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The Best of Books On Married Life

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U.S. Bishops' Division of Family Life

Preparation for marriage has always been a serious and complex endeavor, and it is more so today than ever before.

Gone are the days when a man taught his son a trade and a woman schooled her daughters in the domestic arts. The time has passed when the newly-married could look to their families for special support and attention; they're too far away,

Young people today are the products of a longer and more specialized educational process that places great value on individualism. The decision to marry requires something of a re-orientation, and the couple must work out for themselves their plans for family life.

Today's young couples are aware of this, and are intent on setting up some goals for themseives as married partners.

High school and college marriage courses are helpful; discussions with married friends provide insights; the pre-cana conference highlights and synhesizes practical information In the long run they find mutual understanding in shared convictions, built on dialogue and a continual up-dating of in-

A good book on marriage and

there is also a greater effort to discover and delineate the regard to marriage and family issues.

The following are some of the better selections currently

1.—One of the most recent offerings is Joseph and Lois Bird's "Marriage is for Grownups" (1969, N.Y., Doubleday). Drawing upon their experience in counseling, the authors address this book to those couples whose marriage is basically good, but who become so bogged down in little problems, they seem to miss the mutual fulfillment that they know marital living can bring.

The Birds maintain that marriage is a total relationship between two people who love one another, not just a series of problems that they are mutually faced with and feel compelled to work out. The topics covered in the book are commonplace: communication, money, sex, the children. The apis clear and direct, reflecting what they have learned by experience as much

I found "We All Have Mixed Marriages" one of the best chapters in the book. The au-

family living can be helpful. thors show that every person In many cases the authors are has his own set of values, bemarried couples more interest- liefs and moral imperatives. In ed in sharing their insights many cases these are shared than in solving problems. With-in the Catholic community may differ from person to perherent of the some church will implications of Vatican II in not assure agreement on all

> 2.—The "Mirages of Marriage" by Lederer and Jackson (1968, N.Y., Norton) adapts a mathematical concept and treats the family as a "system." Every "system" is somewhat unique, and equilibrium is achieved by balancing internal strengths and weaknesses. The authors classify marriages along a continuum from Stable-Satis-

They describe each of the categories by a "typical example," and most married couples can recognize something of their own experience in these examples. The book makes the point that marriage is growth and progress, and becomes most dissatisfying when a couple settles for the mirage rather than pursuing the ideal.

said for an earlier book by Jodom of Sexual Love" (1967, N.Y., Doubleday), This small volume caught the message of Vatican II and its implications for a married couple. It deserves careful reading by every engaged couple.

4."God's Love in Human Lan-

How to Fight Sensibly Clip Out and Save

Quarrels? Sure, they'll occur occasionally—unless the marriage partners are either spineless or saints.

The Cana Conference of Chicago offers these eight

• Keep little things little-don't make mountains of

• Keep it to a discussion—a difference of opinion need not turn into an argument.

• Keep hold of tongue and temper—we always hurt the ones we love because we know their Achilles' heel.

• Keep it fair-reveal your feeling honestly. Don't in

• Keep it to yourselves—two are enough for a good fight. Don't bring in in-laws, friends, neighbors, children.

• Keep it current—don't rake up the past to support your present position.

• Keep talking—the silent treatment is deadly and

guage," by Father Van der Poel, (1969, Penn., Duquesne University Press) has just appeared, and it is an excellent synthesis of the scriptural and theological insights of Vatican

Father Van der Poel's work with married couples gives a humanity and psychological seph and Lois Bird, "The Free liveliness to his theological growth. writing as he develops his basic man realities of sexual differences, conjugal love, generosity and affection, and a desire for

II presented in a clear and

thought-provoking style.

The scriptural insight is pres-

thinking of modern popes and ways focusing on the dignity of the human person. His chapter role of law and authority without losing sight of man's basic

Press, draws upon his own experience as husband and father s well as his work in marriage

(Continued on Page 14A)



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