How to Prepare for Marriage
(Sixth Printing)

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 prox-
imate preparation. Few of you need proximate preparation while in school, but
every student who expects to marry needs to be concerned about the remote pre-
paration. The following suggestions under this head are intended to be helpful:

1. If possible, keep your head. Insanity and blindness are natural concomitants of
love; 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 dishwater; 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.

“Catholics Marry Catholics”

An alumnus whose son was a member of a recent graduating class, gave the following advice in the Alumni
Survey:

“Advise Catholic boys to marry Catholic girls. I am a convert. I married a Baptist who gave me all the
rights over my children. She never interfered in my religion, and always reminded me of my Communion Sun-
day. She became a wonderful Catholic and is a wonderful woman. But with all my good luck along this line I
say, ‘Catholics marry Catholics.’ In the past twenty years I have seen too many cases where good Catholics mar-
rried good Protestants and now neither has any religion.”

In general, the testimony of the alumni who have contracted mixed marriages is that difference in religion
makes for unhappiness in marriage. In the Alumni Survey of 1931, for instance, you will find that only two of
the graduates who had married non-Catholic wives were giving full Catholic education to their children (out of 28
cases reported), while 244 (out of 281) of the families with Catholic mothers were enjoying this privilege. Heed the
advice on marriage given by the married alumni: the weight of the testimony of those who have married non-Cath-
olics is against mixed marriage.

Bear in mind also that the majority of failures in mixed marriages may be charged to the laxity of the Catho-
lic party to the marriage. God only knows how many non-Catholic partners to a mixed marriage have been deterred
from entering the Church by the laxity, the inconsistency, of a Catholic mate; how many non-Catholics have failed
to keep their promise to rear the children as Catholics because they saw no fruits of religion in the Catholic
spouse! And the man who rejects the advice of the Church in this matter is usually lax in his religion.

PRAYERS: (Deceased) Mrs. Minnie Maguire; mother of Jim Sanford, ’15; friend of Harry Keefe (Dillon);
friend of Jerry Donovan (Dillon); Sister Domitilla, O.P., Adrian, Mich.; father of George Anderson, ’34. (Ill)
Sister Annuntiata (Clinton, In.); grandmother and uncle of Don Connors (Zahn); stepmother of Bob Rade-
macher (Carroll); mother of Mike Corran (St. Eds); (critically) grandmother of Sal Lapilusa (Morr.); nephew of
Jerry Green (Presbytery); friend of Art Humby (Badin); aunt of Bob Barber (Howard).