

World Marriage Day

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Last night at midnight, I heard the doorbell jangling. I hurried down the stairs to the front door and looked out. At first all I saw was a bicycle on its side. Then a young man came to the door. It was ten below zero outside. I invited him in. He asked to use the phone to call the police. Some “guy” had smashed him in the mouth. He said the other “guy” was dating the daughter of his father’s ex-girlfriend.

Sometimes I feel discouraged. The evil in this world is too much! We see so many unhappy children. They are discipline problems in school. Teachers suffer from the behavior of children who suffer from turmoil at home. Many children have multiple step- parents, and several sets of grandparents from divorces and remarriages. They live in constant turmoil

But I find hope in couples who make their good marriage even better.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter came into my life in May of 1978. On the Weekend I attended, I began to experience that hope. I saw what a gift married couples can be when they make their marriage a priority. We all have a stake in every marriage. We all suffer when love is gone between husband and wife.

Once a year, Worldwide Marriage Encounter invites everyone to celebrate this gift of strong marriages on a special day. February 8 is WORLD MARRIAGE DAY this year. (The second Sunday in February).

Many parishes in our area have a special Mass, with the longest married couples receiving flowers. And all couples are invited to renew their wedding vows. Once, Bishop Gerry invited all couples married fifty years or more to come to the Cathedral for a special celebration. Two couples from the Valley traveled all the way to Portland, Maine. The church was not big enough. St.Peter and St.Paul Church in Lewiston, which holds two thousand people, hosted the next year. It was still too small. Since then, it has been left to each parish to dream up their own celebration. Ed and Gloria Thibodeau have been active in St.Vincent de Paul parish in Bucksport, Maine I went there one year. They had the church hall decorated with pictures of couples from previous years, they had a meal with a Wedding Cake. Then we danced. A group of Folk Dancers came in their finery.

We invite you to dream up something for your parish! What shall we do?

Yesterday morning as I gave a talk to twelve couples who are preparing for marriage. I told them how we want to help them make their marriage a joy-filled and lasting relationship. Keep them in mind. Together we hope for a new day!

Fr. Bob McDonald
Section 1