

DATING; A JOB APPLICATION

Marriage Preparation Class

Introduction to test

Deacon Collins

Welcome to your last ride on cloud “9”; from here on out you start to descend into reality. As we come out of the clouds we begin to see good old “terra firma”. This is why we begin to get the “Jitters”. Did I do a good enough job of evaluating this relationship? My whole world is about to change. The time you have invested into your relationship now comes to the test. Do I or don’t I want to continue the relationship? It’s never too late to say “I’m not sure”.

What is dating all about? It’s about job seeking and job application. Your dating period was supposed to be about figuring out if you want to get married; and if so to whom. That’s all! It’s not about drifting into the next step with no hope or no expectations. The whole idea is to spend time with someone; figuring out if that person has the traits you are looking for that meet your expectations; the qualities you are looking for in a spouse. If they do then keep on spending time together; if they don’t then move on. If you don’t move on then the relationship becomes abusive and degrading for we are taking advantage of each other. Not out of love but out of selfishness or convenience. If you have not made this determination yet, then you have lost sight of the goal of marriage; or never had a goal to start with.

Many people loose sight of what compatibility truly is. They begin to believe that dating is to have someone to hang around with; a way to achieve status or to alleviate loneliness. It’s not just a matter of filling a need; or someone to wipe away their tears. It is not to be loved or idolized so much as to give love. Love freely given wants love freely returned then it becomes commitment, permanent and integrity for only then is there justice. Love is not something that we fall in and out of. Love is the result of commitment.

It can truly be said that love is a risk because it is about the possibility of rejection. Rejection hurts but it is honest because it says “you’re not the one for me”. That’s what dating is all about, the risk of being hurt. In all fairness a little hurt now is far better than a big hurt later on. There is an old saying: when you marry in haste, then you may repent in leisure. If someone is not strong enough to handle rejection; then that person isn’t strong enough to approach marriage. Don’t fool yourself into believing that you can rely on

anything less than full commitment. To know each other is called “integrity”. To be true to each other is called “justice”. To serve each other is called “intimacy”.

At some point your dating reached a climax in a proposal of marriage which is the time of engagement. Although engagement is a formal contract it does not provide for family intimacy experiences. You may think that you covered all the bases about your future. Many may have, but many have not. This is why the Church requires you to examine your relationship in a more formal setting; so that you can reassure yourselves of compatibility and integrity. This written test is not to say yes or no to your desire to marry. That is your decision; but it will highlight areas that may need to be reviewed and agreed to before you act, not after you act when it is too late. You can not change someone’s character or attitudes after the marriage ceremony. When the results have been scored you will meet with a counselor to review your responses. Please do not rush your answers, give them an honest and thoughtful response, after all it’s about your future. It’s not about answers you think someone else wants to hear or see. There is no integrity or honesty in that. Integrity is the only proof of love that is acceptable.

Marriage is about family, creating a new family, an environment of love. It is not about tax deductions or investments; economics or social status nor to legitimize a sexual relationship that seems comfortable for the moment. Marriage, just to legitimize a pregnancy is never an option. This kind of a relationship has no integrity, no justice. It’s about taking advantage of each other’s weaknesses not their strengths. Marriage is about learning to forgive each other’s shortcomings and habits that have yet to be experienced in our changing, our aging, our life’s compromising. Next to our dependency upon God is our dependency upon each other. Our covenant of love with God is through baptism as is our covenant of love for one another is expressed in our covenant of marriage. Talk it over. If you don’t qualify, **NOW** is the time to walk away!