

# My First Month of Marriage: 5 Things I Learned By Marrying My Opposite



My first month of marriage taught me what it means to marry someone who is very different from you.

In 2016, after doing tons of Facebook videos on courtship, I met the man that I would eventually marry. We courted using Fr. Ripperger's blueprint for courtship, dutifully following the four stages: friendship, courtship, engagement, marriage. Within [5 months](#), we were married.

We are a strange pair with totally different upbringings and temperaments. He grew up in Michigan, and I grew up in Brooklyn, NY. My background is Caribbean and his is Irish, German and English. He has a garden and guinea pigs for pets and I am a city girl who hates pets. He is an introvert and I'm... not. He is a simple guy and I like elegant things (I'm learning to live more simply). He comes from a household with two parents and I was raised by a divorced mom and grandma. He is a cradle Catholic and I am a convert.

And yet, there is one huge thing we have in common: We are devoted to our Catholic faith and helping each other get to heaven. This is huge and quite frankly, the most important.

During my first month of marriage, I learned 5 things:

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## **1) LIVING A SIMPLE LIFE IN MY FIRST MONTH OF MARRIAGE**



I'm a city girl and Joseph is a suburban dude. The suburbs of Michigan are different from the suburbs of New York City. Many NYC suburbanites commute to the City, so they still have that City edge and attitude. The suburb we live in is very quiet.

How shall I put this?

"Life is old there – older than the trees. Younger than the mountains blowing like a breeze. Country home take me home. "

Maybe I'm exaggerating, but it's like country to me.

Whereas, I had countless take-out places near me like Panda Express, Chipotle and 2 Chinese restaurants on every block, my new town lacks such accommodations. I tried some fried rice

at one Chinese spot and it failed horribly in comparison to the Brooklyn Chinese take-outs.

What this means is that I am now cooking dinner pretty much daily unless we have leftovers we can make into a meal.

Even I know that's a good thing.

## **What the heck is a compost?**

I didn't know anything about composting until I moved here. If you don't know what composting is either, read more [here](#).

I'm composting now.

Joe collects organic scraps and bits in an old plastic coffee container on the counter. That's our little [compost bin](#).

Now, I find myself dropping all sorts of things into the compost container: fruit peels, orange and lemon rinds and other vegetable bits and scraps I don't need. Even egg shells!



## **Of Gardens and Guinea pigs**

We have a garden, which is Joe's third love (God, me & the garden). I love watching him tend to the garden. When he's in the garden, I know I can spend hours on the internet and he won't even notice. Shh.

He also has some guinea pigs in the back yard, which makes him a bonafide country boy, as far as I'm concerned.

He gets such joy out of doing the simple things in life and I am learning to appreciate the same.

## **2) It Was So Worth it to Wait Until Marriage to Have Sex**

If you're on this website, then it's apparent that encouraging chastity is a big part of our mission.

I wasn't always chaste in my past relationships, so I am so thankful for the opportunity to practice what I'm preaching.

Was it easy to remain chaste during our courtship? Yes and No. We were both not only committed to avoiding sins of purity, but also to being an example for others. At the same time, there were moments when we had to flee in haste because of... hormones.

For those who ask me if it gets easier when you're older, the answer is "No" – not unless you're a eunuch. If you are a hot-blooded, breathing human being, living in a world where you are immersed in overt sexuality, it can be a struggle. Furthermore, although we didn't struggle with porn, for some, [porn](#) is a real problem and distorts intimacy.

But it was worth it.

What a pleasure it was on our honeymoon night to really KNOW each other in the biblical sense – to finally know that with God's blessing we could share our bodies.

**What if you messed up and were already intimate with your boyfriend or girlfriend?**

Those who are in a relationships where you already have been intimate in the past, it doesn't mean you should give up. That's a form of despair and comes straight from the pit of hell. Resolve to not have sex from now until marriage. You

CAN feel virginal again in your marriage bed, if you wait from now until marriage.

Every day is a chance to start over.

Waiting adds such layers and nuances to your relationship, which is usually buried under pre-marital romping. Don't you want to get to know the virtues of the person you want to marry?

### **3) Issues During the Engagement Will Magnify During the First Month of Marriage**



If I said that during the first month of marriage everything smelled like roses, I'd be lying. You know I like to keep it real.

Even before marriage, it was glaringly obvious that we did not have the same taste in food.

Joe is more of a meat and potatoes, corn-on-the-cob, apple pie guy, which is not unusual for a Michigander. I have more eclectic tastes, which is not unusual for a New Yorker. Also, my ethnic background is West Indian (Caribbean), which means I do not get along with bland food. We marinate for days.

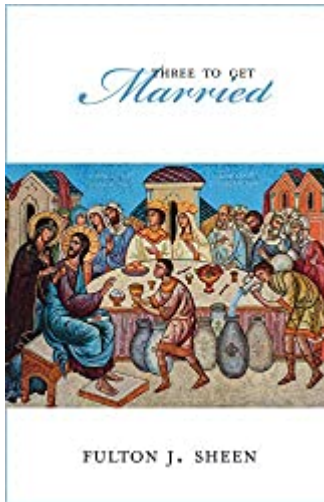
Since NYC has such a variety of foods, I love eating or making foods from other cultures, whether Italian, Asian, Caribbean, African or Middle Eastern.

