

EASTER: LOOKING FOR THE SIGNPOSTS

No doubt many of you have had to take trips to places you had never visited before. When we do not have a map, finding the way becomes an anxious experience. With the new freeways, will I know the way to take? Will the signs be large enough to read and well displayed? Or simply will I get lost?

In our personal journey we also look for signposts. They help us to feel right again. We look for signs to confirm our love. Love might revive us in the moments when we feel unloved, unrecognized, unappreciated and perhaps for some, unwanted. We look for signs that strengthen us in hope. We wonder whether we will ever accomplish what we set out to do. Hope helps us bear frustrations, times of doubt, confusion and setbacks. We look for signposts to confirm us in faith. Faith gives us the confidence to affirm that what we know about people and life really does make sense and is not just wishful thinking.

Now there are two signposts that particularly have inspired me to love, hope and faith lately. These are the two experiences of married life and friendship. Wives and husbands are always in need of signs. A wife needs signs that tell her that she is appreciated. A husband needs signs that he is trusted by his wife.

The same is true of friendship. A friend is someone who can bear to listen to your inner secrets while keeping the confidence. A friend is able to put up with the worst side of you for the sake of working towards the best side of you. A friend is someone who can have the courage to put you back to the right track if you are travelling on the wrong track. A friend is able to be at your side in times of grave suffering, while not able to take the pain away. You may be fortunate to find one person in life that you can call this sort of friend. Blessed is the person whose best friend is also their wife or husband. We need to honour married love and friendship.

In this time of Easter we honour two other moments of the Jesus story as it meets our story. Before the crucifixion, Jesus called you and me, 'friend' and after the Easter experience, he did what friends do and shared what was most precious to him, 'receive the Holy Spirit'. Let me leave you with these words from Michael Leunig:

**God help us if our world should grow dark
And there is no way of seeing, knowing.
Grant us courage and trust
To touch and to be touched
To find our way onwards
By feeling
Amen.**

