

September 4, 2020 Holy Fools Homily: In the plays of the immortal William Shakespeare, one of the most compelling characters is the fool. In the service of the king, he is called upon to entertain and enlighten his sovereign ruler. In the play, “King Lear”, the loyal, witty and honest fool is the king’s confidant and friend. He alone is encouraged to point out his faults and is often fearless in speaking the truth, which can be hard for the most powerful man of the realm to accept humbly.

In the writings of Saint Paul he makes reference to those Christians who are “fools for Christ’s sake.” He adds, “The foolishness of God is wiser than men” and “The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God”

From the world’s point of view, a couple embracing marriage in the Lord Jesus Christ in the Twenty-First Century is considered foolish. Among youth today, how many regard a lifelong commitment, fidelity throughout the course of marriage, chastity and a generous openness to the transmission of human life as absurd and a little crazy? Faithful Christians are contemptuously labeled as “fanatics” and “fundamentalists.” Very often they are the butt of snide jokes and sneering comments on social media.

When Jesus appeared before King Herod in one of the accounts of his Passion, he was treated condescendingly as foolish, a fool. His response was not to open His mouth.

Today, a young couple has wholeheartedly embraced the call to be fools. As “Holy Fools”, they understand that, in today’s post-Christian culture, they must swim against the prevailing current of toxic immorality and climb uphill every day. It can be debilitating and, at times, deflating. But Our Divine Lord never said it would be easy.

Nevertheless, how supremely joyful are those who embrace God’s call and live a life worthy of Christ himself. The irony is that the “fool” is truly wise while the so-called enemies of divine revelation are true fools!

In his first letter to the Christians at Corinth, Saint Paul points out that “God chose the foolish of this world to shame the wise and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being can boast before God.” (1 Cor. 1:27-28)

A couple married in Christ must never abandon hope.

Several years ago, the saintly Mother Teresa of Calcutta was invited to speak at the commencement exercises of Harvard University, one of the most secular institutions of higher learning in America. She spoke for nearly thirty minutes on the beauty of virginity and chastity. The audience, which included many professors of no faith, was stunned. There were a few moments of silence after she completed her prepared remarks. And then, on a secular campus no less, something truly extraordinary occurred. They gave the holy nun a thunderous ovation. They stood and cheered.

Wow!

I make an appeal to this couple who will soon be united in Marriage, to remain strong and be resolved to be faithful to Christ who, by his Divine Providence, has called you to be a couple for life. You will never walk alone. Christ will accompany you every step of your journey together.

Amen!