FEATURE

Men, women seek mates who share love of religion

phone interview.

portant to you."

Even more important to Micaela

Gutierrez, also a member of the St.

Mary's young adult group, is the sign of

commitment that you show by attending

church regularly. She doesn't buy what's

behind the line that some people utter: "I

community," Gutierrez said. "Going to

church is a sign to people that this is im-

interviewed emphasized that any long-

term relationship may lead to marriage,

and possibly to questions between you

and your spouse about how children

faith, then you have to think what faith

"I think if you have more than one

should be raised spiritually.

Several of the young adults the Courier

"It doesn't connote a commitment to

don't go to church, but I'm spiritual."

By Rob Cullivan Staff writer

Is it important that your mate or your potential mate possess strong spiritual or religious values? That was the question the Young Adults page posed last month to readers of the Catholic Courier.

Tracy McCabe, a parishioner at Blessed Sacrament Church in Rochester, wrote the Courier a thoughtful letter on the subject.

"One of the most important things for me in a potential mate is a belief in the Catholic faith and a sense of spirituality," McCabe's letter said. "Since my beliefs and faith are such an integral part of my life, I desire to be with someone who understands and can share in it. I believe shared faith brings an essential connection and dimension to a relationship."

Why is shared spirituality such an essential connection with a mate? For some, it means that the relationship won't be based on mere sexual attraction, or a series of commonly held, but superficial interests.

McCabe noted that that a spiritual connection between you and your mate "was the basis on which to build mutual priorities and values.'

That sounds like a statement with which Lisa Klaver would agree. Klaver tried dating a man who didn't really believe in God, and she doesn't advise anyone with a strong faith to do the same.

"It doesn't jell well," she said, noting the difficulty of sharing her faith with



playing fields behind the church.

A eucharistic minister at her parish, Klaver commented that participating in church life should mean as much to your mate as it does to you.

"Being active in the church environment, you want someone to be with you," she said.

"It's basically moral support," added Carole Agosto, also a member of the Holy Ghost group.

Jim Caputo, a lector and commentator at Holy Ghost, saw choosing a mate to whom faith was important as almost inevitable.

"I think it comes naturally," he said. "You're looking for a mate with similar qualities."

Amy Wilkin, a member of the young adult group at St. Mary's Church in Roch-

ester, echoed Caputo's

comments. "I like diversity, but I'd find it hard to date someone who doesn't have a faith or belief in God in any of sort way," Wilkin observed in a are you going to raise them," said Jim Palvino, a member of the Holy Ghost group.

Agosto noted that couples should consider ahead of time how they will raise their offspring with a knowledge of God.

"I think it's important that they be exposed to some kind of religion whether it's Catholic or Protestant," she said of children

Arthur Louis DiNieri III, another member of the Holy Ghost group, spoke for many when he noted that love may be the preeminent value in any romantic relationship, but shared faith ranks up there with love in terms of determining a couple's mutual happiness.

"I really think it doesn't matter who you love, you just need some kind of faith in the family," he said.

But McCabe wrote a question that brought up a whole other issue framing the topic of dating and marrying people with religious values: Where do you find them?

Do you have advice for readers of the Young Adults page on this subject? Is it possible to deliberately choose social settings where you can find someone who is an eligible Catholic? Or is it something that you have to leave up to Fate or God, more or less?

Write to the Young Adults Page, c/o Rob Cullivan and Mike Latona, Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624-1899. We look forward to your comments.





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