

**Archbishop Thabo Makgoba**  
**Wedding of Bishop Dinis and Lina**  
**8 December 2012**

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Gen 2:18-24

Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

'This at last is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;  
this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.'

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

1 Cor 13:1-8

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

Mt 7:24-27

'Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!'

Gen 2:18-24; Ps 128; 1 Cor 13:1-8; Mt 7:24-27

Dear Dinis, dear Lina – not only is it an Archbishop's prerogative to preside at the marriage of one of his Bishops – it is also a privilege and pleasure!

A poet Tennyson famously wrote 'In spring, a young man's fancy turns to love.'

Well, spring has given way to summer, and it is not just young men who find that love is on their mind!

And that is how it should be.

For God is love, and when God made us in his image, he made us for love.

Love comes to us, and lives in us, in many ways.

Christians are called to love one another as Christ has loved us, and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

There is also the love of families and friends.

Today we gather around you, Dinis and Lina, as those who love you – as your family and friends.

We are conscious that your marriage is also a coming together of two families, bringing new beginnings. We ask God to bless your families in these new relationships.

Most of all, of course, we find the love of God in the love of a husband and wife.

Scripture tells us that, at its very best, this is the relationship that comes closest to the love God has for us.

We find the oneness in love that God desires to have with us, mirrored in the oneness that is the best of married life: becoming 'one flesh', as our first reading, from the book of Genesis said: two lives woven intimately together in every aspect, heart and soul and mind and body.

This is the love of which St Paul so beautifully wrote.

For we know that God is patient and kind, and so forth, and he holds this standard before us.

But, Dinis and Lina – remember that it is the standard to which he holds YOU, not your spouse!

So it will not do for Dinis to keep a record of when he thinks Lina was envious or boastful; nor for Lina to have a list of when she thinks Dinis is arrogant or rude.

Rather, you should ask yourselves 'Was I irritable?' – NO, don't ask that – the answer will always be 'Yes – and more than you ought to have been!'

Instead ask 'Dear Lord, help me notice when I am becoming resentful, so I can step back from it. Help me always to believe the best, and bring out the best, in this, my beloved!' Hold yourselves to account, against God's measure.

For God's greatest delight lies in helping you grow in love – all you have to do is ask him!

Now, what I have said about God and about love is the same for all marriages.

BUT not all marriages are the same.

Today, Lina and Dinis, is an entirely new beginning for both of you.

Don't assume that old answers will do in a new relationship, and in the new situations you will face together.

Work on building good habits of working together on challenges as they arise, and on talking and listening (and remember God gave us one mouth and two ears, so we should do twice as much listening as talking!).

Now, Bishop Dinis – I have to tell you that you must learn to forget you are a bishop!

This may not be easy – you have been a bishop for a Very Long Time.

I was still in school, when you were consecrated in 1976!

And I was not much older when I was chaplain to your niece, studying at Wits; or when Dean Godfrey at St Mary's Cathedral asked me to give your son a lift to the eye hospital.

I never suspected then, that I'd be here today, as your Archbishop!

But, dare I say it, being a husband is a greater calling than being a bishop or archbishop!

For bishops get days off – at least sometimes – and bishops retire.

Neither are options for husbands!

And so, while retirement is still a while away, we certainly hope that you will take LOTS of days off from being a bishop, especially in the next few months.

The Book of Deuteronomy says, 'When a man is newly married, he shall not be sent to war, or have any other duty laid on him. For one year, he is to be free to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married.' (Deut 24:5).

Well, I very much hope that you are not at war with your Diocese!

And I'm also afraid that I cannot agree to you taking a year of holiday from the episcopal duties laid upon you.

But I am sure that you get the message!

And if you don't, I am even more sure that Lina will remind you!!

Today I am also asking all your family and friends here to remind you, if they see you being too much of a bishop and not enough of a husband!

You will notice that I have not asked the clergy to remind you – for we are all more than a little in awe of you, even in the Synod of Bishops, since you are so much the senior of us all!

It was such a joy to be in your diocese in January 2009, but I certainly did as I was told!

You were definitely the boss, and in control. I remember us screeching in the car to the airport, and I was in a bit of a panic – but you were calmness itself!

We thank you that you are a wise father to us all – and a kind one too, who never forgets to bring me cashew nuts!

But remember, Lina is not your parishioner – she is your wife.

As the Genesis reading says, she is your helper and partner.

And if you are tempted to think that being a helper means being your assistant – think again!

For the Hebrew word for 'helper' is the same on that the Psalmist uses when he says that God is our helper!

The help that God desires to give, is that you shall both grow in living in the love that is his greatest gift.

So may you build your marriage on the One who is the Rock – may he be the foundations of your life together, not only today, but always.

Dinis and Lina – it is said that love is like the measles.

The older you are, the worse it hits you.

But unlike the measles, we pray that this love is something from which you will never recover!

May it be so! Amen