

Prayer in Honor of St. Catherine

O GOD, Who didst distinguish Thy holy Virgin and Martyr Catherine by the gift of great wisdom and virtue, and a victorious combat with the enemies of the Faith; grant us, we beseech Thee, through her intercession, constancy in the Faith and the wisdom of the Saints, that we may devote all the powers of our mind and heart to Thy service. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Invocation of St. Catherine

ST. CATHERINE, glorious Virgin and Martyr, resplendent in the luster of wisdom and purity; thy wisdom refuted the adversaries of Divine truth and covered them with confusion; thy immaculate purity made thee a spouse of Christ, so that after thy glorious Martyrdom Angels carried thy body to Mount Sinai. Implore for me progress in the science of the Saints and the virtue of holy purity, that vanquishing the enemies of my soul, I may be victorious in my last combat and after death be conducted by the angels into the eternal beatitude of Heaven. Amen.

Prayer

My Lord and God! I offer up to Thee my petition in union with the bitter passion and death of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, together with the merits of His immaculate and blessed Mother, Mary ever virgin, and of all the Saints, particularly with those of the holy Helper in whose honor I make this novena.

Tips and Prayer Resources for Discerning Marriage

by Bobbi and Brian

A Better Understanding of Marriage

Years before I even met Brian, God was working diligently to prepare me for marriage. I had worldly ideas and a shallow spirituality. My time discerning a religious vocation was actually the time I learnt the most about the sacrament of marriage and what it required. I found the Catholic Catechism particularly helpful in better understanding the sacredness and seriousness of the vocation of marriage.

Praying for My Future Spouse

When I did discern that marriage was the vocation God desired for me, I began to pray for my husband each day. I asked St. Joseph in particular to watch over him and strengthen him. I learned to love my future husband before I even met him.

Focusing on the Present, Not Just the Future

This time of "singleness" was a difficult one for me. I was so eager to start my future that I was neglecting my present. A priest advised me to stop focusing on what I don't have and focus on what I do have - the opportunity to deepen my relationship with Christ as well as the opportunity to serve him without the restrictions of a family to care for. I deepened my prayer and frequented the Sacraments knowing that I would never be a holy spouse or mother unless I worked on sanctity now. I also busied myself with serving Christ's Church and tried to live out my faith better each day.

A Novena to Find My Future Spouse

These actions helped me to live my single life better but as I got older the "waiting patiently" became more and more of a struggle. At one point a friend gave me a novena to Bl. Anna Marie Taigi (a holy Catholic wife) that her sister prayed with the intention of finding her future spouse. Shortly after, she met her future husband on the internet. I decided to pray the novena myself with the same intention. A few months later I, too, met my future husband on the internet. Coincidence? I don't know but people have since asked for a copy of the novena. So here it is:

*O Blessed Anna Marie Taigi, by that humble submission with which you believed in and adored the august mystery of the One True God in Three Persons, obtain for me from the Most Holy Trinity the favor which I confidently implore... (fill in your petition. **)*

Glory be the Father... (three times)

O Blessed Anna Marie Taigi, by the great love and tender pity with which you honored the mysteries in the life of Jesus, obtain for me from Him the favor which I earnestly implore... (fill in your petition.)

Glory be the Father... (three times)

O Blessed Anna Marie Taigi, through your filial devotion to the Blessed Virgin, obtain for me from Her the favor which I humbly implore... (fill in your petition.)

Glory be the Father... (three times)

*(**You can fill in your own petition. For an example, I said the following:*

Petition 1 - That I may find the man God has chosen to be my spouse.

Petition 2- That he and I will both grow in the virtues needed to be a holy spouse and parent.

Petition 3 - That I may know God's will and follow it with love and patience.)

Consecrating Our Friendship to Our Lady

When Brian and I began our friendship online I knew in my heart that this was going to be different from previous friendships so I went to the Adoration Chapel to pray about it. I consecrated our friendship to Our Lady and asked her to guide us and keep us close to her Son. I prayed that we would help each other grow in holiness and never displease Our Lord. From that day on Brian and I always kept each other and our relationship in prayer, with special emphasis on the liturgical year and the sacramental life. We always began dates with Mass or a rosary. Special feast days of the Church were celebrated with prayers and novenas and other acts of piety. This was especially helpful after we became engaged and the struggle to remain pure in our affection was getting more difficult. These prayers, coupled with common sense - not to place ourselves in tempting situations, regardless of how "harmless" they may seem - allowed us to remain faithful to one another and to God.

Asking the Questions before We're Married

Knowing the assaults that confront marriage these days we studied about the vocation of marriage and what we could do to build a strong one, not only in the spiritual sense but in the practical matters as well. We discussed numerous topics before we were even engaged to see if we were compatible in our thinking - from NFP to home schooling to finances to who's family we'd visit for the holidays. Thankfully, we agreed in all the major points and compromised in all the debatable points.

A Sacred Vocation

I believe the one key point we both agreed with wholeheartedly was that the vocation of marriage was one as deep and spiritual as a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. We were called to be saints in the modern world and our little home should be a domestic church of love and sanctity. It was a tall order considering all our faults and vices that we struggled with, but we knew that God would provide all the grace necessary in the Sacrament of Marriage to accomplish the task. It was merely our job to humbly accept that grace and work diligently to live it.

We pray that you and your future spouse do the same!

Bobbi & Brian