

Leflore Wedding

How many people in the room are parents? How many parents in the room have children who always do everything you tell them to do? My daddy always told us when we were growing up... "Do as I say, and not as I do." But it doesn't work that way, does it? Children learn by imitation.... They learn by watching how we parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles act... That's a little scary isn't it? because we don't always act the way we should either. But it is our nature that we human beings have to see to believe. It is not enough for someone to explain things to us. We have to see it in the flesh. And I think that's the way Love is. We have to see it to believe it.

That is what the Christian faith is all about. We are a people who practice the art of Love.... To be sure there are many emotions around Love.... But the reality is: Love is a practice....And love is not about being perfect; it's not about being successful, it's not about being "Good." getting it all right. Love is about living our lives for the other, whether that be our spouse or our neighbor; or even the ones we don't like. And another thing about the life of the faithful community.... That's us, The church; and I mean not just Episcopalians, but all people of faith who gather as a community... we gather so that we might remind each other who we are... what we are here for in this life.... Because we humans

need reminding. We have to see to believe. And, I say again, we exist for only one purpose and that is to Love one another. The sacraments of the church: Baptism, and Holy Communion, and marriage, to name three, are images of what Love looks like. Outward and visible signs of our high calling. Baptism is the initiation into a life of service and sacrifice for the good of the other. Holy Communion is the reminder that the family meal is sacred; that we are to feed and nurture one another as equals. And marriage is the church's way of affirming the holiness of our intimate relationships with each other.... So we gather as the faithful community to remember what it is that makes life worth living.... And it is Love, brothers and sisters. When all of our illusions crumble over time; it is Love that endures and lasts.

In our Gospel reading for this evening Jesus instructs his disciples to abide in his Love.... And he is speaking of their sacramental fellowship. He's telling them to stick together as community, but not just any community. This is a fellowship that seeks to imitate Jesus.... Not perfection, but a life of service and sacrifice, lifting up each other, bearing each other's burdens, respecting each other's dignity; caring for each other's well-being.

Later in this Gospel Jesus shows his disciples what he is talking about; because Jesus knows that we people need to see to believe. On the night of his arrest, Jesus and his disciples share a meal, and he tells them that whenever they do that, he is present among them.... And then he does something that comes as a complete surprise; He washes the feet of his disciples. See! That is what Love looks like. Love is utter sacrifice for the good of the other. And the joy of Love is found in denying ourselves for the sake of the ones whom God has given us to Love.

So Kelvin and Kynchase, remember that.... Love is not about something you get, but Love is about serving the one with whom you share your life. Love always rejoices in the happiness of the other.... And let me also say, that your marriage is not just about you.... It is also about all of us.... Because we are all ever in need of being reminded what Love looks like, lest we forget. So I challenge you to teach us well in your practice of Love. Let your Children learn what true Love is by your practice of it... Remind us, in your lives together, that Love is so very strong, and that it endures, and that nothing can stand against it.... Because seeing is believing.