

Love
A homily by Kevin and Katie Landolt
January 2, 2010

A wise, old fortune cookie once read, “ Love is what makes you smile when you are tired”. It also happened to say the Chinese word for “Lettuce” (sheng cai...incase you wanted to know), and our lucky numbers for the lottery, so the infinite wisdom of the fortune cookie should not be ignored.

Good morning and Happy New Year! My name is Kevin Landolt and this is my wife Katie. We have been asked to speak about Love this morning and are honored to share our experiences and thoughts on what makes our love grow and strengthen with each day. It’s interesting that we were asked to write down our thoughts on the subject of love for this homily, because that is how Katie and I actually began our relationship. We were fortunate enough to be paired by fate and by our college professor to write a research project together. Perhaps, she saw something there that we hadn’t yet discovered. In the summer of 2005, Katie and I spent a stressful and tiring, yet invigorating and exciting time preparing a research project for publication. Little did either one of us realize, that through this task, not only would we become co-authors together, but that we would find a life partner in one another.

Since that fateful summer, Katie and I have been together for 5 and-a-half years and married for 9 months, 4 days and 19 hours.... but who is counting? Although, this may not be considered a long time, especially when compared to say our parents’ marriages of 30 and 40 years. In our time together, we have traversed many of life’s joys and sorrows that have both exalted and tested our bond of love for one another. When given the opportunity to contemplate our journey thus far, it brought to mind a quote from the movie *Captain Corelli’s Mandolin*,

“When you fall in love, it is a temporary madness. It erupts like an earthquake, and then it subsides. And when it subsides, you have to make a decision. You have

to work out whether your roots have become so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part. Because this is what love is. Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the desire to make love every second of the day. For that is just being in love; which any of us can convince ourselves we are. Love itself is what is left over, when being in love has burned away.”

For us, this quote illustrates the true face of our love for each other. Throughout this time together we have experienced many things... the challenges of being poor graduate students and all that entails to the exuberance of graduation. Embracing the unknown in a cross-country move and starting off life together in a new city. Supporting each other in the pain and tragedy of losing my mom to a difficult battle with cancer. Experiencing the elation of joining our lives and our two families together forever in our marriage. Even in finding happiness and comfort in the mundane of a Friday night relaxing on the couch watching movies.

In all of these experiences we have seen different sides of true love that are not fully encompassed in the “being in love” feeling. These are the things that have “grown roots for us” and help us to nurture our spark through all that life has to offer. We have learned that our love’s true light shines through in accepting the other person for all that they are, in listening to and learning from each other, and in being understanding and open to each others opinions, hopes and dreams. We are inspired by the infinite possibilities that our love can have through the examples set by our family, our dear friends here at Wildflower and the larger community of humankind.

In our beautiful marriage celebration this past spring, our wonderful Reverend and friend, Eliza asked this pledge of our loved ones gathered,

“Katie and Kevin have spoken their wish. Will you, family and friends, support and uphold this couple as they journey into marriage—into the years of

unforeseen challenges, unforeseen joys, and even into the dailyness of life which demands this couple never to take for granted their love for each other?”

In this affirmation, Kevin and I saw that when all the tenderness of being a newly wed couple has passed and when our love is tested, that we will need to not only look toward each other to keep our love going, but also to rely upon the encouragement and support of those that care for us and those that “stand on the side of love” for every human being.

This is that community that we have found here at Wildflower. So we challenge ourselves as a couple and also you, our community of fellow lovers to cherish, stand up for and praise every bit of love you see in this world, not matter its form. Help love to grow and persevere through all that stands against it. And find love in the simplest and most ordinary of interactions with each other. Have patience, listen to and open your heart to the love that is in each and every one of us.