

St Valentine's Day

February 14



St Valentine

St Valentine was a Bishop in Rome who was imprisoned for performing marriages for Christian soldiers against the decree of the Roman Emperor, Claudius II.

While in jail, Valentine healed the blind daughter of his jailor and they became friends. He was eventually beheaded in Rome on February 14, 269 AD, signing a farewell note to the young girl with

'From Your Valentine'.

Later, his feast day became a popular celebration with couples exchanging greeting cards which were known as 'Valentines'.



Romance and Mystery

One of the things that makes a new romance so exciting and attractive is the element of uncertainty: *Will this person really be the one I've longed for?*

This initial thrill of discovery is an intoxicating experience. Yet it is also very limited.

Deep Christian love depends on more than the romantic feelings that come from 'falling in love'; it requires a deliberate and intentional loving that strengthens over the years.



“Over the years I’ve noticed that when pragmatism dominates our relationship, we are less playful and more prone to criticism. Conversely, when we are more romantic with each we are also more gentle and forgiving.” - Byron

Keeping Romance Alive

Romance carries with it a sense of playfulness and delight in one another, and is not only for the young. Mature couples need it too.

Men and women are different. Our differences can divide us as the years go by, or we can choose to see them working as a complementary force, attracting us deeper into the mystery of the other.

Mystery is foundational in our most intimate relationship because it connects us profoundly to divine love, which will always be a mystery to us.

In Good Times... and Bad

It's easy to feel romantic in the good times when things are easy between us and life is fairly simple.

It's important for couples to be proactive in fostering romance in these good times lest they fall into the trap of thinking that romance is spontaneous and effortless. Too many couples founder because they fail to make the most of the opportunity to set up romance habits that will see them through their life together.



As heart-warming as young romance is, there is something even more amazing about the romance witnessed in couples of advanced years. Like the tender attention given to a spouse who is seriously ill or the patient acceptance of a spouse with dementia.

It is in difficult moments such as these, when one's devotion to the other surpasses expectations, that the world witnesses the real power of romantic love.



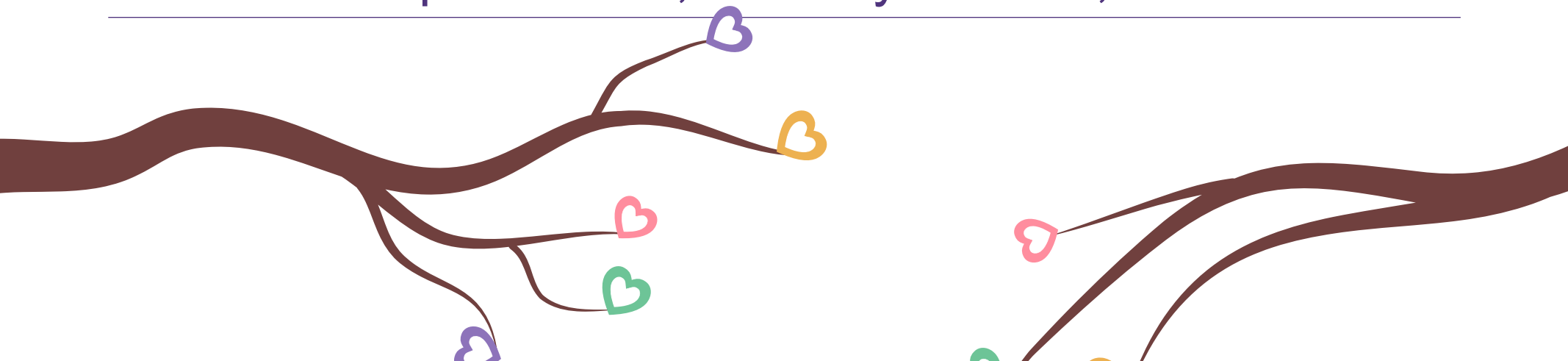
“There is no guarantee that we will feel the same way all through life.

Yet if a couple can come up with a shared and lasting life project, they can love one another and live as one until death do them part, enjoying an enriching intimacy.

The love they pledge is greater than any emotion, feeling or state of mind, although it may include all of these.

