

Spring-Summer 2019
Issue 10

Altar & Hearth

Inspire. Amuse. Inform.

Personality Matters!
because life is pretty boring without it

Short & Round
Dressing the hardest body type

Feeding a Crowd
and how much to buy

When you're single
In the Middle of Nowhere

Hobbits & Heroes
At the stroke of midnight



Dear Readers,

At several points throughout production it seemed like this might have to get pushed back to be the one and only issue for 2019, what with weddings and projects and school and just about everything, but we made it!

When I was beginning work on this issue I felt a bit like the popular meme on the internet where there's a little owl sitting on a branch, all excited, saying, "It's Spring!" only to get dumped on moments later by a blizzard and then lamenting, "Nope!" The weather here in Cincy certainly continues to be a novelty, even if only compared seasonally to Michigan. My roommate, who is from New York, was remarking the other day that her family back home is just beginning to prepare their garden

for planting - while she's had a little box garden going out on our balcony since April! By this point, we're well into real summer, while our families back home are just starting to be able to stop worrying about nightly frosts.

The charming hobbit hole on our front cover is not actually located in New Zealand but in the small town on Yale, Michigan, only a few minutes' drive from where my parents live. It is part of a little private LOTR theme park. It is built to true hobbit scale, making it a bit of a tight fit for adults but loads of fun for parents, big siblings, and small children alike!

Pax Christi,
Colleen





Letters to

the Editor

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING:

Just an FYI . . .

I posted the “Soul Survivor” house fire picture and three graphs about it on “Forgotten Iowa History” website and had over 1,000 comments including several hundred people who wanted to read the whole story. With that interest, a few days later I advised those readers they could read the entire story at your website.

Apparently, many people read the entire story based on more comments, sympathy notes, etc., that came in.

The fire department in the town where this tragedy took place contacted me and said they had the exact time of the fire call in 1913 in their logbook! Another lady offered to bring in her team with metal detectors to go over the site of the fire.

The lady who lives next to the site of the fire contacted me and said they had unearthed part of the basement wall and some artifacts like glass etc. I am giving some of that to the local historical museum. The lady also suggested I erect some type of a memorial on the lot.

I will be at the site of the fire April 5 and will drop off a small tribute memorial which includes a picture of the burning house and three graphs all enclosed in a weather proof picture frame.

From research going forward, it has been an amazing and emotional trip. Thanks much.

- Joe McDermott, Arkansas
March 31, 2019

Staff

Mission

Altar and Hearth Magazine is an ezine by traditional Catholic women responding to the need for a magazine reflective of our principles and values. We are focused on providing light-hearted, whimsical, and inspirational content within a Catholic moral and cultural context.

No more ads for contraceptives. No more ladies in painted on yoga pants and sports bra tops. No more impractical, expensive crafts directed toward two-child families.

Just quality content for the trad woman.

Unless restating established traditional Catholic teaching, the opinions found herein belong to the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Altar and Hearth Magazine. If you find yourself in disagreement, you are more than welcome to voice your views in a letter to the editor.



Managing Editor

Colleen Eldracher holds a bachelor's degree in Business Management, with a major in marketing and a minor in graphic design. She is an outspoken defender of the Oxford comma and has worked as a wedding dress designer, but currently makes church vestments and is writing a step-by-step book about the process. She much prefers writing historical fiction. She teaches 4th - 6th grades and high school English at a Catholic parochial school in southwestern Ohio.



Founder & Former Editor-in-Chief

M. Zapp is a mother, an avid fan of the British Regency, artist and freelance writer. After editing for her high school newspaper and working for a small town paper between college semesters, she never lost her love for the publishing world.

She is a multi-published author of both fiction and web copy and is currently working on the production of several ebooks and novels.

To read this magazine: This magazine can be read online, downloaded as a PDF, or printed. If you do choose to print it, select the option to shrink the pages to fit in the printable area of the paper - otherwise you will lose the outer quarter inch since most printers can't put ink all the way to the edge.

We welcome your input, opinions, and comments. You can post to our FB page or send us an email. For submission information or for information on how to support Altar and Hearth in other ways, please visit our website at <http://altarandhearthmagazine.com/>

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Catholic Business Directory

Alex & Co - Photography - Brooksville, Florida

Arbonne Independent Consultant - Katie Quain - Kansas; online

Colleen's - Custom clothing, wedding dresses, alterations - Yale, Michigan; online

Current Construction - Built to last - Johannesburg, Michigan

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Pure Goat Soapworks - Handmade soaps - online

St. Apollonia Dental - Reliable family dentistry - Sterling Heights, Michigan

St. Jerome Homeschool Library - Spiritual & secular reading, homeschooling materials - online, Wisconsin

St. Zita's Cottage - Catholic crafts - online

The Misty Mountain Boys - Live & recorded bluegrass music - Minnesota

My Holy Cards - Fully-customizable holy cards for weddings, funerals, First Communions, and more! Online at www.myholycards.com

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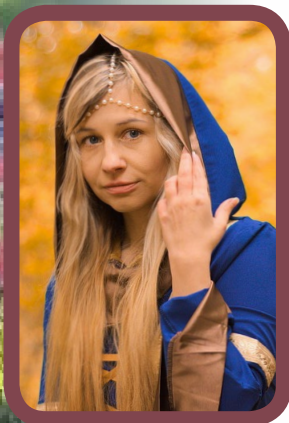
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**Hobbits
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DRESSING

The SHORT

ROUND

Woman



IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN more difficult for the heavyset woman of any height to find flattering clothing, but there is no doubt that the woman who is both short AND heavyset has been handed an especially heavy cross when it comes to fashion.

Unlike the tall heavyset woman, who can use her height to engage in some visual sleight-of-hand, the short heavyset woman is at a definite disadvantage, compounded by the fact that fashion in general is geared toward her exact opposite: the tall, slim woman.

However, since none of us, by taking thought, can either add or remove one cubit from our bone structure, no matter how much we may

pray for an extra 2-5 inches, what is the short, heavyset woman to do?

Here are ten helpful commandments:

1. She should absolutely avoid clothing that ends in a hard line right at the fullest part of her figure, no matter where it may be: bust, waist, hips, or thighs.
2. Next, she should look for styles that have long vertical lines, without a lot of extra bulk or gathers. The occasional pleat is permissible.
3. She should either buy clothes with shoulder pads or add them to her existing clothing. Most women with this figure

type have rounded, slumping shoulders, and shoulder pads both correct the curve and add a little extra breadth to counterbalance the heaviness below.

4. Generally speaking, jackets, sweaters, and coats should end no lower than the natural waist. Cardigans with tight ribbing at the bottom should be avoided like the plague! (Whoever invented them was ignoring the fact that 80% of women are larger at the hips than at the waist, and can't wear them well anyway.)



How the short round woman should NEVER dress. Notice how every line pulls the eye down toward the largest part of her body.

5. She should use color judiciously to draw the eye away from her figure flaws. If prints are worn, they should be oversized.
6. Jewelry should be limited to one statement piece at a time. If a large necklace is worn, skip the big earrings, and vice-versa. Avoid chunky bracelets and watches. Large rings can be worn.
7. She should add as much volume as possible to her hair and keep it up above her shoulders. Because her body is overly heavy, it often makes her head look too small. Visually enlarging the head helps to make her look more balanced.
8. Accessories for the head should have lines that point upward, NOT downward, to create an illusion of height. Floppy, droopy hat brims are forbidden!
9. Handbags, purses, etc. should be carried above the fullest part of the figure and should be neither tiny nor oversized. They should be proportioned to the woman carrying them.
10. Shoes should always elongate the foot. Snub-toed flats are about the WORST type of footwear for the short heavy woman. She should also avoid the opposite extreme of skinny heels and tiny straps, because it will look like she is about to break the shoe to pieces. Sturdy but not clunky footwear is best.

ALL TOO OFTEN, either from habit, lack of resources, or as a result of never being taught how to dress for her figure type, the short heavysset woman does exactly the opposite, and ends up unconsciously making herself look rather like a potato.

As we begin to look at how she **SHOULD** dress, it will be helpful to think of the body as divided into imaginary thirds, beginning at the shoulders and ending at the heels. The short woman wants to elongate her body by keeping the attention somewhere in the uppermost third. She can have a bit of additional interest down towards the bottom of the lowest third.



Here we have the same woman in an upswept hat with plenty of upward-pointing visual interest. Her fluffy hair makes her head look somewhat larger and in better proportion to the rest of her body. Her short jacket keeps the color firmly located above her largest area, while the stripes visually lengthen her figure. The moderate wedge heel gives her a little more actual height, while the lighter color keeps the line going rather than ending it abruptly like a black shoe would.



Color blocking can be a great aid to the short round woman. This dress, which could be formal or casual depending on the fabrics involved, divides her body into thirds LENGTHWISE, further confusing the eye into thinking she is slimmer than she actually is. The contrasting sleeves further help with the illusion. Heavysset women should be careful not to pull their hair back flat from their faces, as it makes their faces look even heavier. Back-combing and hairspray can add some volume even to simple styles like this bun.



In this outfit, while the shirt perhaps doesn't end in an ideal spot, it is counterbalanced by the color accents at the yoke which draw the eye upward and outward, and by the triangular godets in the skirt which draw the eye downward. The fun shoes help, too. Notice how the hat brim is level rather than downturned, and how the hair is done in a loose side bun. Watch out for hats with tall crowns - the flatter the crown, the better. Short women should always be sure to buy tops marked 'petite' because they are cut shorter through the body. Every inch helps!

WITH PRACTICE, EXPERIMENTATION, and some judicious shopping, the short heavysset woman can soon be on her way to achieving a much more flattering look for herself, and consequently feeling much more confident about her appearance!

Hairstyling may prove a bit more of a challenge, but some initial help from a hair-savvy friend can work wonders until she feels assured enough to try duplicating hairdos for herself.

She should be sure when choosing colors to refer to the Color Me Beautiful system in order to make everything work well together. Keep in mind that this process can be done with bold colors as well as with muted, subdued colors, as long as the general principles are followed.

Matte finish, light-absorbing fabrics, as opposed to shiny fabrics, are better for women with this figure type. Thin, lightweight, clingy knits are terrible. Go for heavier knits that can keep a bit more of their own shape and skim rather than accentuate the body.

Remember:

- **Thirds**
- **Long lines**
- **Proportion**
- **Use color to draw the eye upward, and neutral or colored shoes to visually lengthen the legs**
- **Don't clutter yourself!**

It's less overwhelming to work on compiling one complete outfit at a time and then gradually weed out things that don't work anymore, perhaps by passing them on to taller friends. Everyone's taste is somewhat different so the overall results won't be exactly the same for everyone, but that's what makes fashion fun.

Best of luck! Ω



Earrings

THAT DON'T PINCH



THE MAJORITY OF Catholic women, at some point or another, get their ears pierced. Some as infants, some as teenagers, some as a coming-of-age ritual after high school graduation. But for some of us, we never get around to it. The reasons are varied: don't wear earrings, don't wear them enough to make it worthwhile, squeamish, allergic to jewelry metals, etc.

However, most of us in the non-pierced crowd, at some point or another, experience a desire to wear earrings. The alternative to regular earrings is, of course, clip-on ones. But as anyone who has ever worn clip-on earrings will be quick to assure you, after only a few minutes they start to HURT. By the time they get taken off, usually the poor earlobes are red and sore and have a big indent from where the earrings were hanging on for dear life.

Now, is all this pain and suffering necessary?

No!

