

McEachen, Roderick A.
Matrimonial Catechism
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—BY—

RODERICK A. McEACHEN

Priest of Columbus Diocese

Preface by His Eminence CARD. GIBBONS

Published by Ecclesiastical Authority



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Nihil Obstat,

JOSEPH MULLEN, V. G.,

Censor Deputatus.

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PATRICK J. DONAHUE, D. D.,

Bishop of Wheeling.

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Deacidified

PREFACE

The family is the foundation of society. Marriage is the bond of family union. Hence the well-being of society depends primarily upon the purity and integrity of marriage. In these days, when scarcely any, save the children of Mother Church, consider matrimony more than a mere contract, it is imperative that the faithful be well instructed on the nature and duties of this great Sacrament. A false public opinion has condoned the ever-spreading evil of divorce; the childless home has become the fashion. If society is to endure the ancient sanctity of marriage, ever cherished and championed by Mother Church, must be restored to the modern world.

This little volume has a great mission; it goes forth to defend the holiness of the marriage state and the dignity of parenthood; to define the duties and mutual relations of man and wife; to warn our people against the abuses that too often surround marriage in modern society. It is concise enough for the busiest of men, erudite enough for the most scholarly and simple enough for the humblest of our people.

That it may teach many to love and respect the great Sacrament of Matrimony is our ardent wish.

J. Card. Gibbons

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.

CHAPTER I.

Q. What is Matrimony?

A. Matrimony is a Sacrament which unites man and woman in Christian marriage.

Q. Can Christians be married without receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony?

A. Christians cannot be married without receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Q. Are the marriage contract and the Sacrament of Matrimony the same?

A. The marriage contract and the Sacrament of Matrimony are the same for Christians.

Q. Can the bond of marriage be broken?

A. The bond of marriage cannot be broken by any power on earth except by death.

Q. What does St. Paul say about the bond of marriage?

A. St. Paul says: "A woman is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die she is at liberty; let her marry whom she will."—*I Cor.* 7:30.

Q. Has the Catholic Church ever granted a divorce?

A. The Catholic Church has never granted a divorce throughout nineteen hundred years.

Q. What is to be said of those who have been divorced in a civil court?

A. Those who have been divorced in a civil court are still husband and wife as they were before.

Q. Has the state any right to grant divorce?

A. The state has no right to grant divorce.

Q. What is to be said of divorced persons who "remarry"?

A. Divorced persons who "remarry"

are not married; they are living in a state of public sin.

Q. What does St. Luke say about marriage and divorce?

A. St. Luke says (16:18): "Everyone who putteth away his wife and marrieth another committeth adultery, and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

Q. Does the Catholic Church ever permit married people to separate?

A. The Catholic Church sometimes permits married people to separate when there are grave reasons, but they always remain husband and wife until death.

Q. Are Catholics who have been granted a separation ever allowed to marry again?

A. Catholics who have been granted a separation cannot, for any reason on earth, marry again, and they are obliged to be reconciled if possible.

Q. In what case can marriage be annulled?

A. Marriage can be annulled only in case it is invalid.

Q. What does St. Augustine say about the separation of husband and wife?

A. St. Augustine says: "That wedlock be not dissolved, and that neither if separated be united to another."

Q. What does Tertullian, second century, say of the marriage union?

A. Tertullian says: "How can we find words to describe the happiness of that marriage which the Church joins together; and the oblation confirms; and the blessing seals; the angels report; the Father ratifies."

CHAPTER II

THE JURISDICTION OF THE CHURCH OVER MARRIAGE.

Q. Before whom does the Church command Catholics to be married?

A. The Church commands Catholics to be married before their own parish priest.

Q. May Catholics ever be married

before any other than their own parish priest?

A. Catholics may always be married before their bishop or before any priest delegated by their pastor or their bishop.

Q. Are Catholics really married if they go to anybody else than the priest to get married?

A. Catholics are not really married if they go to anybody else than the priest to get married.

Q. What is necessary to make the contract of marriage valid?

A. To make the contract of marriage valid, both man and woman must be present, and express their consent, with free will, before the priest and two witnesses.

