



## Introduction: Rediscovering the True Meaning of Courtship

In today's society, courtship has lost much of its depth. For many, it has become a stage of superficial romance, emotional trial without commitment, or even just a social prelude before the wedding. But the Catholic vision of courtship is radically different: **it is not merely a time of preparation for a wedding celebration, but a comprehensive formation for an entire lifetime of love, sacrifice, and mutual service within God's divine plan.**

This article seeks to restore the authentic vision of courtship by exploring:

1. **Its theological foundations** (What do the Bible and Tradition say?).
  2. **Its practical dimension** (How to live it in a holy way?).
  3. **Current challenges** (How to resist worldly pressures?).
  4. **A concrete pastoral guide** (What steps to follow for a blessed courtship?).
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## I. Biblical and Theological Foundations of Courtship

### 1. Human Love as a Reflection of God's Love

Sacred Scripture reveals that **conjugal love is sacred** because it participates in God's own love:

- *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"* (Genesis 2:24).
- *"God is love"* (1 John 4:8), and therefore, human love must be **faithful, fruitful, and sacrificial**, like Christ's love for His Church (Ephesians 5:25).

Courtship, then, is not a mere "trial run" for marriage, but **a path of discernment to see if both are called to live this divine love in the marital covenant.**

### 2. Biblical Models of Holy Courtship

- **Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 24)**: A courtship guided by prayer and Providence.
- **Joseph and Mary**: Models of purity, trust in God, and obedience to His will.
- **The Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11)**: Jesus sanctifies human love, showing that



marriage is part of His saving plan.

### 3. Courtship in the Church's Tradition

The Church Fathers and saints like **St. John Chrysostom** and **St. Thérèse of Lisieux** taught that:

- Courtship should be a **time of growth in virtue**, not emotional indulgence.
  - **Chastity** is not repression, but freedom to love with a pure heart.
  - **Discernment** is essential: it's not just about "falling in love," but discovering if God calls them to walk together toward holiness.
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## II. How to Live a Catholic Courtship in Today's World?

### 1. Prioritize Spiritual Life (Not Just Feelings)

- **Pray together daily** (Rosary, lectio divina, prayers for their future family).
- **Attend Mass and receive the sacraments** (The Eucharist and Confession strengthen love).
- **Seek spiritual direction** to guide their discernment.

### 2. Cultivate Purity in a World That Mocks It

- **Avoid dangerous situations** (do not put chastity to the test).
- **Remember that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit** (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- **Redeem affection**: Courtship is not for "testing sexual compatibility," but for **learning to love with Christ's heart**.

### 3. Discern Deeply (Beyond Romanticism)

- **Discuss openly**:
  - **Faith**: Do they share the same vision of sacramental life?
  - **Family**: Do they want children? How will they raise them?
  - **Life goals**: Are they willing to face poverty, illness, or hardships, as promised in marriage?
- **Observe key virtues**: Is he/she patient? Generous? Self-controlled?



#### 4. Actively Prepare for Marriage (Not Just the Wedding)

- **Take a Catholic premarital course** (not out of obligation, but for formation).
  - **Learn to forgive:** Courtship is the first school of marital patience.
  - **Practice mutual service:** How do they support each other in difficult times?
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### III. The Major Challenges of Courtship Today

#### 1. The Mentality of “Disposable Love”

- **“If it doesn’t work, I’ll leave”:** Catholic courtship demands **serious commitment**, not temporary relationships.
- **“Marriage is just a contract”:** For Catholics, it is a **sacrament**, a path to salvation.

#### 2. Social Pressure Toward Immorality

- **“Everyone does it”:** Chastity seems ridiculous in a hypersexualized world, but it is **revolutionary**.
- **“Boring courtship”:** A holy courtship is not boring; it is **a love that transcends the fleeting**.

#### 3. Fear of “Forever”

- Many fear lifelong commitment, but **true love is not afraid of eternity**.
  - **Prayer and spiritual guidance** are key to overcoming these fears.
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### Conclusion: A Courtship That Builds Heaven on Earth

Catholic courtship is not a mere formality or a fairy-tale romance. It is **a school of Christian love**, where two people learn to look beyond themselves and prepare for a sacred mission: **to build a family that serves God and the Church**.

**Are you ready to live your courtship as a path to holiness?**



**Practical Steps for Catholic Couples:**

- **Read together** *"Love and Responsibility"* by Karol Wojtyła.
- **Attend a retreat for couples** before marriage.
- **Pray for their future marriage** every day.

*"Love consists not in gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction."* (St. John Paul II)