When I was in high school, I too used to occasionally wear earrings that pinched like the dickens. And being a bit of a wimp, by no means endowed with heroic fortitude, nor inclined to perform extraordinary penances by wearing instruments of torture on a regular

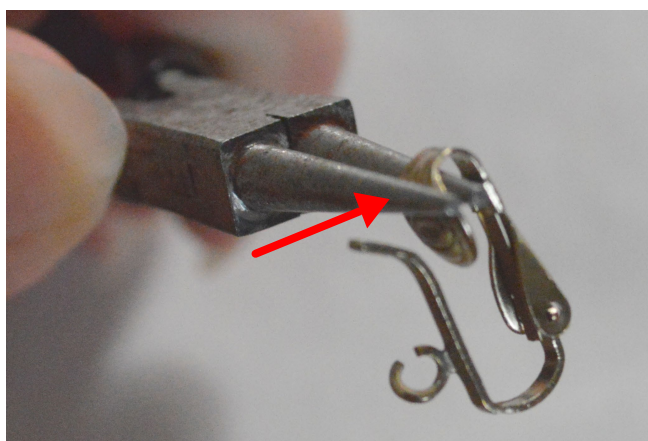
basis, I started to experiment with pliers. I think what gave me the idea was that I had one pair of screw-on earrings which did NOT hurt if you only turned them enough to keep them on, but did not make them tight. I observed that clip-on earrings, in contrast, always pinched totally shut, with no room for the earlobe in the middle. I concluded that if somehow clip-on earrings could only be adjusted so that their fronts and backs did NOT meet, they might be made significantly more comfortable. I ruined a couple pairs of earrings in the process, but fairly soon I came up with a system that worked, and I've been wearing clip-on earrings almost daily ever since, WITH NO PAIN WHATSOEVER. In fact, I almost forget I'm wearing them at times.

So if you, too, would like to experience this phenomenon, simply continue reading this article! You will need the following supplies:

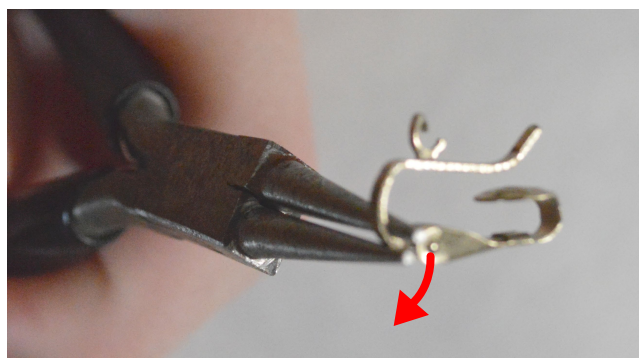
- **A PLIERS.** A regular needlenose one works fine for most jobs, but if you want to get fancy a round-tipped jewelry pliers is helpful to have as well.
- **A SET OF EARRING CLIPS.** I buy packages of them at JoAnn Fabrics and Hobby Lobby. They come in goldtone and silvertone and it's only a few dollars for several pair.



1 The end goal is to have about an eighth (1/8) of an inch of open space between the front and back parts of the clip when the earring is closed. Holding the bottom of the clip, use the pliers to turn in the top of the back part of the clip. This will give you most of the gap you need. You want the front and back to be roughly parallel to each other.



2 After you have the top narrowed down, grab the front prong of the earring clip and adjust the bottom hook of it. If you open the 'J' slightly toward the back, it will help the top sections stay in a parallel position. (Sorry, I can't hold the pliers, the camera, and the earring at the same time!)



3 Try the earring clip on and wear it for a few minutes. Tug on it lightly. There should be some resistance, but not a lot. Too loose and it will fall off; too tight and it will still hurt. Adjust the second clip to match the first, put it on as well, and then wear them around the house. If they're so comfortable you forget you are wearing them, then they are just right! If they still pinch a little, open the gap a bit more. Once you're satisfied with the fit, attach the "pretty" parts, and you're good to go!



4 Sometimes when you change regular drop earrings over to clips, you will find that they hang awkwardly because they are shorter than they were before. In that case, you can use regular jewelry-making supplies to lengthen them out a little for a more elegant appearance.

If the earrings are part of a set, try to find some beads or crystals that pick up on the colors of the rest of the set. If you're making the necklace and earrings yourself, then of course matching isn't a problem.

When I changed over this set, I used goldtone earring clips to match the gold wires and spacers on the necklace, gold earring wires with stops at the end, some gold spacer beads I had leftover from another project, and some buff Swarovski crystals that picked up on the warm peach tones in the necklace.

MOST PEOPLE DON'T even notice that I'm wearing clip-on earrings, unless I casually pull them off to escape a baby's interested fingers. After that, their first question is always, "Don't they hurt?" Now you can also say, while smiling broadly: "Nope!" Ω



Storm's Comin'

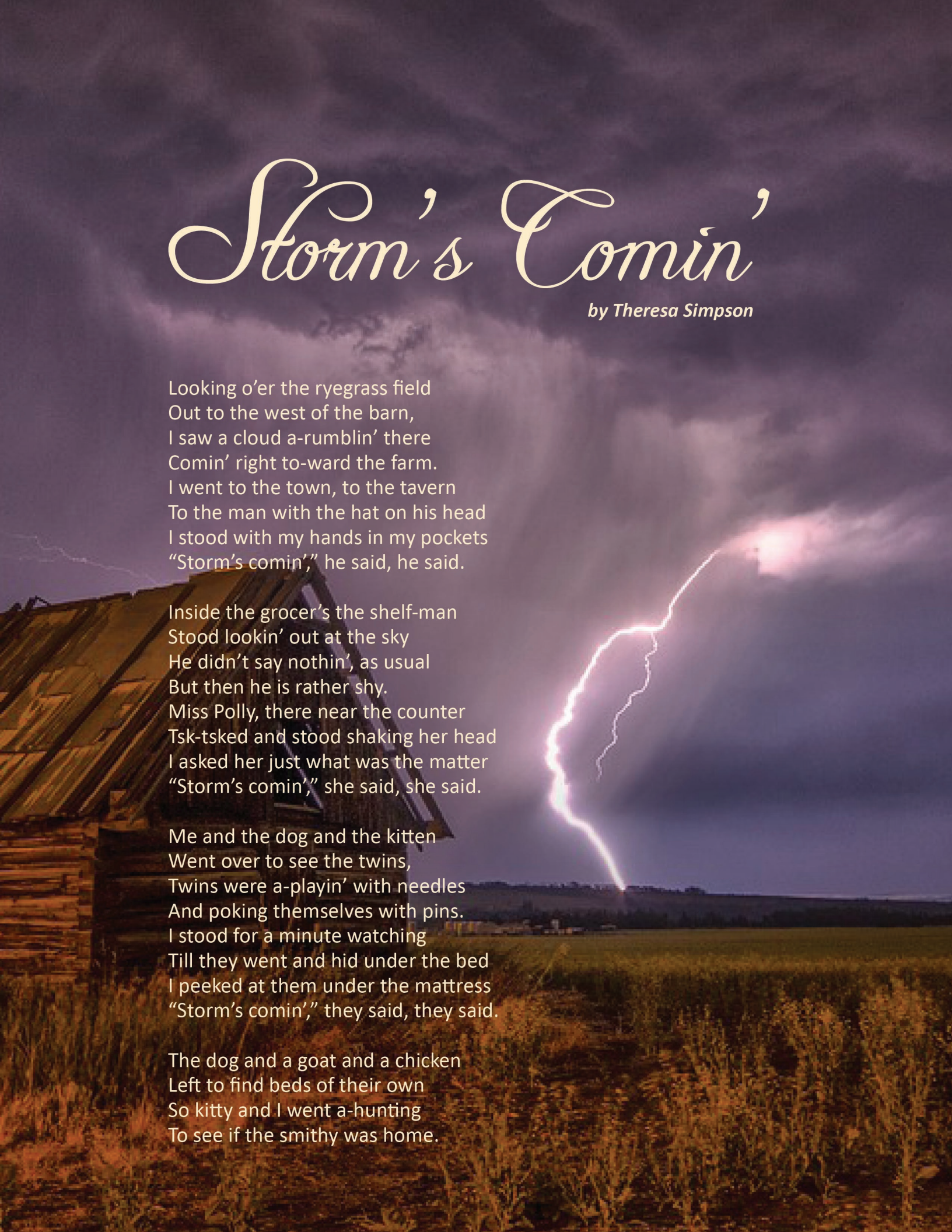
by Theresa Simpson

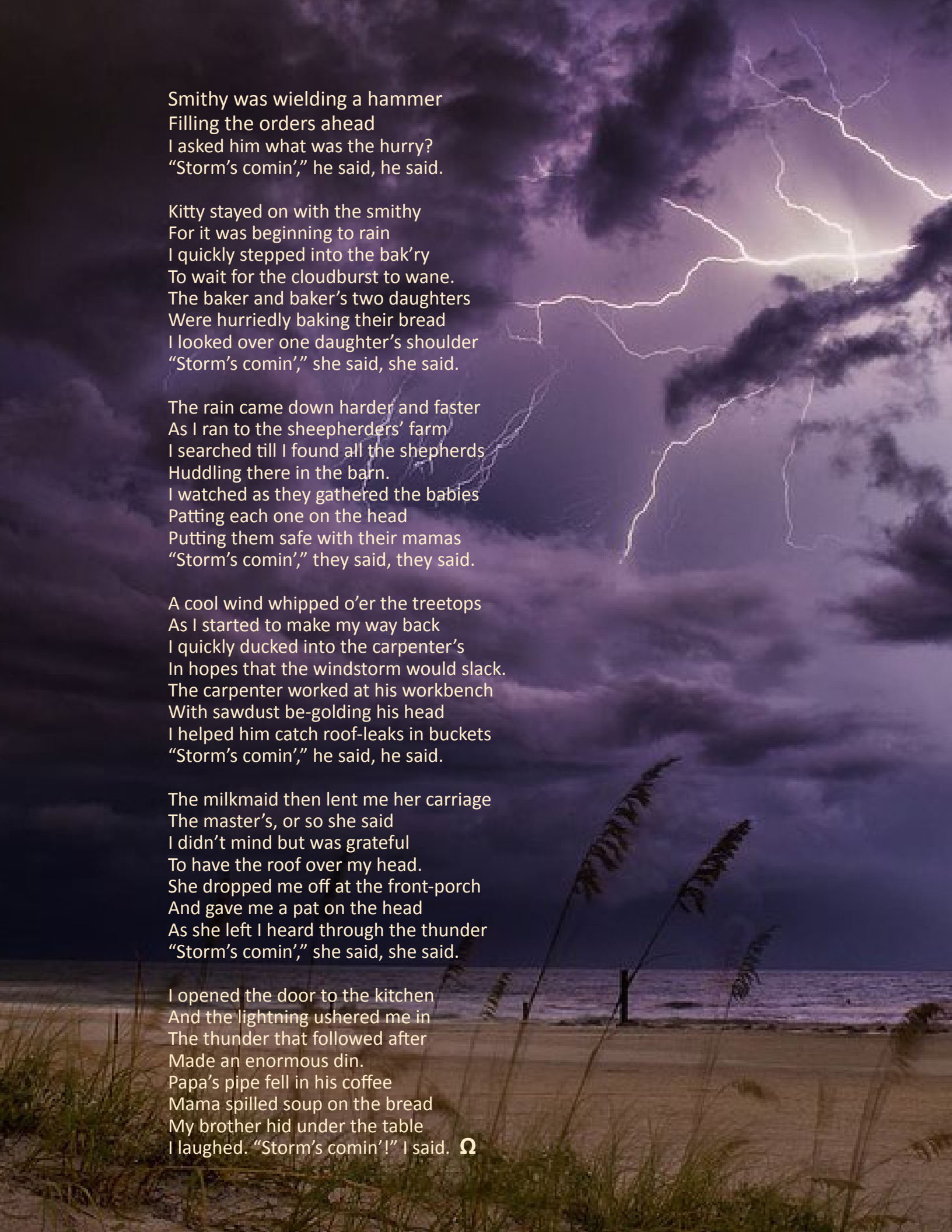
Looking o'er the ryegrass field
Out to the west of the barn,
I saw a cloud a-rumblin' there
Comin' right to-ward the farm.
I went to the town, to the tavern
To the man with the hat on his head
I stood with my hands in my pockets
"Storm's comin'," he said, he said.

