Even some people who profess to be Christians will maintain that a divorce is right and proper under any of these circumstances. And the civil laws offer only a minor obstacle to those who really want to sever their marriage bonds.

The adamant opposition to divorce by the Catholic Church is often criticized as "old-fashioned, out-of-date, unrealistic." The critics say the Church forces people to live miserable lives together when they might find happiness elsewhere and be better citizens.

What these critics forget, however, is that the Catholic Church does not make any laws of its own against divorce. Its teaching merely reiterates the commands of God and interprets the words of Christ with respect to the holiness of matrimony.

It was God, speaking to Adam, Who declared "They shall be two

in one flesh." The Catholic Church did not make this law. It was Christ, not the Church, Who proclaimed that "Whoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her." And God Himself is the author of the command that man "shall leave father and mother and cleave to his wife."

An analysis of the very nature of things also makes it obvious that matrimony is a permanent thing. A man and woman joining in the married state personally assume the responsibility for the care and rearing of any children that may result from their union. Such care and rearing require many years. Divorce therefore not only violates the law as specifically laid down in Holy Scripture, but it also disregards the laws of nature which should be apparent even to the unreligious person.

"What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" makes it abundantly clear that the Church has absolutely no power to dissolve a valid Christian marriage in which two baptized persons have been united, and where the marriage has been consummated.

It will surprise many non-Catholics to discover that the Catholic

Church recognizes as Sacramental in character — and indissoluble — the marriage of *two baptized non-Catholics* who are free to marry. In such cases the Church insists that there can be no divorce with the right to remarry, without violating the divine and natural law. The fact that the two non-Catholics concerned do not recognize Catholic Church regulations makes no difference; for the Church points out that the violation is not against the Church but against the laws of God and the clear intent of nature.

Uninformed and ignorant people have insisted at times that the Catholic Church is not sincere and consistent in its opposition to divorce, and that people with money and influence may get the Church's approval for a divorce and remarriage.

If that were true, Pope Clement VII would scarcely have refused a divorce to King Henry VIII, when the failure to do so caused the separation of England from the Catholic Faith. Nor would Pope Pius VII have suffered imprisonment rather than grant Napoleon a divorce from Josephine.

In more than one case involving well-known people, the Church has excommunicated Catholics who divorced their lawful spouse and married another. Only recently an heiress who was wed in a Catholic church and later submitted to a second ceremony in another denomination in deference to her husband, was excommunicated. Two widely-publicized figures, one of them a Catholic, publicly declared

their intention to marry if each could secure a divorce from his or her lawful spouse. If they did so, the Church maintained, they would be living in public adultery.

The argument is sometimes made that Holy Scripture does not entirely support the firm Catholic opposition to divorce with permission to remarry. This argument points out that God permitted men in the time of Abraham to have several wives, and that men could also divorce a woman for "some uncleanness."

Two very important facts should be cited in contradiction, however. God's dispensation in this case apparently followed the deluge. And in no case was a woman permitted to have more than one husband.

Under the New Law, the Church is empowered to apply Christ's teaching concerning the Sacrament of matrimony. This authority does not, however, give the Church the power to dissolve a marriage which has been consummated between two baptized persons.

In certain cases, the Church may grant a declaration of nullity when it is conclusively demonstrated that the persons concerned were *never validly married*, a simple example of which would be the case of a person abducted and forced into matrimony against his or her will. The Church legislation in this respect is highly technical, the processes of securing a declaration of nullity are most complicated and difficult, and the number of those granted is so small as to be infinitesimal.



The Catholic Church cannot modify its regulations with respect to marriage and divorce to conform to the trends of the times. Holy Scripture declares the married state to be a permanent one. It lays down specific commands against the dissolution of the marital bonds. The Church, instituted by Christ to carry His teaching from one generation to another, cannot change Christ's commandments to adapt them to the wishes, the whims, or the sins of any single generation.

If you are married and having trouble with your spouse, you may have thought that divorce would be the best solution of your problem. If you wish to live according to the law of God and the plain

law of nature, you will abandon such a thought and earnestly direct your efforts to making your marriage a success instead of breaking it up.

If you are contemplating marriage, we pray that you will view it as a lifetime contract—not something to be shed like an old coat when the cuffs become frayed. Even if you are not a Catholic, it will be worth while for you to investigate and understand the Catholic regulations concerning marriage...to know the Sacramental character of the matrimonial state...to realize the obligations of this partnership which you plan to enter not merely with the mate of your choice, but with God Himself.

