

I.

How to Prepare for Marriage.

"How should Catholics prepare for marriage?" asked the professor of catechism. "By the Sacrament of Extreme Unction," answered the wise little girl. That is the proximate preparation. Few of you need a proximate preparation while in school, but every student who expects to marry needs to be concerned about the remote preparation. The following suggestions under this head are intended to be helpful:

1. If possible, keep your head. Insanity and blindness are natural concomitants of life; but, if possible, keep your head.
2. Lead a clean life. That is always possible. The great aids to it are:
  - a) Clean ideals, the Blessed Virgin for womanhood, St. Joseph for manhood;
  - b) Clean companionship, dictated by decent self-respect;
  - c) The private vow of chastity, made with your confessor's permission;
  - d) Ardent attachment to the Sacraments and prayer.
3. Learn frugality. The girl who has to be won by expensive presents is not worth winning. Let her love you for yourself. If you spoil her now you will have to pay the bills later on. Early marriage is nearly always to be preferred (this does not mean the freshman year), as it brings accommodation of character during the pliable years; and frugality is usually essential to early marriage.
4. Seek counsel. Your parents may be pretty dumb in your eyes, but they know heaps more than you do about marriage. And the priest knows plenty about what wrecks marriage. Those who don't consult him before marriage are most likely to do so after it is too late.
5. Never confuse either infatuation or lust with love. Love implies reverence. A girl who does not command your respect is not worthy of you. Your own self-respect demands that you shun such company; and if you are lacking in self-respect, you are doomed to learn by bitter experience that lust is a usurer who sucks blood even to the grave.
6. Try out her cooking. What is the favorite topic of conversation at school? Food, without a doubt. It outdistances athletics, religion, philosophy, girls, everything. It is the great interest that engineers have in common with the rest of mankind. She may never have to soil her hands with dish-water; but if she doesn't, you will. There'll come a time! Don't wait until after marriage to domesticate her. If she doesn't know how to run a home you won't have a home.

The Private Vow of Chastity.

The private vow of chastity is suggested as an act of religion most pleasing to God and most efficacious in attaining its end, namely, the elevation of the ideal of marriage to its lofty Christian plane. A vow is a promise made to God of some good for a good end. It binds under pain of mortal or venial sin according as the matter is light or grave. It should be made only with the permission of one's confessor; and a private vow, such as the one suggested, can be dispensed by one's confessor if it seems too difficult to keep. It doubles to merit of obedience to the Sixth Commandment. It should be made only for a time -- a month, three months, six months, or a year at most. If you are keeping pure and wish to make the vow, consult your confessor.

PRAYERS: Bernard Bird's father is dead; Jos. Dennis Murphy's cousin died Wednesday. Four special intentions.