

# Teenagers Want To Marry. How Can Parents Stop Them?

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S. J.  
Sociology Professor St. Louis University

Our 18 year old daughter has been going with a boy several months younger. I never really approved but never objected too much either. Now they've become very serious about each other and we've had some pretty harsh words over it. I feel marriage is out of the question until he's finished college or put his time in the service. I know I should have corrected this before but maybe it can still be straightened out. What do you think?

Your letter raises several important questions that merit serious consideration by all parents. Are 18 year-olds too young to marry in our society? If they are, how do you deal with a young couple already serious about each other? What lesson should your experience teach other parents?

These questions are all interrelated, but we shall deal with them separately for purposes of clarity.

How young is too young for marriage? Making allowances for individual differences, once young people have completed puberty, the optimum age for marriage will depend on social conditions and custom. Since marriage involves bearing and rearing children, the couple must be prepared to carry these responsibilities as defined by their society.

This allows for a wide margin of differences. For example, the average (though not necessarily the optimum) age at marriage for American women is around twenty, whereas it is a little over thirty in Ireland and only about fourteen in India.

Men tend to enter marriage somewhat later than women. As breadwinners they normally require more years of training and preparation, while national customs may also have some influence. Paradoxically, during the past twenty years when success in the American system has become closely associated with ever-increasing amounts of formal training, the average age at marriage for men has continued to drop.

At present, fifty percent are married before they are twenty-three. By contrast, in Ireland, less than fifty percent are married before thirty-five.

You are quite right in being disturbed about this youth's age. A man should be ready to take a job before he assumes the obligations of marriage. Marriage while in college may provide a convivial roommate, but it is fraught with difficulties. Besides problems related to finance, disruption of schooling, working wives, and so on, there is the husband's immaturity.

Most male students do not "find themselves" or clearly



recognize their place in society until they have finished their training. The wife who works to put her husband through school may feel very heroic, but she is more of a mother than a wife. The girl one marries just out of high school or early in college may look pretty drab and uninteresting five or ten years later when the former student takes his place in adult social circles.

How should you handle your daughter? As you have discovered, at this late stage emotion rather than reason tends to have the upper hand. She is also resolved to assert her independence. Under the circumstances the best approach will be to hold your feelings carefully in check and to examine with her all the aspects of the situation.

You may take for granted that she thinks she's in love, but point out that being in love is not enough. How will marriage affect the boy's future career? Remind her that a man must be prepared to find reasonable satisfaction in his work as well as in his family.

Contrary to the wife, the husband's basic role is fulfilled outside the home. If early marriage limits his needed preparation, he will later become resentful, frustrated and dissatisfied.

She may argue that he can still go to college. Get realistic here! In addition to the points I have mentioned above, remind her that for Catholics marriage normally means babies, and starting at her age, probably a good many of them. Why should they try to fool themselves? Getting a worthwhile college education is a fulltime job.

# Lutheran Group Seeks Faith Unity

By MANFRED WENZEL

Hersfeld — (NC) — A new Protestant organization which holds that differences between Protestant denominations can only be overcome through incorporation into Catholic unity opened its first national convention here in Germany.

The group, the League for Reunion of Protestant and Catholics, a real newspapermen from the meeting. Publicity, according to the league president, the Rev. Max Lackmann, might hinder the association in its work, which at present has neither official support from the Catholic Church nor the approval of Protestant officials.

The league was founded last July by Dr. Lackmann—whose avowed acceptance of the papacy as the center of Christian unity brought about his suspension as pastor of Soest by the Westphalia Lutheran Synod in 1959 — and two Lutheran laymen, Professor Paul Hacker of Bonn and Gustav Huhn of Fuersteneck.

The league has its roots in Die Sammlung (The Gathering), a small but influential Christian unity movement founded in 1955 by the Rev. Hans Amussen, former provost of the Lutheran cathedral at Kiel.

Dr. Lackmann and his immediate associates in the new league are all still members of Die Sammlung, and the league's convention was held at nearby Fuersteneck castle, where Die Sammlung holds many of its meetings.

Dr. Lackmann, interviewed prior to the convention's opening, said he could give no information as to the number of members of the league. "I can only tell you," he said, "that we already have friends, promoters and members in several European countries and in the United States." Concerning the purpose of the league, Pastor Lackmann said:

"The league has no intention of setting itself up as a new church. It seeks to initiate a movement within, not outside, Evangelical Christianity, with the aim of taking an active part in preparing for reunification."

"The work we are going to do, in the first place, is not a work for our community, the league; we want on the contrary to be something of a focal point for Evangelical Christians whose intention is to belong to the one Catholic and Apostolic Church. We are not a club of discontented people, but we conceive our task as that of servants for Evangelical Christians."

