

Reflections

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Marriage

The bride and groom come to Church to wed before God and the Christian community. It is because the love which blossomed was offered as a promise of happiness. They had such a deep experience of love that they decided: this has to last forever.

Each one must have said to himself/herself: My happiness depends on this extraordinary person whom I have met. I realize that without her I cannot grow, I cannot be happy, I need her. Therefore, I want to unite my life with hers. And it is in this way that they begin the marriage journey, filled with hope.

Now then, what does the sacrament of matrimony mean for the love story they are experiencing?

I think that the great majority of Christian marriages are not very clear on that meaning. There is a lot about customs, routine, and even family pressure.

Many believe that marriage is no more than a simple blessing of that same love – just as one blesses a car or a medal – so that God may protect them and that nothing bad happens to them. I know that is not the concept which you have of this sacrament.

The true meaning of Christian marriage is: through this sacrament, the Lord does something with the love. He touches this love and changes it, He changes it into something different than what it was when they entered the Church.

Something similar happened at the Last Supper when the Lord changed the bread into his Body. The bread continued looking like bread, but it was no longer bread, it was a sign that the Body of Christ is there.

The Lord does the same with love on the wedding day: He takes the love of the bride and groom and he converts it into a sign and presence of his own divine love.

The love continues being the love between the two, but at the same time it is something more – like the consecrated host is more than bread. The love between the two receives the mission of being a sign and reflection of the love between God and mankind.

In the sacrament of matrimony, the two are going to accept that mission. They are going to tell the Lord: Yes, I accept that my love may become a reflection of your love.

I want to love my spouse – not according to my whims – but rather by trying to love him/her like You, Lord, love the Church.....like you love all of mankind, like You love each human being. In the depth of their hearts, they are going to tell each other: I accept you like the person through whom Christ approaches me. I know that God approaches me through many things, through many persons, and through many events. But by marrying you, I accept you as the great way through which Christ approaches me.

Each one accepts the other and gives himself/herself to the other as the privileged place of encounter with the Lord. Each one becomes for the other a living Shrine where Christ is encountered. The faces of the wife and the husband become the face of Christ himself: a face filled with love, tenderness, generosity, surrender, and fidelity.

Therefore, God calls them to become permanent signs of his love, living sacraments of his love. The importance of the marriage ceremony is not the bride's dress or how many were the invitees, but this profound encounter with THE GOD OF LOVE.

In the Book of Revelation and in Christian tradition, there is a very beautiful image which is the image of CHRIST AS THE SUN. We know that the sun is the source of light, source of heat, source of life. And Jesus is our sun because his love illuminates, heats, and enlivens our existence.

And what does that mean? Each one must become the Sun of Christ for the other; to give the light, heat, and life it needs to grow. You marry each other because each one discovered that the other was his/her sun, because the encounter with the other made him/her feel happy, secure, accepted. And they decided to marry in order to continue being the sun for each other, to continue giving each other that light.

Dear brothers and sisters, I pray to God and to the Blessed Virgin, Mother of beautiful love, that each one of you be Christ for each other, be the sun of Christ for each other, that is: light, joy, life, love, happiness.

Question for reflection

1. Are we a gift for each other?

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