Q. What part does the priest take in marrying people?

A. The priest is the official witness constituted by the Church to decide whether the marriage is lawful, to see that the proper form of the Sacrament is used, to see that the parties are properly disposed, and to bless their union.

Q. Who then are the real ministers of matrimony?

A. The contracting parties themselves are the real ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony, since they themselves make the contract.

Q. What is the state of Catholics who go to a squire or preacher to get married?

A. Catholics who go to a squire or preacher to get married are not man and wife and they live in sin as long as they live together.

Q. What must Catholics do who have gone to another than the priest to get married?

A. Catholics who have gone to another to get married must go to the priest and arrange to be rightly married.

Q. Why has the Church alone power over Christian marriage?

A. The Church alone has power over Christian marriage because it is one of the seven Sacraments which Christ gave to the ministry of His Church.

Q. Has the State any right in regard to matrimony?

A. The State has the right to regulate the civil effects of matrimony, especially those that pertain to inheritance.

Q. Who has authority to marry the unbaptized?

A. The State has authority to marry the unbaptized.

Q. Has the Church jurisdiction over the marriage of the unbaptized?

A. The Church has no jurisdiction over the marriage of the unbaptized; they are not bound by her laws.

CHAPTER III.

MIXED MARRIAGE.

Q. What is a mixed marriage?

A. A mixed marriage is the union of a Catholic with one that is not a Catholic.

Q. Does the Church forbid mixed marriages?

A. The Church does forbid mixed marriages.

Q. Why does the Church forbid mixed marriages?

A. The Church forbids mixed marriages because they are opposed to the ideal of Christian marriage.

Q. What is the ideal of Christian marriage?

A. The ideal of Christian marriage is a life-long union of love and concord between husband and wife.

Q. Why cannot this union exist in mixed marriages?

A. This union cannot exist in mixed marriages because husband and wife are divided on religion, the most important concern of life.

Q. Does the Church ever permit mixed marriages?

A. The Church sometimes, for grave reasons, permits mixed marriages.

Q. Under what condition does the Church grant a dispensation for mixed marriages?

A. When there is a grave reason, the Church grants a dispensation for mixed

marriages, but only after both parties make the required promises for safe-guarding the Faith.

Q. What does the Church demand of the non-Catholic?

A. The Church demands that the non-Catholic allow the Catholic party the free and unhindered exercise of his religion.

Q. What does the Church demand for the children of mixed marriages?

A. The Church demands that all the children born of mixed marriages be brought up Catholics.

Q. What does the Church bind the Catholic to do for the non-Catholic?

A. The Church binds the Catholic to pray for the conversion of the non-Catholic and set him a good example.

Q. How are mixed marriages celebrated?

A. Mixed marriages are celebrated without Mass, without the nuptial blessing and not in the church.

Q. What are the common evils of mixed marriages?

A. The common evils of mixed mar-

riages are unhappiness, loss of Faith, and children poorly instructed in religion.

Q. What does St. Ambrose, third century, say about mixed marriages?

A. St. Ambrose says: "How can that be called a union where there is no agreement of Faith?"

CHAPTER IV.

MARRIAGE IMPEDIMENTS.

Q. Is marriage invalid between blood-relations?

A. Marriage is invalid between blood-relations within the fourth degree of kindred.

Q. What does the fourth degree of kindred include?

A. The fourth degree of kindred includes third cousins and great-grand nephews and nieces.

Q. Is marriage invalid between relations-in-law?

A. Marriage is invalid between relations-in-law to the fourth degree of kindred.

Q. Who are the husband's relations-in-law to the fourth degree of kindred?

A. The wife's blood-relations to the fourth degree of kindred are the husband's relations-in-law to the fourth degree of kindred.

Q. Who are the wife's relations-in-law to the fourth degree of kindred?

A. The husband's blood-relations to the fourth degree of kindred are the wife's relations-in-law to the fourth degree of kindred.

