

Be Wary of Marriage With Person From Family of Little Stability

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Are we wrong in forbidding our son to continue dating a girl with a bad family background? He is 24, and she is 17. Her parents are divorced. Her grandmother is a fallen-away Catholic, and hence her father never goes to church either. During the summer, her grandmother and mother go around the home half-dressed. Our son claims he asked his confessor about it, and he said it would be all right to marry this girl. Please tell us if we are doing right by opposing this match.



Judging on the basis of what you have written concerning the family background of this girl, I think most of my readers would agree that your reaction is quite understandable. Studies of divorce in three generations indicate that marital failure is much more likely to occur if one or both the partners come from broken homes.

In other words, if his family setting is unhappy, the child may frequently respond in similar fashion in his own marriage. The reason is that the quality of parental relationships influences the personalities and consequently the marital success of the children.

The questionable religious and moral tone of the girl's family offers further grounds for regarding the situation with apprehension. Fallen-away Catholics often try to justify their position by bitter attacks on the Church or religion in general, while a father who does not attend church services provides a harmful model for his children. The full effects of such deleterious influences may not be revealed clearly until later in life when fidelity to religion may require considerable effort or sacrifice.

However, since not all young people with unhappy family backgrounds are unsuccessful in marriage, it would be an error to exclude all such persons from the list of eligible marriage partners without further investigation.

An unhealthy family setting does not predetermine a child to marital failure.

In the process of growing up, children are subjected to a great variety of other influences from neighborhood, school, and church, while as rational creatures aided by divine grace, they are not mere passive products of their environment. No two individuals are ever quite alike even, though they come from similar backgrounds.

Yet the family setting merits serious consideration in the selection of a marriage

partner, for marriage is the life-long union of two personalities, and the family is the cradle of personality. Through his interaction with his parents and other family members, the child learns many of the roles he will play later in life. The love, response, encouragement and support he receives within his family circle inevitably help to mold the personality that he brings to his own marriage.

The family may be regarded as a kind of conditioning agency in which the child grows and learns to live. Without conscious effort, the child absorbs many of the attitudes, values, role-expectations and need-patterns of the parents, so that the personality he brings to marriage reflects this early atmosphere in many ways.

For example, studies show that young husbands and wives tend to imitate parental models in defining their mutual rights, duties, and expectations. This should not surprise us, of course, for these are the only models they know from first-hand experience, and from childhood on they have probably regarded them as more or less "natural."

In the light of these brief considerations it should be clear that the personality development of children raised in families disrupted by divorce proceeds under a serious handicap. Before the actual disruption, the family atmosphere is usually charged with conflict and hate. Often children are used as mere pawns in the struggle. Confused and torn between con-

peting loyalties, they are bound to feel rejected by the departing parent yet experience serious secret guilt as their love and esteem turns to hate.

The personalities they bring to their marriage necessarily reflect their early family experience. Because they lack adequate parental models, many have no clear conception of their own roles in marriage or of what to expect from their partners.

Some are overly anxious about success, fearfully watching for the first signs of trouble, almost as if they were doomed to failure as their parents before them. Others find it difficult to place complete trust in their partners, feeling that their loyalty has been betrayed before and it is safer to proceed with reserve if not suspicion.

On the other hand, persons and circumstance may differ so widely, as I have suggested, that we must be careful in passing judgment on individual cases. Although the unhealthy family background of the young lady you mention provides grounds for serious concern, there are other considerations. If she has received good religious training, is faithful in her practice of religion, appears emotionally well-balanced, and reveals an adequate sense of responsibility, you might reconsider your opposition.

I feel free to suggest this, since your son appears to be a serious young man, and his confessor undoubtedly gave his favorable decision with adequate knowledge of the circumstances.

Churches Spared In Goa Invasion

New Delhi — (NC) — Patriarch Jose Vieira Alvernaz of the East Indies, Archbishop of Goa, has commended Indian troops for sparing places of worship from harm when they wrested Goa from the Portuguese, it was reported here.

The Patriarch, a Portuguese, said he is happy that "all this action in Goa was over very soon." But he said he would have been happier if the absorption of Goa into the Indian Union had been brought about peacefully.

Patriarch Vieira Alvernaz said he would return to Portugal as soon as Indian Army and Navy, they marched to a field where Christmas Mass was celebrated by Father Serreiro da Silva. The troops were urged to bring peace to Goa by dedicating themselves to the cause of good will among men.

He said he is thankful to Gen. P. N. Thapar, army chief of staff, for facilitating the repair of a Catholic church at the Goan town of Mapus in time for Christmas services. The church had been damaged when

Portuguese troops resisting the Indian assault blew up a bridge.

