
« Building Solidly, in Love! »



I am always happy to take part in a wedding celebration: it is an important landmark not only for the lovers themselves but also for all who share in the festivities. It is an event which renews our commitment to love. The couple's wedding march into the church is symbolic of the journey already undertaken the day they first met; they want to reach the same goal together: Is this not one of the definitions we give to love, walking together towards the same goal? And the couple is not alone, in this journey undertaken to Love discovered; we are privileged partners in this, and we assure them of our friendship, prayer, and solidarity.

“HOW GREAT ARE YOUR WORKS!”

May the future husband and wife often pray: “How beautiful are your works! How great are your works! Lord, You fill us with joy! You made us, and every human being is a sacred history, we are the image of God. Your love created us, and you put your Spirit in us. Our roots are in you! Yes, Lord, how great are your works!” The wedding day is a very special day: yesterday is gone, and tomorrow is not yet here. Every second of this day is priceless. It is an exceptional day, a day of covenant. Just as the future spouses want to enter into covenant with each other before the Lord, God the Father renews in each one of his children his eternal covenant. The wedding day is a day filled with hope and the expectation of a rich harvest. As rain and snow do not return to the sky as clouds without having produced what they were meant to do, the Word of God enriches the future spouses, and brings forth good fruit.

NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD

I am not a specialist in building houses and buildings, but I want everything that I have been called to build, to be solid and lasting. I know full well that in these times of change and transition, there is much that is temporary and transitional, and this, too, we must accept, but my ideal is to build solidly a shelter against both the most insignificant inclement weather and the most violent tornado. We must build solidly even in pastoral work, otherwise the ravages of time will get the better of the task already achieved, and the risk is great to have everything collapse. Whether we be master builders, specialists in laying floors, or bricklayers, each step of the construction must be carefully and minutely followed. The same must be done with work inside the home, whether preparing the tastiest meals or working at the most delicate embroidery: each step requires time and complete attention. However, in love, how can one build solidly? A text from Saint Paul in his letter to the Colossians (3:12ff) points the way. I would like, here to pause and meditate a little on this, convinced that nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God. Neither death nor life, nor heat nor cold, neither day nor night, neither hunger nor thirst, neither chains nor threats. This is Paul's profession of love.

GOD IS LOVE: LET US LIVE LOVE!

Saint John writes: “God is love. God's love was revealed in our midst in this way: he sent his only Son to the world that we might have life through him. Love, then, consists in this: not that we have loved God, but that he has loved us and has sent his Son [...] If God has loved us so, we must have the same love for one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet if we love one another God dwells in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us [...] God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him [...] Let us love, then,

because he first loved us” (1 Jn. 8b-12, 16b, 19). This is Saint John’s profession of love. With equal force Saint Paul repeats the same command: “Because you are God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt mercy, with kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievances you have against one another. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. Over all these virtues put on love, which binds the rest together and makes them perfect” (Col. 3:12-14).

SPECIALISTS OF LOVE

In order to build solidly in love, we must become specialists in love, a love composed of care and full of goodness and kindness and generosity, a love that is ever forgiving. This forgiveness is a basic condition for any couple who seeks to build a solid relationship. Even in preparing the grandest meals and laying down the most beautiful tiles floor, we can fail miserably! Some foods can be overcooked or undercooked, and tiles can be mismatched; in such cases one needs to patiently start over again and again, if necessary, in all simplicity, and fully realizing the outcome. Anger would serve nothing, nor stubbornness nor threats. Oftentimes it is only forgiveness that allows one to go ahead, at times even by leaps and bounds. There is a saying that the one who stumbles makes even bigger giant steps! May all of this take place in serenity and peace of mind. Saint Paul says: “May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace . [...] May the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. [...] Whatever you do, do in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through him”(Col. 3:15-17). How beautiful are couples still in love after twenty, twenty-five, and even fifty years of marriage! If they have peace together, they will always show deep respect for one another, speak words filled with kindness, and show caring attention for one another. Lovers are called to form one body in Christ... This indicates the great admiration Saint Paul had for married couples. He wrote: “May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace .” (Col. 3:15). It is this sign of deep unity that every couple is called to manifest in word and action, in their projects and activities.

PRAYER AND GRATITUDE

I want to tell loving couples how important are those ties which they create in their prayer to Jesus. In a married couple, prayer is as important as the air we breathe, otherwise the faith we have and love itself risk being weakened. It is in simple but fervent prayer that all love grows, day after day. In times as troubled as ours, it is good to listen to these words of Mother Teresa: “The fruit of silence is prayer; the fruit of prayer is faith; the fruit of faith is love; the fruit of love is service, and the fruit of service is peace.” It is in this kind of relationship with Christ that lovers can grow as a Christian couple and a Christian family. If they keep this relationship alive, they have nothing to fear, because nothing can ever separate them from the love of God!

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