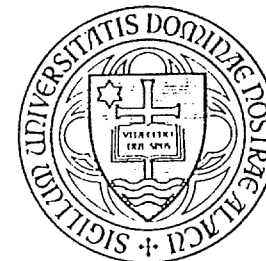


OUR JUDEO-CHRISTIAN HERITAGE...



MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT SERIES
presents
Mabel Webster Davis
from Family & Children's Services Inc.
on



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Renewal on Rosh HaShanah

Unlike the parallel day on the civil calendar, the Jewish New Year (Rosh HaShanah) is the first day of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is thereby linked to a frequently-seen symbolism in religion, that of the number seven.

In religious terms, seven is not only the number of days in the week, but also the number of weeks between Passover and Pentecost, the number of years in the Sabbatical cycle, the number of Sabbaticals in the Jubilee, and so on.

Jewish legend, in fact, teaches that God renewed himself, as it were, at the beginning of the seventh month when he created our cosmos, whose birthday is on Rosh HaShanah. It therefore follows that we humans, in a proper *imitatio dei*, should most properly renew ourselves at the same season of God's renewal — in our case spiritually, through the process of repentance.

Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, a modern Jewish thinker, described repentance as an expression of "the normal functioning of the human personality in its effort at progressive self-realization."

Rabbi Kaplan believed, as have philosophers and mystics through the ages, that the human soul has an instinctive need for constant regeneration. This is the role of repentance: to restore us to harmony with God, our fellow men and women and especially ourselves. Thus, the Jewish New Year season is one of solemnity and seriousness, rather than profane joy.



The High Holiday season is 10 days long — two for Rosh HaShanah, seven for reflection and personal repentance, and, finally, one for the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur).

The worship includes the heart-rending sounding of the Ram's Horn, which is a summons to repent of our sins and is also a reminder of the ram which God caused Abraham to sacrifice on Mount Moriah in lieu of his son Isaac. This vicarious offering taught humankind for all time that God prefers the life-giving sacrifice of the heart — that is, renewal through repentance — rather than forgiveness through

death.

The seven intermediate days are spent in efforts to achieve face-to-face reconciliation with people from whom we are estranged. This is the heart of the holiday season: *deeds of confession and requests for forgiveness*. On Yom Kippur, prayer and fasting are the order of the day, lasting from sunrise to sunset and featuring the periodic repetition of communal confessions.

Also recalled is the ritual of the high Priest of the Temple in Jerusalem, who offered the "scapegoat" sacrifice, the ancient ritual for casting sin out from the midst of the community, its people and its leaders. It was a time for moral self-examination and a resolution to begin anew.

The entire High Holy Day season is one of solemnity and renewal, forgiveness and reconciliation. Its message speaks to all who are spiritually alive.

CHANGES IN FAMILY STRUCTURE: HOW THEY AFFECT YOUR MARRIAGE

Wednesday, Sept. 28th
7:30pm
Center for Social Concern

Topics include: How the married relationship is affected by:
-the birth of a first child
-assuming the care of an elderly parent
-the "empty nest syndrome"
-when adult children move back home

For more information, call the Office of Campus Ministry
Badin Hall
239-5242

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Rest in Peace

Judith Wraspe

ND '88

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Reader responses and
articles are
welcome---Campus Ministry
at Badin Hall.

Twenty-sixth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
September 25, 1988
Good and upright is the Lord;
he shows sinners the way!

*"Your thoughts ought to
be directed to all that is
true, worthy of respect,
honest, pure, admirable,
decent, virtuous or
worthy of praise" (Phil 4:8)*

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Preface

'Once upon a time, in a very big city, there was a man who lived alone in his apartment. When he got home from his day of work, thinking of all the violent and dangerous people he had been close to that day on the streets, on buses and subways, he felt like a survivor of war. The most frightening minutes of all were those spent alone in the hallway unlocking the four locks on his door. This took only one or two minutes, though it always seemed much longer. The main lock was especially costly and had quite a special key. He often suspected this was where some killer would shoot him — as he fumbled with his keys at the door trying to open the last lock. Once inside, he re-fastened the four locks, then pushed home the two bolts, and finally attached the chain. Safe inside, he made his supper and then watched television. Whether he watched news or movies, it was always the same — war, murder, rape and robbery. He kept the lights low and the heavy curtains drawn. It was a dark apartment.

'One night there was a knocking at the door. No one was expected. He never had unexpected visitors. He turned off the television and the lights and stood in terror on the other side of the door. The only light came from under the door. He could see the shadow of someone standing in the hallway.