It is a deeper love, a lifelong decision of the heart. “

Pope Francis, *The Joy of Love*, 163

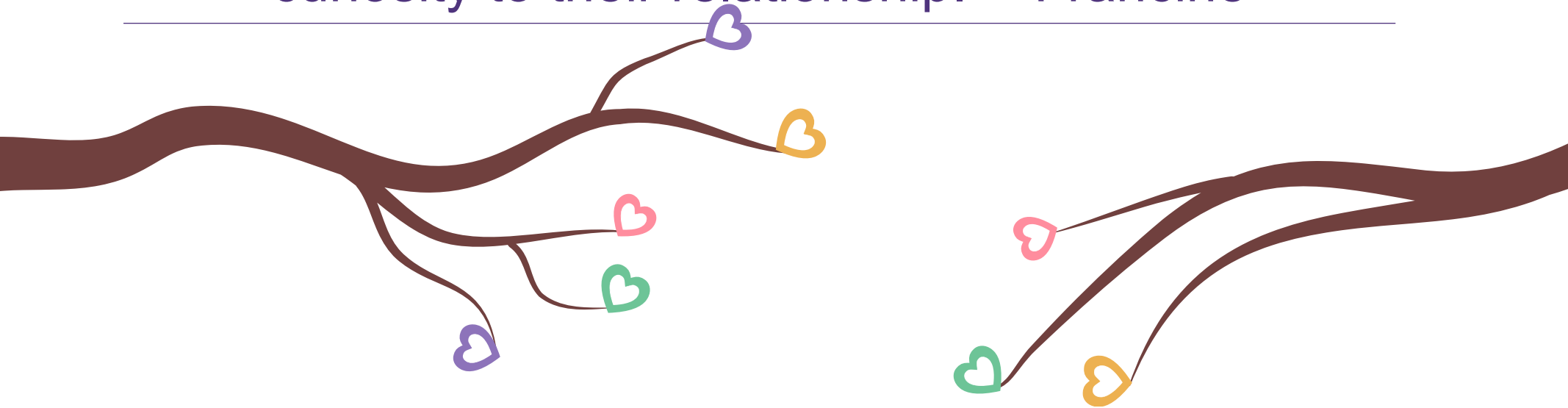




The devotion and care of our lover in his or her lowest and most helpless moments is the purest romance. It is the fruit of years of generous loving in good times.