Inside the grocer's the shelf-man
Stood lookin' out at the sky
He didn't say nothin', as usual
But then he is rather shy.
Miss Polly, there near the counter
Tsk-tsked and stood shaking her head
I asked her just what was the matter
"Storm's comin'," she said, she said.

Me and the dog and the kitten
Went over to see the twins,
Twins were a-playin' with needles
And poking themselves with pins.
I stood for a minute watching
Till they went and hid under the bed
I peeked at them under the mattress
"Storm's comin'," they said, they said.

The dog and a goat and a chicken
Left to find beds of their own
So kitty and I went a-hunting
To see if the smithy was home.





Smithy was wielding a hammer
Filling the orders ahead
I asked him what was the hurry?
"Storm's comin'," he said, he said.

Kitty stayed on with the smithy
For it was beginning to rain
I quickly stepped into the bak'ry
To wait for the cloudburst to wane.
The baker and baker's two daughters
Were hurriedly baking their bread
I looked over one daughter's shoulder
"Storm's comin'," she said, she said.

The rain came down harder and faster
As I ran to the shepherders' farm
I searched till I found all the shepherds
Huddling there in the barn.
I watched as they gathered the babies
Patting each one on the head
Putting them safe with their mamas
"Storm's comin'," they said, they said.

A cool wind whipped o'er the treetops
As I started to make my way back
I quickly ducked into the carpenter's
In hopes that the windstorm would slack.
The carpenter worked at his workbench
With sawdust be-golding his head
I helped him catch roof-leaks in buckets
"Storm's comin'," he said, he said.

The milkmaid then lent me her carriage
The master's, or so she said
I didn't mind but was grateful
To have the roof over my head.
She dropped me off at the front-porch
And gave me a pat on the head
As she left I heard through the thunder
"Storm's comin'," she said, she said.

I opened the door to the kitchen
And the lightning ushered me in
The thunder that followed after
Made an enormous din.
Papa's pipe fell in his coffee
Mama spilled soup on the bread
My brother hid under the table
I laughed. "Storm's comin'!" I said. Ω

Cana is Forever: This is a continuation of the article by the same name in Issue 9. In this issue we will be looking at excerpts from Chapter 3 (it's a long chapter!) of the classic marriage instruction manual by the Reverend Charles Hugo Doyle.

CHAPTER THREE
Remote Preparation

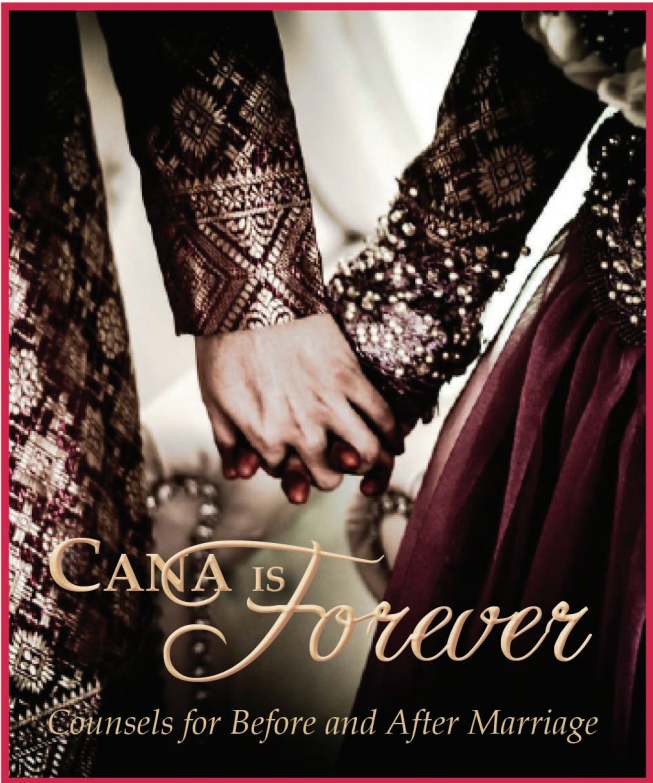
“Success that results from mere chance is extremely rare and this is doubly true in the matter of matrimony. There are those who, when they see a happily wedded couple whose marriage has made them eloquent in love, believe it to be solely the result of a lucky meeting, a decent courtship, and an adequate period of engagement.

“Believe me, these are but a few of the many ingredients that go into the making for happiness and success in marriage. But marriage is not nearly as much of a gamble as some would have you believe. It does not belong in the lottery class. It is definitely an open-and-shut proposition. How marriage turns out is the exact working out of cause and effect. What you bring to marriage and what your mate brings to marriage will determine its success or failure. Therein lies the importance of remote preparation.

“When a marriage collapses, the blame

Book Review

most frequently may be traced to a faulty foundation--a faulty remote or long distance preparation. Being the right kind of person is as important as finding the right person to marry. But being the right kind of person depends not only upon what you have made of yourself or upon whether the influence exerted by other persons and circumstances has been good or bad but also upon that with which you began life. When Victor Hugo said, “To reform a man, you must begin with his grandmother,” he enunciated a principle that opens up fields for speculation.



“Naturally, whatever is said here concerning heredity, environment, social and moral development, applies equally to the one you have already wed or whom you will eventually marry. Consideration of these matters when judging yourself or another may clear up some of life’s complexities.

“Your life began with a single cell. That cell divided in two, the two cells divided and became four, the four cells divided and became eight, the eight became sixteen until as a single individual you represent a total of some thirty thousand million or more cells.

The single cell in the fertilized ovum or egg from which you started increased in weight more than seven million times in nine months. More marvelous still is the fact that the single original cell from which you began--a cell no bigger than the head of a pin -- contained forty-eight chromosomes each with its genes derived partly from your mother and partly from your father--passed on to them through the generations--and determining your features, traits, and even the color of your eyes. With all this in mind, one is confronted with the intricate and staggering force of heredity. Out

of the dim past every child brings a two-fold deposit: an ancestral and a racial inheritance. Scientists claim that the ancestral inheritance is determined by the individual maternal and paternal cells which unite to form one from which the new life begins.

“Mendel explained in his theory of heredity that ‘the offspring is not intermediate in type between its parents but the type of one or the other parent is predominant.’ It is the idea of continuity, the steady flow from the past into the future, that every married person or anyone contemplating marriage must strive to understand, if he or she is to grasp the significance of the vastness of the problem of differentiation between one man and another and one woman and another and cooperate with it intelligently. Heritable traits are admitted in animals. A brood mare which has developed a mean streak or trickiness will be promptly removed from the breeding stables by a wise horseman because he knows that such traits will show up in the colts. In human beings heritable traits are frequently totally discounted. Most authorities agree that a normal healthy baby inherits nothing but:

1. a fear of noise and a fear of falling,
2. a capacity to learn,
3. physical characteristics, and
4. a certain glandular mechanism, and they drop the matter right there.

“Too few of the authorities, I fear, grasp the far-reaching effects that good or bad glandular mechanisms play in determining what sort of a person we are or become or their effect on our relations with others with whom we live.

“An over-active thyroid gland in a pregnant mother may be transmitted to her child, and such a transmission will certainly produce nervousness and irritability. Who can determine the extent of the effect that such nervousness and irritableness will have upon that mother-child relationship and upon other relationships?

“What has been said of the thyroid gland might be said of the other glands. Preponderance of activity or underactivity of even one gland will upset the balance of the whole system.

“There is nearly perfect agreement among geneticists that,

1. close relatives should not marry since such individuals draw their genes from the same common ancestral sources and there is grave risk that defective genes may simply be duplicated and
2. that persons not related but whose family records show similar defects ought not consider marriage together, since they would bring to their union the same trends toward hereditary evils.

“How well your ancestors and mine observed those principles has determined what sort of persons we are today. Not many people stop to realize the profound influence of ancestry on their present status. The person who has such soft bones as to be crippled or partially incapacitated, the young man or woman



whose whole life has been influenced and inhibited due to unsightly, decaying teeth, most likely can trace these defects to a physically incapable or downright careless mother who paid no attention to her diet during pregnancy, and so her blood was non-productive of the calcium and silicon necessary for good bone and dental structure. The fault might not even be the mother's, but the grandmother's. The ultimate effect of these bad teeth might be to alter one's whole personality, close certain professions to that person, and generally affect his relations with others. Indeed, heredity plays a most important part in one's life. Remember this when you come to choose a mate. The prudent choice should be made in the light of your own heritable physical make-up and that of your mate.

"Present-day authorities on genetics have the annoying habit of blandly and unequivocally stating with all the finality imaginable that every baby starts at zero and comes into the world with no heritable traits. They claim that environment alone is to blame for what a child turns out to be. Then they qualify this statement. For instance, they hold that a child is born into this world with a hereditary fear of noise and a fear of falling. If two traits are hereditary, why not twenty-two?

"Much has yet to be explained by the scientists before we have a complete picture of the matter of physical heritable traits. Can it be that our physical side is so plastic that an unborn baby can be affected by what enters its mother's mind through her senses? We have all heard of disfiguring blemishes and birthmarks that were said to have resulted to the unborn baby by its mother having seen a frightening object. Medical authorities today reject this as utterly untenable. However, before dismissing such things as physical impossibilities, it would be well to read the thirtieth chapter of Genesis, beginning at the thirty-second verse. The story found therein tells how Jacob, after making an agreement with Laban to accept 'all the sheep of divers colours and speckled: and all that is brown and spotted, and of divers colours, as well among the sheep, as among the goats, shall be my wages,' proceeded to increase the number of spotted and speckled animals by this most ingenious method. 'And Jacob took green rods of poplar and of almond, and of plane trees, and pilled them in part: so when the bark was taken off, in the parts that were pilled, there appeared whiteness: but the parts that were whole remained green. And by this means the colour was divers. And he put them in the troughs, where the water was poured out: that when the flocks should come to drink,



they might have the rods before their eyes, and in the sight of them might conceive. "And it came to pass . . . the sheep beheld the rods and brought forth spotted, and divers colours, and speckled.' The same process worked for the goats too, and the Sacred Writer adds that 'the man was enriched exceedingly.'

"Unanswerable as the problem is of whether or not what enters a mother's mind through her senses can affect an unborn child and alter its physical development, a greater problem is presented if we ask whether or not the very thoughts and desires of parents can affect the unborn.

"Yet Dr. H. S. Pomeroy makes this curious observation: 'For twenty years I have made a study of first-born children, and I am satisfied that it is one of the laws of heredity that they should resemble the father. The reason for this appears to be that in a happy marriage the husband is, during the first year, an object of peculiar interest and admiration to the wife: she thinks of him rather than herself and her



child is patterned after the model she has before her. The second child, under favorable circumstances, usually resembles the mother, for the reason that, having already one child like the father, both parents unite in the desire that the second child be like the mother. When the first child resembles the mother markedly, it is occasionally difficult to account for it, but usually it will be found that the wife is innately selfish, intraverted, or was led to think of herself rather than her husband.'

"Dr. Pomeroy, by the way, goes all out for the passing on of hereditary traits from parents to child. 'It is,' he writes, 'an established fact that the children of drunken parents will furnish a much greater percentage of inebriates than will the children of temperate ones. It is known that 'love children' are particularly difficult to bring up in paths of virtue.'

"The above has not been included in this essay to supply you with a ready answer to someone's dubious query of 'How do you get that way?' but simply to point out the fact that although one is not born with a ready-made personality, many potentialities of one's character and personality may possibly have been established before birth. You were born with a certain kind of body--thin or fat, strong or weak, active or sluggish, insensitive or responsive, and those things affected your output of energy, push, indefatigability, and these formed the physical foundation to your personality. The kind of body you have today is in no small way the result of good or bad heredity.

"The growth of the human child is divided into three main periods: infancy, childhood, and adolescence. From birth to the end of the first nine months represents early infancy; and from nine months to two years later infancy. From two years to six years we have early childhood, while from six to thirteen, later childhood. From about thirteen years to sixteen is termed early adolescence, and from sixteen years to maturity is called later adolescence.

