Wedding Homily

Last August we wandered through the street theatre at the Edinburgh Festival. We stood on the Royal Mile in a big crowd and watched the tightrope walker. If you are a tightrope walker - and I am not - the whole point is to make it look easy, relaxed, swan like. But he didn't do that. When he came to the end, he balanced – just about - on his rope and addressed the crowd. He said that what the crowd had watched was worth £20 a family – after all he had occupied their kids for half an hour. And then he said, 'I wouldn't want any of you to think that this is easy,' as he wobbled and swayed. And we could see what he meant. He didn’t make it look easy.

I think St Paul is in pretty much the same place when he talks about love. It’s patient and kind. But it’s also tough enough for tough times - bearing, believing, hoping enduring all things. He wouldn’t want us to think it was easy either.

That’s why it is important that we come into church with Scott and Jill to give thanks for the love which they have found together and to share in this service in which they commit themselves to marriage.

This is a special place. It's a place of memory and continuity - of the moment when Alison and I came here and were married by my grandfather who was then 89. And of course it's a place of family memory in particular for Jill's family through the generations

But this is also a special time. As Scott and Jill come to make their wedding vows, it becomes the balancing point between the past for which we give thanks and the future towards which we look in hope.. And today they enter into a future in which life is faithfully given all the way to their last breath.

And so this becomes holy ground - as surely as Moses knew himself to be standing on holy ground when he met God in the burning bush. When two people make lifelong vows to one another, in each case a promise is made and a gift is offered. And where gift meets promise, God is present offering to change - to transform - its meaning. Not just a relationship but a holy union full of love, care, forgiveness and hope..

As we share in this ceremony with Scott and Jill, our prayer and hope is that they will grow into such a union – be a blessing to one another and to their families and their friends.