Q. Is marriage invalid between sponsors of Baptism and Confirmation and their god-children?

A. Marriage between sponsors of Baptism and Confirmation and their god-children is invalid unless a dispensation has been granted.

Q. Is marriage invalid between sponsors and the parents of their god-children?

A. Marriage is invalid between sponsors and the parents of their god-children unless a dispensation has been granted.

Q. Can a person marry another whom he has baptized?

A. A person can neither marry the one whom he has baptized nor that one's parents without a dispensation.

Q. Are dispensations granted for marriage between relations?

A. Dispensations for marriage between relations are sometimes granted for a sufficient reason.

Q. Is marriage forbidden at certain times of the year?

A. It is forbidden to solemnize marriage from Ash Wednesday until the second Monday after Easter, and from the first Sunday of Advent until after the Feast of Epiphany.

Q. May marriage ever be celebrated during these times?

A. Marriage may be celebrated during these times but always without Nuptial Mass.

Q. When does the promise of marriage form an impediment to another marriage?

A. The promise of marriage forms an

impediment to another marriage when it has been made in writing and signed by both contracting parties together with the pastor or bishop or at least two witnesses.

CHAPTER V.

THE BANNS OF MATRIMONY AND THE GRACES OF THE SACRAMENT.

Q. What are the banns of matrimony?

A. The banns of matrimony are the three public announcements of the marriage made on three successive Sundays or Holydays.

Q. Why are the banns of matrimony published?

A. The banns of matrimony are published to obtain the prayers of the faithful for those who are about to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony, to prevent secret marriages, and to discover any impediments there might be to the marriage.

Q. Have the faithful any obligation arising from the publication of the banns?

A. The faithful are bound to make known any impediments they may know to the marriage.

Q. Does the Sacrament of Matrimony give a special grace?

A. The Sacrament of Matrimony gives man and wife the grace to live in peace and love and raise up children to God.

Q. Why are some marriages unhappy?

A. Some marriages are unhappy because husband and wife neglect the grace they have received.

Q. What should the husband and wife do to profit by the grace of Matrimony?

A. To profit by the grace of Matrimony, husband and wife should practice meekness and faithfully fulfil the duties of their state.

Q. What are the duties of the wife?

A. The duties of the wife are to be the

queen of the home, the helpmate of her husband, and the mother and guardian of her children.

Q. What are the duties of the husband?

A. The husband should provide for his wife and children, be a companion to his wife and an example of Christian virtue to his children.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATION FOR THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.

Q. Is marriage a holy state?

A. Marriage is a holy state blessed and honored by the Church.

Q. What must be the state of your soul to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony?

A. To receive the Sacrament of Matrimony worthily, you must be in the state of grace.

Q. How do you make sure that you are in the state of grace?

A. To make sure that you are in the

state of grace, you should receive the Sacrament of Penance.

Q. How should the Sacrament of Matrimony be received?

A. The Sacrament of Matrimony should be received at Nuptial Mass in which there is a special blessing for the bride. (See translation of the Nuptial Blessing in the appendix.)

Q. How should you pray before marriage?

A. Before marriage, you should beg God to give you the grace to receive this great Sacrament worthily.

Q. What should be your disposition of mind before marriage?

A. Before marriage, you should strive to understand the dignity of marriage and the holy purpose for which God instituted it.

Q. Should you receive Holy Communion at the time of marriage?

A. You should receive Holy Communion during the Mass at which you are married.

Q. Against what state of mind should you guard on your wedding day?

A. On your wedding day you should be not led by the pomp and joviality of the occasion to forget the great graces that you receive in the Sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist and Matrimony.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MARRIAGE VOWS.

Q. What vows do those make who marry?

A. Those who marry solemnly promise to live together in peace and love and fidelity until death separates them.

Q. What kind of love should exist between man and wife?

A. There should exist between man and wife a pure love that will make them cling to each other through all trials and afflictions.