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“...let it be repeated as an immutable and inviolable fundamental doctrine that matrimony was not instituted or restored by man but by God; not by man were the laws made to strengthen and confirm and elevate it but by God, the Author of nature, and by Christ our Lord by whom nature was redeemed, and hence these laws cannot be subject to any human decrees or to any contrary pact even of the spouses themselves...”

“Yet although matrimony is of its very nature of divine institution, the human will, too, enters into it and performs a most noble part. For each individual marriage, inasmuch as it is a conjugal union of a particular man and woman, arises only from the free consent of each of the spouses; and this free act of the will, by which each party hands over and accepts those rights proper to the state of marriage, is so necessary to constitute true marriage that it cannot be supplied by any human power. This freedom, however, regards only the question whether the contracting parties really wish to enter upon matrimony or to marry this particular person; but the nature of matrimony is entirely independent of the free-will of man, so that if one has once contracted matrimony, he is thereby subject to its divinely made laws and its essential properties.”

Pius XI.

# IT TAKES A GOOD MAN AND A GOOD WOMAN

Successful marriage isn't easy—even under the most favorable circumstances.

There are all sorts of practical, everyday problems in connection with the combination of a man and a woman, and many special and most difficult ones which are not foreseeable. Matrimony can be a truly happy and purposeful state only when there is a complete and mutual giving of love, respect and cooperation supported by an unquestioned and unquestioning Christian faith.

Physical and moral competency are important requirements for marital success. Without these qualifications, the primary purpose of matrimony—the begetting and rearing of children—may be defeated. The proper rearing of children would also be impaired by the lack of moral competency on the part of one or both parents.

Marriage must, therefore, be approached not only as a spiritual state, but as a practical one as well. The husband must have both the will and the competence to provide for the material needs of his wife and children. The wife must be able to fulfill the practical obligations of motherhood—maintaining the home, caring for the children and acting in general as

a helpmate to her husband in every phase of family life.

Some Christians maintain that Holy Scripture gives approval to divorce and remarriage in cases of infidelity. The Catholic Church agrees that adultery on the part of one spouse or the other may be justification for separation by the innocent party, but not with the right to marry again.

The records of the modern divorce courts, however, reveal some of the flimsiest and often false bases of appeals for the breaking of the marital bond. The husband doesn't earn enough money... the wife refuses to darn socks and sew on buttons... the husband is a "crab," the wife a "nag."

Sometimes the husband squanders his weekly paycheck in a bar or at the races... the wife buys personal finery beyond the husband's means... the husband expects the wife to fire the furnace, or the wife refuses to prepare the husband's early breakfast.

Modern divorce laws make it pretty easy and simple for two people to get a divorce if they really want it. In some states one will merely charge the other with "mental cruelty," the lawyers make a property settlement in advance,

and when the case is called the divorce is usually granted without the "cruel" member of the partnership even appearing to deny the charge.

The husband who wants to make a success of his marriage must realize that he will be called upon



to do many things that would not have been expected of him as a single man. The wife must realize the same. And both must recognize that they may have to give up certain of the privileges and liberties they formerly enjoyed.

The husband will have to be industrious to supply the family's daily needs by his labors. He will have to be ambitious to improve his earning capacity to meet the increasing requirements of clothing, education and pleasure of the children as they grow up and costs increase. If his income is not sufficient to provide adequately for his family and still enjoy little pleasures of his own, he must sacrifice his own enjoyment for the welfare of his dependents.

The responsibilities of a woman are no less, but in a different direction. She cannot fairly or properly expect her husband to perform the labors and services which are in the proper sphere of the wife. If

the husband's income is not sufficient to indulge her wishes for the kind of dresses, hats and shoes she would like to have, she must reconcile herself to the reality and not destroy the peace of the home by her unreasonable and impossible demands.

A man and woman entering the married state give themselves one to the other "for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, until death do us part." This means a sharing of whatever may come — poverty or wealth, sickness or health, fancy clothes or homespun. It is not a true marriage, nor likely to succeed, when a woman marries a man for his money, or a man chooses a mate for her social position.

Fruitful and lasting marriage is largely a matter of love and Faith. When there is genuine love and a consecrated Faith, the practical problems of life are not too difficult to meet and conquer. When these qualities are lacking, even the smallest personality differences will often bring discord and destruction to a marriage and family life.

"In laws" have been the cause of many marriage crackups, and are sometimes blamed when they are not at fault. It is clearly the duty of both the husband and the wife to recognize that the other has relatives for whom there should be mutual respect and consideration. This does not mean, however, that the relatives of either should have a voice in the affairs of a husband and wife, for Holy Scripture directs that a man leave his father and his mother "and cleave

to his wife." This applies, of course, to the wife also.