“From the day an infant is born it requires parents to love, nourish, and teach it, and good religious and social environment to give it a chance, for human behavior is made and not born. Human beings are unbelievably complex things, constantly played upon by numerous forces. So much stress is laid on personality today that one is said to succeed with it and to be a failure without it. Certainly, no one is born with a definite personality. In fact, you had so little individual personality at your birth that had you been accidentally mixed up with other newly born infants neither your own father nor mother could have pointed you out. Today your mother or father could pick you out of ten millions of people.

“What makes you you? Evelyn Duvall and Reuben Hill wrap the answer up very neatly in the following quote: ‘What makes you you depends upon years of responding to life’s situations. Your personality is made up of many things: the kind of body you started with, the type of home you were born into, the sort of people you had to associate with, the way you have been brought up and the things you have learned and, most important of all, how you felt and acted about them. Your personality is the sum total of the characteristic ways of feeling, responding, and behaving, which determine your place in society.’

“Let us examine some of the above-mentioned influences in detail.

The kind of body with which you started. Having already gone into this matter, it suffices here to say that your personality was affected by circumstances that even preceded your birth. The very way in which you were attached to the womb of your mother had something to do with your development. T. Wingate Todd asserts that ‘many low-grade mentalities are not instances of hereditary feeble-mindedness but examples of defect in brain development induced by mal-nurture during pre-natal and post-natal life.’

“The quality and quantity of food, the balanced or unbalanced diet of the mother,

partial starvation or overfeeding; in short, whether your life was one of comfort, of luxury or hardship, made for gross differentiation in your personality and profoundly influenced it.

The type of home into which you were born. Your body was your primary environment. Your home was your secondary environment, and it influenced your present personality in no small way. If you were born to a family which dwelt in the country, you absorbed different ideas about life than you would have had you been born to city folk. Having been born and brought up in a squalid tenement section of a large city would have differentiated your social influence from a person who was born to a multimillionaire’s residence on Park Avenue. In a word, you share the status of your family’s standing in your neighborhood and your community. Where you actually dwell is more significant than perhaps you think. Would you be surprised if I were to tell you that sixty-three per cent of people marry someone who lives within eight blocks of where they live? Thus, such a trifling thing as where you dwell will have its influence upon whom you marry, and where you live once you are married will have its influence upon your children.

“How your parents acted toward each other and toward you has had a great influence upon your personality development. If your parents made a success of their marriage, the chances are good for your making a success of yours. The basis for your marriage has been laid in your own home and the example you there absorbed will be the basis of your own happiness in that career. It is not pure accident that for generations, in certain families, there have been no divorces or unhappy marriages. The influence of family background, traditions, and ideals is powerful. According to leading sociologists, psychologists, clergymen, and others best fitted to know, it has been pointed out that there is a close relationship between childhood impressions of family life and the achievement of married happiness as an adult. The happier the recollections of the parents’ marriage, the better the chances of happiness in the child’s subsequent wedlock.



"In a revealing article by Barbara Benson in the February, 1947, issue of ***The Ladies' Home Journal***, entitled 'Would You Marry Your Husband Again?', a new nationwide survey shows that from persons whose marriage turned out better than they expected, fifty-seven per cent say their parents' marriages were very happy, too. In contrast, among the people whose marriage has been a disappointment, only one in three (thirty-six per cent) recalls his parents' marriage as a happy one.

"Note the evidence of the power of example! This indicates, too, that care should be taken to avoid marrying a person whose parents failed in marriage. The cards are stacked against you!

"Such a trifling thing as the memory of a mother, on the one hand, loving her home and enjoying her role as housekeeper, or the memory of a mother, on the other hand, who constantly protested and groaned about the slavery of housekeeping, may spell the difference between your liking or despising housekeeping and be the cause of your present urge to be a career woman.

"Your personality has been affected for

good or for evil by the differences in familial relationships. Psychologists now all agree that the feeling of being wanted, being loved, and having a place in your own world constituted a fundamental need in your life even from infancy.

"Perhaps I can best explain this with an example. Some years ago a father and mother came to me regarding what they termed their problem boy, Dore, an eighteen-year-old son, who had become defiant, sulky, uncompanionable. The boy had no interest in sports and just wanted to be left alone. As the parents told their story, the reason for their son's strange behavior became evident. When their son was born they wanted a girl, and they could not conceal their disappointment. From the very beginning they began to treat him as if he were a girl. They chose a name as nearly feminine as possible. The gentlest companions were picked for him and rough games were roundly discouraged.

"Naturally, at eighteen, Dore did not fit into sports, and in an endeavor to give himself something in the way of toughness, he developed the habit of vile language and of drinking. The defiance of parental direction and

authority was a natural result of this attempt to gain an appearance of manhood. Dore's parents were taken aback when I pointed out that they and they alone were responsible for what they termed their 'problem child.' He was simply an example of what happens when the feeling of not being wanted is present in a child's mind and heart.

The way you have been brought up. Every child is a very complex human being. Hence the problems of development are by no means simple. Every infant born into the world is a bundle of potentialities, and how the various potentialities will develop depends to a large extent upon environmental factors--in the child's case these are largely the personalities with whom he comes in contact. 'During infancy,' says Mary E. Spencer, Ph.D., 'and the pre-school years, the patterns of development are well outlined. The foundation of what the child will become has already been laid. This ground structure may evidence careful planning and well-defined outlines. Or it may have been built hit or miss, with supports too weak to carry a superstructure of any lasting value. Or the masonry may be very shoddy, giving evidences of poor workmanship, as we review the foundation work on which the later personality and character building are to rest.'

"Some authorities maintain that a tiny infant is influenced by angry and bitter talk indulged in by its parents in its presence. A baby in its mother's arms is said to acquire a lasting fear of lightning, simply by feeling the trembling of the mother as she clasps the little one to her breast. Baseless fears resulting from feelings of suffocation, or pains and clutching sensations suffered in adult life, have been traced back to times in early childhood when the senseless punishment of being locked in a closet was administered by an irate parent.

"Do you understand now what I mean when I say that external forces contrive to make each of us what we are? Those good or bad forces will make us good or bad risks in marriage years hence.

"The delaying of the development of self-reliance likewise can be destructive of essential character formation. While it is true that the human child has the longest term of infancy of any living creature, nevertheless it must gradually be taught to acquire independence if it is to develop normally. Much damage is done to the child in its early formative years by the faith parents have in their protective powers over their offspring and the tendency from force of habit to think of them as much more immature than they are. This robs the child of the opportunity to take care of itself and of the enjoyment of assuming responsibilities.

"Catherine Cox Miles, Yale psychologist, states: 'There is nothing more important we can do for children than give them all the responsibility their shoulders can bear. As a result, in manhood and womanhood, whether they are building a building, running a farm or business, becoming president of a club, leading a community drive, editing a magazine, inventing an engine, writing a book, or managing their marriage, home, and children, they will be able to handle the responsibilities of these jobs from the sheer momentum of habit.'

The things you learned, how you felt about them and reacted to them. Educational experiences are among the strongest environmental influences affecting one's life. What you are or will be depends in no small way on how you were trained and what you were taught. Samuel Johnson once wrote: 'Every man is a worse man in proportion as he is unfit for the married state,' and no person is fit to marry who lacks a good sound intellectual, social, moral, and religious training.

"Pope Pius XI, in his famous Encyclical letter, ***On Christian Marriage***, stresses the importance of a long-range moral preparation for matrimony in the following words: 'For it cannot be denied that the basis of a happy wedlock, and the ruin of an unhappy one, is prepared and set in the souls of boys and girls during the period of childhood and adolescence. There is danger that those who before marriage sought in all

things what is theirs, will be in the married state what they were before, that they will reap what they have sown; indeed, within the homes there will be sadness, lamentation, mutual contempt, strifes, estrangements, weariness of common life, and worst of all, such parties will find themselves left alone with their own unconquered passions.'

"From the Pontiff's words it is obvious that one who has acquired and practiced the Seven Great Virtues of Faith, Hope, Charity, Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude, and Justice, and the Ten Little Natural Moral Virtues of Tact, Order, Courtesy, Punctuality, Sincerity, Unbiased Judgment, the Good Use of Time, Cheerfulness, Loyalty, and Caution in Speech, will certainly make a success of the matrimonial career.

"On the other hand, what marriage could be happy where one or both of the mates bring to their union souls steeped in habits resulting from frequent commissions of the Seven Deadly or Capital Sins--namely, Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, and Sloth?

"The scale of marital happiness tips toward that in which one's soul inclines. Need we stress the well-known fact that a person will be after marriage what he was before it? For instance, a young man who was inordinately proud as a child and teen-ager will most certainly be an arrogant and domineering husband, for pride is not founded on the sense of happiness but on the sense of power.

"What is true of sinful pride is true of all the other Capital Sins. What chance for happiness has a girl who marries a drunkard or one whose temper is uncontrollable?

"A survey made several years ago of the real causes of unhappiness, separations, and civil divorces is most revealing. I say real causes, because in most cases the excuses given in the courts are not the real causes at all but the required legal grounds for civil suits.

"Here follows the list of the true causes of unhappiness or failure in marriage:

On the part of the wife:

- Extravagance
- Dirty--untidy home
- Unattractive person
- Accepting attention of other men or outright infidelity
- Resentment of father's discipline of children
- Too much time spent with mother
- Accepting advice of neighbors
- Nagging or disparaging the husband
- Indifference to the husband
- Not being tactful or feminine
- Drunkenness

On the part of the husband:

- Stinginess
- Interference in household management
- Gloominess
- Lack of consideration
- Lack of love-making and kindness
- Living with relations
- Drunkenness
- Vulgarity or slovenly habits
- Infidelity
- Laziness

"It would be interesting and worth while to write in alongside each of these items the deadly sins that caused it or the different virtues it violates. For instance, laziness is the result of the sin of sloth; and drunkenness the sin of gluttony and the lack of the virtue of temperance.

"There is no gainsaying the fact that there is a vast difference between what you could have learned and what you did learn, and a vast difference between how you were trained and how you could have been trained--between what you are today and what you could or can be.

"While it is true that you are the product of your

environment, nevertheless if your parents were remiss, you don't have to remain a sensitive, anti-social, immoral, frightened, irreligious, or nervous person. As the Chinese say, 'You can't stop the birds from flying overhead but you can prevent them from building their nests in your hair.' You can force yourself to change. You can learn new things and form new and better habits. There is no limit to what determination, love, and the grace of God can do. The kind of marriage you make depends on the kind of person you are and the kind of person your mate is. The success or failure of your marriage will depend in a large measure on what each one of you brings to that union. What each of you brings to marriage likewise depends on the kind of remote preparation each has made for wedlock.

"When Our Lord went to Cana for the marriage feast, it is assumed that He arrived in time for the great procession which formed such a colorful and important part of the ceremony. According to custom, the marriage procession always began late on Tuesday night and was made up of a troop of singers, their voices mingling with the notes of the flute and the clash of tambourines, with, last of all, the bridegroom, gloriously clad, his forehead wreathed with a golden turban entwined with myrtle and roses. About him marched his ten friends called 'sons of the groom,' holding palm branches in their hands while the kinsmen acting as his escort bore lighted torches.

"Arriving at the home of the bride, the bridegroom and his companions entered within and, taking her by the hand, escorted her to the threshold, there to receive the tablet of stone on which was inscribed the dowry. This done, the whole party left for the home of the bridegroom. At Cana, as in every ancient Jewish marriage, the receiving of the tablets of stone on which were inscribed the dowry formed an important part of the wedding.

"The dowry still forms an important part of every wedding--for Cana is forever. Today both the bride and groom bring a dowry to their marriage--a dowry made up of two

individual personalities, each with its own particular history and background. Each dowry is made up of the sum total of good or bad environmental influences, good or bad habits, good or bad ideals, good or bad fundamental moral principles, good or bad religious background, or, in a word, the good or bad remote preparation for marriage." Ω

THIS SERIES WILL BE CONTINUED IN ISSUE 11 WITH KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER 4 OF "CANA IS FOREVER."





