

GRIST

Diocese of New Ulm Social Concerns Office June & July, 2008

VI. Remain Faithful

Music I heard with you was more than music;
and bread I broke with you was more than bread.
Conrad Aiken

In real love you want the other's good.
In romantic love you want the other person.
Margaret Anderson

Men are from Earth; women are from Earth.
Deal with it. *George Carlin*

I have seen in society nothing but dinners
without digestion, suppers without pleasure,
conversations without trust, associations without
friendship, and love-making without love...
Love is more pleasant than marriage for the
same reason that novels are more amusing than
history. *Chamfort*

If you are afraid of loneliness, don't marry.
Chekhov

The worldly understanding of faithfulness is
these days limited to sexual fidelity. But it
actually means far more than that, encompassing
the total attitude of the spouses to each other.
When they are faithful to the image of God in
which they are created, a Trinitarian God of
three persons in a mutual relationship of love,
the love of God is seen. *Jack Dominican*

Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing
compared with love in dreams. Love in dreams
is greedy for immediate action, rapidly
performed and in sight of all. People will give
their lives if only the ordeal does not last long
but is soon over, with all looking on and
applauding as if on stage. But active love is
labor and fortitude. *Fyodor Dostoyevsky*

I love short stories because I believe they are the
way we live. They are what our friends tell us,
in their pain and joy, their passion and rage, their
yearning and their cry against injustice. We can
sit all night with our friend while he talks about
the end of his marriage, and what we finally get
is a collection of stories about passion,
tenderness, misunderstanding, sorrow, money;
those hours and days and moments when he was
absolutely married, whether he and his wife
were screaming at each other, or sulking about
the house, or making love. While his marriage
was dying, he was also working; spending
evenings with friends, rearing children; but those
are other stories. Which is why, days after
hearing a painful story by a friend, we see him
and say: How are you? We know that by now
he may have another story to tell, or he may be
in the middle of one, and we hope it is joyful.
Andre Dubus

A man knows his companion in a long journey
and a little inn. *Thomas Fuller*

Faithful marriage has much to offer regarding
the demands of any lifelong commitment. For
this to happen, however, the heady confidence of
wedding-day promises made by the bride and
groom must give way to reflection on the
lifelong embodiment of marriage vows. It is
marriage itself, not the wedding day, that can
teach us about the real demands of commitment.
This insight is not disclosed in white dresses and
black tuxedos but in mortgages, children,
layoffs, illnesses, arguments and reconciliations,
boredom and delight. The vows of marriage
involve couples in the free embrace of limits. In
marriage, spouses vow themselves in a covenant
before God to walk the Christian journey bound
to one person in a radical and exclusive way.
This free embrace of limits is not an end in itself

but a means for entering into the paschal rhythm of the Christian life and for witnessing publicly to the transformative power of this rhythm. We Catholics celebrate the unique intimacy of marriage, as we must. But we need also to celebrate the conversion and growth in discipleship that the vowed life of marriage demands through the limits it imposes. Those who vow themselves in marriage allow their vows to shape their very identity.

Richard R. Gaillardetz

One should only celebrate a happy *ending*; celebrations at the outset exhaust the joy and energy needed to urge us forward and sustain us in the long struggle. And of all celebrations a wedding is the worst; no day should be kept more quietly and humbly... Love is an ideal thing, marriage a real thing; confusion of the real with the ideal never goes unpunished... To live *with* someone and to live *in* someone are two fundamentally different matters. There are people in whom one can live without living with them, and vice versa. To combine both requires the purest degree of love and friendship.

Goethe

The virtue which requires to be ever guarded is scarcely worth the sentinel.

Oliver Goldsmith

Romantic love can very well be represented in the moment, but conjugal love cannot, because an ideal husband is not one who is such once in his life, but one who every day is such.

Soren Kierkegaard

When you know somebody deeply [in marriage], so many bodies lie in the bed alongside. We need a king-sized bed to contain them. Our bed is full of farmland, 200 acres including the back pasture. The Jungians say that in bed there are always at least four people, invisible man and dark surly woman. But in our bed there is a herd – siblings and offspring, his parents, my parents, and the church, full of incense and Latin. My temple, so old it's got the history of God engraved in the bedsheets. It isn't a bed, it's a text, a Russian novel.

Joan Logghe

Love without direction is a cheap blanket, and even if it did no one harm, no one is warm.

Thomas McGrath

We touch Heaven as we lay our hand on a human body.

Novalis

Don't pray for him to find a wife, pray for him to fall in love... When you enter marriage you find that it is the beginning – not the end – of the struggle to make love work... Vocation implies limitation.

Flannery O'Connor

There are two kinds of faithfulness in love: one is based on forever finding new things to love in the loved one; the other is based on our pride in being faithful.

Francois de la Rochefoucauld

Here is Rule Seven of my own ten rules for a happy marriage: If a husband is not listening to what his wife is saying, he should not grunt, 'Okay' or 'Yeah, sure' or make little affirmative noises. A husband lost in worry is likely not to take in the sense of such a statement as this: 'We're going to the Gordons for dinner tonight, John, so don't come home from the office first. Remember, we both have to be at the dentist's at five, and I'll pick you up there with the car.' Now, an 'Okay' or a 'Yeah, sure' at this point can raise havoc if the husband hasn't really been listening. As usual, he goes all the way out to his home in Glenville – thirteen miles from the dentist's office and seventeen miles from the Gordon's house – and he can't find his wife. His wife can't get him on the phone because all she gets is the busy buzz. John is calling everybody he can think of, except, of course, in his characteristic way, the dentist and the Gordons. At last he hangs up, exhausted and enraged. Then the phone rings. It is his wife. And here, let us leave them.

James Thurber

I believe that love produces a certain flowering of the whole personality which nothing else can achieve.

Ivan Turgenev

Love is not consolation; it is light.

Simone Weil