Q. What fidelity should exist between man and wife?

A. There should exist between man and

wife a fidelity that will make them shrink from even the slightest danger of disloyalty.

Q. Must man and wife be concerned about each other's soul?

A. Man and wife should do all they can to promote each other's salvation.

Q. How can man and wife best preserve peace between them?

A. To preserve peace, man and wife should resolve to bear patiently each other's faults and defects.

Q. Is anyone perfect?

A. No one is perfect; every one has his defects.

Q. What does continuous criticism often cause?

A. Continuous criticism of each other's faults and defects often drives happiness from the home.

Q. What is to be said of impatience and scolding?

A. Impatience and scolding are evil habits, easily acquired, which drive happiness out of many homes.

Q. What should be the ambition of husband and wife for their homes?

A. Both husband and wife should ever strive to make their home a place of peace and happiness.

Q. How does St. Paul describe the relations of husband and wife?

A. St. Paul says: "Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord: for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. * * Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be subject to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it."—*Eph. V, 22-25.*

CHAPTER VIII.

PURPOSE OF MATRIMONY.

Q. What was God's purpose in establishing Matrimony?

A. God's purpose in establishing Matrimony was to raise up children to Himself.

Q. What is the greatest blessing that can befall husband and wife?

A. The greatest blessing that can befall husband and wife is to be blessed with many children.

Q. What is to be said of those who complain that they cannot provide for a large family?

A. Those who complain that they cannot provide for a large family lack confidence in God.

Q. What homes often produce the best men and women?

A. The homes in which the father and mother are raising their children in want, hardship and self-sacrifice are those which often produce the noblest men and women.

Q. What should they do who have prayed in vain for children?

A. Those who have prayed in vain for children would do well to consult a good physician.

Q. What are the secondary purposes of Matrimony?

A. The secondary purposes of Matri-

mony are to enable man and wife to enjoy the peace and pleasures of domestic and home life.

Q. What relation does the family hold to human society?

A. The family is the basis of all human society.

Q. What relation does the home hold to the Church?

A. The success of the Church, in her divine mission, largely depends upon the purity and sanctity of the home.

Q. What relation does the home hold to priests and religious?

A. The character of our priests and religious depends upon our homes, for they are the fruits of the home.

CHAPTER IX.

CONJUGAL RELATIONS.

Q. What does Christ say of the close union between man and wife?

A. Christ says: "God made them male and female; wherefore a man shall leave

father and mother and shall cleave to his wife and there shall be two in one flesh * * what therefore God has joined together let no man put asunder."—*St. Mark*, 10:6

Q. What mutual right is conveyed in matrimony?

A. In matrimony, each of the contracting parties conveys to the other the right of cohabitation, called the marriage right.

Q. Is either party allowed to refuse the marriage right to the other?

A. Neither party is allowed to refuse the marriage right to the other except for grave reasons.

Q. Should each party show consideration for the other in demanding the marriage right?

A. In demanding the marriage right, each party should show every consideration for the other.

Q. What is a good means for wives to preserve the respect and love of their husbands?

A. As a means of preserving the respect and love of their husbands, it is well for

wives to observe a certain conjugal modesty and always to strive to be neat and tidy when they appear before their husbands.

Q. May man and wife abstain from the use of the marriage right?

A. Man and wife may, by mutual agreement, abstain from the use of the marriage right even perpetually.

Q. How should the wife respond to the demands of her husband?

A. The wife should respond with ready affection to the demands of her husband.

Q. What should the husband remember in regard to the marriage right?

A. The husband should remember that, at times, he should give way to the disposition of his wife.

Q. What thought should sanctify the conjugal relations of man and wife?

A. The thought that they are instruments of God in the propagation of the human race should sanctify the conjugal relations of man and wife.

CHAPTER X.

GESTATION AND CHILDBIRTH.

