

## PATRICK KING & LAURIBETH AGEE

Lauribeth and Patrick, the two of you met in one of the most random ways imaginable. The only first meeting I can think of that might top yours is the story of parents of a friend of mine. He was playing a sandlot baseball game, and she was walking down a nearby street. He came up to bat, swung at the pitch, launched the ball into the air, and on the way down it hit her. He ran over to see how she was, and they lived a long, happy married life together.

You met each other under much safer circumstances—out with different sets of fiends in the Power & Light District, friends who did not even know each other. Patrick looked at Lauribeth, was smitten, and decided to try his luck. Years later, when I visited with the two of you about your engagement, both of you summed up the night you met this way: “It had to be divine intervention.” There was no other way you could have met.

Now, consider another couple, whose story appears in the first reading you selected for us to hear: Adam and Eve. OK, their situation was considerably different: When Adam was single, he did not have a lot of women to choose from. But you find in this reading divine intervention—God actively taking a role to find a suitable partner for the guy. God started the process by making animals, hoping one of them would satisfy Adam. You’d think God would have known better. But in the end, according to the story, while Adam slept, God performed surgery without a nurse—which was a miracle by itself. He reached into Adam’s side, pulled out a rib, and created woman. Finally, things started looking up for Adam.

Some individuals work very hard at finding the right partner. They hang around virtual places on the internet; they hang around real places where others come and go. Some find their partner at work, at school, at church, or at play. We believe in divine intervention in those circumstances as well. Not every single woman can go to the Power & Light District and expect that Mr. Right will show up. But if people follow the advice we hear from Saint Paul and Jesus in the other two readings today, doors will open.

Paul writes, “be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor.” He urged the Romans to persevere in prayer and to contribute to the needs of others. This is behind Jesus’ admonition to love one another as he loves us. People get smitten not only by good looks, but also by good behavior.

We never know when divine intervention may strike. When we least expect it, some new opportunity may come our way. We cannot predict it; we cannot cause it, but we can be ready for it through a lifetime of virtuous living. We all probably have personal stories of events that we cannot explain any other way except for the hand of God. Couples like Patrick and Lauribeth will have even more stories to tell as they explore the joy, the love and the sacrifice of marriage. None of us completely understands today what God has in store tomorrow. If we practice virtues, we will be ready whenever God decides to intervene.

*Saturday, May 8, 2021*