There are times when even the most devoted husband and wife have their differences. Maybe the baby cried all night and the parents were worried and short-tempered. A petty spat follows. Perhaps the husband is down in the dumps when he sees the next door neighbors with a new car and he can't afford one. Or the wife sees Mrs. Brown with a smart new dress and would like one but can't have it.

The husband may be slow, quiet, easy-going and the wife volatile, exuberant, and impetuous — and these personality differences may at times be provoking to one or the other. One may have a livelier sense of humor and overdo it now and then at the other's expense. One may be patient, the other just the opposite.

These and countless other big and little differences can cause pain and discord in the family life. But where love and Faith prevail... where there is a proper understanding of the mutual character of the marriage relationship... where husband and wife are truly "two in one

flesh"—these differences never lead to the divorce court.

The fact that the husband is the recognized head of the wife does not mean that he may impose his every whim, opinion and will on her without regard for her rights and position as his wife. His leadership is to serve the mutual interest and welfare of his wife and himself and any children born of their union.

It happens often that the wife becomes the actual head of the house by virtue of the weakness of her husband. In some cases, this is the salvation of a marriage. It happens also that domineering women sometimes usurp the husband's headship with disastrous results.

Under God's specific directions... and in accordance with the law of nature... matrimony is a mutual relationship founded upon love, Faith and the physical attraction of a man and a woman for each other. Its success depends upon the willingness and the ability of both parties to fulfill their respective obligations. It takes a good man and a good woman to make a good marriage.

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"...the sacred partnership of true marriage is constituted both by the will of God and the will of man. From God comes the very institution of marriage, the ends for which it was instituted, the laws that govern it, the blessings that flow from it; while man, through generous surrender of his own person made to another for the whole span of life, becomes, with the help and cooperation of God, the author of each particular marriage, with the duties and blessings annexed thereto from divine institution."

Pius XI.

# SO YOU'RE GOING TO BE MARRIED

Naturally you are excited, thrilled—maybe a little scared.

You probably are skittering about making plans—the wedding clothes, a reception, the honeymoon. Perhaps you're going from one store to another looking at furniture, and chasing all over town looking for a place to live.

You probably have a long list of things to do before the fateful day rolls around...and while you are convinced everything can't be ready in time, you almost wish the day was to be sooner than the date you have set.

There is, of course, a lot of planning and preparation for a wedding. But have you made the most important preparations of all? Are you going to approach marriage merely as a romantic adventure for yourself and your intended, or as a venture with Christ?

Catholic young people are cautioned by the Church that marriage is one of the most important steps they will ever take. They are advised to think well and at length on the exalted holiness of matrimony and the many spiritual as well as practical problems the marriage union involves.

While the Church addresses it-

self mainly to the young men and women within its own fold, the good advice given Catholic young people can be profitably followed by baptized non-Catholic men and women too.



The Church reminds those planning marriage that it is a Sacrament, a holy union which is symbolic of the union between Christ and His Church. It is intended not merely as a state of life pleasing to the couple involved, but as a contribution to the welfare and progress of the human race.

The point is emphasized that marriage will demand many hardships and sacrifices on the part of the husband and wife, but regardless of what may come, they must give each other their constant and

undivided love and cooperation as long as both live.

The Church reminds potential newlyweds of the practical aspects of marriage also... that the man should be certain of steady employment—that the new family should, if possible, establish a home of its own—that the prospective husband should seriously consider the qualifications of the prospective bride to fulfill the obligations of the married state, and that the girl should similarly assess the apparent virtues of the prospective husband in this regard.

Catholic young people are counseled not to marry in haste, but also not to allow minor obstacles to delay a marriage unduly. Young people are advised that the period of courtship was designed by God to be a period of happiness for lovers, but that emotional impulses must be restrained so there may be no defilement of the pure and beautiful sentiments which should prevail.

Love at first sight happens frequently in romantic fiction, and it may happen in real life. Usually, however, it is merely a case of attraction at first sight and the love comes only after a period of companionship. Most sensible young people want their family and friends to meet the new-found lover, and it is only fair and reasonable that this be arranged.

The "old-fashioned" custom of asking the parents' consent to marry their daughter is still recommended by the Church. And the parents of the prospective groom should like-

wise be informed of his plans. This is urged not merely as a matter of filial respect, but also because parents often can give wise advice which may benefit their own son and daughter, and his or her intended. When such advice is obviously not right, or is dictated by the selfish interest of a jealous parent, it may properly be disregarded.

