

Marriage Idealism - February, 2011

February is the month of the greatest of all "Hallmark Holidays", Valentines Day. It is not hard to see that February 14 has been promoted largely to sell stuff. Still, despite the fact that some might look on this day each year with a certain degree of skepticism, the fact that Valentines Day exists and is so heavily promoted can have positive outcomes.

This time of year opens the door for people to take a look at their relationships and make an outward show of affection and appreciation to the ones they love. This is especially the case between husbands and wives. There is no doubt a substantial upside to any day that helps couples refocus on the love that exists within their marriages.

The world we live in can often cast marriage in a negative light. Culturally we have an horrendous divorce rate. Indeed, marriage is often seen as a wonderful thing while ever it is wonderful, and disposable once it is not. The idea of marriage to eternity is seen as completely unrealistic to many.

Yet, despite how negative toward marriage the world around us can sometimes be, in the New Church it is the idealism of marriage to eternity that we focus on. While the institution of marriage is often being torn down, in the New Church we strive to embrace the Lord's teachings of what could be, and what should be, in marriage, if only we allow Him to lead the way.

The New Church teachings help us to see that life's greatest blessings come within the bonds of marriage. These are bonds that are forged on love between husband and wife together with their shared thankfulness to the Lord as the source of true marriage love and a strong sense that what the Lord has bound together is meant to last and grow stronger to eternity.

We conclude by thinking about this teaching about one of the essential realities of what love in marriage should be, from the New Church work *Conjugal Love*:

"When married partners love each other tenderly, they think of eternity in regard to the marriage covenant, and not at all of its being terminated by death. Or if they do think about this, they grieve, until strengthened again with hope by the thought of its continuing in the life to come."

Garry

