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The Novena For a Happy Marriage - Today.

The Novena, not the marriage, begins today. It is addressed to St. Joseph, the head of the Holy Family, which is the model of all family life. Conformity to the will of God was the secret of happiness in that family, as it must be in every happy family. Make that virtue the object of your prayer during these nine days. Say the Litany of St. Joseph and receive Holy Communion daily. -- And take it from the wise old Catholic Church: the possibilities of unhappiness in marriage are too great for you to risk any precaution for insuring happiness.

A Case In Point.

The following paragraphs from the letter of an alumnus state a situation not at all uncommon. He will pardon the open reply since he realizes its common need:

"The girl is not a Catholic. Although officially she is an Episcopalian, she actually does not follow or really believe in any religion. She is not at all shallow, but she does **care** a lot for the pleasures that make life interesting, and she seems to feel that religion will change all that joy of living in her and make her over entirely. Thinking that way, she can't see any place for religion in her life.

"She is perfectly willing to listen to any of my attempts to explain things, but in the few starts I have made I have floundered so badly that I couldn't help realizing that I have to seek advice. Can you tell me how to start?"

Your start should be made in church - before the Blessed Sacrament. Faith is a grace; it comes in answer to prayer. Add sacrifice, self-denial, to show God how much in earnest you are. And pray with perseverance. "God can give in one short moment what He has long denied." (The students will also help with their prayers.)

The point next in importance is your own attitude towards your religion. The example of a good Catholic has the two-fold effect of disarming prejudice against the faith, and of attracting people towards it. If in your life you show that the Catholic religion increases your joy of living instead of diminishing it, the lesson will not be lost.

Third and last in importance is what you say and how you say it. What you say must be plain Catholic truth, without temporizing; how you say it is of small moment provided it clearly proceeds from your heart. In other words, practice what you preach, and it will be easy to preach what you practice.

How should the approach to the subject be made? From what you say, it seems that the little graces of social usage will be meticulously observed in her daily life. Ask her how many little notes of thanks she has ever written to God - to God Who gave her life, to God Who preserves her health so that she can enjoy life, to God Who made it possible for her to attain culture, friends, social amenities, to God Who gave her talents. Ask her how many visits she makes to God, her best Friend. Ask her how many chats she has had with Him.

Ask her about her social, as well as her individual duties to God. If Mrs. Hoover were to visit your city, would it be sufficient to have a few of the socially elect call on her, leave their cards, as it were, or would a dinner or a reception be in order? Or would it be best for the best people to ignore her existence?

Does this approach seem trivial? Perhaps. But it is sound psychology to make the approach through a person's interests, and you haven't given us much to work on. You know her deeper interests. Study them, and adapt this plan to them.