Q. When does the human life of a child begin?

A. The human life of a child begins at the moment of conception.

Q. When is the soul united with the body?

A. The soul is united with the body at the moment of conception.

Q. Is it a sin to prevent conception?

A. It is a grave sin to prevent conception by any means whatsoever.

Q. What is to be said of those who use means to counteract conception?

A. Those who use means to counteract conception commit the grave sin of destroying a human life.

Q. Would it be a grave sin to counteract conception a few moments after it has taken place?

A. It would be as grave a sin to prevent conception, even one moment after it has

taken place, as it would be to kill a child after birth.

Q. What is to be said of those who procure or commit abortion?

A. Those who procure or commit abortion are guilty of the most heinous form of murder.

Q. What is to be said of maternal impressions?

A. It is a mistake to suppose that the deformities and marks which children sometimes bear at birth are due to something that the mother has seen or experienced.

Q. How can mothers promote the well-being of their unborn babes?

A. To promote the well-being of their unborn babes, mothers should, as far as possible, avoid violent anger, dejection, nervous shocks, and all grave disturbances.

Q. Is it ever allowed to take the life of an unborn child to save the mother's life?

A. It is never allowed to take the life

of an unborn child to save the mother's life.

Q. What is to be said of surgical operations at childbirth?

A. All necessary operations at childbirth are lawful except those that include a direct killing of mother or child.

Q. Is it ever allowed to perform the operation of craniotomy?

A. It is never allowed to perform the operation of craniotomy unless it is sure that the child is dead.

Q. Could not the death of a child be hastened to save the mother's life?

A. It would be murder to hasten the death of a child, even one minute, to save the life of the best mother on earth.

Q. What is to be said of extrauterine pregnancy?

A. It is allowed to perform the operation by which the hemorrhage due to extrauterine pregnancy is stopped even though the child dies.

Q. What precaution should be tak-

en for Baptism when there is imminent danger of death at birth?

A. When there is imminent danger of death at birth, the child should be baptized on any possible part of its body even before it is entirely born.

Q. Who should administer Baptism to a child not entirely born?

A. It would be well to instruct the doctor or nurse to administer Baptism when it becomes necessary before the child is entirely born.

Q. What thought should bring consolation to suffering mothers?

A. Suffering mothers should be consoled by the thought that God has a special care for the mothers of His little ones.

Q. What is the noblest thought of a mother?

A. The noblest thought of a mother is that she unselfishly risks her own life for the life of her child.

Q. What should be the state of a mother's mind before childbirth?

A. Before childbirth, a mother should

calmly put her trust in God and refrain from all useless worry and fretfulness.

CHAPTER XI.

PARENTHOOD.

Q. What is the dignity of parenthood?

A. Parents take part in the creation of new creatures, made to God's image and likeness, and are given charge over the body and soul of these children.

Q. For what will parents have to answer to God?

A. Parents will have to answer to God for the immortal souls entrusted to their care.

Q. What is the first and greatest duty of parents?

A. The first and greatest duty of parents is to train up their children in the fear and love of God.

Q. When should the training of children begin?

A. The training of children should

begin as soon as they commence to notice the things around them.

Q. What is the first virtue that should be instilled into children?

A. Purity is the first virtue that should be instilled into children.

Q. What is the foundation of a virtuous life?

A. The formation of a right conscience is the foundation of a virtuous life.

Q. When does the formation of conscience take place?

A. The formation of conscience takes place in most children, probably before the age of six years.

Q. What is meant by the formation of a right conscience?

A. The formation of a right conscience means that there should be instilled into the child's mind and heart, from motives of religion, a love for all that is good and pure and abhorrence for all that is evil.

Q. What bearing on later life has this conscience formed in childhood?

A. This conscience, formed in early

childhood, generally makes the basis of moral character throughout life.

Q. When do children begin to show instincts to impurity?

A. Children sometimes show instincts to impurity even at two years of age.

Q. How should parents guard their children against the evil inclinations of nature?

A. Parents should keep a strict watch over the hands and eyes of their little ones and deter them from all that would be immodest in older persons.

Q. How should parents deal with children as soon as they are able to talk?

A. As soon as they are able to talk, children should be taught that there are certain guards to be placed upon their hands and eyes.

