

Love

While away this past week, I had the honor and pleasure of officiating at a wedding. This was no ordinary wedding as thirty years ago I happened to be in the waiting room with her grandmothers as we were waiting for the bride to be born. The wedding ceremony, quite religious in nature, took place on a bluff that overlooked the ocean in York Beach, ME. In the midst of all the rain and grey clouds, the skies chose to clear up about an hour before the ceremony and we had this wedding under blue skies and sunshine. I hope it is a memory that the happy couple will have for a lifetime.

How many of us gathered here (or reading this) are married or have been married? Do you remember how you met your spouse? How much of your wedding ceremony do you remember? For some of us, it can be a blur while others remember every last detail. But it was a time when we were in love. Hopefully, that love continued and continues today. It isn't all flowers and sunshine—we talked about that at the wedding, too. But, I reminded the bride and groom that in the good times, take time to give thanks to God. In the bad times, before you do anything, stop and listen to what God may be telling you. I stressed the importance of doing that together.

Much like other weddings, this particular ceremony used the reading or the Wedding Feast at Cana. Now, most people choose the reading because it is John's story of Jesus' first miracle that happened to take place at a wedding. In this case, however, I settled on Mary's command to the servant when she said, "Do whatever he tells you." We can't know what God is telling us to do unless we stop and listen. Especially when a couple is raising children, you are thrown by all sorts of events that you simply could not have predicted. All of us, married,

divorced, widowed, and single, have to stop and listen to what God is telling us, especially in the face of an unpleasant or devastating event.

This listening is part of what God is telling us as being a part of a relationship. We offer our prayers to God; how often do we silence ourselves to hear what God's answer may be to the prayer? We may have prayed to win Powerball, to let the Red Sox win one more time, for nice weather at a wedding ceremony, or have prayed for our loved ones to be safe or more serious help to get through something. We do know that no matter who we are or what we have done, we can turn to God for unconditional love that we only hope to mimic.

The first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch, give us our religious history that is shared by countless inter-faith denominations. We will continue to read from Genesis this summer as we look at our Sacred Stories. In today's reading from Genesis, Isaac finds that a wife has been chosen for him in Rebekah and he vows to love her. His trust in God allows him to do this. The reading from the Song of Solomon describes what love is truly like. We are beseeched to "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." While this was written after the time of Isaac and Rebekah, imagine being greeted with that call.

Imagine that call being made to us from God, who loves us and wants us to be in a relationship with God. In the heat of the summer as you sit on the porch with a refreshing beverage, as you walk through the woods because it is cooler there, as you sit by the lake or pond or pool, as you walk the beach of your choosing (physically or mentally) I encourage you to stop, soak in God's love, and listen so that you can "Do whatever He tells you." Amen.