

Matrimony: A Ministry In Sharing With God

By Sister Jane Geiger

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 the 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 and fidelity to God in 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

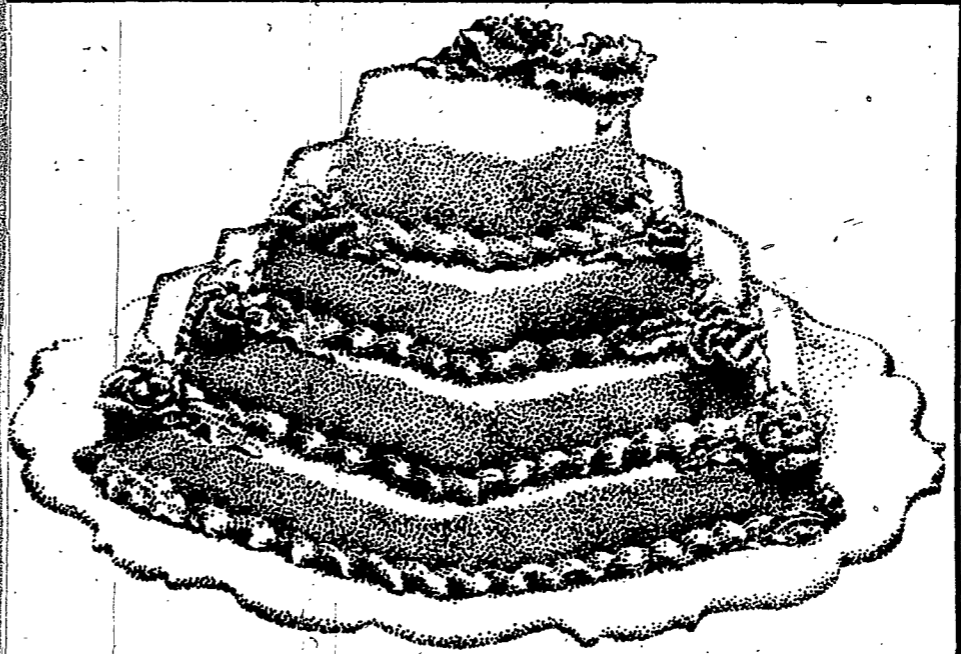
person chooses someone in particular to be that mediator of Christ in his or her life, and in turn chooses to minister to the other.

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 life 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 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 of 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)



Invite Cheesy Eddie To Your Wedding

Silken cheesecakes in ten flavors... including Original, Marble, and Amaretto.

Cheesy Eddie's is an opulent option to ordinary sugar-on-flour wedding cakes. Fine, fresh ingredients and luxurious taste make it worth waiting in line for.

Decorated tier cakes to serve from 30 to 150, with special arrangements for as many as 300.

We deliver anywhere within Monroe County, and require just two weeks notice for a custom cheesecake to suit your taste, the size of the crowd, and your plans for a memorable celebration.

Let Cheesy Eddie's make your wedding smooth and sweet.



439 Monroe Avenue (second floor). Enter under the yellow canopy. 473-1300

Scarlata's Party House on the lake at Island Cottage



DANCING EVERY THURSDAY EVENING 9 P.M. TO 1 A.M. 953 EDGEMERE DR.

We have the lowest package plan price available.

EXCLUSIVE BOOKINGS

Yours will be the only party going on.

We help you arrange everything from band and photo bookings to limosine and florists.

•Originator of the "Wedding Package Plan"

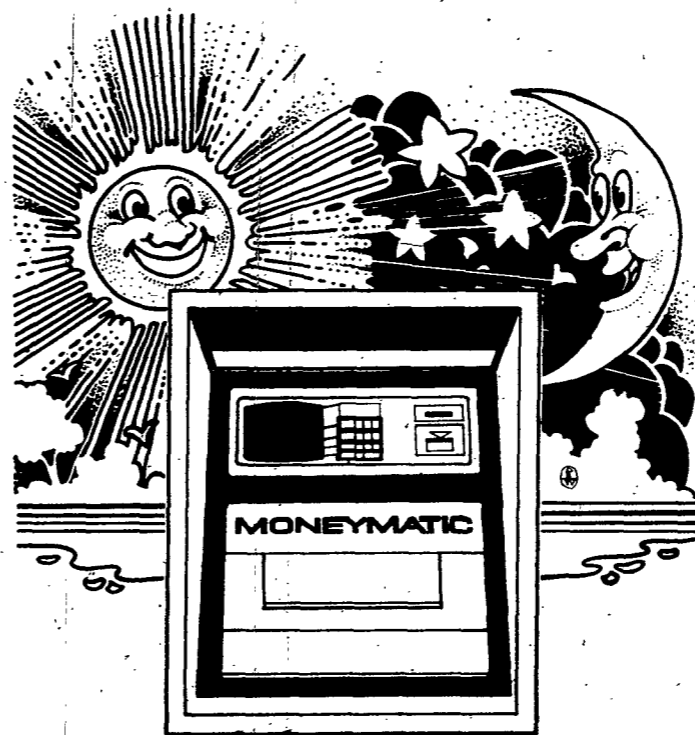
Ask about our Monday through Thursday Special Pricing Plan.

- Weddings
- Showers
- Banquets
- Conventions
- Stag Parties
- Sales Meetings

663-6140

"Our Famous Menu Mailed Upon Request"

Why you'll like Day and Night Banking.



If you've ever been too busy to get to the bank during regular hours, you'll like Day and Night Banking at our MoneyMatics.

It's the quick, easy way to do your everyday banking any time that's good for you. You can make deposits and withdrawals, transfer money, pay bills, even check your account balance.

And because we have more than 70 Day and Night Banks across the state, there's probably one near you.

Here's all you need:

Your own personal identification code, and a Marine MasterCard® Visa® or CashCard. CashCard is the banking card that's free when you have a Marine checking or statement savings account.

Here's what you don't need:

You won't need time. MoneyMatic is fast - each transaction takes about half a minute.

You won't need experience, either. Day and Night Banking is easy, even the first time you try it.

For Day and Night Banking, Tell It To The Marine

MARINE MIDLAND BANK, N.A. Member FDIC