## Samoans Take Vows

Suva — (RNS) — The first Samoan women to take vows in the Roman Catholic order of the Sisters of Our Lady of Nazareth made temporary profession on completion of their novitiate at Cawaci, Fiji.

Nine Sisters, eight Fijians and one Rotuman, pronounced their perpetual vows, while eight Sisters, including two Samoans, made a temporary profession. Ceremonies were held in the order's Novitiate Chapel at Cawaci and were presided over by Bishop John H. M. Rodgers, Apostolic Vicar of Tonga and the Niue Islands.

## Pope Meets Arab Chief

Vatican City — (NC) — The secretary of the Arab League, Mohammed Abdel Kalem Hassouna, was received in private audience by Pope John XXIII.

The Arab League is a union of the Arab states which was formed in the last days of World War II for the purpose of maintaining Arab solidarity.

## Building Rate Dips

Washington — (RNS) — New church construction dropped slightly to \$77,000,000 during February, due to inclement weather and perhaps some moderate effect of the business recession, but it was still the second highest level of construction on record for the month, the U.S. Census Bureau reported here.

January construction was \$82,000,000 and church construction in February a year ago was \$79,000,000, or \$2,000,000 higher.

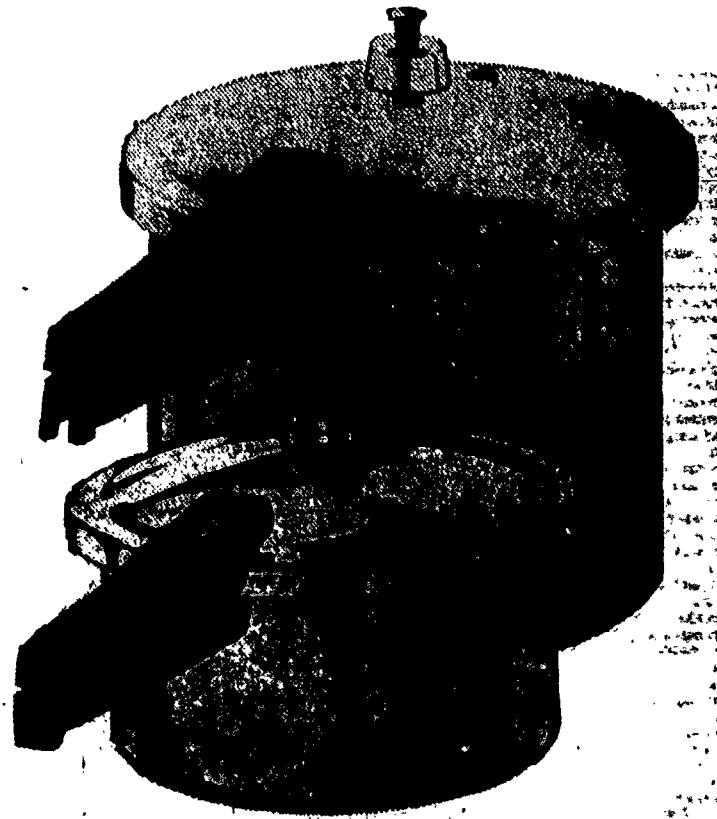
Construction by the nonpublic schools and colleges dropped back to \$48,000,000, a decline of \$2,000,000 from January, but was \$3,000,000 higher than in the same month last year.

Building activity by private hospitals and institutions, many of which are church-related, showed a contraseasonal increase, amounting to \$53,000,000 in February, a gain of \$1,000,000 over January and \$5,000,000 higher than the same month a year ago.