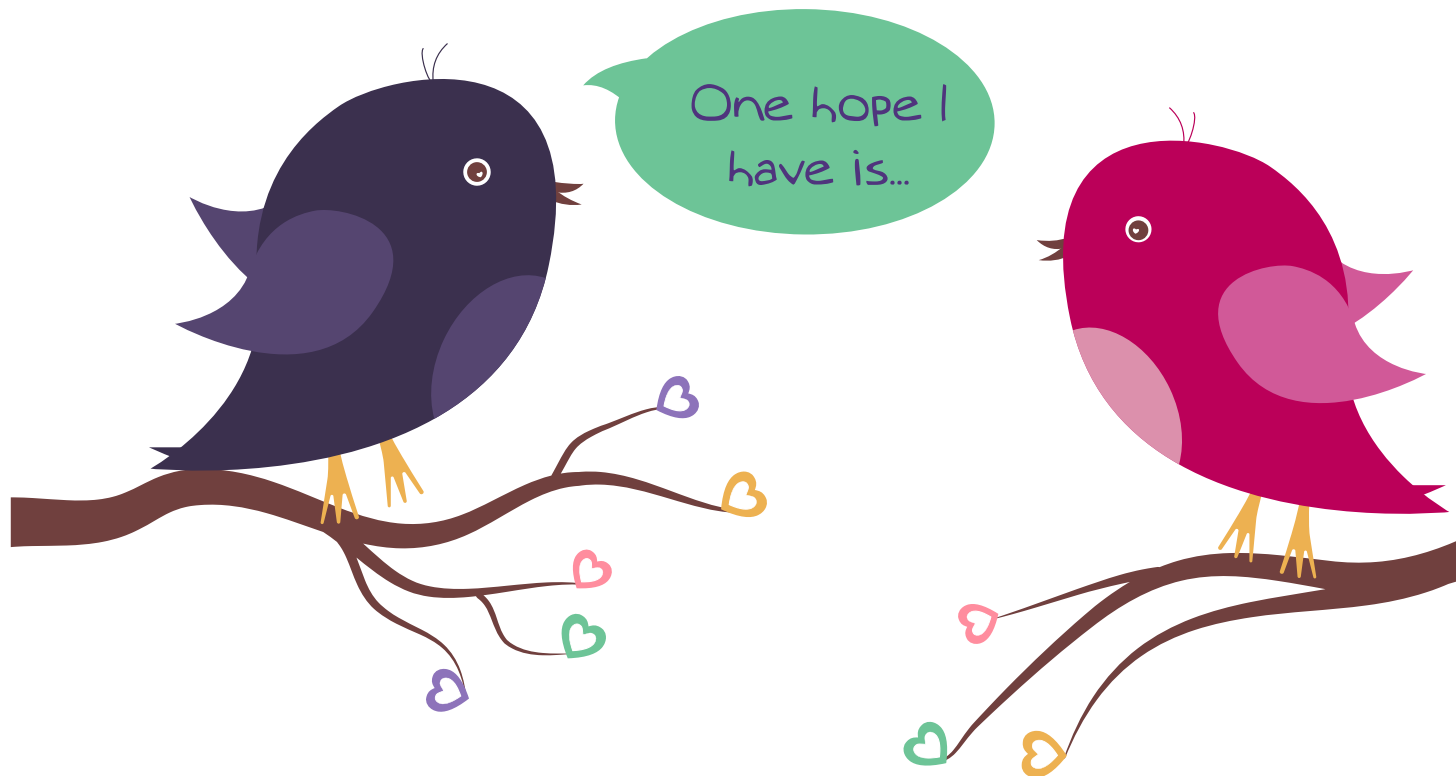
Rekindling the Romance

“Couples who seem to have the most joyful relationships are those who keep a sense of awe for the other person. It’s as if they see the other as this amazing, undeserved gift in their life for who they are grateful do not presume to fully comprehend. They bring a kind of reverent curiosity to their relationship.” - Francine



1. Hear the Mystery

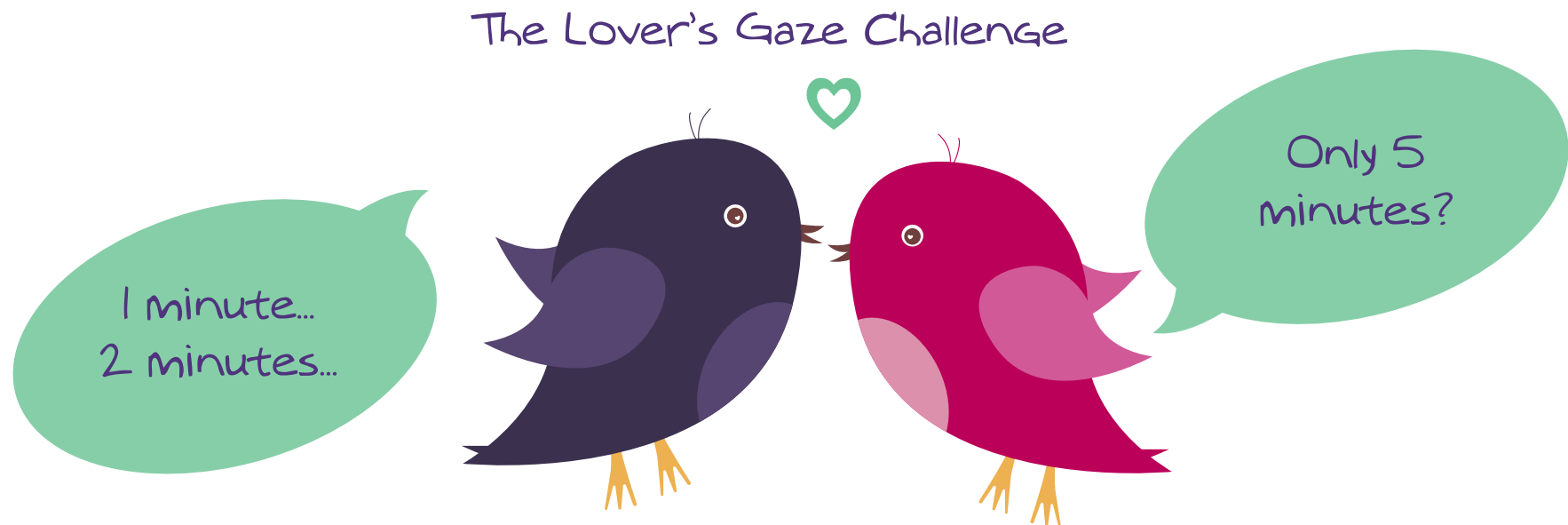
Share with each other a cherished hope you have for your future. Listen carefully to each other. Don't hurry this... take time to really let their hope be fully revealed.



