

Saturday, July 8, 2017 - Day 188 – Job 25-27, Psalm 4, II Corinthians 13

Here in New Hope and at St. Philip's in particular, weddings happen all the time. It's part of the culture for this small tourist town on the Delaware River. Over the past few years, I have met so many wonderful couples: young and old, rich and poor, gay and straight. Some want huge Martha Stewart extravaganzas with all the details set in their heads or in the "wedding binder." Some come wanting nothing more than five close friends and the beauty of simplicity. All couples come with hopes and fears about what this next stage of life will bring.

The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, Chapter 13 is one of few pieces of Scripture most folks know from heart. They have heard it before on soap operas and wedding cards. It is no doubt, the favorite go-to piece of Scripture when it comes to weddings. With its popularity, we sometimes take for granted what Paul writes about love.

Paul fleshes out the many attributes of love:

"Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick tempered, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (2 Corinthians 13:4-7)."

As followers of Jesus, we are people of love. We take love seriously and not as a passing emotion. Our love is an unconditional love which is modeled after the love of Jesus. Too often the word love is over used to the point it is meaningless. By following Jesus and through our baptism, we become icons of love in the world.

In our Marriage liturgy, there is a beautiful prayer which I pray often and does not just apply to married couples.

Make their life together a sign of Christ's love to this sinful and broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair. *Amen*

We need to be signs of Christ's love to this broken and sinful world each day: When we work, play, or simply just be. Our daily witness to the world in our lives is to show the world the love of Christ which never passes away.

By The Very Rev. Michael Ruk