'The knocking came again. He could hardly breathe. Then there was the sound of paper being pushed under the door, and steps walking away.

'He waited a few minutes and then turned on the light. On the floor was an envelope, and in the envelope there was an unsigned Valentine card. . . .'

**DON'T READ THIS---YOU MIGHT BE
TEMPTED TO READ THE WHOLE BOOK!**

Throughout the Bible, from the first verses of Genesis onward, darkness and light are posed against each other: 'In the beginning . . . darkness was upon the face of the deep . . . and God said, "Let there be light."' John's gospel begins with its own Genesis verses: 'In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.' At Christmas, we re-read Isaiah's words: 'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light, those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them light was shined.'

Our ancestors in Isaiah's time lived in a dark world. Now it is nearly two thousand years since the birth of Jesus, yet our world is dark as well. Our darkness, like theirs, is our enmity: we are at odds with God, with others, with ourselves. We experience the darkness as anxiety, fear, loneliness and locked doors. We find ourselves all too ready to believe the worst of others, and easily forget their redeeming qualities.

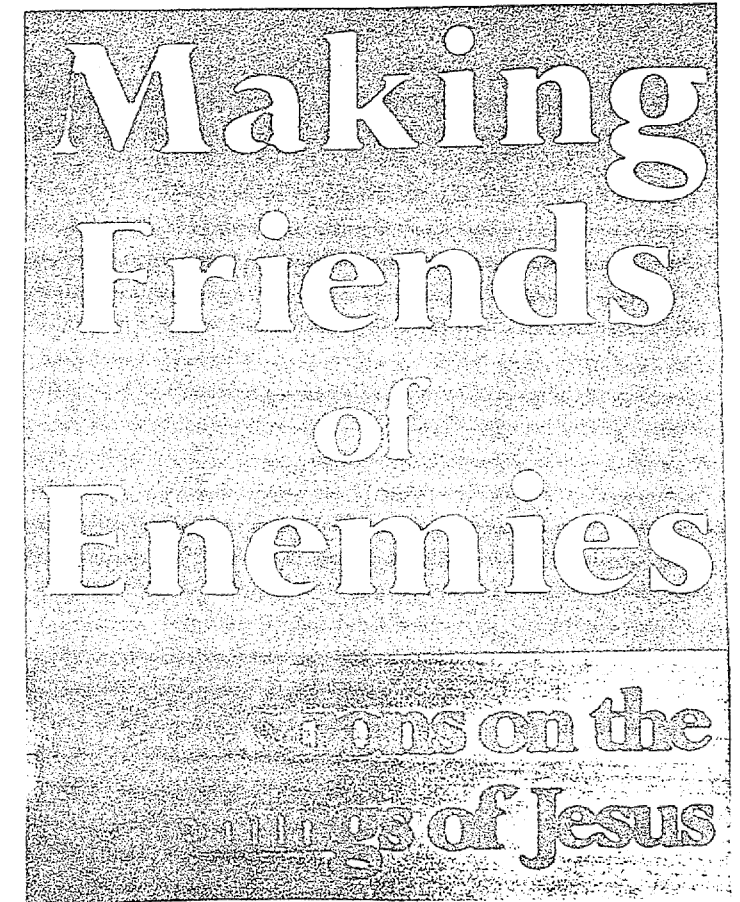
On the other side of our locked door, there is someone standing in the light. Occasionally he delivers Valentine cards.

This small book does not argue that there is nothing to fear in this world, that there is no need for locks. There is a great deal to fear. Fear is reasonable. Our darkness is reasonable. Our enmity is reasonable. Our locks and weapons can all be explained rationally. We may all die of reasonably made decisions that launch a plague of nuclear missiles, all planned and designed by the most rational people on earth.

In these pages you will find an invitation to take the risk of love, to let your life be transformed by God's love. One of God's gifts to us, should we accept it, is encouragement, which is simply the gift of courage, courage to open the door, courage to live in a peaceful way even in dangerous times and places. (And what does courage mean? It simply means heart.)

At Cana, in Galilee, Jesus turned water into wine. He can also turn darkness into light, frightened hearts into courageous hearts, violent hands into healing hands, broken community into reconciled community. For the great miracle of Jesus is not turning water into wine but turning enmity into love.

Jim Forest



Making Friends of Enemies

Reflections on the teachings of Jesus

Jim Forest

Available from AVE Maria
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