SYMPTOM:

It's the young woman who can cook beautifully - but never thinks to make a meal for the priests now and then. It's the young man who is quite capable of running a lawnmower - but who never considers that the yard at the church needs a trim. It's the child who *could* get good grades or win prizes in school but won't - because it would take hard work or some extra effort - even though such prizes are well within reach.

DIAGNOSIS:

- Pusillanimity -

Pusillanimity is combination of laziness and cowardice: not doing the good we could and should do. It is a pet vice of our modern age, especially among young people, and it keeps them from greatness. It leaves strong, bright, capable, talented adults shrinking behind their parents' shadows, content to let them do the hard work of living.

TREATMENT OPTIONS:

1 Be a grown-up. Don't wait for your parents to sign the family up for some task at church, whether it's cleaning, cooking, lawn-mowing, or volunteering at some event. Put your own name and contact info down. Especially if you have your own vehicle and your own job, it's time to contribute and start pulling your own weight in the world. Manage your own taxes, even if you hire someone to file them for you. Do your own car and apartment shopping. Plan your own vacations. Go to events for singles *on your own initiative*. Look for a spouse rather than sit at home waiting for a handsome UPS man to show up on your doorstep.

2 Take on challenges. Sure, maybe you've never planned, purchased, and prepared everything for a meal all by yourself, but if you have at least some cooking experience, it's really not that difficult. Pick what you're going to make, figure out what you will need, and go to the store. If you end up with a little extra, don't sweat it. Whoever is receiving the meal - whether it's priests, a mother with a new baby, or the organizers of a parish potluck - will certainly appreciate it. Plus, just think what good practice it will be for when you get married someday!

3 Be willing to learn. Sure, maybe you've never done much sewing beyond a counted-cross-stitch, but you know what? If you volunteer to try something more complex, either mending or making needed items from scratch, there is probably someone else who can coach you through the tricky parts. Or you may discover an analytical, problem-solving corner of your brain that actually works pretty well on its own! Ω



Personality

by Fr. Leo J. Kinsella

A GIRL CAN DEVELOP personality chiefly by learning to do things. No matter how beautiful she is, the girl who does nothing but sit on a sofa and vegetate is not going to be a bargain for any husband. After the first flush of infatuation wears off, she will be very fortunate if she does not bore him stiff. On the other hand, the girl who learns to swim, to play tennis, to sing, to play the piano, to dance, to sew, to cook, and to read good literature, is going to become an interesting person. Her company will be sought after and enjoyed. Out of the long hours of practice at the piano or with the voice, for example, there evolves a stronger character. Patience, persistence, a realization of what it is to fail, to exult in momentary success, to suffer and, therefore, to be able to feel for others--all this and more will come to her because of her hours of work at the piano. So, when she is called upon by her friends to play for them, she is happy to be able to entertain them. The thought that she brings music into their lives and thus adds to their happiness brings her a quiet confidence enhancing her luster.

To take another example, suppose that she learns to play tennis. She is awkward and slow on her feet. There is the temptation to quit after the first ridiculous effort, to preserve her dignity, and to draw back within herself and thus avoid the embarrassment of ridicule from bystanders and the teasing of her friends. But she resists the temptation to remain a wall flower. She swallows her pride and through the little humiliations of clumsy failures grows in humility. She already is reaping her reward for effort. Because she has begun to grow in the virtue of humility, there open up before her all the various paths of virtue heretofore closed or even unknown to her. For instance, upon the foundations of humility now established

in her life, she has to take but one easy step to a sense of humor. She is now able to laugh at herself as well as at others.

Perhaps some may think that I am exaggerating to say that the great virtue of humility, an entree to all the virtues, and even a sense of humor can be developed, by attempting to learn the game of tennis. Not in the least. How did the saints or anyone ever develop the virtue of humility? By sitting at home twiddling their thumbs? By withdrawing into their shells, so that no one could laugh at their shortcomings and mistakes? No. They dared to fail, and in their mixture of failures and successes they drew a clearer picture of their real worth. They became humble and, therefore, very lovable in the eyes of God and man.

More will be said later about this incipient sense of humor accidentally, it may appear, found on the tennis court. It is so important a facet of personality, as a radiant jewel in the crown of the ideal wife, that a full chapter will be devoted to its consideration. A last word about humility. If a sense of humor is a shining jewel in the crown of the ideal wife, then



humility is the golden base of the crown and the support of all else it may contain. Many have the false idea that they are being humble by staying in the background and attempting nothing. The brash, bold and conceited girls are the ones out in the limelight doing things. More often than not it is just the opposite. The girl who dares to do things, especially in competition, is the humble girl. She may fall flat on her face. So what? She is not concerned with herself, not worried about what others may think. Because she is humble, she is not aware that anyone is thinking of her anyway. The girl who fears to venture is the conceited girl. She is afraid to provide laughter at her own expense. She flatters herself that everybody is watching her. Hardly anybody knows that she is alive. By learning to do things the girl is developing unconsciously, as likely as not, her personality and thus is equipping herself to be able to contribute to the enjoyment of others, her future husband, for instance. She is able to hold down her end of the social teeter.

A certain girl learned to play bridge. She never entered any bridge tournaments, but she could



hold her own with the better players. Most of her bridge was played at college. She hardly played at all for a few years. In fact, she could not remember playing once since she was married three months ago. Her husband invited his boss and wife over for dinner. He apprehensively told her that they were eager bridge fans. She was amused at her husband's concern for what he thought would not take place after the coffee was served. The husband's apprehension turned to bewilderment as his wife got out the cards and table. What could have turned out to be a rather futile evening amounted to almost a personal triumph as she engineered a little slam. She derived the most satisfaction from the quiet pleasure manifested in her husband over a newly discovered accomplishment of his wife. Three people enjoyed themselves of an evening simply because she knew how to play a card game. She was able to promote the pleasure of others. When a wife is able to do that, more satisfaction eventually comes to her.

Perhaps by this time a few objections have been forming, because this is being read critically even if with an open mind. Remember that a well rounded personality is only one of the points on which we are to insist as essential to the concept of the ideal wife. There can be no doubt, all things else being equal, that the girl with personality has a far better chance of succeeding as a happy and desirable wife.

Very few girls are ever going to reach the top in anything. There is so little room up there. Indeed, it is better that a girl become adept at a number of things rather than to strive for supremacy in just one thing. In this way she has a much better chance of developing a well rounded personality.

Happiness tends to spread itself. The best explanation for God's creation of the human race is the happiness of God. He needed nothing, wanted nothing, but He was so happy that He flowed over into the creation of man. He desired someone to share His happiness with Him. With us it certainly is true that joy bubbles over. A boy hears of a circus coming to town. A girl on the inside track with teacher

hears of an unexpected free day. Both can hardly contain themselves till they tell their friends, till they spread their happiness over the good news. A young man receives a raise in pay. He does not fall asleep on the way home from work that evening. He is anxious to rush into the house and break the good news to his wife and see in her eyes the joy which he has brought about.

Extroverts are happy people. Introverts are unhappy people. Mental institutions, the saddest places in the world, are full of introverts. The extroverts are out jumping around in the sun. These are general statements. I realize that all general statements are false, including the one I am just making. Yet there can be no doubt that introversion leads to loneliness and unhappiness. The girl who develops her personality sidesteps the pitfall of introversion. The girl with personality does things and with other people. She expresses herself in her various hobbies, avocations, and accomplishments. She has opened up and blown off, as we say. Wonderful tonic psychologically.

The introvert withdraws usually in self-pity inside herself like a clam. "Poor little me. The world does not like me, so I'll hide within myself." The world does not dislike her. It does not know that she exists. She flatters herself, if she thinks it does. (Notice that the introvert and the person who does nothing tend to develop just the opposite of the virtue of humility.) She never gave the world a chance to know her. How else except she do things could the world get to know and love her? The introvert is unhappy because she is all wrapped up in herself. She has only her poor, little, empty self, a very insufficient source of happiness. Because she is unhappy with herself, she fails to bring happiness to her husband. She does not like to mix with people, even her husband's friends and business associates. A wife of this type is no asset to her husband.

The extrovert is happy because she has forgotten about herself. She is interested in other things and persons. Other people



are interested in her. Remember that happy people spread their happiness. The happy wife brings happiness to her husband. He loves to be in her presence because he is happy there. The extrovert fascinates her husband for the simple reason that extroverts fascinate everybody. The introvert, lacking in personality, is a problem to her husband. The husband stupid enough to marry one will as a rule not have the intelligence, to say nothing of the patience, to be a child psychologist. That is what he has to be to deal with his wife. The introvert takes a few quick looks at the world, finds it very frightening, and pulls back into her shell. She might have a pretty shell, though, well fashioned by God and pleasing to the eye of man. Her future husband becomes infatuated with this beautiful shell. He thinks that he is in love with her. That could not be, because this blushing little creature is so far back in her shell that he could not possibly know her, and not knowing her, he could not possibly love her. Oh, yes, he is infatuated with her shell. But it takes some shell to keep a man infatuated over the years. As usual, the infatuation soon wears off: and then our Dilbert begins to lose interest. The wife never comes

out of her shell and does things. She never develops her personality. So, when Dilbert looks hopefully beyond her shell, he finds nary a thing there. There is no inner beauty within that body which I have been calling her shell. The introvert has little beauty of soul, little personality. How these girls expect to hold the interest of their husbands is not at all clear. Certainly not just by inhaling and exhaling which any chimpanzee or chipmunk can do. Soon she becomes a dead weight in the life of her disillusioned husband.

MEDIUMS OF PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

The average girl left to herself and her own resources would find it very difficult to develop her personality. Fortunately into her path are thrust several mediums for personality development. The scope of this chapter limits us to a discussion of only a few of these mediums. The first of these is her school. For many, school is just a hurdle to get over with as little pain as possible before life can begin. There is something to be said for this attitude. Essentially, school is preparation for the future. Most girls would prefer to get a hold on that "future" now. Moreover, school for too many loses its real purpose. It is not a place built just for the acquisition of a lot of factual information. It is also a place in which to learn how to live better with their neighbor and work out their destiny. A human being has only one destiny, to be united with God and share His happiness.

She has a free will. She must choose what path she will walk in life, whether it lead to the love of God and neighbor as pointed out and traveled by Christ or the path of selfishness. In other words, she must decide whether the love of God or her own self satisfaction is to be the predominant driving force in her life. Whichever she chooses, she does so because she thinks that her choice will bring her the most happiness.

For a good many years I taught in a high school. It was annoying to see so many girls

just hibernating through four years. Some did nothing but rush home from school and do all their homework that they might be leaders scholastically. It was a Herculean task to budge the first type of girl out of her lethargy. The second looked sort of sideways at me when I told her to study less and play a little more. Both are missing too much of the best school offers. School provides the opportunity to learn to do very many things and to have much fun doing them. Algebra and Geometry have their purpose: mental exercise and development. But school should be much more than just algebra and the other subjects. The so-called extra curricular activities are important, for they give girls opportunities to do things.

The glee club, the gym class, the school athletic teams, the Latin club, the dramatic club, and many other activities are splendid chances for improving personality. As I write, the picture comes to my mind of a fat little girl complaining that gym was stupid and that she was going to sit it out as often as possible. If her criticism was true, the school was much at fault, just as much remiss as if it had an incompetent French or history instructor. But I am afraid that the fat little girl was more interested in sitting. She evidenced about as much life as a sack of potatoes and in posture and appearance she easily could double as such. She needed the gym like nobody's business. Some of the girls poked fun at her because she was overweight. So, instead of having loads of fun playing volleyball, badminton and basketball, she sat in the locker room and continued her phenomenal growth. The gym would have done wonders for her figure.

Remember, a girl does not become interesting and attractive by sitting, only by doing many things for which school offers the opportunity.

As most of us grow older and become less active physically, one of our greatest sources of entertainment is intelligent conversation. We derive satisfaction from the discussion of current events, of problems affecting our daily lives, and of sundry subjects of mutual



interest. Too little stress is given today in educational circles to the art of conversation. I believe that there are a number of reasons for this lack of interest on the part of educators.