# THE GLEAM OF STAINLESS STEEL

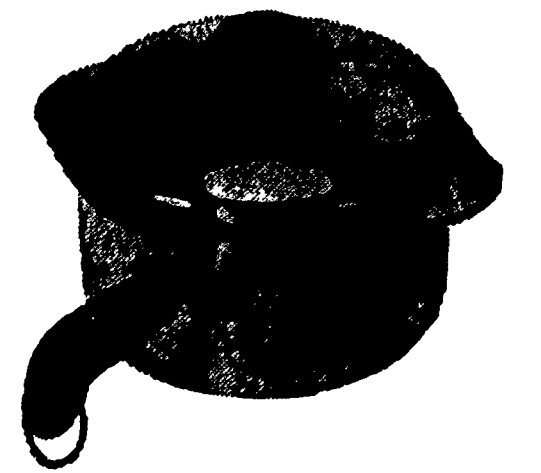
in sale-priced, famous-make kitchenware



## Presto pressure cookers

4-qt. size, reg. 22.95 **19.88**  
6-qt. size, reg. 26.95 **23.88**

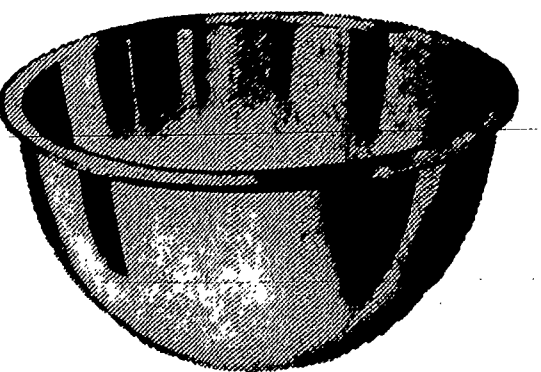
For high speed cooking, better flavor, choose Presto pressure cookers, made of stainless steel for lasting beauty and easy care. The special prices are for a limited time, so hurry!



## Revere Ware double boiler

1 1/2-qt. size, reg. 11.50 **8.88**

A versatile kitchen utensil that's a favorite among homemakers. Stainless steel with copper clad bottom that heats evenly.



## West Bend mixing bowl

**1.99**

Has tapered sides for easier hand mixing. Wide, easy-to-grip rim. 3 1/2-quart size in easy-to-clean stainless steel.

Sibley's Housewares, Fourth Floor; all branches

# EASTWOOD'S

White...

## THE STRIDE RITE SHOE

THE SHOE THAT UNDERSTANDS CHILDREN

healthfully fitted by Eastwood Experts!

in smarter styles for important occasions . . .

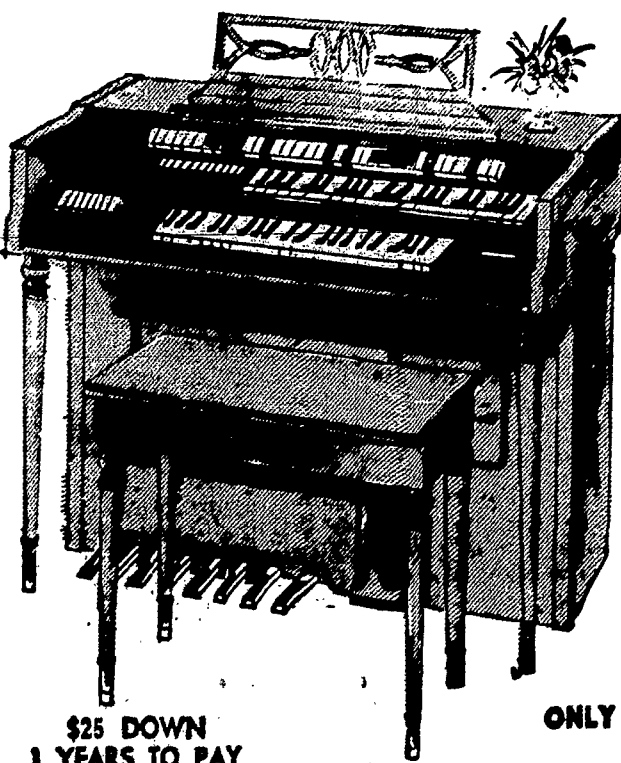
First Communion  
Confirmation  
Graduation!

★ 29 EAST AVE.  
★ EASTWAY PLAZA, WEBSTER



IT'S A CHORD ORGAN!

IT'S A COMPLETE SPINET ORGAN!



\$25 DOWN  
3 YEARS TO PAY

ONLY **\$1045**

the all new

## GENUINE WURLITZER

**2 AMAZING ORGANS IN 1**

the professional instrument beginners can play!

- More than 1,000 pre-set tonal effects
- 2 standard 44-note keyboards
- 4 tonal couplers—to expand tonal range of upper and lower keyboards
- 72 pedal settings—instant changes in volume, tone, pitch and sustain
- Genuine sustained percussion—on both keyboards, Hawaiian guitar, chimes, bells, harps, etc.
- 39 'rocker tabs'—at the flip of a finger you have effects of flutes, strings, reeds singly or in combination
- Plus FREE private lessons by certified teachers and complete elementary music library in our studio

Only \$1145 in beautiful mahogany

This full spinet Organ without chord unit sells for

Please send information about the ALL NEW WURLITZER 2-IN-1 ORGAN

Name .....

Address .....

City .....

Zone .....

Open Tues. & Thurs. Evns. 8A-8-1948

412 East Main St.

Ask About Free Parking Next Door