Not only do we not have the same taste in foods, but Joe is a very finicky eater. He is picky about not only tastes, but textures. He doesn't like cheese on most things, so any type of pasta with cheese is a no-no and any sort of casserole that includes cheese is out. Yet, he makes homemade pizza with mozzarella and makes "fried cheese". He grows jalapenos and spinach in the garden, but won't have them in any dish except for salad. Fish is also out.

Are you shaking your heads in sympathy yet?

[Three to Get Married by Venerable Bishop Fulton J. Sheen](#)





I knew this was going to be a problem. What I didn't anticipate was how I would take it personally – almost as a rejection of my cooking skills (which are considerable, if I say so myself).

I didn't realize how stressful menu planning would be. I didn't know how I would feel boxed in and unable to be as creative as I could be. If you remove cheese and fish, sweet potatoes, avocado, casseroles, lasagna, baked ziti, rice and beans and other delicious dishes, you are left with a fairly empty cooking toolbox.

And so, this caused a bit of tension during our first month, especially since I was trying so hard to be a traditional wife.

The silver lining in this whole situation is that he is low maintenance in that he will eat leftovers for weeks straight. He likes to "use it up", which means he will repurpose the leftovers until they are all gone. He doesn't waste one drop.

Therefore, if I want to make baked ziti for myself, I can make a small portion and just put out leftovers that he likes.

This is a compromise for now.

But it's still hard and I have my moments of frustration.

The other day we were discussing how I think we are adjusting to each other's food tastes and I'm learning to make variations of what he likes, which I also enjoy. Joe said to me, "I would think part of being submissive is making the meals that your husband likes, right?" Touché.

How do some of you with picky husbands deal with menu planning?

## **4) The Rosary Changes Hearts & Make Things All Better**

Sometimes I get cranky for no reason.

Although I don't turn into a Medusa, I'm sure hormones affect my mood, especially when Aunt Flo is in town (you ladies know what I'm talking about). Men instinctively know when to stay away when we're "PMS'ing."

Ladies, the Rosary can help.

I'm not promising the glares will turn into dewy-eyed glances, but you'll be able to tolerate your husband, at least.

Pope Saint Pius X said,

*“The Rosary is the most beautiful and the richest in graces of all prayers; it is the prayer that touches most the Heart of the Mother of God...and if you wish peace to reign in your homes, recite the family Rosary.”*

We prayed the rosary on our wedding night and we hope to continue to pray it together, daily.

If you're married and you don't have a routine of praying a family rosary every day, I highly recommend it.

Even if you're single and in a serious relationship, why not pray the rosary periodically? That's better than cuddling on the couch and getting into all sorts of trouble.

## **5) During the First Month of Marriage, Being a Submissive Wife is a Process**

I know you all were dying to find out if I am in fact a submissive wife. After all I talk so much about submission.

Can a confident, assertive woman be submissive to her husband?

The answer is yes, with 2 caveats.

1) Don't force yourself to turn into a wallflower if you were never one and, 2) you're going to mess up – a lot.

You need two ingredients for success in this area: a willing heart and a patient spouse.

Sometimes when I find myself being extra assertive and taking the reins, I self-correct. When I don't notice, Joe gently lets me know. Sometimes, he says playfully, "That's not very submissiveness," which always makes me smile but it also makes me self-adjust. doesn't complain.

He knows I desire it from the depths of my heart and he supports me in this journey.

## **So, what does submission look like in my household?**

To put it simply, I do everything I can to be my husband's helpmeet. That includes tasks that I used to hate to do, like housework and cooking. I also manage the day-to-day finances. I'm sort of like the accountant, and he is the CFO.

But wait, there's more.

Being a helpmeet also involves psychological and spiritual support. That means I try to build him up and encourage him when it comes to his work and when it comes to his decisions. I support him in his masculinity, by harnessing my femininity.

The more feminine we are, the more we encourage our men to be masculine.

It's easier to do tasks than it is to mentally and spiritually support someone. It's hard for us women to go along with our men's decisions when we KNOW we're right. Right, ladies?

When I am submissive and in my feminine role at home, everything fits in place and we both are at peace.

It's a daily struggle for someone who is not naturally submissive.

Pray for me that I may improve in this area.

So these were the 5 things I learned during my first month of marriage.

My first month has been an amazing experience of growth, sacrifice and so much love that my heart wants to burst.

I have truly learned what it means to be one. Joe and I work every day on living our marriage sacramentally, with God as head. We are learning to sacrifice for each other and we are growing to love each other more every day.

In the end, it takes [three to get married](#): God, the husband and the wife.

We hope to consecrate our home to the Sacred Heart soon.

Pray for us so that we will help, and not impede, each other from getting to heaven.

What was your first month of marriage like?

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*This article was written in 2017 and updated in 2020. I may write a whole new update at the 5-year mark!*