As the wedding day approaches, the Church counsels the betrothed pair to intensify their spiritual activities by the more regular reception of the Sacraments and by prayer. Thirty days or more before the wedding, the pastor of the parish in which the bride lives is notified of the intention to marry and arrangements are made for the Nuptial Mass, which takes place in the bride's parish. If the groom lives in another parish, his pastor is also notified, as the announcements (banns) proclaiming the marriage, must be made public in both parishes.

It is possible, of course, for two young people to be married without all this preparation. But in the eyes of the Catholic Church, marriage is sacred and serious. It is first of all, the formation of a partnership between God and a man and a woman for the transmission of human life—for the birth of a body which will be the temple of a soul. Secondly, it is a Sacrament through which flows the grace of God to help men and women properly to meet the responsibilities of married life.

And finally, what the priest says

to the bride and groom at the Wedding Mass is the kind of advice which should greatly help any couple planning marriage. Here are the words addressed to every couple married in the Catholic Church:

"My dear friends: You are about to enter into a union which is most sacred and most serious.

"It is most sacred because established by God Himself; most serious, because it will bind you together for life in a relationship so close and so intimate, that it will profoundly influence your whole future. That future, with its hopes and disappointments, its successes and failures, its pleasures and pains, its joys and sorrows, is hidden from your eyes.

"You know that these elements are mingled in every life, and they are to be expected in your own. And so, not knowing what is before you, you take each other for better or worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death.

"Truly, then, these words are most serious. It is a beautiful tribute to your undoubted faith in each other, that recognizing their full import, you are, nevertheless, so willing and so ready to pronounce them. Because these words involve such solemn obligations, it is most fitting that you rest the security of your wedded life upon the great principle of self-sacrifice. And so you begin your married life by the voluntary and complete sur-

render of your individual lives in the interest of that wider and deeper life which you are to have in common.

"Henceforth you will belong to each other; you will be one in mind, one in heart, and one in affections. And whatever sacrifices you may hereafter be required to make to preserve this mutual life, always make them graciously. Sacrifice is usually difficult and irksome. Only love can make it easy; and perfect love can make it a joy. We are willing to give in proportion as we love. And when love is perfect, the sacrifice is complete. God so loved the world that He gave His Only begotten Son: and the Son so loved us that He gave Himself for our salvation. Greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life for his friends.'

"No greater blessing can come to your married life than pure conjugal love, loyal and true to the end. May, then, this love with which you join your hands and hearts never fail, but grow deeper and stronger as the years go on. And if true love and the unselfish spirit of self-sacrifice guide your every action, you can expect the greatest measure of earthly happiness that may be allotted to man in this vale of tears. The rest is in the hands of God. Nor will God be wanting in your needs; He will pledge you to life-long support of His graces in the Holy Sacrament which you will receive."

# THE PHONY "SCIENCE" OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD

You might imagine...from listening to its sponsors...that so-called "Planned Parenthood" is something scientific, something new, and something of great benefit to family life.

Actually, it is nothing more nor less than birth control under a different and more popular name. It isn't new, for the pagans in the days of the Roman Empire practiced it to their near-destruction. And it isn't beneficial to family life, for it strikes a death blow at the very purpose of marriage—the begetting of children.

God did not endow men and women with the mutual attraction of sex for their personal physical pleasure. The element of desire and gratification was added to the sexual relationship so that men would exercise this physical power for the propagation and perpetuation of the human race.

Those who advocate so-called planned parenthood are proposing that men and women enjoy the pleasures of sex indulgence, which is in accordance with the law of nature, but practice contraception, which is in complete defiance of the natural law. Contraception is a frustration and perversion of na-

ture, in which a human faculty is misused and abused.

Birth control is not only a sinful violation of the natural law, but the cause of many family catastrophes. It is an evil which not only prevents life, but often exacts a tragic toll upon the physical and spiritual health of those who practice it.

The Catholic Church stands almost alone as an uncompromising opponent of birth control. The position of the Church with respect to this practice is clearly set forth in a letter of Pope Pius XI on the subject of Christian marriage, which says:

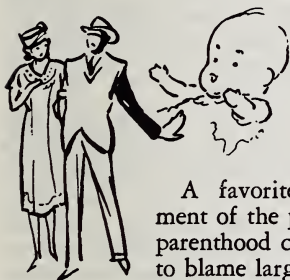
"Any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offense against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of grave sin."