A group of high school girls at recess time usually presents the same picture. All are talking; none are listening. Promote talking? Teachers naturally lift an eyebrow if one suggests more conversation at their school. Yet ninety-nine per cent of all this talk is just chitchat such as "You eat? No, you?" Real conversation is an art. Like any other art it must be cultivated and practiced.

The voice is an important phase of personality. Often the voice alone gives the cue to personality and character of a girl. A petulant, or frivolous, or frigid, or nagging young lady frequently rings a bell of warning in her voice to interested young men who have ears to hear as well as to catch dirt. Likewise, a warm hearted and generous woman refined and cultured with a well developed personality can tell others of her accomplishments simply by speaking a few sentences. "The flute and the psaltery make a sweet melody, but a pleasant tongue is above them both." Ecclesiasticus 40, 21.

Perhaps by this time some find their thoughts wandering from the work at hand--namely, self appraisal and consideration of how to advance toward the goal of the ideal and desired wife. Maybe some are asking by now why they should strive to become this paragon of a girl. Too many young men are too stupid anyway to see and appreciate in a girl all the qualities of the ideal wife.

Isn't a girl lucky for that! A girl can thank God that these imbeciles are not attracted to her. One of these cigarette sucking simpletons might rush her off her feet, and then see with what she would be stuck the rest of her life. It does seem that neurotics attract each other for marriage. I suppose it is one more bit of evidence of the old proverb, "Birds of a feather flock together." So the girls who develop their personalities and acquire the other features of the ideal wife have a much better chance of attracting their counterpart, the ideal husband. Again, let that all-interesting ideal husband take care of himself for a while. Let us get back to our "netting."

Conversation is not a one way street. It connotes the ability to listen as well as to talk. Some people make a good audience. They stimulate conversation purely by the manner of their attention. They are alive, and thus they register. Because they are interested they are interesting. They bring out the best in others. A clever girl can do wonders by the way she listens with animation to her boy friend. The boy friend or the husband is only human. There will be times when he is going to want to tell "all about it." He is loquacious for a change. Then for heaven's sake, let the wife give him the stage. Or, perhaps, he is taciturn and yearns for quiet. The wise wife senses these various moods of her husband.

I remember a case in which the wife hauled her husband down to the Chancery. Her major complaint was that her husband would not talk things over with her, would not confide in her. "He just never talks with me." This poor woman talked "like a blue streak" for an hour and a half. A number of times I tried to break

in. At each failure I got a knowing look from the husband as much as if to say, "Know how you feel. For years I've been trying to get a word in edgewise."

While at school a girl should "make hay while the sun shines." It is then that she can acquire and develop ability at conversation. As she learns to swim, to play tennis, to figure skate, and to sing, she can talk with interest and intelligence about these things. If she knows nothing about music, a girl will have to be pretty clever to be able to "get away with" talking about music. On the other hand, as she develops her personality by learning to do various things, she should acquire facility in conversing about these things. If she reads good literature, she opens another tremendous potential for conversation. True, she must practice, and school affords that opportunity not only in the classroom, but even during moments of recreation.

Practice on your girl friends? Why not? They do on you! Friends have been defined as those between whom there need not be conversation. Husband and wife can spend a quiet evening at home with a minimum of conversation and be happy and content. They are aware of each other's presence, and that is enough. Yet intelligent conversation will



add immeasurably to their lives. A dumb Dora may have her moments; but, if she cannot formulate two consecutive and coherent sentences, let us all pray for strength for that husband of hers.

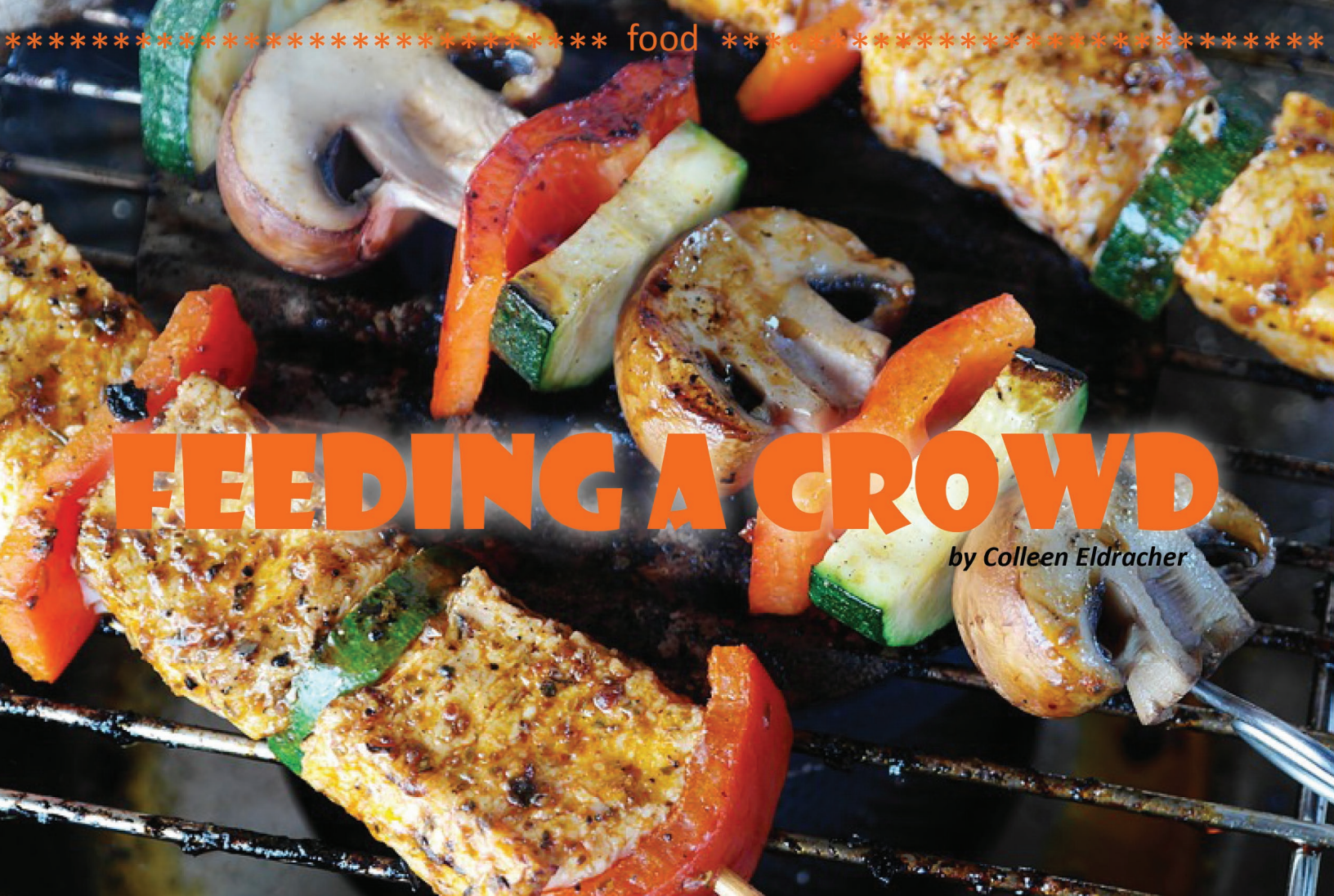
CHURCH GROUPS

A girl's parish church affords another opportunity for personality growth. Frequently I have heard girls say that they do not attend the young people's club of their church. They went to it a few times, but did not "get anything out of" the club. How often I have heard that criticism. I always wonder what they expected to "get out of" the sodality or young people's group. Was the young assistant to put on a three ring circus for their entertainment, while they sat like a cabbage in a movie house? Was a prodigy similar to Fr. Malachy's miracle to be brought off? Or did they even expect a more stupendous work: the pastor himself spinning through the hall like a whirling dervish spraying out twenty dollar gold coins? Hardly. Who has seen gold coins for ever so long?

These girls, disappointed in the parish group of young people, are always looking for what they can get out of things. It never enters their imagination that they might contribute to things. Obviously, girls with this attitude of sitting back and waiting for life to come to them will go away empty handed from any project. If they would enter the parish group with the idea of giving themselves to its success, in the long run they would be the ones to gain. Self-seekers always end up holding the bag--an empty one. Those who give of themselves carry off the prizes. One of these rewards is growth in personality. Girls who give their time, energy, and imagination to the parish group cannot fail to promote their personality, albeit unconsciously. Ω

Abridged from *The Wife Desired*, 1954.

Imprimatur: Samuel Stritch, Archbp. of Chicago
Nihil obstat: John J. Clifford, S.J.



I F YOU'RE NEWLY married or newly moved-out-of-your-parents'-house, the idea of entertaining on a large scale can be daunting at first, especially if you're not from a large family. But with summer here, opportunities and even necessities for having a gang of people descend upon you only seem to increase and multiply at a tremendous rate, necessitating the purchase and preparation of large amounts of food. Here's to your entertaining success!

PORTIONS

Hot dogs and hamburgers are fairly easy to estimate - get about 1.5 times as many as the number of people you're having over. If you know that most of them are hungry guys or growing teenagers, you may want to up it to 1.75, or even double. Ditto for buns, although generally you can stick with a few less. Ladies are becoming notorious

for having just the sausage and not the bun. Watching their figures, you know.

What about other meats? If you look at catering recommendations online, they recommend having about 1.5 pounds of food, total, per person (Bailey, 2018). I know, right - I don't exactly go shopping with a scale, either. This total would include the main dish and any sides - possibly excluding dessert - so it gives you at least an idea of how much to visualize on each plate. Some will eat more, some less, so it will work out.

My sister, who worked at Mission Point Resort on Mackinac Island for a summer, recommends only about 1/4 to 1/3 of a pound of your protein per person, especially if you have a lot of sides. Also take the digestibility of the sides into consideration - if it's something heavy, like potatoes, it will fill them up faster than salad would.

Speaking of salad, if you buy it pre-washed and vacuum-sealed in large bags, just keep in mind that it expands A LOT once you take it out and toss it into bowls. Two or three such bags for 50 people is plenty, so when in doubt, buy less.

For sides like pasta and potatoes, it depends on how many options you'll have, and the size of your serving dishes. It's good to have a variety of slightly smaller options in case people like one thing better than another. Not everyone wants to have macaroni salad as his main course.

For pizza, estimate 3 slices (of a traditional round pizza) per person. The guys tend to have 4 or 5, and many of the ladies only have 2, so it works out.

CONDIMENTS

The first time I threw a big event, I made the mistake of buying the big double-sized salad dressings and other condiments at Gordon Food Service. WAAAAAY overkill. Even a big party will only go through a "regular" sized ketchup, less of the same size mustard, and perhaps a little more of pickle relish. Ditto for salad dressing. Ranch is more popular than Italian, and the more choices you offer the less you need of each.

DESSERTS

Three gallons of ice cream is plenty for 50 people. One gallon is plenty for 10-15. For brownies and other bars, cakes, etc. that can be cut larger or smaller depending on how many guests you have, work out how many pieces you can comfortably get from one pan, and then multiply pans/batches as needed. For a large cake that is ordered, such as for weddings or graduations, ask the bakery how many people their various sizes will feed.

GETTING IT HOT

If you're living on your own or with a roommate, especially if you're removed at some distance from any friends with big families (and consequently large pots) getting all this food cooked in an efficient fashion then becomes a problem.

For liquid items like chili, there really is no substitute for a giant pot, or two smaller ones. Downside to two smaller ones is that you rapidly lose space on your stovetop to cook other things. A crockpot can be used to keep such dishes hot after they have been prepared.

If you don't have enough dishes of your own, places like Gordon Food Service have disposable pans that aren't terrifically expensive, along with racks to hold them and those little burner things that go underneath to keep things warm. (Warming or chafing trays is the proper term, in case you need to ask a clerk.)