Habits to Help Romance Endure

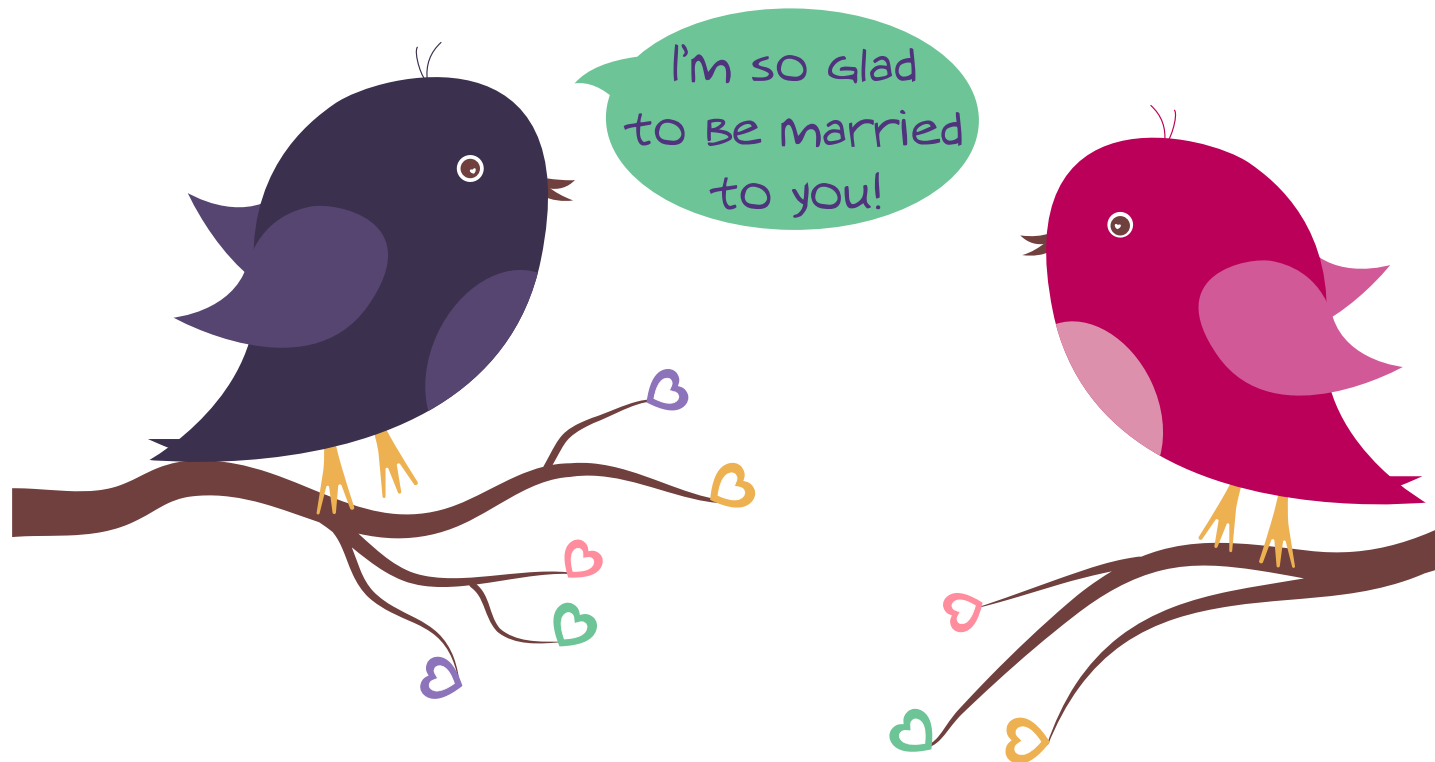
2. See the Mystery

Make time to watch each other at work or play. Look into each other's eyes with love and acceptance. Try holding your gaze for five minutes, using only your eyes to communicate your openness.



3. Speak the Mystery

Express your wonder and gratitude for all that the other is in your life. Express it in prayer, express to each other, express to your family and friends. Become your lover's cheer squad and advocate.





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