

Along the track

The Wedding

At a recent wedding this short, beautiful blessing poem was part of the ceremony:

*Today you see down a mountainside
Out over the islands to your sure horizon
Your sight is sharp, your goal clear, and tides
Of love lap around your desiring*

On such an important day when the future is rightly filled with hopes and dreams, chasing rainbows is the order of the day. That's a good thing. Planning together, having a vision for our future together, what we want our marriage to be is important. If we just let life happen to us, we won't take hold of it and live it.

A wedding marks an important stage in the life of two people who are learning to love each other. That can be a wonderful experience, a life long and life-giving journey with its highs and lows, its joys and sadnesses, its twists and turns. Gazing ahead to shared horizons and shared goals with love 'lapping' all around is a reminder that marriage isn't just an ordinary event. On this day, we are surrounded by family and friends who have come together to celebrate with those who are taking this step. That is also a reminder that love needs others, that lasting love finds its life in giving and in receiving, in openness and generosity. Of its very nature, love is outward-looking, it seeks the benefit of others. On this day of happiness and excitement when we are surrounded by those we love and who love us, it is easy to see that.

But love isn't just about dreaming, chasing rainbows or about planning great adventures, although that is surely a part of it. Genuine love and happiness is not only about feeling good about ourselves because other people love us; it is about how well we love others and how we learn to love ourselves. Marriage ought to help us love another, that's true but it also ought to help us learn more about myself and learn to love myself. Marriage is not the merging of two people. It is an extraordinary relationship which allows each person to grow. Even in the closest relationship, there is a distance, a separation. Marriage allows a marvellous living side-by-side where we love each other for who they are, not what I would like them to become. Marriage allows us a precious environment where we can discover each other and help each other to grow.

So this blessing poem included these words:

*Two sets of footprints you will make but true
Companions on this journey you'll become
When you slip out of step, think of today
Relive it again, its close embrace of freedom.*

There's a lot in those few words. We are intimate companions on this journey, two people side by side. And when we 'slip out of step', when sometimes the going gets tough or disagreements arise, *relive today again*, remember those who were here with you today, those who wish to be part of your journey, those who love you. Relive the commitments made today, relive the joys and the hopes, the dreams that brought you together today. But remember too, that such an experience, such a memory gives you a freedom to be who you are, to become the person you are meant to be.

I was especially struck by the last two lines:

*May you find bliss in ordinariness
And joy forever in its present tense.*

It is in the ordinariness of life that we discover each other, that we learn to love, respect and honour each other, it is in the ordinariness of life that we come to *love the distances in relationship as much as the togetherness, it is in the ordinariness of life that we come to know and love our partner and learn to love our own self*. It is in the ordinariness of life, in the day-to-dayness of sharing life with a partner that love takes root and becomes extraordinary. Sadly, however, when we come to experience the ordinariness, we often do everything we can to avoid it. Marriages sometimes flounder in the constant pursuit for what we think will bring us greater happiness – possessions, constant adventures, distractions of all sorts. It is rather in what we create so that we can discover the joy and wonder of each other that real happiness lies.

In Pope Francis; words:

Indeed, love "is a single reality, but with different dimensions; at different times, one or other dimension may emerge more clearly". The marriage bond finds new forms of expression and constantly seeks new ways to grow in strength. These both preserve and strengthen the bond. They call for daily effort.

Amoris Laetitia #164

Regards
Jim Quillinan

Email: jquillinan@dcsi.net.au