

Neurotic Couple Finds Strange Satisfaction in Arguments

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What position should parents take toward their child's troubled marriage? Our daughter has just left her husband for the third time in three months. He pretended to be a Catholic at marriage but doesn't practice, refuses to take her and the two babies to church, lies, admits he had been unfaithful, is irresponsible about money, and so on. They went to a marriage counselor after the second breakup, but he refused to continue after she returned to him. Now he claims he's seeing a psychiatrist and is going to reform, so they're "dating" again. When we tell her to be cautious, she resents it and acts as if we were her enemies. How can we help?

As every counselor soon learns, Anthony, there is nothing more difficult, and perhaps more useless, than trying to help someone who doesn't want to be helped. The situation you describe is unfortunately not rare. A considerable number of parents face the difficult problem of what to do when their daughters run into marital difficulties and return home with their children.

Most parents are willing to make generous sacrifices to accommodate the new members, but when the pattern of separation and reconciliation is repeated time and again, as in your case, they rightly question whether their willingness to provide a haven of refuge whenever trouble arises is really a sound approach.

Although your description of your son-in-law suggests that he is a typical example of the irresponsible type who promises everything and delivers nothing, I think you are not unaware that your daughter also lacks sound judgment and emotional stability. This combination is far from uncommon in marriage.

Apparently a fast-talking, irresponsible male holds a special appeal for the immature type of woman who refuses to come to grips with the hard facts of reality and prefers to live in her own imaginary world built on wishful thinking. Such women are perennial suckers for even the most obvious masculine "line" since they are accustomed to believe only what they want to believe.

Anyone who must deal with troubled marriage soon discovers that many such couples are complementary only in the sense that they mutually respond to each other's neurotic needs. They may appear very unhappy, quarrel constantly, even separate frequently, yet they always return to each other, since they have learned that their stormy relationship offers them the means of mutual neurotic fulfillment.

In such cases, quarrels, separations, and reconciliations are merely different phases of the ongoing union.

Thus your son-in-law works hard at reconciliation not primarily because he is anxious to secure a stable marriage, but because this offers him an excellent opportunity to prove how effective his "line" can be in fooling others. If he succeeds again, he'll again start pushing her around to see how much she'll stand for, and the quarrelling will start anew. As you mentioned, serious trouble started the second day after the last reconciliation.

On the other hand, your daughter has such a short memory and is so receptive to his "line" because this enables her to continue avoiding coming to grips with reality. She reacts strongly to your commonsense warnings, since she is well aware that if she followed your advice, she would have to abandon the convenient practice of escaping from making difficult decisions by seeking refuge in day-dreaming and wishful thinking. The fact that she has learned nothing from previous separations and reconciliations indicates that she sees and believes only what she wants to.

WHAT CAN YOU do under these circumstances? Should you continue to provide a haven of refuge every time there is trouble? Should you refuse to allow her to see him while she remains with you? Should you dissuade her from going back to him, since you are convinced that he will never change?

I don't think any of these approaches will prove very effective, Anthony. Keeping in mind that you want to do what is best for the marriage and for all parties concerned, you and your wife should sit down and have a good talk with your daughter. Point out that you are willing to do whatever you can to help the marriage but that in the light of her past marital experience it should be clear that her present conduct is quite irresponsible.

Hence if she insists on another hurried reconciliation, before she is able to make sure that he is sincere, or before she has given him sufficient time to prove that he is willing to change, she should understand that she is on her own. In other words, she and the children can not come home at the next separation.

This may strike you as an extreme position, but it is the only prudent and charitable one open to you, for unless she learns to stop dreaming and to face her marital situation squarely, there can be little hope for a successful marriage. As long as you continue to supply an easy escape when trouble arises, neither she or he will make a serious effort to settle their differences.

This pair have to learn that they must personally accept and live with the consequences of their action. They will never do so if your generosity allows them to back out of a situation every time the going gets rough.

Herbert Fetter Last Rites Held

Requiem Mass for Herbert L. Fetter was offered by the Rev. Leo V. Smith in Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, Friday, Oct. 26. Mr. Fetter, 72, retired manager of the old Rochester Welding Works, died Oct. 23, 1962 in his home, 189 Hillendale St.

HE WAS A member of the Men's Club of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church and was a past president of the Rochester Welding Society. Born in Columbus, Ohio, he came here 25 years ago.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Ethel Fetter and several cousins.

Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. Arrangements by Alvah Holloran & Son Funeral Home.



Pope Appeals For Peace

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope John XXIII is shown as he made a dramatic and impassioned appeal for peace over the Vatican Radio. Speaking in French, the international language of diplomacy, the pontiff called on rulers of nations to negotiate "at all levels and at all times" to spare the world the horrors of war. He said that by negotiating heads of state would be acting in accord with "a rule which calls down the blessings of Heaven and earth." The Pope's appeal came shortly after the crisis developed between Russia and the United States over the "offensive" arms shipments to Cuba.



Soldiers Pray For Peace

Key West, Fla. — (RNS) — Roman Catholic soldiers on emergency alert service in Key West, Fla., are shown at prayer in St. Mary Star of the Sea church. Special prayers for peace, urged by U.S. bishops in Rome attending the Second Vatican Council, were said by American Catholics at all Masses on Oct. 28. Key West, major Florida vacation area, became virtually an armed camp as the U.S., during the Cuban crisis involving Soviet missile installations, built up its forces in the emergency.

Racial Discrimination Said 'Serious Sin'

Detroit — (RNS) — Racial discrimination can only be combated by understanding and prayer. This was the consensus here of a panel discussion on interracial problems held at the convention of the Third Order of St. Francis, a Roman Catholic lay group devoted to translating the ideals of St. Francis of Assisi into social action. THE PANEL held that since racial discrimination is a serious sin, it is the duty of Third Order members to join forces against evidences of it. Since it is not democratic, they noted, it also is the duty of tertiaryes to fight it as good Americans. Panelist James Vinazu of Boston said that "if we open our hearts and extend a helping hand to those discriminated against in our community, we will help them to become good Christians and citizens."

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Jail Priest

Berlin — (NC) — Father Kazimierz Suchan, C.S.S.R., has been sentenced by the Polish communist court in Kozalin province to four months in jail on a charge of criticizing anti-Church laws, according to reports reaching here.

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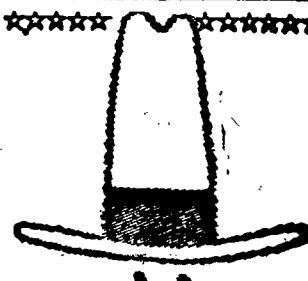
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At Fatima

Fatima — (NC) — Water is so short at the famed Marian shrine here that it is being sold from tank trucks. Leading local figures have asked for government help to solve the problem.

An adequate water supply is the biggest problem of this large pilgrimage center where water now sells at about \$1.20 for 200 gallons.



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