

# Knowing God Important In Lifetime Marriage

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A father was asked to reflect on the way he had raised his children and to say, if he had to do it over again, what he would change. He thought and said, "I would love their mother better."

A man and woman marry one another because they experience a oneness that makes them feel whole. Ideas, hopes, interests, values, concerns are shared or affirmed in one another. They feel comfortable in the thought that they can journey through life together supporting each other in all that is most precious to them in life.

For the Catholic couple, the most important reality in life is their relationship with God. The Sacrament of Baptism committed them to a graced life with the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit — a call to walk with God and be faithful. Intimacy with and fidelity to God is a journey one makes together with others in a community of faith. We call this community "the Church." No one makes the journey alone. In a sense all of us are ministers to each other as we walk in faith — each one in some way mediates the presence and experience of the Lord to the other. Often we think of

Matrimony as "the other choice," not a (religious) vocation or "a calling" when in fact it is a very definite choice of ministry. In the Sacrament of Matrimony the person chooses some one in particular to be that mediator of Christ in his or her life, and in turn chooses to minister to the other.

The father we mentioned in the beginning wished his relationship with his wife had been better. Perhaps he was saying that he wished he had been more aware of his mission to call forth and enrich her faith; perhaps he wished she had asked more of him or that he had been more responsive when she challenged him to a deeper or a more active faith. A desire for God and the need for intimacy with Him lies deep in the heart of each one of us and our striving for human love is a parable of that deeper love. For too many, the tragedy of their lives is that they are never able to identify and satisfy this deep hunger. Part of the beauty of loving and knowing another intimately is to be able to own our deepest desires, to put them into words, to strive for them, to actively support one another in the striving and to call one another to an accounting when we let down, compromise, or fail.

The Sacrament of

*"For the Catholic couple, the most important reality in life is their relationship with God."*

Matrimony calls a couple to this kind of openness and accountability in their relationship with God. It is a kind of contract they need to discuss before they are married and a topic which demands open and honest communication all along the way if their marriage is to assure the happiness and growth it should mean for them and their children. God does not intrude Himself into their lives if they are heedless and unaware, but He does show His face to a man and wife when they consciously seek Him and invite Him to walk with them through the joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, successes and failures that are a part of every lifetime.

Prayer and the sacramental life of the Church help to give

them this sensitivity; these are signs that assure, "I am with you." Rooted in this experience of being nourished and loved by God, the couple becomes careful of all life — of every life they touch. Their lifestyle, every decision and choice from the most important to the most trivial, speaks of love of God, concern for neighbor, and reverence for all created things. They are faithful children of the Father and good stewards of the material goods He places in their hands. Their message is clear as they live their lives together and communicate their gift better than any other teacher to their children and to the Church: "Let the coming generation be told of the Lord that they may proclaim to a people yet to be born the justice he has shown." (Ps. 22:31-32)

## Diamonds and Their History

To some people the diamond means baseball. To those born in April the diamond is their birthstone.

But to young couples in love, the diamond is the universal symbol of engagement.

The diamond is the accepted symbol of the engagement promise, representing to young people everywhere the individual expression of their love.

It all began with Mary of Burgundy. She was the first lucky girl to receive a diamond ring for her engagement to Maximilian of

Austria, on August 17, 1477.

The diamond has been considered one of the most precious of all materials almost since the dawn of history. The diamond, the hardest substance known to man, literally endures forever. Once cut and polished it never loses its beautiful brilliance. The very word diamond comes from the Greek word "Adamas" meaning invincible.

No two diamonds in the world are the same. Each diamond has a personality of its own. Think of a diamond as Nature "doing her own thing."

The shape of the diamond is also a factor in its cost. In general, the round or brilliant cut is less expensive than the so called "fancy" shapes like the marquise, the pear and the emerald cut. The reason is simply that more rough diamonds are found in nature that lend themselves to the brilliant cut.

The oval is an adaption of the round or brilliant cut and appears larger than a brilliant of the same carat.

The marquise cut is the name given to the diamond shape that is long and pointed at both ends. This word is a French one.

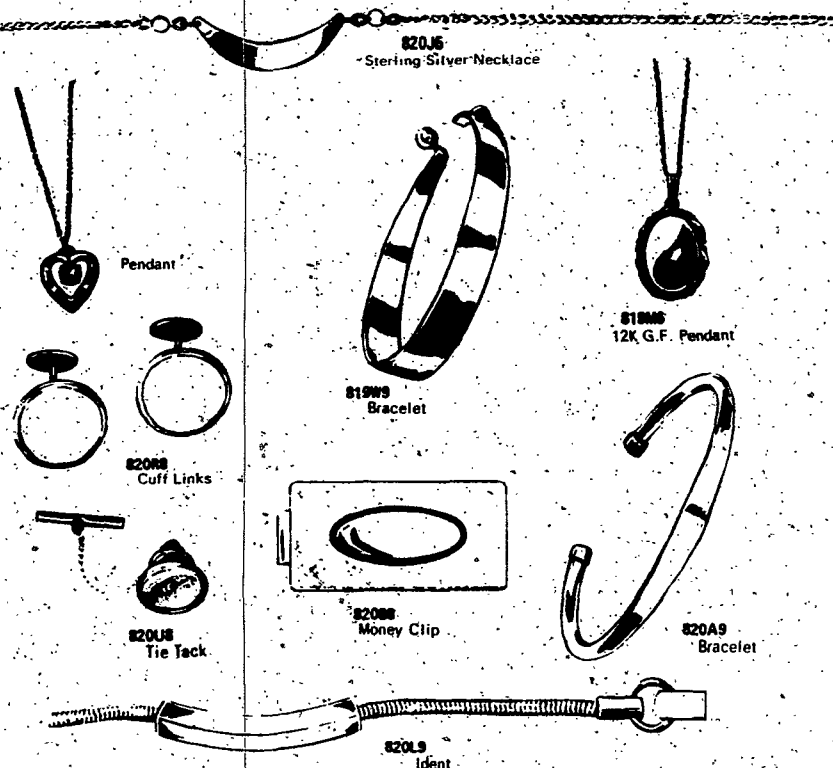
The emerald cut — a straight sided oblong — goes back centuries to the old table-cut method of fashioning gem stones, particularly emeralds. But the emerald cut diamond is the most recently developed of all the popular diamond shapes.

Because of its clean, modern look, the emerald cut diamond is most often set in platinum, usually with two baguette side stone.

As with anything else, the shape of a diamond is a matter of individual taste — one is not preferable to another, they are all works of art.

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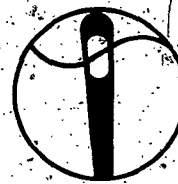
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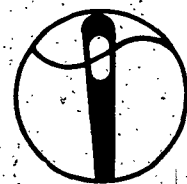
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