

Beyond "Love Story"

Marriage: Deciding to Love

By FR. ROBERT COLLINS,
Diocesan Director of
Family Life

"Love means never having to say 'you're sorry'" is a famous line from the currently popular motion picture "Love Story." Such love implies perfect giving, perfect sharing, perfect attunement to one another's needs. But more than these, it implies a series of important decisions made by a couple as

they prepare for and enter into marriage.

A fundamental decision made independently of one another is a willingness to love, a response to the Sacrament of Baptism and the daily living of that love which a young man and woman observe in parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends. Our concept of love takes form through relationships with other people.

A young man and woman learn certain values and attitudes and establish a personal priority list of virtues. With the onset of puberty the young man and woman begin a process of testing and redefining these virtues, looking for someone whose values approximate one's own, whose world-view and life style are compatible with one's own—a person to love.

Falling in love means a beautiful face, a sweet voice, a handsome body, a charming personality. It means running up the steps to meet your girl or standing in the window as your boy drives away at the end of a date. It means lazy dreams of a future with him and a restless urge to be at home with her.

As Father Joseph Champlin relates in *Together for Life*: "As the months pass this blind, compulsive, divorced from reality experience of falling in love either grows into something strong and deep or withers, then dies. When young lovers come down from the clouds, their vision improves. They notice faults, disagree on de-

isions, argue or fight. They stop playing games, act more naturally, let their hair down. The true you comes out."

Sometimes these are moments in the death of love. The breakup for a few is bitter, quick, and hurtful; for others, it is a gradual drifting apart, a slow realization that what seemed so eternal, sure and clear was only first love, or infatuation, or the longing of a lonely person.

Often love grows, building on that strong initial attraction and developing deeper daily. It blossoms, it gains strength, it becomes strong as death.

Faults remain, but come to be accepted; disagreements continue, but are resolved through compromise; arguments go on but end with reconciliation. The road gets rocky at times and for periods the couple may even drift off in different directions.

But eventually they return, resume the journey and find their mutual love has plunged to a new and richer level.

A decision has been made: "I want to spend my life with you." Implicit in this decision is a willingness to practice and grow in the foundation virtues of married love. They make a decision to be generous, to give without first asking for a guaranteed return, to seek every day new opportunities for giving. They make a decision to understand one another, to concentrate constantly on each other's good qualities. They make a decision to sacrifice "I" and "me" to "we" and "us."



They make a decision to be honest and open in communicating with one another. They make a decision to build up each other in holiness.

They are ready to enter a union which is most serious because it will bind them together for life in a relationship so close and so intimate that it will profoundly influence their whole future. That future, with its hopes and disappointments, its successes and its failures, its pleasures and its pains, is hidden from their eyes. They know that these elements are mingled in every life and are to be expected in their own. And so, not knowing what is before them, they decide to take each other for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death.

They have a vision, a goal, a promise to keep to one another, a burning desire that their love will continue to grow to that point where they will truly never have to say to one another "I'm sorry."

State Marriage Laws

- Each applicant must present a physician's statement certifying to a pre-marital serologic (blood) test and physician's examination, duly signed by physician and applicant. The statement must show the date on which the blood specimen was taken, date test was completed, date of physical examination, and name and address of laboratory making test, but the result of the test must not be shown on certificate.
- Serologic tests must be made in laboratories recognized by the state.
- The blood test certificate expires 30 days from the date on which the specimen was taken and cannot be used thereafter.
- The marriage license expires 60 days from the date of issue.
- Both parties must appear

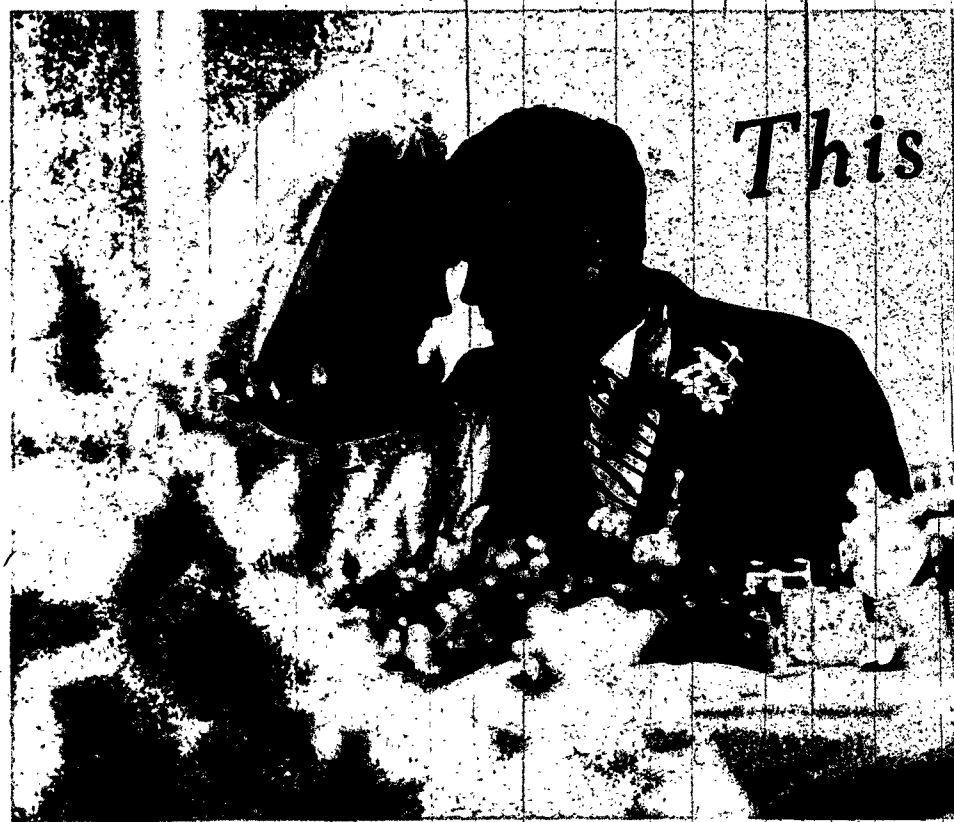
- in person when applying for the marriage license.
- Minors (males under 21 years and females under 18) must be accompanied by both parents, if living, or by guardian if parents are deceased, whose consents to the marriage are required.
- All applicants under 21 years of age must present proof of age.
- Licenses issued in New York State may be used anywhere in the state.
- No period of residence is required for out-of-city or out-of-state applicants.
- The wedding may take place 24 hours after issuance of license, provided, however, that three days will have elapsed between the date on which the blood specimen was taken and the date of the marriage ceremony.

INSIDE

I think true love is never blind
But rather brings an added
light,
An inner vision quick to find
The beauties hid
from common sight.

— Phoebe Cary

Art and Ellen Maurer describe the revolution in Pre-Cana, page 4B. Father Champlin recounts a personal history of the mixed marriage laws on page 12B. There's the ground rules for having a good fight on page 6B; and a check-off list for your wedding plans offered on page 9B.



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