Q. What should parents demand of nurses and servant-girls?

A. Parents should demand that nurses and servant-girls be modest even with very young children.

Q. What danger is often present from nurses and servant-girls?

A. A nurse or servant-girl may give a child a false conscience in regard to purity and modesty that will remain with it through life.

Q. Does the danger of impurity cease with early childhood?

A. The danger of impurity does not cease but generally becomes greater as the child grows up.

Q. What may be said of vicious habits in young men and women?

A. Vicious habits in young men and women can almost always be traced back to some defect in early training.

Q. When should children be taught to pray?

A. Children should be taught to pray as soon as they are able to talk.

Q. What is a beautiful custom followed by many parents?

A. A beautiful custom is for the parents to have their little ones kneel at their knee and lisp their prayers with them.

Q. What other virtues should be taught very young children?

A. The fundamentals of all the virtues should be inculcated in the hearts of children from the beginning.

Q. How should parents view the whims and humors of their young children?

A. Parents should view the whims and humors of their young children as budding traits of character which they may bear through life.

Q. How should parents deal with their children in general?

A. Parents should deal honorably and justly with their children and make them feel their trust and confidence.

Q. What should a parent do when he has unjustly punished his child or has mistakenly opposed the child's correct opinion?

A. If a parent has unjustly punished a child or has mistakenly opposed the child's opinion he should frankly admit his mistake.

Q. How should parents instruct their sons and daughters in regard to marriage?

A. Parents should instruct their sons and daughters, when they have reached the proper age, in the duties and dignity of marriage.

Q. What should young folks do before promising marriage?

A. Before promising marriage, young folks should always ask the advice of their parents.

Q. What kind of courtship should young folks make before marriage?

A. Young folks should avoid long courtships; they can learn to know each other well by a courtship of six months or a year at most.

Q. What should parents do if they discover a religious vocation amongst their children?

A. If they discover a religious vocation amongst their children, parents should strive to foster it by prayer and good advice, and should consider it the greatest blessing that God could send upon their family.

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

At the proper time, before the Mass begins, the candidates take their place at the altar-railing, or in the sanctuary according to custom. They stand, facing the altar, the bride to the left of the groom. The bridesmaid to the left of the bride and the groomsman to the right of the groom.

The priest says to the groom:

N., wilt thou take N., here present for thy lawful wife according to the rite of our holy Mother the Church?

The groom answers: I will.

The priest then says to the bride:

N., wilt thou take N., here present, for thy lawful husband according to the rite of our holy Mother the Church?

The bride answers: I will.

Then the bride and groom join their right hands and make the following promises: The groom first repeats after the priest:

I, N. N., take thee, N. N. for my lawful wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.

Then the bride repeats after the priest:

I, N. N., take thee N. N., for my lawful husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.

Then the priest says in Latin:

I join you together in marriage, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then the priest sprinkles them with holy water; then blesses the ring saying:

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R. Who hath made heaven and earth.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Bless, O Lord, this ring, which we bless in Thy name, that she who shall wear it, keeping true faith unto her spouse, may abide in Thy peace and in obedience

to Thy will, and ever live in mutual love through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The priest then sprinkles the ring with holy water. Then the groom places it on the third finger of the bride's left hand, saying:

With this ring I thee wed, and I plight unto thee my truth.

Then the priest says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then the priest says:

V, Confirm, O Lord, that which Thou hast wrought in us.

R. From Thy holy temple which is in Jerusalem.

V. Lord, have mercy.

R. Christ, have mercy.

V. Lord, have mercy.

Our Father, etc.

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Save Thy servants.

R. Who hope in Thee, O my God.

V. Send them help, O Lord, from Thy holy place.

R. And defend them out of Sion.

V. Be unto them, Lord, a tower of strength.

R. From the face of the enemy.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Look down with favor, O Lord, we beseech Thee, upon these Thy servants, and graciously protect this Thine ordinance, whereby Thou hast provided for the propagation of mankind; that they who are joined together by Thy authority may be preserved by Thy help, Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE NUPTIAL BLESSING.

