

they may be unable to express themselves truly and fully. Their sexual adjustment in marriage suffers.

**The betrothal rite.** In earlier times, when a man and woman became engaged, they solemnized their agreement in the church by plighting their troth. This ceremony is enjoying a remarkable revival in the United States.

The ceremony is simple and short. You and your spouse-to-be promise before a priest that you will prepare yourselves in the best way possible for the sacred state of matrimony. You assert solemnly that you sincerely intend to wed unless you discover defects that would make marriage undesirable.

This ceremony symbolizes your desire to spend your days before your wedding in trying to make sure that you're doing the right thing. It doesn't bind you to marry. Rather, it emphasizes the importance of thorough preparation for marriage and it imbues bride and bridegroom with a sense of the important spiritual nature of the marriage contract.

The betrothal rite will give you a greater sense of the dignity and idealism of married life. It will dispose you to treat it with the reverence it deserves.

**"Rights" of engaged couples.** Engaged persons sometimes err in thinking that, as long as they intend to marry, it's all right for them to engage in intense necking, petting, or in the sex act itself. Some even think they have a "right" to these activities. Of course, they're completely wrong.

The sex act is restricted to the married, and it's a serious sin to indulge in it before the wedding ceremony. This principle is one you can understand, because it's also in-

volved in most other areas of life. It's the only way to keep you from driving a car one the day before you get jailed. Drive a car a day later and you're in violation of the law. In the seminary, you learn to say Mass so that you can be ordained. What would you do if you didn't sacrifice before he received the Eucharist? You'd be guilty of sin. And in the same way, you lose the rights of marriage before you are married.

In addition to being sinful, premarital sex for a young man and woman in marriage is a problem because it has been repeatedly proven that it leads to marital temptations generally, and to a more idealistic and happier frame of mind. It is a stumbling block to intercourse often, and it leads to remorse which may last throughout life.

It's well to remember that the sex act is far removed from intercourse. In Chapter Three, you should remember the intensity of your sex drive. A young man and girl and lead to thoughts and actions which are much more likely to create problems than to other sins. Intense petting is a sin.

Priests and parents often tell young people what a powerful thing sex is. Your sex urge is one of the most powerful God made it that way. He made it so that you are attracted to each other so that you can cooperate in His work of procreation.

Once upon a time, the story goes, a young man and woman were in a field. The man was very handsome and the woman was very beautiful. They were both very young and very innocent. They were both very pure and very clean. They were both very good and very kind. They were both very honest and very brave. They were both very strong and very smart. They were both very rich and very poor. They were both very happy and very sad. They were both very free and very bound. They were both very alive and very dead. They were both very real and very unreal. They were both very true and very false. They were both very good and very bad. They were both very right and very wrong. They were both very yes and very no. They were both very love and very hate. They were both very life and very death. They were both very light and very dark. They were both very hot and very cold. They were both very dry and very wet. They were both very hard and very soft. They were both very fast and very slow. They were both very high and very low. They were both very up and very down. They were both very in and very out. They were both very with and very without. They were both very for and very against. They were both very pro and very con. They were both very yes and very no. They were both very love and very hate. They were both very life and very death. They were both very light and very dark. They were both very hot and very cold. They were both very dry and very wet. They were both very hard and very soft. They were both very fast and very slow. They were both very high and very low. They were both very up and very down. They were both very in and very out. They were both very with and very without. They were both very for and very against. They were both very pro and very con.