

1 Corinthians 16:14 “Do Everything with Love.”

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For each of us, our life's journey will bring us to times of storms. These actually help form us and lead us to personal holiness. In my case it has led to a particular work and role within the Church in separated, divorced, remarriage and stepfamily ministry. We are transformed like the rocks on the lakeshore, washed by the water to become small pebbles or the beautiful sand that we love to walk through with bare feet ... and maybe...to even build sand castles.

The water is the grace that constantly pours into us as we stay connected to God through prayer, the Sacraments and the Mass. Grace then helps us to bloom like the flower that is nourished by the rains. How? By guiding us in the decisions that we have to make and provided that we try do everything in love. For someone who is divorced, that can take sheer will and self-discipline especially when you have to deal with your ex-spouse. If you have children, you will be connected to each other for the rest of your lives. For those of us who want to follow Christ and His teachings this means facing the fact that this journey of being someone who is divorced will entail learning how to forgive and to love an ex-spouse in a different way than you want to--despite your differences. Christ's message still applies, especially when you are contemplating separation or in the midst of the divorce war. To do everything with love as Scriptures calls us to do will mean “learning how to love out of the box”. There are no step by step instructions.

In my own life, I wanted to depersonalize my ex-spouse because of my own anger towards him. Because of his human failings, I had blamed him for the failure of our marriage without really looking honestly at how I had contributed to its demise. The divorce war causes us to do this. We separate ourselves from the person that we had loved and had failed us. I realize now many years later in my reflection on my life while sitting on a bench near the lake that I had to learn my own lesson of love. The most important lesson at this time? God loves my ex-spouse because He had created him too, and, regardless of what has happened, God had called me and continues to call me to at least try to learn how to “do everything with love”. (1 Corinthians 16:14)

I pray again, “God please bless my mistakes and make right my actions so that love will flow to heal all of those that have been affected by my human failings--especially my ex-spouse and my children. Amen.”



Reflections for the Divorced

1 Corinthians 16:14
“Do Everything with Love.”

It's a beautiful fall day and I am on one of my wonderful walks observing the beauty of God's creation. Everything seems perfect as my walk takes me through the trails of the wooded area. I sit on a bench just reflecting on the beauty of nature in front of a lake.

I needed to take this walk as I am searching for the meaning in my life. You see, I have been divorced for several years and have raised seven children that knew divided worlds and homes. Searching for the meaning in my life caused me to reflect on all of the things that have happened to me in my life journey. Was it God's plan? Maybe . . .Or, without realizing it, I had made decisions that directed me to find fulfillment or happiness *hoping* that it was the will of God for my life.

You might say that I kind of stumbled in the briar patches of my life. Thinking about all of this caused me to hyperventilate as I thought about all the wrong choices, the things that I did not respond to that I should have, and the plain mistakes made because I did not have the right knowledge at that time in my life. I guess I am realizing my immortality and worrying about the judgment day that the nuns in grade school had constantly told us we all would face (so they could keep us in line). A prayer goes through my mind....”God, please bless my mistakes and make right my actions so that love will flow to heal all of those that have been affected by my human failings--especially my ex-spouse and my children.”

Let's face it, our kids can give us a list a mile long on our human failings, and with seven kids mine could be seven miles long!

I did not intend to have this day focus on the negativity in my life....I wanted to enjoy this day. I looked out at the lake and watched how the water came up to the shore causing the water to rush over the rocks. I noticed around the larger rocks there were pebbles. Perhaps at an earlier age they had been large rocks. Nature began to take its effect on me, and I began to realize something beautiful. God is always with us, He knows we are imperfect. He has given us the beauty of creation to remind us of His glory. It speaks of this glory in the rays of the sun and the storms that send the rains upon the soil of the earth that washes down the mountains. The rains nourish the flowers to help them grow and bloom and emit beauty to everyone. Everything works towards the goodness of God. I began to realize our lives are like that. We have days of sunshine and we also have the terrible storms in our lives. But He is there to shine his grace down upon us and dry our tearsif we allow Him in our lives.