The advocates of planned parenthood argue that it is wrong for people to have children in numbers beyond their means; also that large families often tax and injure the health of the mother and therefore constitute a human and economic



waste. They imply, if not in so many words, that the begetting of children should be on a planned basis in keeping with the mental, physical and financial qualifications.

If the birth-controllers had their way, millions of men and women would be disqualified from the natural right to have children. Many others who might wish for a large family would have to be content with a small one. And the world would be taking a short cut to race suicide.



A favorite argument of the planned parenthood crowd is to blame large families for the high

mortality rate, undernourishment and other deficiencies occurring in slum and tenement areas. The truth is, of course, that it is the poverty of these people and not their large families which cause such conditions. Slums do not give an environment conducive to the health of children, whether there are ten in the family or one or two.

As many of the advocates of birth control call themselves Christian, husbands and wives are often led to believe that there is nothing wrong with birth control in the eyes of God. The fact is, however, that the practice is definitely and absolutely a violation of the na-

tural law, given us by God...a violation of the Sacrament of matrimony, which designates marriage as a holy state...and a direct offense against God as Holy Scripture reveals in the case of Onan.

Onan was guilty of the first recorded instance of birth prevention, which is the same as birth control and planned parenthood. Any Christian who believes that birth control is not sinful should read Verses 9 and 10, Chapter 38, Book of Genesis.

The birth-controllers try to argue that the Catholic Church itself, while condemning the use of contraceptives, actually recommends a birth-control plan of its own. This is not correct. What the Catholic Church recommends...and this applies particularly if there are grave reasons why conception should be avoided...is not birth-control, but self-control.

In Catholic eyes, the enjoyment of sex pleasure by husband and wife is not in itself wrong, since such pleasure is not wrong when married people are no longer fertile because of old age or some other natural cause. But the pleasurable aspects of this relationship are secondary to the first purpose which must never be deliberately excluded, and the Church condemns any act or the use of any device, which frustrates the purpose of conception while permitting mere physical gratification.

Birth-control is sometimes advocated as an aid to health, an example being that a husband and wife need this relationship so as to

promote and express their Christian love, but the wife is physically unprepared for the sufferings of childbirth.

The Catholic Church, on the other hand, maintains that contraception is a perversion of nature and may be filled with grave risks to the physical as well as the spiritual health of those persistently practicing such acts. The Catholic view is strongly supported in the following opinion of an eminent non-Catholic doctor:

"There is no doubt whatsoever that from a medical, neurological and psychological point of view, the Christian ideal of marriage is best and, wherever observed, will have the happiest results. Although injury to health need not necessarily result from the use of contraceptive devices, as a matter of fact their use does often result indirectly in sterility and cancer. Birth control through interruption of the marriage act, if continued over a long period, will inevitably produce disorders in the nervous and psychological spheres, and in this medical opinion is unanimous."

Christian parents, whether they are Catholics or not, cannot in good conscience practice contraception, regardless of the economic or social reasons which may be advanced in its support. God did not say that the laborer and the banker may both gratify their natural sexual pleasures at will, but that the laborer may have only one child and the banker six.

A modern Catholic mother once described artificial birth control as

ugly—something that places the wife "in a position of a legal prostitute." The physical enjoyment, she said, is the secondary privilege of married life. "The first is the noble and sacred privilege of becoming, with God, cooperators in the production of human life. While the first is more important, it by no means eliminates either the effect or the necessity of the secondary."

The sex relationship is an ugly, sordid, sinful thing only when it is abused and misused... only when its sacred purpose is defiled by lust... only when its natural processes are interrupted and defeated by unnatural means.

The husband and wife who defy this natural law are defying God's express command. They are rejecting the partnership God offers them in the greatest adventure marriage provides. Many of the great saints, philosophers, poets, artists and leaders who have helped to build modern civilization would never have been born if their parents had listened to the birth controllers, for many of them were children of large families—and born in poverty.

Christ, as every Christian knows, felt a special love for and interest in little children. How, then, can any Christian husband and wife proclaim a loyalty to the Savior while desecrating the process of nature which brings children into the world?

If this sinful practice is marring your married life, is it not time to stop and think and change your ways?

# WHAT DO PRIESTS KNOW ABOUT MARRIAGE, ANYWAY?

The teachings and regulations of the Catholic Church concerning marriage are often resented.

Some don't like the Church's stand against mixed marriages. Others call the Church arrogant and domineering for insisting that the non-Catholic party to a mixed marriage agree to raise the children Catholic. And divorced people often complain that the Church stands in the way of a remarriage which would mean happiness for them.

