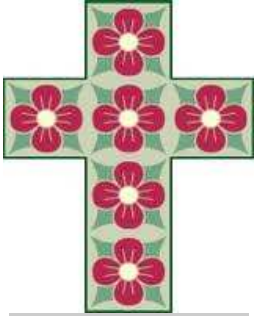


May
2012



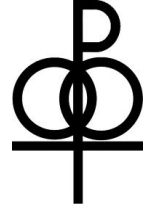
HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Words from the Cross

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
9770 Foothills Canyon Boulevard
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129
www.HolyCrossHRCO.org
303-683-1300



"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband (Eph. 5:31-32).



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Debbie and I will be celebrating our 30th wedding anniversary this month, and I praise God for the many blessings that He has poured out upon us during our time together. Marriage ties a warm band of love around millions of men and women and produces precious family circles of natural love. However, as St. Paul points out, this blessed covenant also give us a whiff of the fragrance of God's eternal love for us as exemplified by Christ and His relationship to the church.

Because our marriages are an image of the everlasting marriage of Christ and His Church, His Bride, we, as believers in Christ, experience marriage in its fullest sense. By himself, what man can be to his wife that Christ is to His Church? Can a man redeem his wife, as Christ did His Church? Can he give satisfaction for her sins, reconcile her with God, keep her in the faith until the end, and finally bring her into the glory of heaven? No, he can do none of these, but, God be praised, none of these are required of him.

What makes the marriage of believers an image of the marriage of Christ and His Church is a husband's self-sacrificing love for his wife. Saint Paul writes, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her." Just as Christ eternally cares for us, protects us, and comforts us in our sorrows, so a Christian husband should love his wife just as actively as they live out their lives in this world. Christian marriage is also an image of the marriage of Christ and His Church from the side of the wife. The apostle writes, "Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands." The true Church reveals and proves herself faithful by this: she is willingly subject to Christ, who rules her with His Word of eternal love. Every word of Christ is a command that she carries out with joy, even if it costs her very blood and life. So, too, is the Christian wife. Her husband's love is holy to her. She does not seek to rule over him, but instead, she desires to serve him whom God has given to her. She does not require hard commands; rather, she cares for her husband by observing with her eyes. She considers herself blessed to be able to serve him.

Oh, how blessed is the marriage that imitates the divine union of Christ and His Church! It is truly a little bit of heaven on earth.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Skelton