

Your Engagement Blessed, Part 1.

The following words of Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical letter, Casti Connubii, should be pondered by those about to marry:

"Let, then, those who are about to enter on married life approach that state well disposed and well prepared, so that they will be able, as far as they can, to help each other in sustaining the vicissitudes of life, and yet more in attending to their eternal salvation and in forming the inner man unto the fullness of the age of Christ. . .

"To the proximate preparation of a good married life belongs very specially the care in choosing a partner; on that depends in great measure whether the forthcoming marriage will be happy or not, since one may be to the other either a great help in leading a Christian life, or a great danger and hindrance. . . . They should, in so deliberating, keep before their minds the thought of God and of the true religion of Christ, then of themselves, of their partner, of the children to come. . . . Let them diligently pray for divine help, so that they may make their choice in accordance with Christian prudence, not indeed led by the blind and unrestrained impulse of lust. . ."

The Rite Of Betrothal (Engagement).

From the Roman Ritual translated by Father Weller: When a Christian man and woman intend to pledge themselves to marriage, it is praiseworthy and in accord with ancient ecclesiastical custom to have the engagement solemnized and blessed by the Church. . . . There is no prescribed ritual for betrothal. However, it is most fitting that the ceremony take place before the altar of God, and that it be followed by the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, together with the reception of Holy Communion.

1. The priest (vested in surplice and white stole) with his assistants awaits the couple at the communion rail. At hand are holy water and the altar missal. As the man and woman come forward with the two witnesses they have chosen, the following antiphon and psalm are sung--Psalm 126. . . .
2. The priest now addresses them: "Beloved of Christ: It is in the dispensation of Divine Providence that you are called to the holy vocation of marriage. For this reason you present yourselves today before Christ and His Church, before His sacred minister and the devout people of God, to ratify in solemn manner the engagement bespoken between you. At the same time you entreat the blessing of the Church upon your proposal, as well as the earnest supplication of the faithful here present, since you fully realize that what has been inspired and guided by the will of your heavenly Father requires equally His grace to be brought to a happy fulfilment.

"We are confident that you have given serious and prayerful deliberation to your pledge of wedlock; moreover, that you have sought counsel from the superiors whom God has placed over you. In the time that intervenes, you will prepare for the sacrament of matrimony by a period of virtuous courtship, so that when the happy and blessed day arrives for you to give yourselves irrevocably to each other, you will have laid a sound spiritual foundation for long years of godly prosperity on earth and eventual blessedness together in the life to come. May the union you propose one day to consummate as man and wife be found worthy to be in all truth a sacramental image and reality of the union of Christ and His beloved Bride, the Church. This grant, thou Who livest and reignest, God, forever and evermore, Amen." (To be continued Monday.)

Prayers: (deceased) uncle of Jos. Galloway (Dil), Ill; aunt of V. Smith. Sp. Int. 8.