

Don't forget your
Adoration period.
Exposition from
12:30 to 5:00 daily.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
March 14, 1945

Lent is not over. Why
aren't you at Mass and
Communion?????????????
THURSDAY IS CAUSALTY
DAY

Is Marriage A Cross?

A young couple had just made their decision to be married. So they went to the old pastor, their friend, to inform him about the matter. They introduced the purpose of their visit with the words, "We've decided to take the fatal step."

The pastor appeared to go into a fit of anger immediately. He rose from his chair and shook a menacing finger at the couple and announced in solemn tones that "Marriage is not a fatal step." The couple meant only to be playful with their old friend, and he knew it. And he meant to be playful with them too. But he went into the dramatics to bring home to his youthful parishioners the fact that God instituted marriage as a state of happiness, not of penance.

Christian marriage is a union, not of two persons, but three. The presence of the third party takes the chance of failure out of marriage.

The marriage of two Catholics is a Sacrament, it is one of the seven different means Christ uses to come into intimate contact with human minds and wills. Every Sacrament is, as it were, Christ reaching down from heaven to give the recipient a helping hand. In the case of marriage, the offer of His hand is not just a temporary one. It is a permanent offering, day-in and day-out assistance for both the husband and wife. It is the presence of the power of Our Lord with them. Both those who are looking forward to marriage and those who are already married must remember that their union is marriage "in Christ," a state of life in which they are not alone, but working with Christ for their temporal and eternal joy and contentment.

Catholic couples are married before the altar. Marriage is one of the few occasions on which lay people are permitted by the Church to assist at a sacred ceremony in the sanctuary itself. If the bride and groom are thinking the same thoughts as Mother Church, they are looking upon the ceremony as the act of going up to the House of the Lord to meet their Lord and Master, and there in His presence to join themselves to one another and to Him. The intimate union of the three is effected the instant the couple say "I will," for those words, the expression of their consent to marriage, make them man and wife, and at the same time, bring Christ to them in the Sacrament.

The helping hand that Christ offers the couple is extended to them the moment they say "I will." It is extended to them "until death do us part." The right to all the assistance necessary for a happy and holy marriage comes on the day of marriage. Christ gives those graces when He sees they are needed, and that can be nearly every hour of the day for the entire period of "life together."

March 14, 1945 (continued)

It is impossible to describe with completeness the extent of Christ's help to the couple. He whispers to them, when He chooses, little inspirations: "Here is a chance to be more helpful to your wife and to the children." "Be more patient around the house." Christ shows both parties ways and means of loving one another more perfectly. He consoles them in time of trial. He carried a great part of their worries and doubts, and sufferings. He convinces them more and more that children are gifts from Him to make them more happy. Christ sows the good seed. But it must take root, the graces He offers must be accepted. Marriage can never be a "fatal step" where both husband and wife put their hands in Christ's and go along with Him.

Grace builds on nature. And this is why you had better make the Triduum, the Three Days of Prayer for a Happy Marriage. Your prayers will bring you a good wife. If you make the mistake of picking a golddigger or a proud and selfish girl, you won't have much for God to build on. Better pray. It will also help your wife from getting a lemon.

The Triduum starts Friday - Mass, Holy Communion and Litany to St. Joseph.