Let us pray.

O Lord, favorably help our supplications, and graciously protect Thine ordinance, whereby Thou hast provided for the propagation of the human race, that this union made by Thy authority may be preserved by Thy help; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us pray: O God, Who by the might of Thy power didst make all things out of nothing; Who,

at the beginning of the world, when man was made to the image of God, didst, out of his flesh, make the woman, and give her to him for a helpmate, thereby teaching us that what it had pleased Thee to fashion out of one, it should never be lawful to disjoin. O God, Who by so excellent a mystery, hast consecrated wedlock, and hast been pleased to make it a type of the mysterious union of Christ with His Church: O God, by Whom woman is joined to man, and that alliance ordained in the beginning is endowed with a blessing, which alone was not taken away, either in punishment of original sin, or by the sentence of the deluge; look down graciously upon this Thy handmaid, here joined in marriage, and who earnestly desires to be taken under Thy protection. May it be to her a yoke of charity and peace; faithful and chaste may she marry in Christ, and be an imitator of holy women; may she be pleasing to her husband like Rachel; prudent, like Rebecca; long-lived and faithful, like Sarah, May the first author of sin have no share in any of her actions. May she remain firmly attached to the Faith and the commandments, and being joined to one man in wedlock, may she fly all unlawful addresses; may she fortify her weakness by the strength of discipline; may she be grave, in modesty worthy of respect, and in heavenly doctrines learned; may she be fruitful in offspring, approved and innocent, and may it be at length her happy lot to arrive at the rest of the blessed in the heavenly kingdom. May they both see their children's children even to the third and fourth generation, and attain to happy old age; through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee

in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God world without end. Amen.

May the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob be with you: and may He fulfil His blessing in you: that you may see your children's children to the third and fourth generation: and afterward enter into the possession of eternal life, by the help, of our Lord Jesus Christ Who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth God, world without end. Amen.

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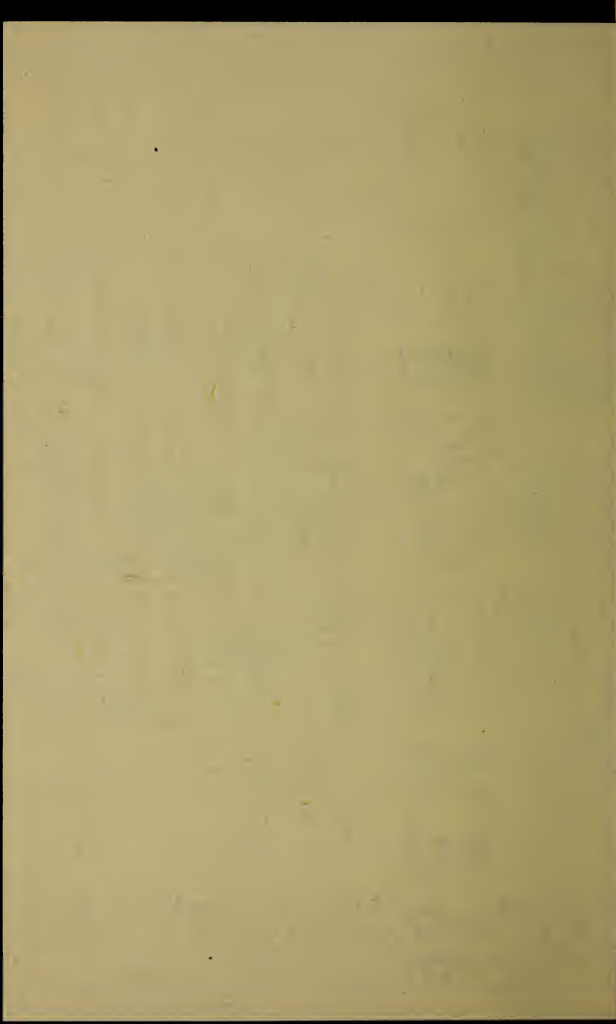
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