The Church's opposition to birth control, sometimes plausibly called "planned parenthood," and its refusal to approve divorce, are among the other causes of complaint. The critics, of course, are usually those who are personally affected by the Church's interpretation of the divine laws.

Before attempting to answer these objections, let us first answer the question: *Just who and what is the Catholic Church?* Is it merely an organization or society created by a group of people in accordance with principles and practices which they deem worthy?

No, the Catholic Church is the Church instituted by Jesus Christ Himself...the Church to which

Christ entrusted His commands and teachings for the people of all time...the Church which the Savior said should go forth and "teach all nations"...the Church which Christ promised would endure to the end of time and which would be guaranteed against error.

Backing up this claim is the publicly recorded history of the Church from the time of Peter, the first Pope, down through the centuries to the present time—the only Church in the world which speaks in every tongue to the people of every race and nation...the only Church which is truly apostolic in origin and mission and truly universal and Catholic...the only Church wherein reposes the proof positive of all of the promises and prophecies of Holy Scripture, and the fulfillment of all of the age-old records of Christian tradition.

People of other Christian allegiance will, of course, dispute this claim. Some will assert that the "Church" is an invisible thing which encompasses all of the believers and followers of Christ regardless of the congregation in which they worship. This contention, however, loses its validity in the fact of the record of history, and for the added reason that there is no unanimity

of belief or creed among the professing Christians who claim to belong to this invisible Church.

From this point, we can proceed to the fact that marriage is a Sacrament instituted by Christ to provide grace. The Catholic Church — the Church of Christ — is alone vested with Christ's authority to administer the Sacraments. It is, therefore, the duty of the Church to make sure that the Sacrament is properly administered. This requires certain procedures, rules and regulations, but these Church laws do not and cannot change the divine laws to suit the changing whims of individuals or the changing patterns of social life.

It is not intolerance or lack of respect for the non-Catholic party which causes the Church to oppose mixed marriages . . . but concern for the spiritual welfare of the Catholic involved. The unity of mind and heart which should exist between husband and wife is absent in such cases. Centuries of experience have demonstrated that the faith of the Catholic spouse may be undermined, and that the children of such marriages often do not follow the Catholic Faith.

The Church reluctantly permits Catholics to marry a non-Catholic, when the latter agrees to a binding promise that all of the children will be baptized and brought up in the Catholic religion. The non-Catholic is also required to give a moral guarantee that there will be no interference with the faith of the Catholic. And there must be no other

marriage ceremony excepting that of the Catholic Church.

Certainly if the Catholic Faith is the True Faith, it is the duty of the Church to prevent its sons and daughters from losing this Faith. Mixed marriages constitute a threat against the spiritual welfare of the Catholic involved and the legislation of the Church concerns itself with this danger.

Experience proves that a non-Catholic spouse may sincerely agree to raise his or her children in the Catholic Faith, but is not qualified to do so and the children too often pay no attention to religion whatever. The Church cannot allow this to happen without having failed in its duty to the specific commission of Christ.

People whose matrimonial plans are in conflict with the teaching and the laws of the Catholic Church are inclined to resent the priest who explains these laws and insists upon their fulfillment. "What," they demand, "does a priest know about married life? He doesn't marry and he doesn't have any of the problems of family life."

Jesus Christ, of course, did not marry either. Yet He laid down the laws for holy matrimony. And when the priest explains the position of the Church on any marriage question, he is not merely a sociologist or matrimonial counselor giving out advice, but an authorized representative of Christ explaining and interpreting the divine laws.

The argument is also made that the Catholic Church is opposed to

mixed marriages, and wants all marriages performed by a Catholic priest, merely because the Church wants to keep up its membership as an organized society. The answer to this should be quite clear to any intelligent and fair-minded person.

Christ has charged the Church with the responsibility to preach the Gospel to all men, of all times, everywhere. This means that the Church must strive constantly not only to maintain the faith of those who willingly come to Christ through the Sacraments, but unceasingly to seek out and by persuasion bring into the True Fold the unwilling, the rebellious and the sinful. In the face of such an obligation, the Church would be obviously derelict in its duty to God if it permitted souls to be lost by their failure to follow the divine law in such a holy adventure as matrimony.

It is undoubtedly true, as some complain, that the Church's restrictions with respect to matrimony sometimes constitute a hardship on those who want to revise the laws

to fit their particular conditions. But is it God and the Church which create these hardships, or is it the individuals concerned in the marriage? This is another question which answers itself for all who acknowledge that divine laws have been laid down for the Sacrament of matrimony.



