

Regulations -- They're for Your Benefit

(Continued from Page 16A)

There are several kinds of marriage impediments:

1. **Mixed Religion:** This impediment is present should your fiancée be a baptized Protestant. We spoke of this earlier, and how the Bishop would want to be assured that you, as a member of his flock, would not be endangering your faith in any way by entering this union. When you assure him of this, he would then grant a dispensation.

2. **Age:** Church law states that the minimum age for Catholics anywhere is 16 years old for the man, and 14 years old for the woman. However, in those countries where civil law prescribes a higher minimum age, as in New York State, the Church law escalates the minimum age to be the same as the civil law. Therefore, in New York State, Church law is 21 for the man and 18 for the woman, except with parental permission.

3. **"Previous Bond":** This law states that one who has contracted a real (valid) marriage cannot enter a second marriage at the same time, until death, for instance, terminates the first. A civil decree of divorce, or for that matter, a whole roomful of such divorce papers, has no effect on a valid marriage. Should there be a question as to whether your first marriage was truly valid, this should be talked over with a priest.

4. **"Disparity of Worship":** This law

prohibits a Catholic from marrying someone who has never been baptized — a Jewish or Moslem person, for example. A dispensation from the Bishop would be possible here too.

5. **"Holy Orders":** Church law states that anyone who has received the office of Subdeacon, Deacon, or Priest cannot validly contract marriage. Dispensations from this impediment have been granted in the past, but rarely.

6. **"Solemn Vows":** are those taken by members of some religious Orders, and a dispensation from this major impediment would be necessary before such a person, leaving the Order, could validly marry.

7. **"Abduction":** This would apply

if you for instance, carried your fiancée off to your mountain hideout, summoned the priest, and forced her to marry you. The ceremony would be invalid, null and void.

8. **"Crime":** This impediment discourages marital infidelity. This impediment does not have reference to a police record, but refers to the situation of a married person committing adultery with someone and promising to marry that person as soon as his spouse should die.

9. **"Consanguinity":** This impediment is present when one wishes to marry a close blood relative. For simplicity's sake, let us say that marriage may not take place between two blood relatives closer to each other than second cousins

inclusively. Third cousins, or those more distantly related, may marry without encountering this impediment.

10. **"Affinity":** This refers to close in-laws. Just as a brother may not marry his sister, for example, so too a brother-in-law may not marry his sister-in-law, without a dispensation. Or, another example — a widower could not validly marry his deceased wife's mother, sister, or first cousin.

11. **"Spiritual Relationship":** This arises between one who baptizes and the person baptized, and the person baptized and his (her) sponsor. In other words, just as a father cannot marry his child, so a godfather cannot marry his godchild — again, without a dispensation.

A Mother Offers Advice to Her Bridegroom Son

Dearest Son,

In a few days you, my first born, will be married. Since your father's passing, I have tried to be both father and mother to you, but now I speak to you as a mother. Actually I, as a woman, am sharing my thoughts with you. Life in general and widowhood in particular has taught me much about life. My greatest gift to you at this time is to be able to share these observations with you. These are now only memories to me but they can help you build a successful marriage and find happiness.

Be gentle! Strong and thoughtless

tactics on your first nights together can cause repulsion and coldness. A lover is always more concerned about the beloved than himself. Give her different tangible signs of love. You will never know how pleased I was at the sight of an unexpected bouquet or a box of candy and how my heart ached to give something in return.

Never criticize her in front of anyone, especially me. Every wife wants to please her husband as much as his mother did before. But I've had 20 years of practice in loving you and caring for you. Give her time. For all

the world I want her to be another daughter to me. And nothing will make happier than seeing both of you happy, my children.

And finally, I pray that you will always stay close to God and be firm in your faith. May the Holy Spirit guide you. May the Good Lord bless you and your wife always.

Love and Kisses,
Mom

Mrs. Katherine Marlin
Secretary, Catholic Widowed Parent Club.



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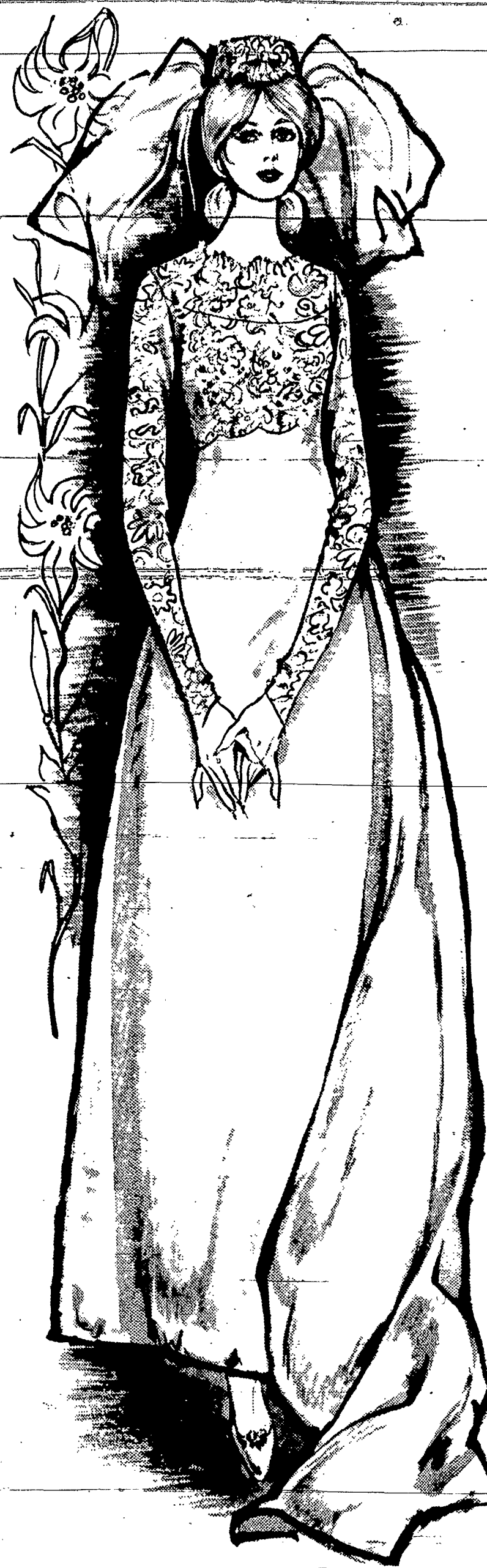
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