Since you will probably have to rotate things through the oven, bake the things that can be served cold/cool first and keep them covered until it's time to serve them to retain some heat. Wrapping them in bath towels can also help. Work out your pan sizes so you can have as many smaller things in the oven as possible while your main dish is baking, but do keep in mind that having the oven full will slow the cook times for everything. Rotate the pans around and turn them from time to time to make sure everything is cooking evenly.

TABLE SERVICE

For plates, it's always good to have a few extra; likewise for cups and napkins. Forks and spoons are much more in demand than knives; someday a genius will figure this out and scale the multi-packs accordingly. Until then we must resign ourselves to having millions of plastic knives left over. Washable tablecloths are one of the world's greatest inventions.

Don't forget to have fun, and good luck! Ω

Bailey, V. (2018, November 21). *How to Calculate Food Amounts for Catering*. Retrieved from BizFluent: <https://bizfluent.com/how-5665635-calculate-food-amounts-catering.html>

Eldracher, Christina. (2019, July). (C. Eldracher, Interviewer)



***** feature *****

THE Stroke OF Midnight

by Colleen Eldracher

AS A KID, I never questioned “why” the story of *Cinderella* appeals so powerfully to so many people, including adults. It just did: poor girl wants to go to a fancy dress-up ball (who wouldn’t? I loved playing dress-up!), her fairy godmother appears to give her wonderful gifts (ooh goody, and it’s not even Christmas!), a pumpkin gets changed into a coach that still looks vaguely reminiscent of its original form, and off she goes. It’s love at first sight with the prince (whose name is apparently unimportant), they dance the night away, and then oops! Clock strikes midnight, and off she goes. Depending on the

version, either courtiers go to try the slipper on every girl in the kingdom, or the prince does it himself. (My personal favorite is when the prince goes to do it himself, in the 2015 Disney version. Such a bummer about the necklines, though...) The stepsisters, being ugly, necessarily have large feet (slightly troubling for a big-footed child, but not much), the slipper fits Cinderella’s teeny-weensy foot, and she lives happily ever after in a palace. Yay!

A week before I originally started this article, I was putting in some extra time with one of

my sixth-grade students, who is a struggling reader. I had a color-illustrated volume of fairy tales that I had picked up for a dollar at a library book sale rack, and decided that it was time to broaden this boy's education.

To my surprise, he got really excited about **Cinderella**. He didn't seem to have any prior exposure to it at all. When the fairy godmother appeared, he practically bounced up and down in his seat, begging me to tell him who she was. I laughed and said he had to keep reading to find out. He groaned dramatically in dismay. Down went his finger to the words, and he hurried to get to the part where her identity was revealed. He got a giggle out of the cat being turned into the coachman, perhaps because he has a cat at home himself. I could see his imagination working as his mind made the connection between the words on the page and the pictures. He, too, had no questions about why everything would end at midnight, but he clearly wanted the story

to end happily, even as he groused about how many pages were left. He finished the story by the end of the period and, the next day, gave a surprisingly detailed summary of what had happened for the other students during a speech for English class. A few days later, when he had some free time, he (for probably the first time in his life) asked if he could read a book. Soon he was poring over the story again, as children the world over have done for centuries.

ANYONE WHO SCOFFS at the idea that fairy tales form an important part of our cultural heritage has never taken the time to appreciate the timeless attraction of their straightforward moral content and ageless wisdom. As G. K. Chesterton so aptly states, "The old fairy tale makes the hero a normal human boy; it is his adventures that are startling; they startle him because he is normal." He then goes on to say: "Fairy tales do not give the child his first idea



"Then Eliza went down the slope from the shore, and hid herself behind the bushes.

The swans alighted quite close to her and flapped their great white wings.

As soon as the sun had disappeared under the water, the feathers of the swans fell off, and eleven beautiful princes, Eliza's brothers, stood near her. She uttered a loud cry, for, although they were very much changed, she knew them immediately."



of bogey. What fairy tales give the child is his first clear idea of the possible defeat of bogey. The baby has known the dragon intimately ever since he had an imagination. What the fairy tale provides for him is a St. George to kill the dragon.” And that is an encouraging thought! Of course, he then adds, tongue-in-cheek: “I have little doubt that when St. George had killed the dragon he was heartily afraid of the princess”!

The majority of the old tales show the clear triumph of good over evil. Virtues such as kindness (whether to people or to animals), honesty, purity in love, and generosity are rewarded, while vice is punished - often in gruesome ways! (The one that always comes to mind for me is how in older versions of *Cinderella*, the stepsisters cut off parts of their big feet to try to fit into the tiny slipper. Eww! Talk about being desperate to get a husband!)

While there is a certain elegant simplicity in the prose of fairy tales that brings much to mind while saying little, many times they are also adorned with real literary beauty and pathos. Who can read Hans Christian Andersen’s version of *The Wild Swans* without feeling a shiver of a thrill at the imagery he evokes of the massive white swans thundering into the sky, trumpeting their silvery cries as they fly off to their cursed banishment? Who, after reading that story, doesn’t get excited to hear the distant, ethereal migrating melody of Trumpeter Swans flying north for the summer, so high in the air they can hardly be seen even as they pass overhead in their hundreds?

Fairy tales have the power to take us out of ourselves. The phrase “lost in a good book” has become a cliché, but unlike most clichés it is actually true. (“Madder than a wet hen,” for example, isn’t. The hens really don’t seem

to care, and go about their business as usual. Hornets, now, though . . .)

Most children and even adults cannot articulate exactly where they go when they are wrapped up in a good book, but they would agree with me that it is a wonderful place. As our imaginations develop, we see the events and characters described in greater and clearer detail. Sometimes even going back to a well-loved story several years later reveals new insights that were never noticed before.



A TURNING POINT for my own journey into the land of imagination came with my introduction to J. R. R. Tolkien’s the *Lord of the Rings*. I was eleven and saw *The Fellowship of the Ring* at the home of some friends. Quite honestly, my life was never the same afterward.

The LOTR films, which I then waited impatiently to see as they came out on DVD over the successive years, and which I eventually purchased as extended editions, really set my imagination on fire in a lasting way. Here in one series was everything I had loved in the fairy tales and medieval stories of Ivanhoe and Robin Hood from my childhood: handsome knights, beautiful ladies, innocent victims to be protected, glorious cities, hideous monsters, and throughout a fierce dedication to preserve what was right and decent in the world in the face of overwhelming odds. I had never seen anything like them. I read just about everything Tolkien had written about Middle Earth - the *Silmarillion*, *Unfinished Tales*, the *Hobbit*. I even waded through the entire appendices at the back of the *Return of the King*, if that’s saying anything.

As a result of my interest in the films, I learned a great deal about armor and its parts, weaponry and its uses, historical costume, the importance



MIDDLE EARTH

QUALIFYING LIFESAVING MEDALIST

3019 T.A.

-
- PULLS GANDALF BACK FROM BEING SWEEPED AWAY BY SARUMAN'S AVALANCHE UP ON THE PASS OF CARADHRAS
 - HELPS SAVE FRODO FROM THE WATCHER IN THE WATER
 - DRAGS ARAGORN BACK FROM FALLING ROCKS AS THE WATCHER DESTROYS THE ENTRANCE TO MORIA
 - SAVES MERRY AND PIPPIN FROM BEING MAULED BY THE CAVE TROLL AT BALIN'S TOMB
 - SAVES BOROMIR WHEN HE LOSES HIS BALANCE AND NEARLY FALLS INTO AN ABYSS AT A BROKEN STAIRWAY
 - DITTO FOR GIMLI, AT THE EXPENSE OF HIS BEARD'S DIGNITY
-

LEGOLAS, or rather Prince Legolas of Mirkwood, is a rather under-appreciated character in the LOTR films. Guys deride him for being too pretty and for never getting dirty, with nary a hair out of place, but when you pay close attention, it becomes obvious that in a way Legolas is really the Guardian Angel figure for the Fellowship. While in the books he frequently makes comments about the "children" he's traveling with, in the films this translates to becoming the de facto babysitter. He snatches everyone except Sam from a perilous situation at *least* once! As the films progress, it is also interesting to notice that what Sam is to Frodo, Legolas is to Aragorn, albeit in a much quieter way. Then, too, he strikes up an unlikely friendship with Gimli, his former nemesis, and their teasing exchanges and visual contrast provide some much-needed comic relief even when the going gets tough.

TRIVIA

LEGOLAS IS ONLY SHOWN TO BE GENUINELY AFRAID OF THREE THINGS IN THE ENTIRE MOVIE TRILOGY:

- A Balrog of Morgoth. Which, like, you'd have to be out of your mind NOT to be scared of. But then he did seem to have the advantage of knowing what it actually was.
- 10,000 Uruk Hai all at once (but only 40 or 50, even 100 of the ugly brutes? Nah . . .)
- Letting Aragorn get too far away to be rescued. Because all of the elves just take it for granted that he's too reckless for his own good.

HE'S ALSO DEFINITELY THE STRONG, SILENT, SELF-EFFACING, AND OCCASIONALLY SCARY TYPE:

- The only non-Fellowship, non-immortal character brave enough to actually touch him is Theoden. Once. And he looks a bit uncertain about his personal safety beforehand.
- The only thing Legolas ever says to Frodo is "And you have my bow."
- Legolas is the only Fellowship member (besides Merry & Pippin) who never has any direct interaction with the One Ring. Probably because he's old enough to know better!



“SINCE IT IS SO LIKELY THAT (CHILDREN) WILL MEET CRUEL ENEMIES, LET THEM AT LEAST HAVE HEARD OF BRAVE KNIGHTS AND HEROIC COURAGE. OTHERWISE YOU ARE MAKING THEIR DESTINY NOT BRIGHTER BUT DARKER.”

- C. S. LEWIS

of attention to detail in film and fiction, and what made up a grounded, likeable character - all things which have served me well in the study of various real-life historical periods and in writing my own stories over the years.

From fairy tales I have largely turned to historical nonfiction, but even there the powers of imagination gained from imagining knights and dragons and princesses has stood me in good stead. And when I do peruse

fiction, boy oh boy! They’ve made me a pretty demanding critic!

AS A MATTER OF FACT, the basic tropes of fairy tales form such an integral part of literature that even to this day modern authors use their structures to tell much more complex tales of their own.

“The function of the imagination is not to make

strange things settled, so much as to make settled things strange.” (Chesterton, again.)

Take, for example, the *Beauty and the Beast* trope. That can be used in a vast variety of ways - to set up an arranged marriage, to show the gradual softening of a jailer, to break a variety of curses and spells involving castles.

Or *Sleeping Beauty*. The modern medical drama can even be said to follow this pattern - patient falls gravely ill from a mysterious toxin and everyone must race against the clock to save him or her before it’s too late.

Others, like the prince or princess going in disguise among their subjects to find out what life is *really* like - and invariably falling in love with a commoner in the process - or the long-lost prince or princess who grows up having no idea who they are and then must return to save their kingdom, have been redone and redone nearly ad nauseam.

Then there are spoofs galore, such as Patricia C. Wrede’s four *Dealing with Dragons* books, and Christopher Healy’s *A Hero’s Guide to Saving Your Kingdom* series. Connoisseurs of classic fairy tales can chuckle and snicker through these as the very self-aware characters make endless comments and puns contrasting how things are ‘supposed’ to work seeing as they live within the framework of a fairy tale themselves. (I know *I* found myself laughing hysterically at several parts! Cough. Buy lots of the *Hero’s Guide* books so he can write a fourth and finish off the loose ends of the series.)

IF YOU’VE NEVER HAD much exposure to fairy tales yourself, due to sports or other interests in your own childhood, and are looking for some good ones to get your own children started on, here are some of my favorites, in no particular order:

- *Beauty and the Beast* (Robin McKinley wrote an adaptation called simply *Beauty*, which was interesting.)