The parish priest who refuses to approve the second marriage of a person who had previously contracted a true marriage which was followed by divorce, is not being unjust or obstinate in his attitude. He is merely insisting that the parties involved obey the divine laws. And he could not lend the holy offices of the Church to the approval of a marriage which defies those laws.

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"...that they may not deplore for the rest of their lives the sorrows arising from an indiscreet marriage, those about to enter into wedlock should carefully deliberate in choosing the person with whom henceforward they must live continually; they should, in so deliberating, keep before their minds the thought first of God and of the true religion of Christ, then of themselves, of their parents, of the children to come, as also of human and civil society, for which wedlock is a fountain head. Let them diligently pray for divine help, so that they make their choice in accordance with Christian prudence, not indeed led by the blind and unrestrained impulse of lust, nor by any desire of riches or other base influence, but by a true and noble love and by a sincere affection for the future partner; and then let them strive in their married life for those ends for which the state was constituted by God." Pius XI.

# WHAT DO YOU MEAN "A HOME OF YOUR OWN?"

Young married people get all excited when they're planning to buy or build a home of their own.

They tell their friends all about their plans for decorating the dining room... building a barbecue pit in the back yard... dressing up a rathskeller in the basement... providing an attractive playroom for the babies-to-be. They make all sorts of sacrifices to save money so they can pay off the mortgage as soon as possible.

All this is fine, of course. But it isn't the size of the rooms, the comforts and conveniences, the location of the house that really makes a home. For the home is a house of God, and it can be a place of joy, security and beauty only if God is made a part and a partner of the family life.

The home is not a modern invention established by men to sell bricks and lumber and furniture. It is an institution created by God Himself as the basis for our society... as the birthplace and school for our children... as the "command post" which controls the lives of those within its walls.

The divine law for the preservation of the home says, first of all, that it must be indestructible, or

indissoluble. Divorce defies this law. It is, in God's plan, a place of union for the Christian love of a man and a woman and the birthplace of their children. Infidelity despoils the Christian love of husband and wife. Birth control defies the divine law for the procreation of new life.

The home, according to God's plan, is a place where the father and mother will impart their love of God and their understanding of His will to their children. Yet our modern society is sorely afflicted by juvenile delinquency, by adult immorality, and by the evasion of religious duties because too many parents are failing in this vital aspect of family life.

"A dining room table," said Simeon Strunsky, "with children's eager, hungry faces around it, ceases to be a mere dining room table and becomes an altar."

"Christ," said the Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph. D., of the University of Notre Dame, "should be the Head of every home, the Witness of every deed, the Auditor of every spoken word, the Reader of every thought in the silent kingdom of the soul."

Many modern-day mothers seem to be greatly relieved when they have bundled the children up and sent them off to school for the day. It is impossible, however, for parents to transfer more than a small part of the responsibility for the education of their children to any school. For the true Christian education of a child does not consist merely of the acquisition of information concerning the history, arts and habits of the human family. Much of the Christian education that should be provided is by example, and principally by the example of consecrated Christian parents.

"In order to obtain perfect education," said Pope Pius XI, "it is of the utmost importance to see that all those conditions which surround the child during the period of his formation, in other words the combination of circumstances which we call environment, correspond exactly to the end proposed. The first, natural and necessary element in this environment, as regards education, is the family, and this precisely because so ordained by the Creator Himself."

But, some will say: "We try to train our children right. We taught them to pray, to respect the rights of others, to go to church. We try to keep them away from bad company and to see that the entertainment in which they indulge is clean and wholesome. What more can parents do for their young?"

The confused and troubled state of human affairs is enough to demonstrate that there is much more

to be done than our parents have done in the past, and more than is being done today. If, for instance, every home on earth was truly a Christian home — truly a house of God — there could be no such things as war, economic strife, racial intolerance, and public submission to widespread vice and corruption.

All of these and many other evils are visited upon society by men and women who have a wrong or immature understanding of Christian duty and a weak or blunted sense of Christian responsibility. And the only hope of ever making this a cleaner, better world is by the return of men to family life in keeping with the divine purpose for which God established the natural law.

The average husband and wife may feel that their individual efforts would contribute little to a solution of these world-wide ills, yet they can make a genuine contribution to a better society by making their own little family a truly Christian one in every sense of the word.