The Apostolic Internuncio to India, Archbishop James R. Knox, went to Goa on Christmas. Pope John XXIII sent him to provide spiritual help for the distressed in Goa.

About 1,200 Portuguese internees in Altario Camp in the Goan capital of Pangim heard Mass on Christmas. Led by officers of the Portuguese Army and Navy, they marched to a field where Christmas Mass was celebrated by Father Serreiro da Silva. The troops were urged to bring peace to Goa by dedicating themselves to the cause of good will among men.

The Patriarch celebrated Christmas Mass in Pangim cathedral.

University Schedules Freedom, Faith Study

St. Louis — (RNS) — A new six-week academic program on American freedom will be introduced next summer at the Institute on Communism and Freedom at St. Louis University, a Jesuit school.

Father Robert J. Henle, S.J., acting academic vice-president of the university and dean of its Graduate School, said the program would be in the form of a workshop and would cover the theory, history, and institutions of American freedom. It will be presented from June 19 to July 27, concurrently with a session on communism which was initially offered last summer.

"THE PURPOSE of the program," Father Henle said, "is to prepare participants to explain freedom and its institutions intelligently, confidently and critically to students in high school and college, and to the public so as to provide a reasoned ground for their commitment to freedom."

In examining the concept of freedom, those attending the summer sessions will study the historical development of philosophical theories of freedom, various writings on American freedom, and conflicting theories of freedom in contemporary use.



Near Berlin's Wall

Berlin — (RNS) — Cardinal Spellman of New York walks with Major Thomas Tyree of Grosse Pointe, Mich., to an Army mess tent in Berlin. Earlier, the cardinal, who was visiting American troops in the divided city in his capacity as Military Vicar to Catholics in the U.S. Armed Forces, celebrated his three Christmas Day Masses in Berlin. While at the Friedrichstrasse checkpoint Cardinal Spellman walked six feet into East Berlin. He called "Happy Christmas" to the Communist border guards, but they did not answer.

World Asked Pity Lepers

PARIS — (NC) — The ninth leprosy day, will be sponsored January 28, 1962, by the Order of Charity headed by Raoul Follereau of France.

Newsmen Vote Blake Above Pope

New York — (RNS) — Dr. Eugene Carson Blake of Philadelphia, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and architect of a 4-way Protestant merger plan, was named top newsmake of 1961 in the field of religion, according to an Associated Press survey.

Selected as the overall "Newsmaker of the Year" was President Kennedy, who won by a wide margin over Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev for the second successive year. Mr. Khrushchev was named in 1959 and 1957.

Dr. Blake barely nosed out Pope John XXIII, who was chosen by the AP as the top religious newsmaker for the last three years.

THE SURVEY, in which newsmakers in other fields also were selected was conducted by the AP among news editors of its member newspapers and radio and TV stations.

In 1961 Dr. Blake received wide publicity in both the religious and secular press for proposing a merger of four major Protestant denominations as a first step toward a more inclusive Christian union.

Newsmakers in other fields chosen by the AP included Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy, the President's wife, as "Woman of the Year"; the late Ernest Hemingway in literature; Newton Minow, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, in entertainment; and Mr. Khrushchev in foreign affairs.

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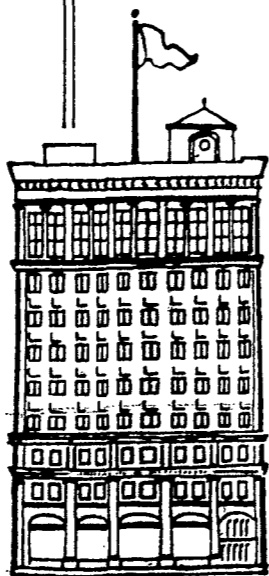
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A Bill For \$10,000,000

Before the close of 1962 Rochester Gas and Electric should begin to see the end of one of its most troublesome and complicated construction problems.

For the past ten years RG&E has had to relocate electric, gas and steam underground structures to make way for highway construction.—Inner and Outer Loops, Expressways, etc. In spite of the fact that the utility pays taxes to run its cables, conduits, and pipes under the public thoroughfare of the municipality in which they are located, this relocation expense is a direct charge against the RG&E and so ultimately must be paid for by its customers.

Many states consider such an expense a part of the cost of building the highway. In New York State, however, this cannot be done unless the State legislature gives permission. Until such action is taken, therefore, this expense amounting to approximately ten million dollars, will be a charge against RG&E's customers.



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