- *Sleeping Beauty*
- *The Wild Swans*
- *The Enchanted Princess* (the one from Fratelli Fabbri Editori, Milan, has fabulous illustrations)
- *Cinderella* (my favorite version is actually *Ella Enchanted*, by Gail Carson Levine)
- *Puss in Boots* (Marchenfilms did a hilarious German-language version of this, where the cat literally turns into a dashing cavalier. You can still practically see his tail twitching. They have adaptations of several classic fairy tales that are quite good.)
- *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*
- *The Goose Girl*
- *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*
- *The Princess and the Pea*
- *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*
- *Rumplestiltskin*
- *The Frog Prince*
- *The Bearskin Prince*
- *Snow White and Rose Red*
- *Little Table Set Thyself*
- *The Jabberwocky* (while this isn’t as old as many of the others, it’s still a fun scary poem about fighting a monster)

This list doesn’t even begin to cover the many fairy tales proper to various countries such as China, Japan, India, Russia, and the Scandinavian countries. So many to choose from!

Happy reading! Ω





GROWING UP IN A MISSION setting was a character-building experience, long on work and setup and short on socialization. The people that come for the Mass had the Faith - *just* the Faith - and not one other single point of common interest. Everyone came from completely different walks of life, from those living in the backwoods trying to remove themselves and their children from the influence of the world to successful

businesspeople who had more wealth than I could ever have dreamed of.

Attending Mass was always interesting. We went to church in whatever accommodations the coordinator could procure. The Mass was held in the basement of a bank, in the Boy's Club with basketballs pounding the floor during the Holy Sacrifice, a community social hall connected to an ambulance service with sirens blaring, and even in the garage on our property. The people came from all over, traveling many miles and for some many hours to attend Mass. They were as varied as the places they called home. Priests were flown in on whatever day of the week they could squeeze in a Mass for our mission. Set up was extensive, with everything from a collapsing confessional to carpet squares on which to kneel. The thought of a church and a permanent home for the Blessed Sacrament was unknown in my young life.



TRADITIONAL CATHOLICS HAVE been scattered far and wide since Vatican II (in spite of persistent myths among younger generations about the availability of the Latin Mass before 2007). Many, like me, had few if any Catholic friends at all. We had our family members and that was it.



Therefore, when I learned that there was a thing called a YAG (Young Adult Get-Together) being held a few states over in Cincinnati, Ohio, and that it was specifically for single traditional Catholics, my brother and I and a friend headed there for the weekend to see what it was all about. This was the early 90s and it was the start of the singles get-togethers for me.

We arrived and were logged in with about 80 other singles. I heard funny terms floating around from the locals. “Shark Fest” was apparently used to describe the event for the more desperate individuals that were there circling and eyeing potential matrimonial catches. I had to laugh and realized that the gathering had been taking place annually and even twice a year for some time by then and that many of these people knew each other, being from the same city. Catholic friends! Imagine my surprise.

The return trip from our first YAG was a frenzy of talk. My brother was remembering the girls he had met and the girls in the car were naming off every guy and where he was

from. There were a few persons who were remembered in common: the very talkative organizer (who later became a nun - she died of cancer relatively recently), and others who were individually remembered. We were so excited to have met real Catholics. Some even seemed normal! To attend Mass in a church had been the best yet; I had cried when hearing a choir for the first time.

ATTENDING THE YAG CHANGED MY LIFE

Returning home to work in the Baptist “Bible Belt” in Missouri lost its charm. I longed to make it back and even to move to the area where Catholics lived, went to the park, played volleyball, ice skated, and ate Skyline Chili. It had been really neat when we all had gone out to eat. The entire table of twelve had said grace before the meal together. That was an experience for me. Being from a large family we had never gone out to eat much and I had never really thought about making such a statement of Faith. It took a few times before I really felt comfortable saying grace in

public. Good friends can make you grow in many ways.

Gathering youth from these distance places to meet other Catholics their ages is a worthy cause. It is paramount to have true Catholic friends for encouragement and stability. Human beings are really herd animals at heart and your “herd” makes a real difference in your life and ideas! I’m not only referring to the man and woman combination that is most often thought of and hoped to be the outcome of the singles get-togethers. Bolstering each other in spiritual matters and growing and strengthening each other in the Faith are important outcomes of Catholic friendships. It is true that several found the right spouse at the YAGs and then married and filled parishes across the country with their offspring, but it is important not to narrow your sights when attending a singles get-together. Better to be ready for an unexpected outcome!

I met one girl who really stood out to me while on my first trip to the YAG. We had both turned in early the first night as the week of work and travel had left us fatigued. We talked and ended up hanging out some during the weekend event. Lexi had a place in Cincinnati and hosted me on short weekend stays a time or two. When I decided I wanted Catholic friends full time I packed up and moved there. Lexi was kind enough to let me stay with her while I got my bearings. We got along so well that when the lease on her condo expired, we

decided to rent a house and room together.

We stuck to each other’s company for five years, finding that we got along like sisters. We hosted many new arrivals in town, giving the girls a place to get their footing when they too wanted full-time Catholic friends. We hosted parties for the singles in the area and anyone visiting who wanted in on the fun. That rented house was a hub of Catholic friend activity. Lexi and I traveled and explored on the side, enjoying single life while waiting for God’s Will to be revealed for us.

It truly was wonderful to find a lifelong Catholic friend, a sister, at my first singles get-together. There were so many interesting people that I still refer to as friends from all over the country. They have enriched my life and made me laugh over the years. I am so thankful that someone took the time and the effort to make this experience available. Whatever your ideas of such events are, please keep an open mind and seriously consider going!

MY OWN HAPPY ENDING

Have you ever had things go so smoothly that you really think God must be showing His plan to you? I moved to Cincinnati when I was 24 when I decided I wanted to be closer to the Mass. The Catholic social life was a draw as well after living in the Midwest with many protestants and very, very few traditional



Catholics. My vocation had had me puzzled for several years, so waiting for divine direction, I settled for moving closer to the Mass and figured I would let God send me a message, or a man, to close the matter.

As I mentioned earlier, my friend Lexi was putting me up until I got my footing, and everything with work fell into place. New job, new life, social activities in abundance. Lexi and I had grand times hosting all the other Catholic girls who came through town, but we were always wondering in the back of our minds what we were supposed to be doing “for real.”

After about four years of this I decided I would move west a bit, closer to my family. I turned in my two-week notice and quit my job. My mind churned and I was positively sick the entire weekend. Monday saw me back in the boss’s office asking for my job back. I couldn’t leave my church family. Nothing about it felt right. It couldn’t be God’s will to move me out to Cincinnati and then forget about me. Plans being cancelled, it was a relief just to go to Mass and continue to wait.

The week after the date of my foiled move, there was a wedding reception for a girlfriend. The groom had an exceptionally large family. His Aunt Martha, who claimed she felt like she knew me for years at the bridal shower, took it upon on herself to introduce me to the first cousin of the groom. Mere introduction wasn’t enough. She threw us out on the dance floor a couple of times and kept a close eye out for developments.



Nothing developed that evening or the next six weeks. The shy cousin finally got tired of being prodded by the new wife and made the call to me (it must be said the new bride felt bad for the bachelor cousin after witnessing him peeling a potato and eating it like an apple, raw; she figured he needed a keeper). He had been raised Catholic but didn’t do too much about attending the Novus Ordo church. Our first date was unremarkable for the most part. He even stated at the door, “That wasn’t too bad, maybe we should try it again sometime.”

After a couple dates that didn’t add up to much, I started introducing him around to all the single gals from the YAG: more pretty, young, eligible, quality Catholic girls than you could ever imagine meeting in a lifetime were there **every weekend!** Mr. Shy still came around so I asked him to Stations of the Cross during Lent.

He must have been unconsciously waiting for something just like that. His interest was sparked and he started going to Mass. Our





Aunt Martha, who started it all . . .

backgrounds were very similar, being from large Catholic families. He was raised with the new mass but had had the old catechism while attending Catholic school. His family had trouble accepting a traditional Catholic. I think just about any religion would have been more acceptable to them. I explained that I was doing what the they had done when they

got married many years earlier, before the changes. Time eventually helped to heal this gap, and Paul and I were married.

The long and the short of it is, God had me wait for His time, not mine. Both my husband and I had been waiting for God to send the right person along. It was a long wait but we did find the perfect match. We married when I was 29 years old and he a few months younger at 28. We had a whirlwind family after a slow start. Two years with no children and then eight in ten years, no twins. Watch what you wish and pray for!

Don't spend your time wishing your life away. I had so many wonderful single years and made the greatest Catholic friends, many of whom have children who are good friends with my own children. The wait may not be easy. My roommate and I had many dateless Saturday nights, watching movies with the lights out so we looked like we weren't home. Just pray that you don't make a big mistake. Remember, life could be really long and hard with the wrong spouse, and any old spouse frequently proves worse than no spouse! It will all come together in God's good time, and patience *is* a virtue, after all. Ω



LOVE IT vs. HATE IT

"Nothing beats a good musical! Singing, dancing, and acting all in one? Melodrama, misty lighting, fancy costumes? Sign me up for box seats!"



[musicals]

YOU SAID: Musicals are so fun! I love the energy they bring!
- *Claire, IL*

Sorry, I usually only like musicals in foreign languages, thank you very much! Somehow not completely understanding what they're saying makes the transition from speech to singing easier; and many foreign companies have better choreography than American ones.
- *Colleen, OH*

Love them! They're cheerful and most of them are innocent and you can carry them around with you by singing the songs on repeat.
- *Sarah, ENG*

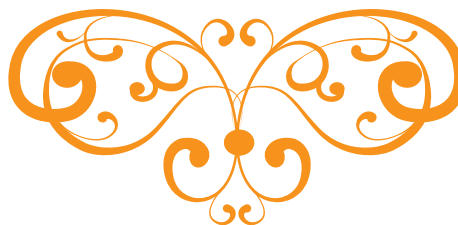
I generally dislike musicals...all too often cheesy and grating...but there have been a few that surprised me!
- *Theresa, OH*

Love musicals! I spend my everyday life singing so I wish musicals were the norm. People



"There are two things that I cannot resist: one is musicals and the other is a spaceship in trouble. But I am smart enough not to combine the two things."

Joss Whedon
brainyquote.com



"Ugh, musicals are soooo contrived and cheesy! Every time someone has anything important to say they have to burst into a song with corny lyrics!"

might think it's weird, but I burst into song randomly too.
- *Sarah, MI*

I love musicals. I just went to see one last night.
- *Johanna, IL*

Well....a lot like movies - find the good ones! Then they're a lot of fun. Catchy songs for days, lol!
- *Christina, MI*



Join the **Love It** vs. **Hate It** fun in the next issue:

Fake Nails

You know, the kind that are glued on over the top of your actual nails, and then painted, varnished, etc.?

altarandheartheeditors@gmail.com
Subject: FAKE NAILS

Emily's Etiquette Essentials



Dear Mrs. Emily,

I've been on a handful of dates now with a nice Catholic young man, but I really feel that we are not cut out for each other. We've been talking for a few months, I have a good handle on his personality and interests, and I can't see myself marrying him. He is much more interested in me than I am in him, though, and I don't want to lead him on unfairly or waste his time/money, so how do I let him down without dropping him on his head?

Sincerely,
Nervous in Nebraska

Dear Nervous,

I feel you - it's always a bummer having to let someone know that we're not interested, especially if it's through no fault of their own.

Perhaps the best way to go about explaining it to him is to focus on why **you** aren't good wife material for him rather than the other way around. Be sure to assure him that it's

nothing he said or did (as long as that truly is the case) and point out various aspects of your own personality that don't mesh well with his. Unless he is completely infatuated, he has probably started to pick up on some clues that you are less than enthused. Compliment him on the things he has done right, stress that you are grateful for the opportunity to have gotten to know him better, but make it clear that there is no future in it. Men are much more direct than women and prefer to know right out rather than be left hanging. He will most likely appreciate your honesty and the two of you will probably be able to have a frank discussion about it once you get past the initial embarrassment of bringing up the subject.

If you are able to part ways amicably, and you feel he wouldn't be offended, you can even offer to keep an eye out for girls who may be better matches for him - after all, you have a bit of an advantage now in that you have a better idea of the kind of wife who might suit him. Good luck and God bless!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Emily



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pray for us!*