They can, for instance, institute family prayer on a regular, daily basis. "We heartily commend the beautiful practice of family prayer," say the Catholic Bishops. "The presence of Jesus will surely be a source of blessing in the home where parents and children unite to offer up prayer in common. The spirit of piety which this custom develops will sanctify the bonds of family love and ward off the dangers which often bring sorrow and

shame. We appeal in this matter with special earnestness to young fathers and mothers, who have it in their power to mould the hearts of their children and train them betimes in the habit of prayer."



James Hamilton gave six factors which must be present if the home is to be a happy one. "Integrity," he said, "must be the architect, and tidiness the upholsterer. It must be warmed by affection, lighted up with cheerfulness; and industry must be the ventilator, renewing

the atmosphere and bringing in fresh salubrity day by day, while over all, as a protecting canopy and glory, nothing will suffice but the blessing of God."

Infidelity, immorality, divorce, birth control, juvenile delinquency, intolerance and hatred, dishonesty, all the evils which so sorely afflict the world today may be traced to the failure of parents and the breaking down of Christian family life.

Those who wish to give their children a better world in which to live... and to prepare themselves and their children for eternal life with God... will concern themselves seriously and constantly with the task of making theirs a Christian home—a house of God.

That is the true secret of successful marriage, the true secret of Christian parenthood, the true way for a man and a wife to live purely and to live worthily.

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"There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted. This truth of Christian Faith is expressed by the teaching of the Council of Trent. "Let no one be so rash as to assert that which the Fathers of the Council have placed under anathema, namely, that there are precepts of God impossible for the just to observe. God does not ask the impossible, but by His commands, instructs you to do what you are able, to pray for what you are not able that He may help you."  
Pius XI.



## A PRAYER TO BE SAID BY MARRIED FOLK IN THEIR OWN BEHALF

O, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, King and center of all hearts, dwell in our hearts and be our King: grant us by Thy grace to love each other truly and chastely, even as Thou hast loved Thine immaculate Bride, the Church, and didst deliver Thyself up for her.

Bestow upon us the mutual love and Christian forbearance that are so acceptable in Thy sight, and a mutual patience in bearing each other's defects; for we are certain that no living creature is free from them. Permit not the slightest misunderstanding to mar that harmony of spirit which is the foundation of that mutual assistance in the many and varied hardships of life, to provide which woman was created and united inseparably to her husband.

Grant, O Lord God, that between us there may be a constant and holy rivalry in striving to lead a perfect Christian life, by virtue of which the divine image of Thy mystic union with Holy Church, imprinted upon us on the happy day of our marriage, may shine forth more and more clearly. Grant, we beseech Thee, that our good example of Christian living may be a source of inspiration to our children to spur them on to conform their lives also to Thy holy Law; and finally, after this exile, may we be found worthy, by the help of Thy grace, for which we earnestly pray, to ascend into Heaven, there to be joined with our children forever, and to praise and bless Thee through everlasting ages. Amen.

# A Prayer To Be Said By Parents In Behalf Of Their Children

O Lord God, who hast called us to holy matrimony and hast been pleased to render our union fruitful, thus making glad the sublime state of life wherein Thou hast placed us, by a certain likeness to Thine own infinite fruitfulness; we heartily recommend to Thee our dear children; we entrust them to Thy fatherly care and all-powerful protection, that they may grow daily in Thy holy fear, may lead a perfect Christian life and may be a source of consolation, not only to us who have given them life, but also and chiefly to Thee, who art their Creator.

Behold, O Lord, in what a world they must pass their lives; consider the cunning flatteries whereby the sons of men everywhere endeavor to deprave their minds and hearts with false doctrine and wicked example. Be watchful, O Lord, to help and defend them; grant us the grace to be able to guide them aright in the paths of virtue and in the way of Thy commandments, by the righteous pattern of our own life and practice,

and our perfect observance of Thy holy law and that of our holy mother the Church; and in order that we may do so faithfully, make us certain of the grave danger that awaits us at the hands of Thy divine justice. Nevertheless all our efforts will be unavailing, unless Thou, O almighty and merciful God, shalt make them fruitful by Thy heavenly blessing.

This Thy blessing, therefore, we humbly ask of Thee, from the bottom of our hearts, trusting in Thy great goodness and mercy hitherto shown unto us; we ask it for ourselves and for the children whom Thou hast been graciously pleased to give unto us. We dedicate them to Thee, O Lord, do Thou keep them as the apple of Thine eye, and protect them under the shadow of Thy wings; do Thou make us worthy to come at last to heaven, together with them, giving thanks unto Thee, our Father, for the loving care Thou hast had of our entire family, and praising Thee through endless ages. Amen.

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