

Wedding Homily for Dominic and Jessica Atilano-Montoya – June 23, 2018

Congratulations, Dominic and Jessica, as we celebrate your choice to live together with God's blessing. I think many of us used to take marriage for granted; but in recent years we've come to realize it really is a choice. Many people now choose not to ask for God's blessing in marriage.

But you two have asked for God's blessing, and I promise you, God will bless your relationship because he loves you for wanting it, for asking for his blessing. God will be a partner in your marriage, and he will make things work together for the best for both of you, to keep your union strong. It won't all be on your shoulders.

With this sacrament, your marriage is your vocation in this life. It is how you will follow Jesus faithfully. It identifies you as God's people. Marriage is your path to heaven.

Jessica and Dominic selected our scripture readings today and they tie together so well. I hope my words will be a source of renewal for all married couples here.

In the story of Adam and Eve, God blesses their sexual relationship, so that in this new world God made for them and for us, they don't face it alone, but together, so they see more clearly, so they exercise their dominion over it by making wiser decisions together. And God pronounces this first marriage very good.

Even after they sinned, they still realized the benefits of blessed married life: the depth of conjugal love, of being there for each other (their commitment to get through the difficult times together), and that wonderful experience when making sacrifices for each other becomes joyful giving. Dominic and Jessica have those original blessings to look forward to, and many more.

In St. Paul's Letter, we heard how love isn't a right; it can't be earned or demanded. It's a gift from God. Jessica and Dominic, we believe God chose you two for each other. God has blessed you two with love for each other, so you can pass it on to others. Our broken world needs your love. Sharing it with others makes you real, authentic Christians.

Because if you let your love for each other overflow to others, if your love motivates everything you do, then your love for each other becomes the salt of the earth and the light of the word, like we heard in the Gospel. Your salt and light comes from you together. Your salt and light are your zest for life, and how your souls, that is to say, your personalities, will be witnesses to others of your faith, of the joy of the Gospel.

We pray today that your love for each other will vitalize your other gifts, your other skills and talents, so that your love motivates your actions and goals and achievements, so you can exercise your love to benefit people. Exercise your love: love is work – we have many married couples here who will vouch for that. Love is more than a feeling; it's a way of looking at the world, of thinking, of choosing and acting. May Christian love govern everything you do!

Live and love not only for yourselves but for others. That's a good summary of Jesus's message. Be salt and light for others. Your blessed life together and committed love for each other will help lead many people to heaven.

We pray that your faith will go stronger together, your hope more confident, and your love ever deeper.